NOVICE SCHOOL TEACHER: COPING UP WITH CHALLENGES

by:

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Mostly, repeated piece of advice could be received from many experienced teachers was, “Don’t give your smile to learners too early.”

It is the usual philosophy, especially if you were teaching intermediate graders such as grades five and six, seems to be learners would behave better if they are afraid of you. The stress is seemed to be more on maintaining control than on finding ways to help them learn. But avoiding of teacher to give a smile might have been perceived as a cause of classroom management issues. Or, deciding to laugh with the learners may have actually prevented more serious situations.

Research findings of Lindqvist et al (2019), new teachers are experiencing both interpersonal (with students, parents and colleagues) and intrapersonal (being ‘good enough’; establishing boundaries related to time and engagement; suppression of emotions) conflicts as they started out in teaching. To cope up with these challenges, new teachers used various collaboration, conformity, influencing and autonomy.

Hence, to help the new school teachers out there, here are few practical tips for you to survive from a pool of challenges.

Laughter. There are days that sense of humor is the only key to survive. Laughter is also a great way to make those long school calendar days short. If you laugh with your learners, you are making connections and begin to develop harmonious relationships. In a more relaxing environment, people are more willing to take challenges. Remember to laugh with your learners, but not at them.
Bond with Colleagues. Find ways to connect on professional and personal level with your co-workers. When learners see you getting along with your co-workers that puts them at ease. Moreover, you will be their role models for collaboration and respect. In this global communication age, your co-workers use social networking apps like Facebook, Twitter and the like that you can always find someone to share a laugh with you.

Homework. The usual complaint of teachers was that learners did not turn in their homework. The common belief that, the time that homework was reinforced, learning and responsibility are taught. But the only learners who seemed to regularly do homework were the same ones who understood the lesson well in the class as well as who had already demonstrated great responsibility. Wake up! Save time for yourself. If homework is being given to reinforce concepts, make sure that learners have plenty of resources to access for help at home. Try to consider assigning reading lectures or videos as homework. Devote time in class to discuss the tough stuff that requires guidance from you.

Parents. Provide consistent, regular information to all of the parents of your learners. Be positive when you see developing problem. Call the attention of parents to discuss it. Let the parents know about the great things happening in your class, too so their communication with the school are more positive than of negative. Make use of technology to provide a window to your classroom in many different ways like blogging or digital portfolios.

Classroom design. You don’t need to visit every supply stores just to design your classroom. Posters, letters, borders and everything else are available online. 21st century classrooms are making differences. Use of furniture mobiles multiple types of learning situations. Traditional desks in rows are mostly gone. Some classrooms make use of sofas, picnic tables, and even booths in their respective rooms to inspire innovation and collaboration.
Early finishers. We obligated the early finishers to give them challenge and extend their learning. Regular early finishers demonstrate that the work is too easy, although there are rare few who speed through and get it all wrong. You can choose from two alternatives that make pedagogical sense: (1) give them something challenging to do after they reflect on their work, or (2) replace their work with something suited to their level.

Sunday blues. It’s too tempting to rush out the door on Friday afternoon after a long week, but you will regret it as soon as you wake up on Sunday morning. It is better to plan your week ahead of time. In this case, you are not only taking care of daily tasks, but also doing a little preparation each day for the following week.

On the days when you feel out of control, and yet your best plans have dissolved into chaos, remember the powerful strategy: count backwards from ten. Out loud. Slowly.

You don’t need to say what you want, neither to say what happens when you reached number one. Just count, and watch children magically separate into individual personalities all looking at you wearing wide eyes to find out what will happen next. Then take a deep breath, and remind yourself why you chose this profession in the first place.

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