

EXAMPLE OF PROOF-READ ESSAY:

1. How can I establish high expectations for student behavior? Why is this so important?
2. How can I assert my authority in a firm and positive way without raising my voice?
3. What are appropriate rules and consequences for student behavior? Why is consistency so important?
4. How can I clearly communicate the rules and consequences and be sure that students understand my expectations?
5. How can I provide positive reinforcement?
6. How can I build a sense of community in my classroom and develop positive relationships with my students?

Being a role model may be the hardest part of being a teacher, but it is also the most important. The students absorb everything you do in the classroom, both consciously and unconsciously. The cultural meme data transferred to your students includes not just your lessons, but also your behaviors, your inflections, your overall persona, and the values you communicate to your students. What you demand of yourself is what you demand of them, and if your expectations of what the students can achieve are low, their behavior will be influenced accordingly. If students are to behave well and succeed in class, there has to be faith from the teacher that they can do so. This will carry over to the students' relationships with each other, and ultimately to their behaviors outside of the class. It may not be immediately obvious, as the teacher's influence competes with all the other memes [COMMENT: Is this the word you wish to use? Alternatives: Impressions, stimuli] in a child's life, but it's still there and exerting some degree of influence that may ultimately result in positive behavior.

This encouraging "ideal teacher" persona isn't a perfect ideal that can be universally implemented by all teachers in all classes, because conditions vary between individuals. For example, not all teachers will be comfortable with teaching in an energetic and hyper-extroverted style. Similarly, not all students will respond positively to that kind of teaching style, and may instead feel uncomfortable and even patronized. Success occurs when individuals' teaching and learning styles connect, and the student feels as though the teacher is someone to respect. Teachers have to give the impression that they will not allow misbehavior, but they have to do so in a way that also gives students incentive to follow the rules. If the students believe that following the classroom rules is directly in their self-interest, they are more likely to do so. If they cannot be convinced of this, the teacher must establish consequences for their misbehaviors, albeit natural consequences that follow a clear cause-and-effect pattern. For example, an item causing distraction may be confiscated, or a teacher might call a student's parents after repeated and regular offenses. This [[COMMENT: Not sure what "this" is referring to]] is as true for students' behaviors towards each other as it is for their behaviors towards the teacher. Learning is a social process, and a safe environment is most conducive to this kind of growth.

The implementation of the consequences is ultimately where the teacher succeeds or fails. The students must experience positive and negative reinforcement on an intuitive

level, instead of **their behavior** hinging solely on external rewards and punishments. It is equally important that the consequences be consistent. Occasional deviations from an established regimen are acceptable based on circumstances, but anything more than **that** undermines the teacher's competence in the eyes of the students, and makes the class a frustrating and unpredictable environment. External rewards are prone to these expectations, and thus lose efficacy over time. They aren't nearly as important as making the class and the required behaviors meaningful on their own, because they tie the value exclusively to an outside, impermeable **idol**. Praise that fosters self-confidence within the student, or tasks that appeal to students' interests, are significantly more effective in the long run.

Unfortunately, there are no certain **and** easy answers **as** to how a teacher can put these principles into practice. The ideal balance between punishing students too harshly and being too lax with consequences varies for each student, and changes as students grow and develop different needs. Conflicts between **students**, as well as between students and teachers, will **inevitably** arise. The teacher's job is to be patient and analytical, observing all **of** the possible factors **influencing** students' behaviors and using that **knowledge** to make as informed a decision as **is** possible.