

UNIT A

Basic Understandings — The Teacher

The successful teacher must know
and practice the three characteristics
of an effective teacher.



Development
the program
ies.



Basic Understandings — The Teacher

The successful teacher must know and practice the three characteristics of an effective teacher.

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Unit A is correlated with **Part 1: The Effective Teacher** in the video series *The Effective Teacher*.



Your success during the school year will be determined by what you do on the first days of school.

The First Days Are Critical

What you do on the first days of school will determine your success or failure for the rest of the school year. You will either win or lose your class on the first days of school.

The first days of school can make or break you. Based on what a teacher does or does not do, a teacher will either have or not have an effective classroom for the rest of the year. What happens on the first days of school will be an accurate indicator of your success for the rest of the school year.

The Purpose of School Is Learning

Douglas Brooks observed a group of teachers in his research. The ineffective teachers were those who began the first day of school with a fun activity and then spent the rest of the school year chasing after the students. The effective teachers spent time organizing and structuring the classroom for student success. Fun is fine in the classroom, but the purpose of school is learning.

Effective teachers have classrooms that are caring, thought-provoking, challenging, and exciting. They have this because they begin with classroom management procedures.

Students like well-managed classes because no one yells at them and learning takes place. Effective teachers spend the first two weeks teaching students to be in control of their own learning. **Unit C in this book may be the most important for you to read and implement as you start the first days of school.**

School is a serious place. You go to school to study, work, and produce—just like in an adult workplace. School is where you go to learn skills that help make you a productive citizen and grow to your fullest potential as a human being.

Douglas Brooks, in his article “The First Day of School,”¹ discovered two things:

1. Very few teachers receive any instruction on what to do on the first day of school.
2. Very few teachers get any experience or training during student teaching on what to do on the first day of school.

¹Brooks, Douglas M. (May 1985). “The First Day of School.” *Educational Leadership*, pp. 76–78.

Nearly every teacher goes out to teach with no instruction or knowledge and no experience on what to do on the first day of school. **Yet there is overwhelming evidence that the first two to three weeks of school are critical in determining how well students will achieve for the remainder of the year.**

The first two or three weeks? How about the first two or three days? The first two or three minutes! The first two or three seconds!

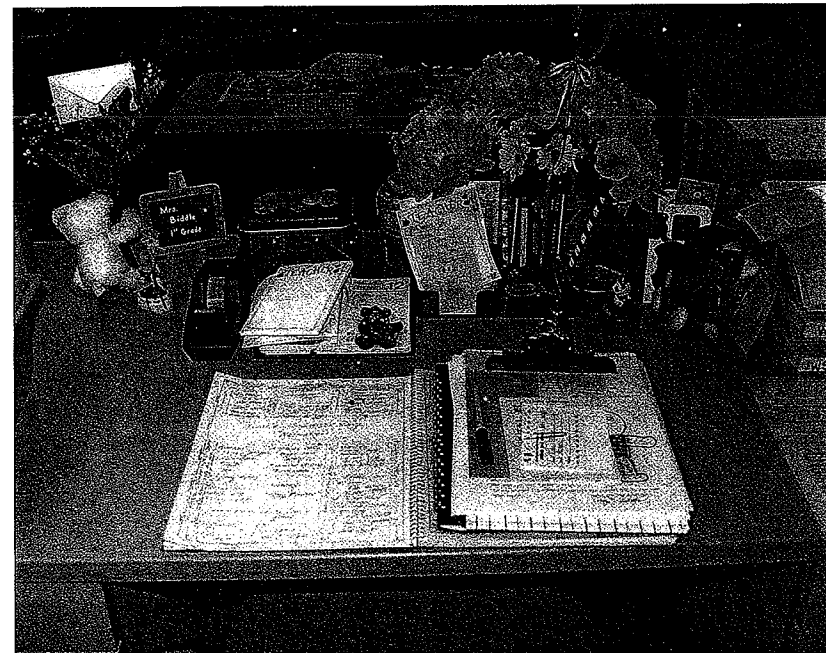


Student achievement at the end of the year is directly related to the degree to which the teacher establishes good control of the classroom procedures in the very first week of the school year.

The effective teacher establishes good control of the class in the very first week of school.

Control does not involve threats or intimidation. Control means that you know (1) what you are doing, (2) your classroom procedures, and (3) your professional responsibilities. It is urgent also that your students know that you know what you are doing.

You must have everything ready and under control when school begins. **Your success during the school year will be determined by what you do on the first days of school.**



This teacher is ready on the first day of school.

Effective People Know What They Are Doing

People who do things right are **EFFICIENT**. And people who do things right over and over again, consistently, are **EFFECTIVE**.

"My, he's efficient!" This is what you say about someone who does things right. "She is very effective" is what you say about someone who does the right things or makes the right decisions so that the office is effectively run.



Efficient: Doing Things Right

Effective: Doing the Right Thing

The **Effective** teacher
Affects lives.

Effectiveness has to do with **DOING**. To be effective, you must be doing something, constantly working toward improved performance.

The Four Stages of Teaching

1. Fantasy
2. Survival
3. Mastery
4. Impact

There are four stages to teaching,² yet many teachers never progress beyond the second one, survival. Which stage are you presently in? The purpose of *The First Days of School* is to get you to the third stage, mastery, so that you can make a difference in the lives of your students.

²Ryan, Kevin. (1986). *The Induction of New Teachers*. Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa.

Stage 1—FANTASY. A naive belief of neophyte teachers is that they are infallible. They believe that to be a successful teacher, all they need to do is relate and be a friend to their students. They also believe that teaching means doing activities, especially fun activities.

Stage 2—SURVIVAL. Teachers are in survival when they rely on ineffective practices just to make it through the day. To them, teaching is a job, and they do it for the paycheck and vacation benefits. Teachers in survival spend much time whining about work conditions and making excuses. They find busywork for the students to do, copy notes from a chalk board or transparency, show videos. They exhibit no accountability: "I teach the stuff; if they don't want to learn it, it's not my fault." So they come each day to put in time and baby-sit.

Stage 3—MASTERY. Teachers who know how to achieve student success employ effective practices. These teachers know how to manage their classroom, teach for mastery, and have high expectations for their students. Effective teachers strive for mastery by reading professionally and going to professional meetings. They teach to make a difference and exhibit accountability: "If the students are not learning, I need to find another way or discuss the problem with my peers to see if they have answers. I am an adult; I am responsible; I am a problem solver."

Stage 4—IMPACT. Effective teachers are able to affect or make an impact on their students. A teacher's role is to open the door to learning. Effective master teachers know how to get their students to enter for learning. To make an impact on your students, you need to use effective teaching practices. Students learn only when the teacher has an appreciable effect on a student's life. You have arrived as a teacher when you reach this stage. You have gone beyond mastery.

Don't Be a Pal

Our heart goes out to all the neophyte teachers who want to be their students' friend. Be friendly, caring, loving, and sensitive, but do not be their friend. They have enough on their hands with their own friends.

The students of today need you to be an adult role model that they can look to with admiration and pride. If you become a student's friend, the student will start asking for favors, as people do of friends. And if a favor is not granted, the student becomes incensed, — "I thought you were my friend. I hate you!"

It is better to be a paragon than a pal.

Effective Teachers Affect Lives

Teachers who are efficient and effective are more capable of affecting the lives of students than teachers who are not efficient and effective. Perhaps you have heard the definition of education, as shown on the graphic to the left.

For instance, what is the difference between a student who is tardy and a student who is not tardy? Between one who turns in the homework and one who does not? Between one who studies for the test and one who does not?

It is not height, age, sex, race, religious affiliation, or socioeconomic background.

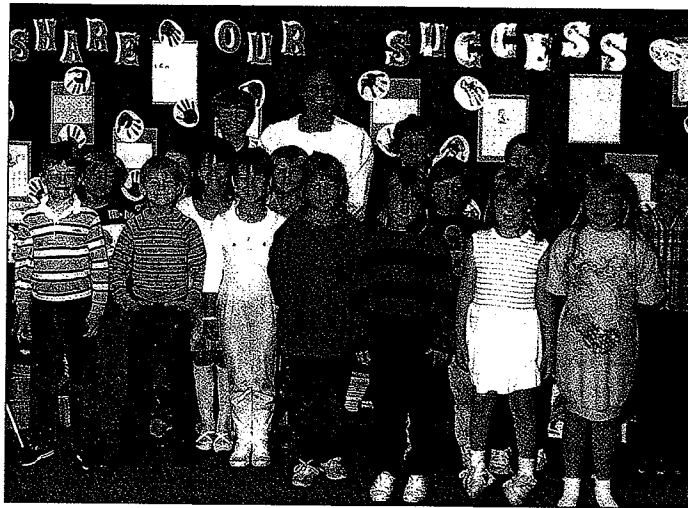
It is behavior or attitude. You change or affect the attitude of a student, and you suddenly have a student who is not tardy, participates in class, does the homework, and studies for the test.

You were hired to affect lives. You were hired not so much to teach third grade, history, or physical education as to influence lives. Touch the life of a student, and you will have a student who will learn history, physical education, even science and math, clean the erasers, staple all the papers, and turn cartwheels to please you.

The beginning of school is the most critical time of the school year. **What you do in the first days of school to affect the lives of your students will determine your success during the rest of the year.**

EDUCATION
IS NOT
teaching people
what they do
not know.

EDUCATION IS
teaching people
to behave as
they are not
already behaving.



The effective teacher affects lives.



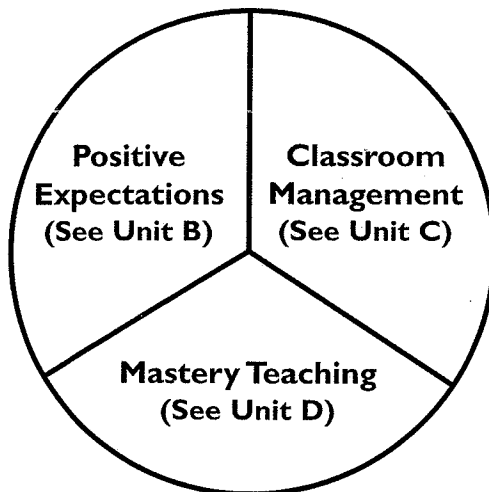
The Effective Teacher

1. Establishes good control the first week of school.
2. Does things right, consistently.
3. Affects and touches lives.





The effective teacher must be proficient in the three characteristics of an effective teacher.



The three characteristics of an effective teacher and where to find them.

The Effective Teacher

The Three Characteristics of an Effective Teacher

An effective teacher ...

1. has positive expectations for student success.
2. is an extremely good classroom manager.
3. knows how to design lessons for student mastery.

There are three characteristics of an effective teacher, and they apply to all teachers.¹ Note that none of the characteristics have anything to do with grade level or subject taught. These characteristics are known, and you can easily learn how to be a very effective teacher.

You are probably eager to present your lessons, do your exciting activities, and share your wonderful knowledge. None of these will be successful until you become skilled in the characteristics of an effective teacher. Teaching is not covering chapters or doing activities. **Teaching is a craft, a highly skilled craft that can be learned!**



Every one of us is both a student and a teacher.

We are at our best when we each teach ourselves what we need to learn.

¹Good, Thomas L., and Jere Brophy. (1994). *Looking in Classrooms*. New York: Harper/Collins, pp. 376–377.

Positive Expectations

Positive expectations, sometimes called high expectations, should not be confused with high standards. Having positive expectations simply means that the teacher believes in the learner and that the learner can learn.

The belief in positive expectations is based on the research that whatever the teacher expects from the learner is what the learner will produce. If you believe that a student is a low-level, below-average, slow learner, the student will perform as such because these are the beliefs you transmit to the student. If you believe that a student is a high-ability, above-average, capable learner, the student will perform as such because these are the expectations you transmit to the student.

It is essential that the teacher exhibit positive expectations toward all students. It can only benefit both the teacher and the student, as well as the total classroom environment.

Classroom Management

Classroom management consists of practices and procedures that a teacher uses to maintain an environment in which instruction and learning can occur. For this to happen, the teacher must have a well-ordered environment.



**Well-Ordered Environment + Positive Academic Expectations =
Effective Classroom**

Discipline has very little to do with classroom management. You don't discipline a store; you manage it. The same is true of a classroom. Unit C explains how to manage a classroom, applying the principle that a well-ordered environment leads to an effective classroom. The teacher must establish a productive and cooperative working environment. **The effectiveness of such an environment is the result of how well a teacher manages a classroom.**

*Ways to
convey positive
expectations are
discussed in
detail in Unit B.*



Jane H. Smith
Principal, Haughton High School

*High Academic Standards In A
Controlled Environment*

210 E. McKinley Dr.
Haughton, LA 71037

(318) 949-2429

Jane Smith is now superintendent of the Bossier Parish schools. But when she was principal, the standard she set for her school was reflected on her business card.

*The management
techniques that a
teacher must use in
the first days of school
to get the students
to develop good
classroom habits are
discussed in detail
in Unit C.*

*How to design lessons
to reach mastery is
discussed in detail
in Unit D.*

Lesson Mastery

Mastery is the student's demonstration that a concept has been comprehended or a skill can be performed at a level of proficiency determined by the teacher.

When a home is built, the contractor receives a set of blueprints from the architect. The blueprints specify the degree of competence that will be acceptable. The inspector who periodically checks on the construction always looks at the blueprint first and then checks the workmanship to see if the work has been performed to the degree of competence specified.

Students Work Without the Teacher Present

Dear Dr. Wong,

In my 23 years in the classroom, I have always felt that one of my greatest strengths is in the area of classroom management.

To illustrate, I called the administration one evening to inform them that I was ill and would not be present the next day. The following morning my students were standing in the hall outside my room when the first bell rang. The other teacher in the department opened my door to let the students in. As the day progressed, the classes came and went. In the afternoon a counselor came looking for me. My students said that they had not seen me all day, turned the radio up again and went back to business as usual.

My standing joke with the administration is that if I could get my students to keep quiet about my absence, I could stay home all week or maybe even take a trip to some South Seas island!

In closing, I have not had a serious discipline problem in over 15 years and my day is free to spend however I wish at 3:15 p.m. Thanks for pointing out to me that I am doing something right.

Richard L. Crewse
Concord High School
Elkhart, Indiana

Teaching is no different. To teach for mastery, an effective teacher must do two things:

1. Know how to design lessons in which a student will learn a concept or a skill.
2. Know how to evaluate the learning to determine if the student has mastered the concept or the skill.

Student success in the subject matter of the class will be the result of how well the teacher designs lessons and checks for mastery.



The classroom of Roberta Ford, middle school English teacher and Colorado's Teacher of the Year, is structured for success.



The Effective Teacher

1. Exhibits positive expectations for all students.
2. Establishes good classroom management techniques.
3. Designs lessons for student mastery.



Pam Ware of Gainesville, Georgia, is a national Milken award-winning drama teacher. She produces and directs 13 shows each year—with ease. Pam says, "I am a planner of the first order. I pride myself in management skills, selling the theater program and its value, explaining procedures, and presenting a calendar of time expectations and commitments from my students. I have very high expectations. Then I light a spark that will flame toward brilliant success."



The beginning teacher must perform the full complement of duties while learning those duties.

Yes, the Hardship Will End

The first day of school or a class—even the first few minutes—will make or break a teacher.

It is those first few minutes and first few days of school that are the subject of this book.

The First Year of Teaching Is the Most Critical in a Teacher's Career



Richelle Dodoo,
first-year teacher.

New teachers feel

Isolated,
Vulnerable, and
Deeply concerned with how
they will be perceived, yet
Afraid to ask for help.

They are hired,

Given a key,
Told which is their room, and
Given no support.

They are given the worst assignments.

They feel frightened.
They feel humiliated.
They are given no help.
They want someone to
give them hope,
to tell them when their
hardship will end.

Clueless may be the best way to explain the plight of neophyte teachers. Their bag is brimming with a five- or six- or seven-step lesson plan, boxes of activities, the state performance appraisal instrument, five interpretations of educational foundations, nine theories of child development, and a collection of buzzwords. But they have no clue as to what to do in the first days and weeks of school.

Your first day of teaching will be an exciting anticipated event but very frightening at the same time. **Yet you can succeed if you learn how to be effective on the first days of school.**



The First Year of Teaching Can Be Frightening

1. Teacher education will not have prepared you.
2. Student teaching will not have prepared you.
3. The district may not have prepared you.
4. Yet you will be expected to perform immediately.

Teacher Education Will Not Have Prepared You

Teacher education rarely prepares the student teacher for **noninstructional tasks**. You will have lots of ideas for instructional tasks: bulletin boards, activities, projects, books, and media.

But you probably will have received no training in such noninstructional activities as how to maintain discipline, conduct a parent conference, keep a grade book, act and dress for success, teach procedures and routines, or deal with negative, nonsupportive, and energy-draining students and colleagues.

The schools of education are not to be blamed. No one ever said that education ends with a college degree. The best teachers are also the best students. Good teachers are continually improving themselves by going back to college; joining professional organizations; attending conventions, conferences, and workshops; paying attention at in-service meetings; and working cooperatively with others on the staff to improve student achievement.

Selected Professional Educational Organizations

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
American Association of Physics Teachers
American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages
American Library Association
American School Counselor Association
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
American Vocational Association
Association for Childhood Education International
Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities
Association for Educational Communications and Technology
Association for Gifted and Talented Students
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Comparative and International Education Society
Council for Exceptional Children
Council for Learning Disabilities
Home Economics Association
International Reading Association
International Society for Technology in Education
Kappa Delta Pi
Lutheran Education Association
National Alliance of Black School Educators
National Art Education Association
National Association for Bilingual Education
National Association for Gifted Children
National Association for Teachers of Hospitalized/Homebound
National Association of Biology Teachers
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of School Nurses
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Business Education Association
National Catholic Education Association
National Council for the Social Studies
National Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Rural Education Association
National Science Teachers Association
Phi Delta Kappa
Society for Music Teacher Education

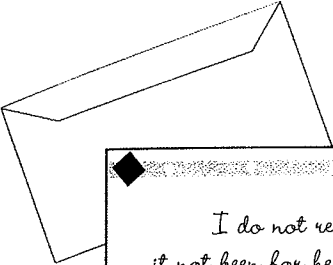
Each publishes a journal and holds meetings. Many have state and local branches. Consult with your mentor for addresses.

Student Teaching Will Not Have Prepared You

Student teaching rarely includes any training in what to do on the first day of school. First day? You probably did not receive any training for the first minutes of class when the students walk in and decide whether they are going to be with you or against you.

Your master teacher is not to be blamed. No one ever trained your master teacher in what to teach you. Few teachers took over a class on the first day of school when they were student teaching. Few student teachers enter teaching with any experience in what to do on the first day of school. Typically, the master teacher started the class and then turned the class over to the student teacher. Or the student teacher came to teach for a period of time during the school year.

Thus most student teachers enter the teaching profession with no training and no experience in what to do on the first day of school.



I do not remember this teacher's name, but had it not been for her, I never would have made it this far. Bless her! Something happened to me before the first day of school when I began teaching 26 years ago in Los Angeles.

I was standing in the teachers' lounge when this experienced teacher came to me and said, "You don't know how to start, eh?"

I said, "How can you tell? If you can only start my classes for me and get them rolling, I'll be able to carry on."

No one had taught me how to start the first day of school.

Gail Sutton
Portland, Oregon

The District May Not Have Prepared You

In teaching, entry into the profession is sudden. Unlike the business world, where the newcomer goes through a training or apprenticeship period, gradually gaining knowledge, experience, and responsibility, this may not happen in the teaching profession. Newly hired teachers, not just neophyte teachers, are given a key to a room and told to go teach. What are you to do?

*Figure it out yourself.
Do it yourself.
Keep it to yourself.*



The beginning teacher is expected to assume the same tasks and responsibilities as the most seasoned teacher on the staff.

In the trades, plumbers and electricians go into an apprenticeship program, first working as an apprentice, then laboring as a journeyman, and finally qualifying as a licensed tradesman or craftsman. In sports, you begin as a rookie on the bench, slowly gathering knowledge and experience as you work toward a starting position and a higher league.

Have you ever wondered why your seemingly problem students do so well at a fast-food restaurant? Restaurants like McDonald's and Domino's Pizza have sophisticated training programs to prepare workers before they face the public. Go behind the scenes at one of these places, and you will see workers studying videos, learning and reviewing aspects of their jobs.

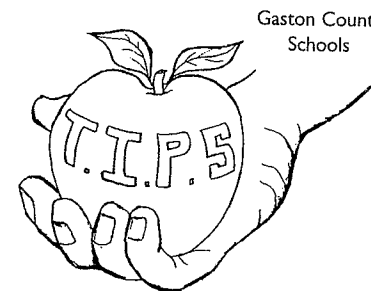
Effective schools and teachers, likewise, have an induction program for all newly hired teachers.

Induction Can Help Beginning Teachers

Induction has three purposes:

1. To **reduce** the **intensity** of transition into teaching
2. To help you **improve** your **teaching effectiveness**
3. To **increase** the **retention** of greater numbers of highly qualified teachers

Teacher Induction Program



For Success

The Gaston County schools received the North Carolina Governor's Award for Excellence for their new teacher induction program.

You Will Be Expected to Perform Immediately

Do not sign a contract until you ask a district if it has a new teacher induction program. Effective districts want to help their newly hired teachers succeed. They offer induction programs that begin before the first day of school and may extend for several years thereafter. Induction is not orientation, mentoring, or evaluation. (See pages v and xiv.)

I am proud to tell you that my first year of teaching has proven to be very successful. Thanks to the nurturing of a fine administrator, our district induction program, and the book *The First Days of School*, I was able to get the school year started off right....

Together, we completed a year that proved to be rewarding to both me and my students.

Marita Lacey
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



Marita Lacey is now working with fifth graders in her seventh year of teaching and is still very successful.

You will be expected to perform your full complement of duties immediately while learning them at the same time.

Yes, you will be expected to be perfect on the first day of school and then get better each year. You can do it, but you will be able to do it better if your district puts you through an induction program and then partners you with a mentor. Welcome to the teaching profession!



Some school districts have model classrooms that are prepared before the first day of school. Induction program teachers visit these classrooms to see how a classroom can be set up for the start of school.

Your First Year of Teaching Can Be a Happy Experience



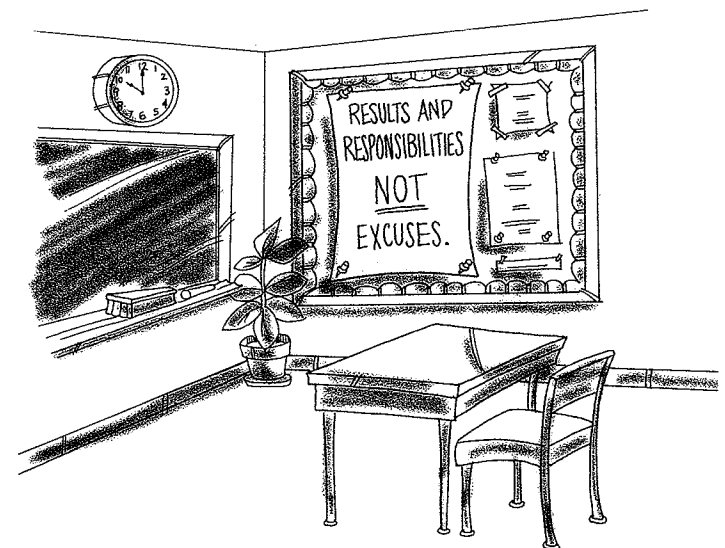
**Here's the biggest secret to teaching success:
Beg, Borrow, and Steal!**

It's really called research and learning, but you walk into the classrooms of effective teachers, look around, and if you see something that you think might help you, you say, "Gimme, gimme, gimme." There are many veteran teachers who will be happy to share with you and help you.

Your whole life is ahead of you, and it can be filled with happiness and success. **If you want positive results from your life, you must keep certain responsibilities in focus:**

- ✓ **Work** in a collegial manner with your colleagues.
- ✓ **Associate** with and learn from positive mentors.
- ✓ **Join** a professional organization.
- ✓ **Continue to learn** through classes, workshops, conferences, in-service meetings, books, journals, tapes, and advanced degrees.

Avoid teachers who constantly complain and make excuses. Do not allow people who cannot control their own behavior to be in control of your behavior. The only limitations are those you place on yourself and those you allow other people to place on you. **You are the only person on the face of the earth who can use your abilities. It is an awesome responsibility.**



Seen on a third-grade teacher's bulletin board in South Chicago.

You Can Have Any Job in Education in Three to Five Years with a Raise in Salary of 25 Percent or More

Your future in education can be very rewarding, but only the teachers who strive for success will be rewarded. It's no different with students. Only those who work hard and have the most positive attitudes get the best grades. Here are some reasons why the future looks good for you.

- At the start of the new century, 75 to 80 percent of all teachers who were teaching in 1990 will have been replaced by more recent graduates.
- All kinds of job opportunities will be available—and not just in the classroom. Many teachers will become administrators or college professors, hold jobs in educational organizations, write software, become consultants, run educational programs for private businesses, open child-care centers, and embark on many other educationally related endeavors.
- Business will get heavily involved because it must. And companies will reeducate workers who didn't learn in the classroom. Private industry will be spending more money on education than public education.
- Although teachers are in the learning profession, they are among the worst when it comes to wanting to learn how to improve their own competencies. Most teachers do not go to conferences and deride in-service meetings.
- Because many teachers do not want to grow, those who do can have almost any position in education in three to five years at a salary 25 percent more than what they are making right now.

There is a new sense of urgency about our schools, a hopeful sign. You can play an active role during this time of urgency—and be rewarded for your contribution.

Education

And Now, a Teacher Shortage

Sunbelt school systems are caught with their rosters short

WANT TO TEACH BUT HAVE NO CREDENTIAL? asks the headline on a poster inside the Los Angeles unified school district's crash recruiting center. "Relax," continues the pitch. "We can help you get your teaching credential while you work full time as a junior or senior high school teacher..."

Among the remaining young people who do decide to teach, reportedly up to half quit within five to seven years. Most threatening of all, perhaps, is the imminent prospect of numerous retirements. The average age of American teachers has risen to an estimated 40 to 43, and in the next five years, 30% to 50%

Because of the need for many more teachers in the future, there will be many opportunities for effective teachers.

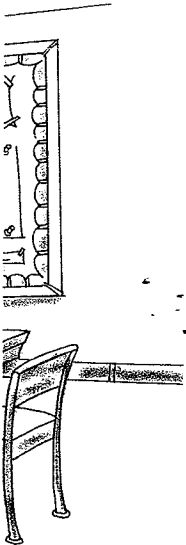
The Greatest Threat

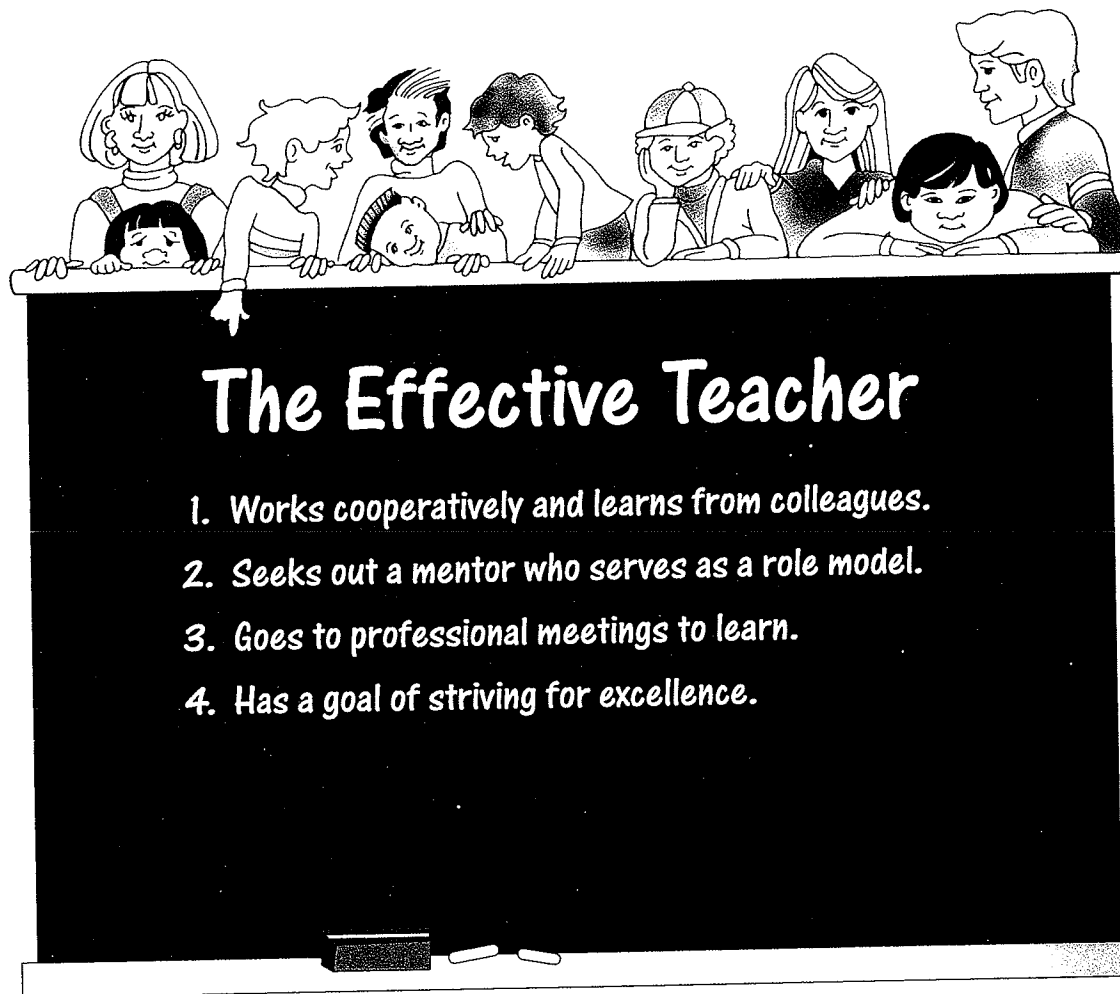
The greatest threat to a nongrowing teacher is a teacher who is growing. The stagnating teacher will do everything to discourage and prevent you from growing because your growth is perceived as a threat.

Do not listen to cynical, nongrowing teachers who try to tell you that you are no good unless you stay in the classroom, teaching at the same grade level, using the same textbook, worksheets, and tests.

These are the people who make fun of administrators, schools of education, workshop leaders, conventions, conferences, in-service meetings (if they go, they sit in the back rows), and anything and anyone else that wants to help you grow into the great teacher and person you are destined to be.

Find yourself a mentor, a fellow colleague who will serve as your role model, someone from whom you can learn and take inspiration and whom you can hold up as a symbol of the success you want to be.



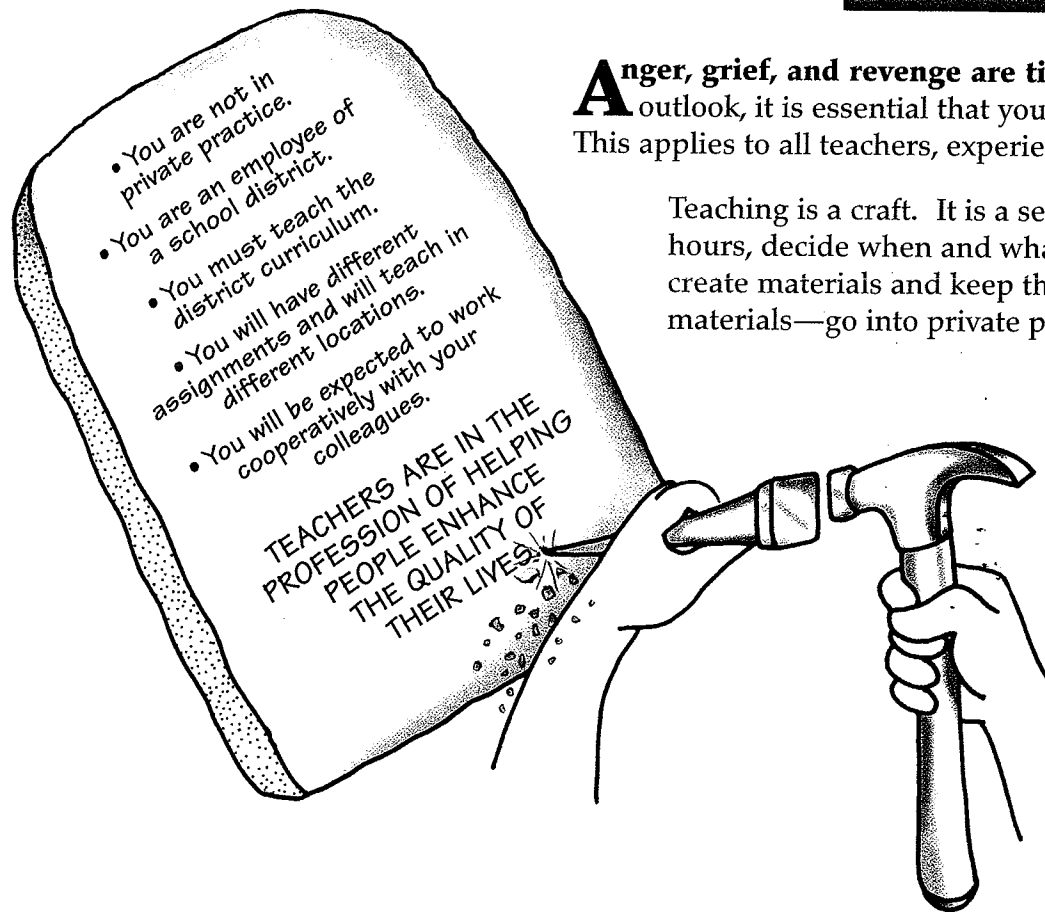




The teacher is
NOT in private
practice.

You Are in a Helping Profession

Teachers are not in private practice.
We are in the helping and caring profession,
a service profession to help people
enhance the quality of their lives.



Anger, grief, and revenge are tiring. For happiness, sanity, and a positive outlook, it is essential that you understand your role in the teaching profession. This applies to all teachers, experienced as well as entry-level, first-year teachers.

Teaching is a craft. It is a service profession. If you want to choose your own hours, decide when and what you want to do, treat people as you please, create materials and keep them private, and avoid sharing and exchanging materials—go into private practice.

Be a brain surgeon, a self-employed cabinetmaker, or a real estate broker. Open a pizza restaurant, design and market computer software, or deal in stocks, bonds, futures, and commodities.

You Are Employed by a School District

If you choose to be a teacher, know that you will be an employee of a district or a board of education. When you sign a contract, you are agreeing to teach the district's curriculum as well as to abide by and carry out the district's policies, rules, and regulations. As a district employee, you are not allowed to teach only what you want or to do as you please.

- ✓ **The district is owned by the local citizens.** It has a set of policies and regulations governing the behavior of all employees and students to protect this ownership.
- ✓ **The district has a curriculum.** The district's curriculum has been and will be an evolving product, formulated by a district committee made up of many of your colleagues.
- ✓ **The district has employees, like you.** Your colleagues brought years of experience and expertise with them to formulate the district's mission, philosophy, and curriculum. The board approved their work, and it is the curriculum for the district, of which you are an employee.

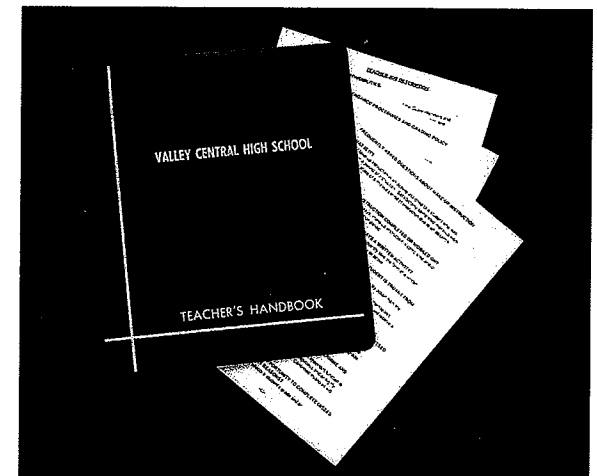
For your happiness and effectiveness, accept in your own mind and heart that you can live and perform comfortably with the district's role for you. If you can't live with the district's expectations for you, perhaps you should go into private practice.

You Will Not Be in One Room Forever

Understand that your first assignment will not be your last assignment. For your sanity, accept that in a world changing at breakneck speed, you will not be allowed to stagnate in the same room teaching out of the same book forever.

Palmer v. Board of Education of Chicago (1979)

Probationary teacher Joethelia Palmer did not want to teach about one of the holidays. She was discharged of her duties. She took the district to court, and the district won.



The effective teacher knows the district's curriculum guide and uses materials that reflect those objectives.

Furthermore, you will be expected to do your job with the same enthusiasm that you expect from your own students. You will be expected, on your own initiative, to serve on committees, confer with parents, and attend meetings, in-service programs, conferences, college classes, and workshops to further yourself and the district's goals.

As an employee of the district, you should expect to be reassigned from time to time. Be a model of adaptability. Just as you expect your students to go into a changing world and adapt, show that you can adapt and excel in a changing world. Finally, understand that you have a role as part of a larger community and society.



Understand Your Role

1. The schools are owned and operated by the citizens of your local community.
2. Schools are the foundation for transmitting the values and traditions that ensure our life in a free society.
3. The schools are built for the STUDENTS.

Take Responsibility for Yourself

To be an effective teacher, you need to move on to the third stage of teaching: mastery—the subject of this book. Survival, the second stage (Chapter 1), is a normal stop on your journey as a teacher, but the ideal is to get beyond it quickly. Yet on every teaching staff from kindergarten through graduate school, there are instructors who have been teaching for decades and are still at survival. Why does this happen to some teachers? They acquire ineffective teaching attitudes and techniques early on, and these become crystallized into their permanent teaching repertoire.

cago (1979)

t want to teach
d of her duties.
t won.

*Perhaps the most
valuable result of all
education is the ability to
make yourself do the
thing you have to do,
when it ought to be done,
whether you like it or not.*

—Thomas Huxley

urriculum
bjectives.



*Isolation
is unique to the teaching profession and,
by implication,
to the whole educational system.¹*

Teacher isolation is a reality. Many teachers become comfortable in their isolation. Teachers who work in isolation cut themselves off from sources of useful information, both colleagues and professional resources. Survival mode results when teachers stay within the limitations of what they know or do not know, and the latter is always much greater.

Ineffectiveness is tiring. Working with limited information, teachers then mimic each other. They develop bad habits. They resort to busywork to keep students quiet. They develop cynical attitudes toward conferences and in-service meetings, not allowing themselves to grow. They adopt the classic stance of survival and find their life very tiring.

Good habits are easy to develop. Bad habits are difficult to break. If you are a new teacher, develop good teaching attitudes and techniques and you will be happy. If you are a veteran teacher, you can be happy and effective tomorrow. Please do the following:

- ✓ Turn to Unit E and read Chapters 25 and 26 and the Epilogue.
- ✓ Read Chapter 5 to find out how research can help you.

Then get ready for three exciting units—on positive expectations, classroom management, and lesson mastery.

What's the Difference Between an Effective Teacher and an Ineffective Teacher?

There's only one difference: The ineffective teacher is simply not doing what the effective teacher is doing. Do what the effective teacher is doing, and you will be effective—*instantly*.

Successful people **MAKE** themselves do the things that unsuccessful people will not do.

Effective teachers look at the resources available to them and then reorganize those resources to work toward a goal.

The universal mantra of all teachers is "I teach my students how to think."

Ineffective teachers look over the resources, move them aside, and rely on busywork as an excuse for learning.

Effective teachers are problem solvers. "I teach myself how to think," they tell themselves. "I analyze, synthesize, and create materials to help students learn."

Effective, problem-solving teachers do it all day long: rearrange resources and information to help students reach the goals of the class.

¹Lortie, D. C. (1995). *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

If you want to become a professional educator, have a career with a future, be happy, and be recognized as a person who makes a difference in the lives of others, begin by making an impact on your own life. **A teacher cannot give what he or she is not.**

Some people can give thousands of reasons why they cannot succeed at something when all they need is one reason why they can succeed.

If you do not take responsibility for yourself, no one else will. It's that simple.

Get to Know All Your Colleagues

Get to know all your colleagues. And listen to them. You will see many who are there to help enhance the lives of the students. Many know what they are doing and are happy to share with you. Learn from them. The happiest and most successful teachers, administrators, parents, and school board members are there to work WITH you to help you become an effective teacher so that you, in turn, can help and affect students.

There is something inherently special about our profession that allows us to close out a previous academic year and plan for a new beginning—a sort of annual renewal, if you will.

—Lee Gray



Get to know all your colleagues. They have much to offer.

They say that the three most important words in real estate are location, location, location.
The three most important words for a teacher are **listen, listen, listen**.

If you are a beginning teacher, **listen, listen, listen**. If you are an experienced teacher,
listen, listen, listen.

WELCOME (back) to the helping and teaching profession.



The Effective Teacher

1. Can explain the district's, school's, and department or grade level's curriculum.
2. Realizes that teaching is not a private practice.
3. Is flexible and adaptable.
4. Listens, listens, listens.



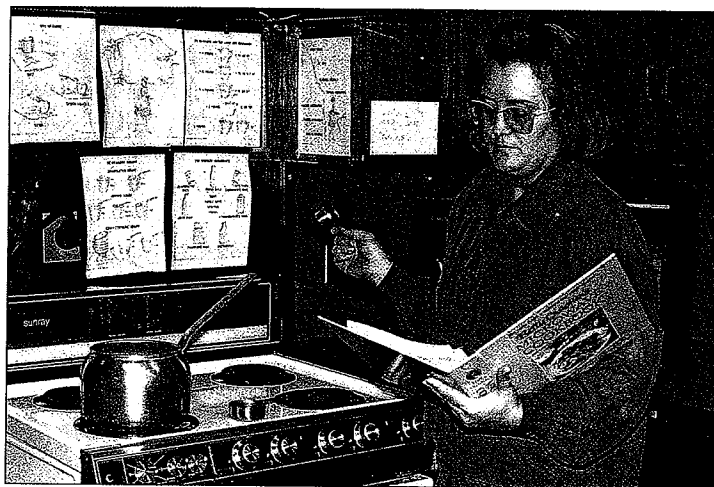
*Effective teachers
use proven
research-based
practices that are
employed by
thousands of
other teachers.*

The Research Process

**The effective teacher understands
how and why research is done.**

Research is the process of critical thinking and solving problems. It is this ability that sets humans apart from all other forms of living things. Research is simply the use of the human mind to search for and seek answers or, as some would say, to search for the “truth.”

Research is what a person does to find answers. Research is not something only scientists do. Businesspeople do research; so do baseball players, knitters, plumbers, lawyers, dentists, artists, and homemakers. Students, when they do term papers, do research.



When you change a recipe, you are doing research.

Humans have always been seeking and searching. And that is what research is all about, to search. To search and search and search, over and over again. That is why it is called **re-search**.

During the Renaissance, the process for research became formalized. This process is the same basic process used by a scientist seeking an answer to cancer, a student doing a term paper, a lawyer investigating a case, or a chef trying to find a better way to make a cheesecake. It is a higher-order thinking process.

It May Be Dangerous to Teach as You Were Taught

Since the 1960s, much research has been done on education. Before that time, much about teaching, as well as much about running a school, was based on myths, hearsay, and traditions handed down from teacher to teacher or on teachers' recollections of how they were taught when they went to school.

No education professor, administrator, in-service speaker, or teacher at a workshop has ever said that the model of teaching in the illustration to the bottom right, is the way to teach.

Unfortunately and erroneously, many teachers tend to teach as they were taught. And most of us were taught by educators who either were not effective teachers or did not know the current research on effective teaching. Most teachers tend to teach as their academic college professors taught them simply because that was their last and most remembered educational experience.

- ✓ Academic professors are not teachers. They are researchers who are creating, seeking, and gathering new knowledge.
- ✓ Most academic professors do not have teaching credentials. They are not certified to teach.

Yet many teachers teach as their college professors, who are noncertified role models, taught them and think that this is teaching.

Not all research is done by college professors in an academic realm or by researchers working for a government agency. Much educational research is done by practitioners, teachers, or administrators working on a master's or doctoral thesis or by people who just like to do research.

The Research Process

Problem:	What do I want to know?
Prediction:	What do I think is the right answer?
Procedure:	How will I solve the problem?
Data:	What will I look for?
Conclusion:	What do the results tell me?

THIS MODEL OF TEACHING HAS NO RESEARCH TO SUPPORT IT

- Assign chapters to read.
- Answer the questions at the back of the chapter or on the worksheet.
- Deliver a lecture and have students take notes.
- Show a video or do an activity.
- Construct a test based on a number of points.

When Should You Ask Questions During a Video?

Educational research tells you.

Bob Wallace, a middle school teacher in Ventnor, New Jersey, reported the following as a result of his research with his students.

He divided his students into three groups and did the following:

Group 1: Showed the students a video and gave them a test.

Group 2: Briefed the group on the video to be shown, then showed the same video as shown to Group 1 and gave the same test.

Group 3: Briefed the group exactly as he had Group 2, then showed the same video. However, during the video, he stopped the tape frequently. During each stop, he asked questions and held class discussion. He then gave the same test as he had given to Groups 1 and 2.

Guess which of the three groups scored the highest on the test. Group 3, of course.

This confirms what research found to be an effective way to ask questions in the classroom.

An Example of Educational Research That Applies to Every Teacher

John P. Rickards discovered two things:¹

1. The most ineffective place to print questions is at the end of a textbook chapter.
2. It is an ineffective method to give a student all the questions for an assignment at one time and then ask the student to answer all the questions and to turn them in all at one time.

Rickards found that if you want a student to achieve high-level comprehension, you should intersperse the questions throughout the text.

You know that this is true from having taken reading comprehension tests. Reading comprehension tests are not written with pages of text followed by a long list of questions. They constantly go back and forth, a paragraph or two of text followed by a few questions.

To put it another way, no doctor asks questions when the patient is dead. A doctor intersperses questions during the treatment of a patient.

Likewise, the effective teacher does not ask all the questions at the end of the discussion, class period, video, chapter, lecture, or meeting.

The effective teacher who wants high-level comprehension intersperses questions throughout all class activities. This is what the research tells us.

Effective teachers do what the research tells us is most effective. Effective teachers use proven research-based practices. Why would you do otherwise?

¹John P. Rickards. (November 1976). "Stimulating High-Level Comprehension by Interspersing Questions in Text Passages." *Educational Technology*, p. 13.

Effective Teachers Use Research-Based Practices



People who know what to do and people who know how to do it will always be working for those who know why it is being done.

Educational research is not all theoretical, conducted in an ivory tower. Nearly all educational research quoted in this book was performed by researchers looking at teachers and students in functioning schools and reporting on effective and ineffective practices. The effective teacher does three things:

1. Understands how research is done.
2. Uses proven research-based practices.
3. Understands that these practices are used by thousands of other teachers and are tried-and-true methods that work.

It is one thing to know what you are doing. It is another to know how to do it. Most important, you need to know why you are doing what you are doing.

There is an extensive body of knowledge about teaching, and the effective teacher understands and uses this knowledge. Do not teach from hearsay, myths, or prevailing practices. To be an effective teacher, understand that effective school research is based on the reporting of what effective teachers do. These methods are used by hundreds of thousands of effective teachers. You can be one also!

Research cannot and does not identify the right or best way to teach, nor does it suggest that certain instructional practices should always or never be used. But research can illuminate which instructional practices are most likely to achieve desired results, with which kinds of learners, and under what conditions.²

—Myriam Met

The Four Beliefs of an Effective Teacher

1. It is the teacher who makes the difference in the classroom.
2. By far the most important factor in school learning is the ability of the teacher.
3. There is an extensive body of knowledge about teaching that must be known by the teacher.
4. The teacher must be a decision maker able to translate the body of knowledge about teaching into increased student learning.

—After Madeline Hunter

²Cawalti, Gordon (ed.). (1995). *Handbook of Research on Improving Student Achievement*. Arlington, Va.: Educational Research Service, p. 3.

Research on Improving Student Achievement

Aligned Time on Task: Students who are actively focused on educational goals do best in mastering the subject matter.

Research findings: More than 130 studies support the obvious: The more students study, the more they learn! Time alone, however, does not suffice. The lesson criteria, learning activities, and tests must be matched and emphasized. (To see how this is implemented, refer to Chapters 22 and 23.)

Cooperative Learning: Students in small, self-instructing groups can support and increase one another's learning.

Research findings: More than 50 studies state increased academic achievement is greater when there is frequent exchange among teachers and students. In addition, students learn teamwork skills that are essential in the workplace. Cooperative learning, however, should be only one of many different practices used by a teacher. (To see how cooperative learning is implemented, consult Chapter 24.)

Extensive Reading: Extensive reading of material of many kinds, both in school and outside, results in substantial growth in the vocabulary, comprehension abilities, and information base of students.

Research findings: Cognitive abilities, such as comprehension and vocabulary, are enhanced with an increase in time spent reading, inside and outside of school. Studies show, however, that children spend no more than a few minutes a day reading on either assigned or independent reading. School resources need to be provided for materials and large blocks of time for students to read.

Wait Time: Pausing after asking a question in the classroom results in an increase in achievement.

Research findings: Students are given less than one second to respond to a question. Increasing wait time from three to seven seconds, accompanied by a high-order question, results in students responding with more thoughtful answers and an increase in science achievement.

—Based on Gordon Cawalti (ed.).
*Handbook of Research on Improving
Student Achievement.* (1995). Arlington,
Va.: Educational Research Service.



The Effective Teacher

1. Understands the research process.
2. Teaches with proven research-based practices.
3. Knows the difference between an effective teacher and an ineffective one.

