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[Instructional Strategy](#)
[Classroom Management](#)
[Create a Culture for Learning](#)
[Computer Access](#)
[Quick Tip](#)
[Calendar](#)

[Clayton High School](#)
[Wydown Middle School](#)
[Captain Elementary School](#)
[Glenridge Elementary School](#)
[Meramec Elementary School](#)
[Family Center](#)
[Substitute Teacher Resources](#)

Instructional Strategy: Handling Wrong Answers

There are two reasons why students answer questions incorrectly. Either they are trying to be funny or they really do not know the correct answer. The way you handle a wrong answer should take into consideration the reason for the incorrect response.

If a student answers inaccurately, inappropriately, or even foolishly on purpose, do not allow yourself to be drawn off-task and controlled by the student's behavior. Simply redirect the question to another student who is likely to respond correctly and move forward with the lesson. Even though the student response was not acceptable and may have generated inappropriate responses from the class, acknowledging it will generally only make matters worse. Maintain the flow of instruction by ignoring both the student response and the reaction from class. By focusing your attention on appropriately engaged students, the disruptive student does not get the attention they are seeking and the behavior will likely die out.

If a student tries, but answers incorrectly, do not dwell on the failure of the student or the incorrectness of the answer. Failure is a negative, ineffective and poor teacher when trying to get students to participate and a wrong answer has been given. Nothing should ever be said or done to compound the failure a student feels when they give an incorrect response. Instead, acknowledge any part of the answer that was correct then direct the question and the student's attention to another student who you are quite sure knows the answer. Once the question has been answered correctly, come back to the original student and ask the question again, allowing him/her to echo the correct response, thus creating a successful experience for the students.

Teacher: "Sam, what is the largest country in South America?"

Sam: "Argentina"

Teacher: "Good try Sam. Argentina is a large South American country, but not the largest. Listen to see if someone else knows the answer. Amanda, what do you think is the largest country in South America?"

Amanda: "Brazil"

Teacher: "That is correct. Good job Amanda. Sam, what is the largest country in South America?"

Sam: "Brazil"

Teacher: "Very good! That is exactly right."

Classroom Management: The First Five Minutes

No matter what grade level or subject you teach, the first five minutes of class are critical! Those first few minutes after the bell rings will set the tone for the rest of the day. The most important thing a substitute teacher can do is quickly get the students involved in a learning activity. Many teachers have established routines that include independent "starter" activities for students to do while the teacher takes roll, lunch count, etc. If such is the case, have students follow the regular routine and be prepared to jump right into the next lesson or class activity when they have finished. If you received a last minute call to sub and you didn't have time to review the lesson plans before school, you may want to assign a five-minute activity or worksheet of your own to buy yourself a little time to get ready to teach. There is nothing that communicates you are nervous, unprepared, and don't have a handle on things as fast as letting students sit idle at the beginning of class while you try to get organized.

Don't drag out procedures like taking attendance and lunch count any more than necessary, or spend a lot of time talking to students about who you are and what a great day they are going to have. Consider starting the day with a simple and yet informative statement such as the following:

"Hello, my name is Mrs. Nelson and I am going to be teaching for Mr. Murphy today. We'll be following the plans Mr. Murphy left and using the behavior plan he has posted on the back wall. I'll appreciate your cooperation as I may do things just a little differently than Mr. Murphy. Now lets begin by...."

Be friendly but to the point from the beginning. The sooner students are involved in a learning activity the less likely they are to engage in inappropriate behavior. Just as first impressions are important, so the first five minutes right after the bell set the tone for an effective day.

Create a Culture for Learning

The classroom climate and culture fostered by a teacher have a direct impact on student learning. Teachers who model their own enthusiasm for learning and who encourage and support student efforts are likely to see increased student ownership of learning and increased achievement. In their classrooms students learn to encourage and support each other and to recognize and honor differences. Practices you might want to reinforce or introduce:

- Don't be afraid to model your own commitment to and zeal for learning.
- Enthusiasm is catching - foster it through encouragement and modeling.
- Focus on keeping interactions with students positive and supportive.
- Nurture student's sense of the importance of their learning and performance.

- Inspire students to encourage and support one another in their learning by modeling that behavior and intervening when it is not present.
- Help students to recognize their peers' differences such as learning style, culture, and race.
- Encourage and praise students when they support their peers' efforts to learn new content and skills.

Computer Access

The District has computer access for substitute teachers in order to use Aesop. The username is always "subsub" and the January password is "Feb2019!".

Quick Tip

Compliment your students, as you hope the full-time staff members will compliment you!

Calendar

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|-------------|------------------------------|---|
| Feb. 1 | Early Release | Check with administrator before leaving for the day |
| Feb. 5-7 | Elementary Umbrella Meetings | High Needs |
| Feb. 6 | Board of Education Meeting | 7pm Administrative Building |
| Feb. 15 | Early Release | Check with administrator before leaving for the day |
| Feb. 18 | President's Day | No School |
| Feb. 20 | Board of Education Meeting | 7pm Administrative Building |
| Feb. 21-27 | Lab Classroom | High Needs |
| March 5 | Lab Classroom | High Needs |
| March 7 | Lab Classroom | High Needs |
| March 8 | No School PK-12 | Conference Prep/Grading Day |
| March 11-14 | Parent Teacher Conferences | |
| March 15 | No School PK-12 | |
| March | No School Spring Break | |

18-22

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|----------------|--|---|
| March 26 | Lab Classroom | High Needs |
| March 27 | Board of Education Meeting | 7pm Administrative Building |
| April 1, 3 & 4 | Elementary Umbrella Meetings | High Needs |
| April 16 & 17 | Elementary Specialists Umbrella Meetings | High Needs |
| April 5 | Early Release Day | Check with Administrator before leaving for the day |
| April 8-22 | MAP Testing | High Needs |
| April 19 | April Break | |
| April 24 | Board of Education Meeting | 7pm Administrative Building |

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