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Effective Teaching: the Qualities and Strategies That Impact Student Achievement

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EFFECTIVE TEACHING: THE QUALITIES AND STRATEGIES

THAT IMPACT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

This thesis explores the topic of effective teaching in the world of education. There are many definitions to describe what effectiveness is, but a central theme is comparative to educational objectives. Once goals are established, effectiveness can be measured. It is clear through literature and research that a teacher has a huge impact on their students, not only within one year but has a cumulative effect that stretches across many years. This literature review separates effective teaching into two sections: qualities and characteristics of effective teachers and practices and strategies of effective teachers. The findings were quite conclusive and showed that effective teachers are: relational, communicative, intelligent, professional, and have a growth mindset. This literature review shares a few effective strategies teachers use to impact student achievement including: classroom management, instruction, assessment and accounting for student differences.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Teacher Effectiveness Considerations

Teacher effectiveness is a common topic in education today. But what does it mean to be effective? How does one define it? These questions provide a great insight into the complexity of how to quantify true effectiveness. According to Stronge (2007) effectiveness is an "elusive concept", according to Ko et al. (2013) defining effective teaching can be "complex and controversial" , and Confait (2015) as well as Steele (2010) even go on to say that a single definition of teacher effectiveness does not exist. Oftentimes effectiveness is associated with 'high quality' or 'good' teaching. But when seeking to understand effectiveness it is important to focus on outcomes and goals, because before anyone can be effective they have to have a measuring tool to see if their objectives are being achieved. "Thus, the objectives of education and the definitions of the quality and effectiveness of education are closely connected. This means that defining effective teaching must be done in relation to understanding the objectives of education" (Ko et al., 2013, p. 6). Once objectives are set in place it is easier to measure effectiveness.

So what is the goal or objective of education? The main purpose of education is to develop students cognitively, but there are also important social and behavioral aspects that should be considered as well both currently and in the future. This includes developing students "to become good citizens, promoting their physical, emotional and economic well-being and inculcating skills and attitudes that encourage lifelong learning" (Ko et al., 2013, p. 6). Overall education should take a holistic approach to help students grow and develop as individuals in a multitude of areas. Effectiveness as a definition can vary from class to class, subject to subject,

school to school, situation to situation and it is no different when attempting to define effectiveness in regards to the array of areas educators are trying to develop in their students. However one thing is quite clear, teachers matter. More specifically, effective teachers matter.

Effective teachers have "an extraordinary and lasting impact on the lives of students" (Stronge, 2007). There is much research that demonstrates the difference in student achievement when with an effective teacher compared to with a non-effective teacher. Stronge (2007) looked at a multitude of studies that approximated the variability in student achievement explained by teacher effectiveness and it ranged anywhere from 7% to 21% and is even greater when looking at the cumulative effect year over year. This shows how important quality teachers are to student achievement, not only now but for years to come. Teaching is no simple feat and is considered by many to be an art and a science, "Teaching is a science because it requires knowledge of technique. It is also an art because it requires decision making" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 23). There is much that goes into becoming an effective teacher and this thesis will break it down into two sections: the qualities and characteristics of effective teachers followed by the practices and strategies of effective teachers. This literature review strives to guide and equip teachers with current research and findings that will help teachers become more effective in their respective classrooms.

Thesis Question

What are effective qualities and strategies that impact student achievement?

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Information Gathering Procedures

While conducting research for this thesis, literature was found using ERIC / EBSCOHost, ProQuest Educational Journals, Academic Search Premier, Research Gate, and Google Scholar for publications primarily from 2000-2020. Published empirical studies from peer-reviewed journals that focused on education and effective teaching were reviewed in the collection of this research. Supplemental research was also collected from sources such as teaching philosophy articles, other various educational books and articles, psychological articles, etc.

Section 1: Qualities / Characteristics of Effective Teachers

The qualities of an effective teacher can be viewed as various characteristics or traits that a teacher possesses and demonstrates. Some of these qualities come naturally to educators while others need to be added and constantly worked on. The evidence is clear that effective teachers demonstrate the following qualities: relational, communicative, intelligent, professional, and have a growth mindset. There are many other characteristics that teachers can demonstrate, but these specific qualities are proven to have the largest impact on students and their level of success at school.

Relational

One of the first steps to becoming an effective educator is establishing a relationship with each and every student. Effective teachers are caring teachers, and students not only notice but remember how they were treated. Healthy relationships manifest from showing care and are built through compassion, trust, respect, a good rapport, and are full of positive interactions. Showing compassion toward students all stems from seeing them as an individual who is overcoming many potential obstacles, both inside and outside the classroom. When compassion is

demonstrated, trust follows closely behind. Creating mutual respect and rapport with students is the most critical aspect of creating any positive learning environment (Kyriacou, 2009). Effective teachers must command respect from their students, but not simply by demanding it. Instead they must demonstrate their competency in their ability to teach well and most importantly showing respect toward their students, displaying a genuine interest and curiosity into their student's lives. Creating this positive rapport allows students to feel cared for and respected, ultimately allowing them to flourish (Kyriacou, 2009).

Compassionate & Empathetic

In 2007 Rudduck and McInytyre conducted a study evaluating students' perspectives of good teachers. Among several findings, the study showed that students do indeed have clear expectations and demands about their teachers' roles in the classroom. One of their central assertions they found was: "Good teachers are respectful of pupils and sensitive to their difficulties" (Rudduck and McInytyre, 2007, p. 50). Another study by Hill (2014) revealed that students viewed teachers as effective when they displayed compassion and empathy. Showing sensitivity toward students' difficulties is also known as compassion; understanding and supporting students through whatever hardship they may be facing. Teachers can support their students through difficulties by expressing concern for their well being, being approachable and accessible with adequate office hours, showing empathy towards their situations, being patient, and overall simply providing a warm and inviting environment (Hill, 2014).

How does one show compassion or demonstrate sensitivity towards students' difficulties? When teachers express authentic concern and genuine care for their students, it shows them that they are cared for not only within the classroom but also outside the classroom as well. This understanding, that their teacher sees them as an individual, can open the pathway to a healthy

relationship. Being accessible comes from being open and simply available for students who need help. This needs to be freely and regularly communicated to students so they know they have support. Sometimes simply knowing the teacher has their best interest at heart means more than the actual support itself. Being approachable comes from displaying care as well as empathy towards the student. If a student feels as if they are not heard or cared for they will not open up or even attempt to communicate with their teachers. When students feel compassion, feel valued, and feel their struggles will be met with empathy then they are more likely to approach their teacher with any problem they may have.

Along with empathy comes patience. It is not merely enough to initially show concern for the student's difficulty, but patience must be shown in the process of solving the problem. In many cases, difficulties are no easy fix and require hours, if not days or weeks to overcome. Each teacher needs to display the willingness to support their students, no matter the length of time it takes. Supporting students through their difficulties simply comes down to creating a warm and inviting environment. Each teacher can ask themselves these questions to answer this: "do my students know I value them?", "do my students know that I care about helping them through their obstacles?", "do my students feel comfortable enough to ask me for help?", and lastly "if not, *why*? And how can I change this?" Showing compassion and empathy can also play a vital role in behavior management. As opposed to an interventionist who is solely concerned with rules and consequences, a non-interventionist seeks out to listen, support and build relationships. A non-interventionist believes students are inherently good and simply need compassion and empathy when they mis-step (Kyriacou, 2007). There is certainly a delicate dichotomy each teacher must balance between showing compassion and supporting but still holding to a certain standard of excellence that should be expected. When each student

understands the standard of excellence that is expected but feels they are supported, mutual respect is cultivated.

Trust, Respect & Rapport

Mutual respect also comes through mutual trust. Trust is formed when teachers treat their students fairly. Research from Bozkus and Tastan (2016) found that treating students fairly and respectfully ranked as a top quality in personality traits of effective teachers. Student's want to trust their teachers and when they feel they cannot, due to ineffective teaching or to behavior by the teacher that is felt to be unfair, trust and respect are lost and misbehavior generally occurs. This is because there is a direct correlation between how the teacher acts and how the students act, in a mirror-like fashion. "Studies have shown that when people observe an action being performed, it activates some of the same neural pathways that would be active if they actually performed the action. This is called the mirror-neuron system" (Kaufman, 2021). This shows the importance of modeling any desired behavior for students, such as: listening, kindness, empathy, cooperation, respect, etc.

When teachers are respectful, firm yet fair, show no favorites, and maintain order without being an authoritarian figure, they are generally well liked by their students (Kyriacou, 2009). When students expect their teacher (who has authority over them) to behave in a manner that is productive and conducive to learning and they are not given this, they then tend to act out and lash out simply because their needs and expectations are not being met. Educators should not rely on students to share these expectations with them because students may not always express their needs or expectations directly. Expressing one's feelings, needs and emotions can be difficult enough for adults yet alone a daunting task for children. If the individual who has authority over students has proven to be unreliable, it is nearly impossible for the students to

authentically express themselves. Effective teachers must be cognizant of their behavior, and also demonstrate respect, and fairness toward students in each and every situation.

Along with establishing one's authority it is imperative to establish a good rapport with each student. Kyriacou (2009) defined quality rapport as "having a harmonious understanding of each other as individuals and is based on mutual respect and esteem"(p. 109). In the same regards when developing mutual respect between teachers and students, staff that create positive behavior opportunities and build a good rapport with students can have the same effect on behavior. Subsequently though, developing inadequate rapport with students can lead to student misbehavior. In Rudduck and McInytyre's (2007) study they found that establishing a good rapport with students stems from these three qualities: teachers show genuine care for their students' progress, show respect for their students as learners and show respect for their students as individuals.

Genuine care for student progress shows each student that their achievements are valued. But before they can achieve, their learning experiences need to be tailored to an appropriate level of understanding. Once their appropriate level is found, they need to be supported through the experience. This means effective teachers need to monitor and address when obstacles and difficulties arise, so help can be administered and students can be supported in their efforts to achieve. When students are not showing progress, this should be addressed in a concerned but constructive manner. Doing so demonstrates to the student that their progress is valued and there is a belief that they can achieve more than they are. If their teacher does not believe they can achieve more, students will generally not believe so either. Finally, when progress is being achieved it must be celebrated through praise (Kyriacou, 2009).

Respecting students as learners can be manifested in many ways. First, the students must feel their voices, opinions, and views are being heard. Developing and elaborating on student thoughts allows them to take control of their learning process. Giving students the ability to shape their activities allows them to become more effective learners and fosters greater self-esteem as they see themselves as individuals who have control over their growth. There is much importance on these interactions between students and teachers. Portions of control must be given to the students in their own learning journey as it signifies each other's role in the process and where knowledge comes from. Students will either take up an active role when given some control or a passive role with no control. Knowledge on the other hand comes from the process of investigation and exploration, not solely from the teacher. When a teacher unequivocally maintains control over the entire learning process, it echoes loudly that they have the knowledge and the students do not, and the only way for the students to acquire this knowledge is through their teacher; this could not be further from the truth (Kyriacou, 2009). Effective teachers relinquish some control to their students because *an active learner is an effective learner.*

Of the three qualities the last is perhaps the most important. Showing respect for students as individuals comes through getting to know them in their personal lives. First and foremost, learning their names is a sign of genuine respect. A name is a powerful thing. It acknowledges one's existence and connects the two individuals. The sooner an educator can learn names, the sooner they can build relationships with their students. One can show respect for their students as individuals by demonstrating curiosity toward their passions, interests, and activities - both inside and outside of school. Discovering what they are interested in can paint a better picture of the child as a whole. Learning what they are passionate about allows teachers to establish grounds of commonality. For instance, if you know a student loves baseball you now

immediately have a talking point with that student. When that student comes to class you can simply ask them about the game last night. Or if the student loves to read, you can ask them about their current book and even talk about what you are reading. It is important to note such conversations need to be a two way process, where the teacher shares his or her interests and life activities (Kyriacou, 2009) with his or her students. These conversations may not appear to do much but can have a profound impact on the student's life in the classroom and outside of it.

Positivity

Being relational with students is simply seeking and establishing as many positive interactions with students as one can. The more positive interactions a teacher can have with a pupil, the better the relationship will be. According to Bozkus and Tastan's (2016) study, positive interactions with students were found to be the most important personality trait an effective teacher can demonstrate. Each of these interactions have a powerful effect on the brain. When you authentically praise a student [a positive interaction], the student's brain releases dopamine. This creates a cycle. You provide positive feedback. The student's brain releases dopamine. The student feels good and is motivated to feel that way again. With this increased motivation, students spend more time and attention working on a skill. They build those skills. You give more praise — sparking the release of more dopamine. And the cycle starts all over again" (Kaufman, 2021). In retrospect students who do not receive positive feedback will not enter this cycle of motivation and learning.

There is a delicate balance between the type of feedback given to students. According to Kaufman (2021), research suggests students need five positive interactions to every one negative interaction. Various positive interactions could include simply calling a student by their name, making students laugh, asking about their hobbies or passions, giving positive feedback to an

assignment, acknowledging their insight in a class discussion, etc. This does *not* mean that teachers should avoid giving corrective feedback. It simply suggests that teachers should be cognizant of how much negative and positive interactions they have with their students and then strive to always have more positive interactions than negative.

Nothing creates more positive interactions than teaching with enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is not just essential to effective teaching (Stronge, 2007), teaching with enthusiasm is a *top trait* of effective teachers (Bozkus & Tastan, 2016). Teachers can show enthusiasm and excitement not only towards their subject matter, but also in their everyday lives and especially toward their students. As any professional educator knows teaching can be a demanding and exhausting profession so one's "ability to cope skilfully with the pressures and frustrations that can arise is an important part of maintaining one's enthusiasm" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 4). Not only do the students need an enthusiastic leader, but the teachers themselves need enthusiasm if they are going to thrive in this career. Enthusiasm brings a sense of joy to many situations, and is extremely contagious, especially with students. "Interest and enthusiasm is *infectious* and helps to create a climate within the classroom that emphasises the worthiness of the learning activities" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 104).

Any lesson or activity can be amplified simply when teachers express enthusiasm toward their subject matter. A study by the Los Angeles Unified School district revealed that students whose teachers were positive and enthusiastic performed better academically (Stronge, 2007). Why is that? When a teacher is passionate and motivated by their content it creates a trickle down effect toward their students, who by simple observation and modeling become more excited about learning, which then translates to higher student achievement. This is also true with 'at risk' students, who need temporary or ongoing assistance in order to succeed academically.

Stronge (2007) explained, "at-risk students, whose teachers exhibited excitement and enthusiasm in teaching and who positively interacted with students, performed as well as their peers who are not at risk" (p. 33). Obviously this does not indicate a direct causation, but this does imply a positive correlation that should be instrumental in defining effective teacher qualities. On the opposite side of the spectrum, teachers that do not display excitement or enthusiasm have been shown to actually inhibit student achievement as it "undermines the quality of the presentation" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 104). It is no surprise that when a teacher presents the content in a dull and boring manner it creates a difficult environment for students to focus and grasp any material. "Each lesson requires a performance from the teacher which, at its best, will be fresh and authentic" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 104). It is imperative that each time a teacher presents he or she is well prepared and exudes excitement and enthusiasm for the subject matter.

Not only should teachers display enthusiasm for their content, they must also show excitement and passion for each and every student. It is one thing to ask students about their lives outside of school, but it is a completely different thing to energetically, eagerly and fervently seek to understand each student as an individual. One's enthusiasm and interest can be assessed by one's tone of voice, (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 104) "his or her tone of voice will communicate that the teacher is interested [or not]." Ultimately an effective teacher's goal is to passionately pour into each and every student. They can achieve this, as Kyriacou (2009, p. 83) points out, with "enthusiasm and good humor, to develop a positive and encouraging tone in the lesson, which will foster and support pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem." Excitement and enthusiasm go beyond the content and the classroom, it seeps into the very identity of each child, which shows how important it is for effective teaching.

Caution

In building positive relationships with students it should be noted that educators need to employ caution when establishing these relationships. There should be appropriate boundaries between teachers and pupils, and a clear understanding of the teacher's role in the relationship. Although there may be a strong and healthy relationship, the two parties are not meant to be friends. It should be more of a father/mother role caring for the student as their own but having the ability to discipline and hold accountable when need be. Teachers should "periodically exert control over classroom activities and discipline in order to maintain an effective learning environment" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 110) as well as create opportunities to give both positive and constructive communication. When there is a healthy dichotomy for caring for students on an individual basis, research has shown evidence that pupils find great value in these relationships (Pye, 1988).

<center>**Communicative**</center>

In any healthy relationship, communication is at the forefront both in personal relationships as well as professional relationships. Verbal and nonverbal communication plays an essential role in the overall effectiveness of teachers. Not only does effective communication create a clear environment for students, it also adds psychological benefits and creates a safe space. Effective teachers also are cognizant of how they communicate - verbally as well as non verbally. Teachers must communicate directly with students regarding expectations, subject matter, instructions, feedback as well as communicate with students' families. Lastly, effective teachers communicate and collaborate with colleagues to develop the best materials and strategies for students.

Verbal & Nonverbal

In any exchange of communication, two forms exist: verbal and nonverbal. Communicative teachers are highly aware of both their verbal forms of communication as well as what they communicate nonverbally. Both forms hold paramount importance to the message trying to be conveyed to students. This means that effective teachers must not only be aware but also sync their verbal and nonverbal communication to send the same message. If a teacher verbalizes one thing but their non verbal cues convey a different message, this could lead students to be confused and upset. On the other hand, teachers do not always have to communicate verbally, but instead give nonverbal cues (such as body language, facial expressions, and silence) to send a powerful message to students. No matter the form of communication there is value and power behind each message.

According to Stronge (2007) there was one finding that was quite clear with regards to teacher communication and student accomplishment, "students taught by teachers with greater verbal ability learn more than those taught by teachers with lower verbal ability" (p. 4). This evidence places an extremely high value on teachers' vocabularies and verbal skills. Teachers who have a higher verbal ability are able to communicate better with students as well as are able to more effectively convey ideas and concepts clearly to students. One way teachers can improve their verbal ability is by expanding their overall vocabulary through increased reading and writing. These simple practices can add depth to one's vocabulary, help retain new words and assist when putting new words and phrases into practice. In addition to speaking more clearly and effectively with an increased vocabulary, effective teachers need to be aware of the words they choose to use with their students. Not only in terms of academic language but also language that is uplifting and encouraging, language that builds a positive atmosphere.

Words not only have power but consequences as well. Language can shape worldviews and has power to influence people's perceptions and understandings, "simple shifts in language of praise and feedback can hold immense power in children's view of themselves and of learning" (Venet, 2015). Because of this, educators have an obligation to use this power to uplift, support and to speak love into their students' lives. This holds true for *all* students, those in the special education programs, with IEPs, 504 plans, ESL, general education students, all ethnic groups, all socio-economic backgrounds, and those with mental health challenges. About 1 in 5 children between the ages of 9 and 17 have some type of mental health challenge (Venet, 2015). Understanding the challenges of each student in a classroom can help shape and align the daily practices used to best support them.

There are a plethora of ways to use empowering language in any classroom, a few examples are the following. First off, remove any unintentionally derogatory language from everyday speech. For example, instead of using the words 'crazy' or 'nuts', an effective teacher would use the words 'unbelievable' or 'unusual'. Secondly, teachers should avoid falling back on figures of speech and instead simply state what they actually mean, e.g. "I'm so OCD" instead use "I like things organized" another would be, "I'm a little depressed today" instead use "I'm a little sad today". This way teachers are not minimizing the challenges students face on a daily basis. Along the same lines, educators should seek the story behind the story, e.g. instead of labeling a student as being 'defiant' or having a 'lack of motivation' teachers should seek to find the root cause. Students could be experiencing anxiety, depression, or a mental health crisis. Next, effective teachers use *person first language*, e.g. "my student with autism" rather than "my autistic student". This shows that teachers see the person, as an individual, first then everything else second. Lastly, communicative teachers can use empowering language through the words

'support' and 'choice'. Rather than 'helping', 'supporting' shows care but also demonstrates the students have the power to improve their own lives and the same is true with giving students choices. In a world where students may feel like they have no control over their own lives, allowing students choice can empower them to take control of their own lives. Discussing their ability to make decisions and also walking them through what the consequences and outcomes may be of each decision is beneficial. Words can both uplift and empower students to take control of their own lives. Above all, human beings are shaped by the words they hear, see and use. Because of this, communicative teachers are deliberate and intentional in using neutral, open, accepting and empowering language to best support their students.

Not only must teachers become aware of their verbal language with students, they must also be cognizant of their nonverbal communication toward students. According to Steele (2010) nonverbal communication has a "greater impact than what is said with words," and "advanced nonverbal communication skills have been found to be viewed as more effective and were preferred by student[s]". Generally, nonverbal behaviors falls into four categories: "*Proxemics* which includes space and distance - *coverbial* behavior includes elements of physical gestures, facial expression, body movement, and eye contact - *paralanguage* includes the behaviors accompanying speech such as tone of voice, pitch, volume, rhythm, and speech rate - [and] *appearance* which includes attractiveness, grooming, and dress" (Steele, 2010, p. 72). Most classroom management direction is nonverbal, in fact Steele (2010) found that about 75% of classroom management comes without saying a single word. For example, teachers can eliminate many behaviors simply by walking over toward the area of problem, simply making stern eye contact, or nodding in disapproval. In the opposite effect teachers can positively reinforce good

behavior by simply smiling, making eye contact, showing a thumbs up and nodding their heads in approval.

Nonverbal communication can also help with the lesson itself. During instruction, modeling has been found to be more effective, in some cases, than verbal directions (Steele, 2010). Giving the students a visual of what is expected for them can have a large impact on understanding. During any class discussion or when the teacher asks a question, his or her tone of voice and nonverbals will indicate to students if he or she is truly interested in hearing what they have to say (Kyriacou, 2009). This level of interest is observed and noted by the students, directly influencing their future participation in class, "these nonverbal interactions are both an influential and a persuasive form of communication between teachers and students" (Steele, 2010, p. 73). And just like verbal ability, nonverbal ability can be improved upon. First and most importantly teachers need to be self-aware. Aware of what they are silently communicating in any interaction and aware of the impact nonverbals can have. Once teachers are aware, through instruction and practice they can improve their physical expression, vocal expression, and interpretational skills.

Psychological Benefits

As discussed earlier, positive communication with students is vital; this is due to the release of a chemical in their brain called dopamine (Kaufman, 2021). Dopamine creates a 'feel good' mental state in which the student strives to feel that way again, creating a cycle of hardwork and approval. Simple social actions such as talking or even laughing with others releases a hormone in the brain called oxytocin. This helps humans create bonds with each other. These bonds create a feeling of "psychological safety" (Kaufman, 2021). When humans feel safe they are more likely to challenge themselves and try new things. The same applies to students,

when they have a feeling of safety they are "more likely to participate in class discussions, ask questions, try to do an assignment even when it's hard, or talk in a tone of voice that's appropriate for the situation" (Kaufman, 2021).

When students do not feel safe (which can result from a number of different stimuli such as: trauma, stress, or various threats) their brains constantly remain on high alert seeking potential danger. This sense of stress causes the amygdala to trigger the release of a stress hormone called cortisol and adrenaline also called epinephrine. Because of this hyper-awareness toward potential danger, learning cannot occur simultaneously since the stress detection system is operating at such a high level. In students this may manifest itself in multiple ways: "avoiding assignments, putting their head down, yelling or making negative comments, walking out of the classroom or leaving a live video lesson, acting out physically or aggressively" (Kaufman, 2021). This means building psychological safety for all students, especially these ones, is imperative.

When students are around people they trust (through relationships and positive communication) they are more likely to learn since their threat detection systems are lowered. This occurs because oxytocin can calm the amygdala, lowering students' heightened stress levels (Kaufman, 2021). The release of oxytocin comes through positive social interactions, such as: getting to know your students through open communication, building rapport through discussing students' interests, making students' laugh, praising students' efforts rather than their outcome, reassuring students that it is okay to fail, and most importantly communicating a sense of calm through any student outbursts. Effective teachers understand why positive communication with students is so important, it is not just an anecdotal science but instead has real meaning and benefits as it is building psychological safety and trust.

Expectations

There are clear benefits to communication with students not only psychologically but also functionally in any classroom. Establishing clear expectations and communicating those expectations to students is a common theme across research that evaluates effective teachers. Haynie (2010) found that top teachers in their study held a significantly higher expectation for all their students than did the bottom teachers. Kyriacou (2009, p. 26) stated, "Research on pupils' level of need for achievement has highlighted how the expectations of others (teachers, parents, peers) can influence their aspirations and how they interpret success and failure to themselves (referred to as 'attribution theory)." Hamzah et al. (2008, p. 17) discussed their research results when they state, "The results of regression analysis showed that the main variables of excellent teachers' teaching performance were expectation ($\beta = 0.52$, T = 6.32 and Significant T = 0.00) and contribution with the percentage of 27.00…. *when the expectation score increased a unit, teachers' teaching performance raised 0.52 units*" (p. 17). This shows that teacher expectations had one of the largest effects on student achievement. It is imperative to not only communicate clear expectations, but to establish high standards for each student to see what they can become rather than who they currently are.

High standards come from a foundational belief in each student. Haynie (2010) pointed out that top teachers find the positive qualities in their students which ultimately translates to holding positive attitudes toward their students' abilities to learn how to be successful. Clark (2000) reiterates that when teachers hold high expectations students achieve more, this comes from creating demanding situations that ultimately help produce self-regulation in students (Smittle, 2003). Clark (2000) also determined that this holds true for women and minority groups. They need high expectations just as much, and should not be given a free pass or low

expectations. Teachers must be aware of their beliefs and treatments of all their students, as having low expectations will create negative results.

In Haynie's (2010) study, she discussed that bottom teachers accepted lower performances and practiced enabling behaviors toward students. Showing preferences and setting low expectations for students reinforce learned helplessness (Orlich et al., 2010). If a student knows that his or her teacher does not think or believe they can achieve more, they generally will not achieve more. Instead they rely solely on their teacher to do it for them and ineffective teachers fall victim to this behavior. Ineffective teachers also show "inconsistent expectations for different learners that are lower for disadvantaged students" (Ko et al., 2013, p. 20). It is important to set clear, consistent, and high expectations for ALL students, no matter their gender or skin color. This does not mean each student will achieve the same thing, but it means effective teachers expect their students' best and will not settle for less.

Setting expectations for students goes beyond simply achievement. Orlich et al. (2010) divides up the classroom into three aspects in which expectations need to be set: procedural, learning, and attitudinal. In the procedural aspect expectations need to be clear on what the students will be learning, as well as how they will achieve this. Within the learning aspect, teachers must clearly set the expectations of proper behavior while learning, "there are clear and non-negotiable expectations about appropriate behaviour, which are calmly and firmly insisted upon" (Ko et al., 2013 p. 12). and what the learner should be striving for. Lastly, with the attitudinal aspect students can expect equitable practices as well as a positive learning environment. When teachers communicate their expectations with students and set high standards in their expectations, students simply achieve more because they have an advocate who believes they can accomplish more.

Content & Subject Matter

Along with communicating expectations, it is important for teachers to effectively communicate the actual content and subject matter to their students. To adequately communicate subject matter requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the content (Stronge, 2007). Having a vast background and understanding in the subject matter is a foundational principle for effective teaching. Clear understanding of the content means teachers can explain it easily to their students and make it interesting (Kyriacou, 2009) as well as provide examples "helping students move from easier to more complex topics" (Hill, 2014). The deeper the teachers' knowledge base, the more strategies they have to convey the subject matter to their students. Most importantly the content must be presented in an organized manner (Bozkus & Tastan, 2016). This is because "most concepts are part of a content hierarchy that gives meaning to the concept and makes it easier to learn" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 139). Students build their current knowledge base using their previous knowledge base, so effective teachers know "how to structure the content and the processes by which it is delivered" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 38). There needs to be a clear and gradual build up of subject matter matter that students can grasp and continually build upon.

As Stronge (2007) stated, "being an effective communicator is about repackaging and delivering a message so that others can receive, respond, adapt, and use the information successfully" (p. 102). When a teacher truly understands their content area, they are able to synthesize the knowledge and concepts themselves and communicate them to students at a more appropriate level for them to understand. Effective teachers understand that each student might need the subject matter repackaged in a slightly different manner based on his or her learning style and ability. To this Orlich et al. (2010) suggested differentiated instruction also known as

multi methodology. Essentially teachers must find different ways to communicate the same message to a variety of students, for example: using pictures for visual learners, words for auditory learners, and practice for kinesthetic learners. Ko et al. (2013) suggested a similar strategy to adapt instructional methods to match student needs. These variations of communicating content allow each learner to absorb it in their own way. Ultimately, effective teachers do not just have students memorize content but instead stimulate discussion, enhance communication (Hill, 2014) and provide students with knowledge so they, themselves, can think critically, solve problems and appropriately "respond to evaluative and reflective questions" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 226). Effective direct communication of content plays a paramount role in student learning, and it is proven that high quality communication can actually offset any disadvantages associated with low socioeconomic background (Stronge, 2010).

Feedback

Another piece that effective teachers communicate to their students is feedback. Effective feedback establishes expectations, norms and routines. Communicating feedback to students is a critical component to raising student achievement as it "can enhance the development of metacognition in the student, through the teacher's feedback, on ways to improve their learning outcomes" (Ko et al., 2013, p. 22). Effective feedback is to be communicated in regards to student academic performance and behavioral performance (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012) as well as on an individual basis and class basis (Ko et al., 2013). Regular feedback allows teachers and students to monitor progress and growth, showing areas of strength and improvement. So what does effective feedback look like?

Communicating feedback to students can be verbal, non verbal or even written. Effective feedback is specific, clear, timely, and constructive. Specificity is critical as it points to the area

that the student did well or needs to improve on. Clarity shows a direct path toward success for the student after receiving feedback. Timely may be the most important aspect of communicating feedback, "studies have found that the amount of time between the activity and the feedback has a critical effect on student achievement…. In fact, the longer the delay in giving feedback, the less likely students will respond to the feedback and the less likely learning will be enhanced" (Stronge, 2007, p. 80). If teachers expect students to use their feedback, it needs to be soon after. Lastly, feedback needs to be constructive and communicated in a positive manner. As discussed above there needs to be at least five positive interactions to every one negative interaction (Kaufman, 2021). Teachers must point out when students do things well so when it comes time to give feedback on areas of improvement, students are open and receptive to the feedback.

As far as behavior feedback, effective teachers reinforce positive behavior by either praising or correcting (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012) and should occur immediately after behavior. For example, "Thank you for raising your hand" or ignoring a student who blurts out and asking them to try again but this time by raising their hand. This immediate response to their behavior either reinforces to continue said behavior or offers feedback so they can correct it. Effective feedback is praising loudly and correcting softly. No one likes to be embarrassed so why embarrass students? Instead praise them for their efforts and correct softly their areas of improvement. Ultimately, feedback is given to improve and make progress whether academically or behaviorally. Educators should give feedback and let students try again showing proficiency the second time around.

Communication with Families

Teacher efficacy is established through a relationship between the teacher and the student. Good communication is the lifeline of any healthy relationship. However, it does not

stop there. Effective teachers also communicate regularly with parents / families, completing the triangle of success. The three points of the triangle include the teacher, student, and family. When all three points are on the same page, success follows suit. Consequently, if even one point is off the results could be disastrous. Including families in the loop of communication not only provides a stable foundation for the student when he or she goes home, but it also allows parents to feel included and enables them to take part in their child's academic journey. The home-school relationship plays a integral role in creating a positive classroom environment (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012) and as Kyriacou (2009, p. 137) pointed out it starts with communication, "Good communication between the school and parents is essential if there is to be a sound partnership between the two." First and foremost teachers need to strive to understand and become flexible with the vast, dynamic and unique home situations of their students (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012). Not every student has a traditional biological one mother, one father home life; some have single parent homes, or are raised by a grandparent, aunt/uncle, older sibling, foster parents, etc. The student's guardian(s) isn't always what matters, what is important though is establishing a two way communication channel, cultivating respect and commitment, on both ends, to uphold the child's best interest. Once communication is established teachers should "empower parents with knowledge that fosters future advocacy of their child" (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012, p. 6). Just as teachers empower their students, it is equally important to equip families with tools and resources so that they can empower their child as well.

Teachers can empower parents by establishing a consistent system of two way communication, sharpening parent's basic skills by sharing resources with them, sharing strategies how families can support their student's academic progress, creating volunteer opportunities, giving parents voice by sharing power in decisions about teaching and learning,

and tapping into community available resources (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012). In any healthy relationship clear communication is a cornerstone to its success, the same way teachers consistently communicate with their pupils they must create a consistent system in which both parties can communicate back and forth. This is where teachers can speak on the child's progress as well as concerns they may have. The same goes for parents communicating back to the teachers over progress they have seen in their child, questions they may have or concerns they may have. Using this two way street of communication teachers should share content, information and resources equipping parents to help their student achieve even while at home. The parents may or may not take advantage of this offering, however, effective teachers understand it is better to have available, but not used, than to want to help but not have the available resources to do so.

Along with helping their child, parents simply want to be involved. This can come through volunteering efforts and is why it is important for teachers to make these opportunities available to families. When parents show up it strengthens the success triangle. Giving parents too much power to make decisions in regards to the classroom should be met with caution, per example of having too many cooks in the kitchen can leave one with a terrible meal. However, allowing parents to feel heard and understood goes a long way. Families can also give tremendous insight as to how their child learns and functions best. Lastly, as each child needs a triangle of success, their communities also play a vital role. The adage "It takes a village to raise a child" holds true, so effective teachers can tap into community resources and communicate their findings with parents and families.

The emphasis of this communication network between teachers and families should be a positive one. Reaching out to families only when there is a concern creates a negative association

for parents when they communicate with teachers. So communicating frequently about their child's growth and development in class allows parents to form a positive association between their child's teacher and them. Once positive relationships have been established effective teachers can then communicate corrective issues that arise, but doing so in a constructive manner. Ultimately effective communication with parents is positive, consistent and an open two way dialogue keeping the student's best interest at heart.

Communication with Colleagues

Any effective educator wishes to instill a collaborative learning environment where students can openly communicate, brainstorm, discuss, and problem solve with their peers. It is through this collaboration that students can learn and grow at a rate that surpasses what they can learn by themselves. Since each student has something unique to offer, they can bounce ideas off each other and begin to consider possibilities they may not have been aware of before. The same is true for the other end of the classroom, the adults must hold themselves to the same standard they hold their students. Effective teachers communicate regularly with their peers and collaborate to form solutions and better learning environments.

Teacher collaboration or 'social capital' as Goe and Stickler (2008) call it is the sharing of information, vision and trust. They found that increasing teacher social capital "positively impacted observed instructional quality and school achievement" (p. 19). This means, the more teachers communicated with one another and shared information, strategies and methodologies their instructional efficacy improved and overall school performance improved as well. They went on to discuss that "collaborative decision making differentiates high- from low-performing schools" (Goe & Stickler, 2008, p. 19). Showing that one key quality distinguishing high performing schools from low performing schools, was collaborative decision making. When

school decisions are made through the participation of its faculty, rather than a panel of outsiders or a single individual, those decisions tend to create a larger, more positive impact on the school.

From a micro perspective, social capital drastically improves each individual classroom. Effective teachers collaborate often with their peers for a number of reasons. For starters they discuss curriculum, striving to cover most of the same content starting and ending around the same time so there are no gaps in student understanding as they can go from class to class, year to year or grade to grade. Next, educators discuss instructional methodologies to best find the best methods at presenting the content effectively to students, who come from multitudes of backgrounds, learning styles and abilities. The same applies with assessment. When teachers discuss they are able to find the best ways to measure understanding and proficiency in their students. Classroom management (which will be discussed more in depth later) is a multifaceted and complex process of engaging students as well as keeping them on task in an organized and orderly manner; executing such a process effectively requires many hours of practice, strategic implementation and discussion with colleagues. The most successful managed classrooms are run by teachers who discuss, deliberate and collaborate with their colleagues.

Social capital can also help support individual students whether they have a learning disability, physical or cognitive impairments, emotional and behavioral issues, or if they are simply gifted/talented. Cooperation and coordination with SPED departments can help teachers better reach their students in a multitude of ways. They can get background information on their students and strategies to best support academically as well as emotionally and socially. Classroom teachers can discuss areas of improvement for their students that can translate to their work with their SPED teachers. Each party is working to help the child succeed and grow, so why not work in partnership and unison to better support them? No one educator has all the

answers. The more professionals one can communicate and collaborate with, the higher the rate of success there will be for their students.

Intelligent

It is no surprise that educators who have a high level of intelligence are more effective than those who do not (Stronge, 2007). However, it is to be noted that human intelligence is "a dynamic quality not fixed at birth. Secondly, through appropriate learning experiences, intelligence can be enhanced. Thirdly, intelligence has many different attributes" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 160). This shows that intelligence is not set in stone, and can be increased throughout one's life. It also shows that intelligence can be expressed in a multitude of ways, one way that does not directly show intelligence is simply obtaining a degree. Stronge (2010) indicated that there is not strong evidence to support an educators degree with intelligence in helping student achievement. To look at attributes of intelligence that impact student achievement, Howard Gardner (2006) gave nine categories of types of intelligences from which seven will be discussed: verbal/linguistic, logical, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Through these seven intelligences, effective teachers demonstrate subject area knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Each individual has various attributes when it comes to intelligence as well as different levels of intelligence, however it is important for educators to become well versed in as many areas of intelligence as possible in order to relate to as many of their students as possible.

Multiple Intelligences

One of the first intelligences Gardner brings up is verbal/linguistic intelligence. These individuals have verbal skills that are well developed and have sensitivity to the sounds, meanings and rhythms of words. Verbal skills generally translate to high quality reading, writing,

speaking, listening, and overall effective language skills. This is important in effective educators as it can be used to explain concepts well and to tell meaningful stories to students. As discussed above, "students taught by teachers with greater verbal ability learn more than those taught by teachers with lower verbal ability" (Stronge, 2007, p. 4), so improving one's linguistic intelligence is advantageous to become an effective teacher.

The next is logical intelligence. This is used to logically analyze problems, to reason and to recognize patterns. These individuals have the capacity to think conceptually and abstractly about patterns, relationships and correlations. This is drastically important when solving complex problems, thinking about abstract concepts, and conducting experiments. Teachers and educators who demonstrate logical intelligence can problem solve quickly and effectively, thus modeling the behavior for students.

Following logical intelligence comes visual/spatial intelligence. Within this is the capacity to visualize and think in images and pictures, spacing out objects accurately from recollection. These individuals are great with charts, maps, directions, videos, pictures and spatial judgement. They can easily put puzzles together, interpret graphs/charts well, enjoy the visual arts from drawing to painting and can also recognize patterns easily. Effective educators who can think visually can convey visually as well to their students, allowing them to connect to the subject matter through pictures, charts, videos, etc.

Next is bodily/kinesthetic intelligence. This means these individuals are excellent at body movements, various actions, and physical control, usually have excellent hand eye coordination, motor control and dexterity. They can handle objects skillfully, enjoy creating and doing things with their hands, have tremendous physical abilities, and generally remember by doing rather than hearing or seeing. This might be the most prevalent in the world of education as too many

times students learn best by doing rather than sitting passively and listening. They need hands-on

projects that they can discover concepts and develop proficiency through action.

Musical/rhythmic intelligence follows. These individuals have the ability to appreciate

and produce rhythmic patterns, sounds, pitch and tones. They have a strong appreciation for

music as well as a connection to sounds and performance, such as dancing. They enjoy singing

and playing instruments, can recall melodies easily, recognize tones and musical patterns, and

produce rhythm effortlessly. This intelligence is often overlooked in the realm of education,

outside of music class, but it can impact students greatly by helping students create connections

to content through music, rhythm, patterns and dance.

Interpersonal intelligence can be demonstrated through the capacity to interact well with

others. This comes from detecting and responding appropriately to various moods, desires and

motivations of others; seeing things from other perspectives (as will be discussed later in this

literature review for Open Minded and Reflective). They have the ability to show great empathy,

generally are cooperative, communicate well verbally and nonverbally, create positive

relationships and resolve conflicts in multiple settings. As a teacher it is critical to have

interpersonal intelligence as it allows one to relate directly with one's students. As an effective

educator one must be able to 'read the room' so to speak and match/adjust the lesson based on

where students are currently at. This intelligence also is the foundation for establishing

relationships which, as discussed, is fundamental to effective teaching.

Finally, intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to be self aware with one's feelings,

beliefs, and thinking process. These individuals are great at being in tune with their emotions and

can reflect and analyze where they are currently at in their emotional state. They can openly and

easily analyze their strengths and weaknesses, analyze various ideas and theories, have

wonderful self-awareness and understand the bases of why they are feeling the way they do. This emotional maturity leads to respect and trust, because ultimately effective educators are always in control of themselves and have power over their state of mind. When they do not, teachers are immature lashing out over their inability to deal with their current emotional state. When this occurs pupils instantly retract any trust and respect that was given.

Intelligence comes in many forms and is based on individual strengths and weaknesses. Effective teachers should strive to improve in the areas that they feel may be a deficit to increase their opportunities for personal and professional growth. Understanding that intelligence is not fixed and can be increased allows educators to strive towards bettering themselves and challenging their students. Teachers can both be examples themselves and relate to students through demonstrating transparency through their own learning process.

Subject Area & Pedagogical Knowledge

It is no surprise that teachers that hold great intelligence and knowledge in their subject matter are more effective than those who do not. However again, this does not directly correlate to degrees earned by the educator. Goe and Stickler (2008) pointed out, "Not only do recent empirical studies *not* find a substantial benefit for students of teachers with advanced degrees, but the majority of such studies also indicate that teachers with master's degrees and beyond may *negatively* influence their students' achievement" (p. 3). True subject matter knowledge is not to be confused with advanced degrees. It is to be recognized though, that there is a *positive* correlation with student achievement and their teacher's subject area expertise (Goe & Stickler, 2008). When educators know their content area exceedingly well, they are able to use their multiple intelligences to communicate this knowledge to their students in an easy and effective manner. They are also able to help students make connections between concepts because they

themselves have already made the connections. This is vital because new learning builds on old knowledge and the more frequent and effective connections allow for a greater understanding and higher success rates.

Pedagogical knowledge stems from the word pedagogy. Pedagogy in the world of education is simply "the art (and science) of teaching" or the "master plan by a teacher" (Bhowmik et al., 2013). For example, setting up learning targets within the curriculum and content, deciding instructional strategies and methodologies to present subject matter to students, deciding how best to evaluate students on the concepts, etc. Having pedagogical knowledge means one is aware of the multitude of methods to effectively teach. There exists a vast array of teaching strategies "because there is no single, universal approach that suits all situations. Different strategies used in different combinations with different groups of students to improve their learning outcomes" (Bhowmik et al., 2013, p. 1). This is why Orlich et al. (2010) stated that teaching is an art and a science, "Teaching is a science because it requires knowledge of technique. It is also an art because it requires decision making" (p. 23). There is not a one size fits all method when it comes to teaching, but effective teachers are well aware and well versed in the various methods of teaching instruction and strategies. Bhowmik et al. (2013) gave the ultimate purpose of pedagogical practice when they say, "Pedagogical practice promotes the wellbeing of students, teachers and the school community - it improves students' and teachers' confidence and contributes to their sense of purpose for being at school; it builds community confidence in the quality of learning and teaching in the school" (p. 1).

Professional

To be effective in any field there is a characteristic that is quite simple but often overlooked and under developed. This quality has the power to establish respect and merit in any

teacher, or has the potential to completely lose one's credibility. It can make or break any educator in regards to how they are viewed by their colleagues and by their students, and that is simply being professional. Being professional is often associated with appearance and vocabulary, and although both are important to establishing oneself, true professionalism instead comes from the qualities within and the conduct displayed by the individual. In this literature review four characteristics shined above the rest: integrity, consistency, commitment, and servant leadership.

Integrity (Ethical)

Before anything meaningful can take place, ethics must be the foundation of the task. Professionalism thrives on ethics, which is simply doing the right thing at the right time for the right reasons. In a study by Minor et al. (2002) ethicalness was found to be a top trait in effective teachers. This should come at no surprise, as doing the right thing should produce quality results. However, sometimes it is difficult to define the *right* thing. In their findings they defined ethical behavior as "fair, honest, trustworthy, impartial, dependable and reliable." Being fair and impartial with students can go a long way. Honesty and trustworthiness are the cornerstones of building trust with pupils, and leads to being dependable and reliable which are imperative for students to have consistency (which will be discussed more in the next section). Orlich et al. (2010, p. 3) pointed out another pillar of ethical conduct when he says, "every educator has an ethical and moral obligation to assist all students to realize their full potential. Embracing those ideals is a professional obligation." It is the responsibility of educators to support *all* students no matter what. Sadly, it is very easy for both teachers and students to slide by… As Kyriacou (2009, p. 97) said, "both teachers and pupils are often tempted to take the easy path and engage in a degree of collusion to avoid 'making waves' or expending additional effort. It requires great

integrity for a teacher not only to resist such temptation when it occurs, but to actively seek to identify and overcome such classroom processes." If a student has given up or shows no signs of life, it can be very easy for educators to give up on them. But as Kyriacou is saying, effective teachers need to fight tooth and nail to not fall into this trap, and instead fight even harder for their students. In the same manner for over achieving students, it can be very easy for teachers to just let them slide by with high scores without actually challenging them. Effective educators must support and challenge each child at *their* appropriate level. In summation, the role of an educator demands a high ethical standard because the community has given them the great privilege to take care of their youth. That is not a responsibility to be taken lightly.

Consistency

There are many critical components of being consistent, however the most important aspect of consistency is providing students with a steadfast teacher who can be their rock in any moment, especially in moments of crisis. Above all else, an effective teacher sees the individual first as a human and second as a student. If their needs aren't being met individually, then the progression to meeting their needs academically will never happen, or at least not in the full potential capacity. Hill (2014) reiterated this when she states that students need to have faith and trust in their instructors. Faith and trust are cultivated in many ways, the first is simply being there for them. Being consistent in one's availability will help students develop trust that their teacher will be there when they need him/her. This means setting open office hours and being available before or after school. Teachers may have a variety of times that they are available, and need to demonstrate consistency so students know when help is available.

Next, faith and trust are cultivated through consistency in being the same person day in and day out. Students have a lot going on in their personal lives and may not have a reliable,

consistent authority figure in their life. When they come to class it is imperative for educators to be the same person each and every day. Do not be hot one day and cold the next. Effective teachers provide a consistently warm, welcoming, positive environment for their students. As discussed above this occurs through relationships and establishing positive rapport with students seeking as many positive interactions as possible. Students should be able to count on their classroom environments to be a place where they are loved and valued because sadly not all of them have positive things going on in their lives. On top of being positive and keeping the classroom positive, teachers can make sure each and every student feels safe in their classroom.

This happens through establishing and consistently upholding the rules and expectations. Kyriacou (2009) spoke on the importance of establishing clear rules and expectations for the class, and to consistently uphold the standard. Not only does this help distinguish authority, but it allows other students to feel at ease knowing that their teacher will uphold the law of the room. Failure to consistently communicate and uphold these rules and expectations will diminish one's authority, lose trust among their students and chaos will generally ensue. 'Firm but fair' (Rudduck & McInytyre, 2007) is needed to integrate any set of classroom rules, with consistent implementation teachers can start to build trust, order and safety in their classrooms. Along with consistent execution of the rules, teachers must also remember to consistently praise when applicable. Praising students not only in their accomplishments but also in their willingness to put themselves out there, creates a classroom culture where students can feel safe to take personal risks. Encouraging the risk of getting things wrong allows for optimal growth. Emotional safety is just as valid as physical safety. It is a ceaseless dichotomy to balance, but nonetheless is crucial to the health and well being of the classroom.

There are many effective qualities, several in which have been discussed in this literature review, however these qualities lie to waste without consistent implementation. And ultimately the most important characteristic for educators to constantly display is to be yourself, each and every day. Furthermore, to be the *best* version of yourself. There will always be mistakes made and bad days, but the push to be consistent cannot be overestimated. Effective teachers find a way to be consistent for the betterment of their students.

Commitment

Part of being professional is going above and beyond especially in the realm of commitment. Effective teachers can be committed to their profession in a multitude of ways. The main two ways teachers can demonstrate this are a commitment to their students as well as a commitment to their development as educators. These two components alone make up a vast majority of what it takes to be an effective teacher.

First and foremost every single effective teacher should have a commitment to their students. Commitment to protect, value, love, teach, correct, and inspire. That should go without saying but too many times it gets lost in translation along the way. As educators are committed to their students' development and growth they must also commit to helping them grow holistically, not just academically. It is the privilege of every teacher to help their students also develop socially, emotionally, mentally, and ethically. This level of commitment is what it takes to be effective and make an impact in the lives of these young adults. An important distinction should be made, this commitment to students is regardless of background, gender, IQ, personality, ability, etc. It is simply a commitment to help ALL students. Smittle (2003) advocates for the commitment to teaching underprepared students just as one would commit to teaching prepared students. She warned that lack of student achievement was more than a

cognitive issue, teacher interest and commitment were "critical factors" in the development of a child. Effective teachers understand this impact and choose to commit to each and every student in their classroom.

The next aspect is equally important and that is a commitment to professional development. Professional development allows teachers to grow, learn, and improve each and every year. This growth mindset (which will be discussed next) is what develops effective teachers. Effective teaching does not just happen overnight, it takes deliberate and intentional effort to constantly improve. In the same study that found 'treating students fairly and respectfully' to be a top quality of effective teaching, Bozkus and Tastan (2016) also discovered that a devotion to professional development was a top quality. Sadly, they also found that this trait was considered one of the least important to teacher candidates. Smittle (2003) emphasized heavily the value of professional development as well as engaging in ongoing evaluations. Objectivity is a critical component for improvement, so evaluations allow teachers objective input from outside sources. "Effective teachers are constantly embracing change in their quest for improvement and also applying findings from evaluation outcomes to enhance teaching effectiveness and student success" (Smittle, 2003, p. 6). Helping teachers to manage change as well as improving faculty overall is generally achieved through professional development. Change is hard but "Effective teachers wholeheartedly embrace these opportunities" (Smittle, 2003, p. 7).

Servant Leadership

A form of leadership that has been shown effective in the classroom is servant leadership (Steele, 2010). Servant leadership consists of two parts. The first part being, shockingly, servanthood. The second part, wait for it….. leadership. It may seem common or self explanatory

to many, however what is not common is the application of such an approach. Too many times those in authority positions take on the actual leadership role first, with the servant mentality second or not even at all. This approach can lead to an unhealthy drive for power or a demand for status, fame, or respect - because when one's first priority is the leader role, they are placing themselves first. When one becomes a servant first, they prioritize and focus on others and the needs of the classroom or organization before themselves. This simple shift in mindset changes everything. Instead of focusing on 'what can I get from this position?' a servant leader focuses on 'what can I give to others in this position?'. Instead of fixating on 'what do I need?' A servant leader fixates on 'What do my people need?', 'How can I help them grow and develop?' and what is best for my classroom/organization?'. Above all a servant leader, especially in the classroom, "speaks to the universal human longing to be known, to care, and to be cared for in pursuit of the common good" (Steele, 2010, p. 75). Notice how the human aspect to be known and cared for comes first while still striving for the common good, it is a difficult balance to walk but effective teachers find a way to do so. "The teacher as servant leader models desirable attitudes, behaviors, and skills to the students and sets high standards for all" (Steele, 2010, p. 75). When the leader of any classroom or organization demonstrates these qualities, the rest of the group can do nothing but follow suit. Modeling serving others can transform any group. When educators have a more thorough understanding of true leadership behavior their effectiveness in the classroom will improve dramatically (Steele, 2010).

Growth Mindset

A critical component of being an effective teacher is having a growth mindset. A growth mindset is the belief that one's qualities can be changed or improved and is always looking to better oneself, compared to a fixed mindset that believes that one's qualities are carved in stone

and cannot change (Dweck, 2006). The graphic below shows the difference between a fixed and growth mindset when it comes to dealing with challenges, effort, criticism, etc. In the words of the great Bruce Lee (a martial artist, actor, philosopher), "Empty your cup so that it may be filled; become devoid to gain totality." One cannot improve or gain with the preconceived notion that they know everything or that they are set in stone. To truly gain wisdom, skill and expertise one must be reflective and open-minded; constantly evaluating how and what they can do better. Orlich et al. (2010) stated this is done through thinking prospectively and retrospectively, reflecting on past results as well as planning for the future. They define reflection as "An active mental process that teachers use consistently as they interact with students and the curriculum, including mental rehearsal prior to teaching, careful consideration of instructional options, anticipation of classroom problems, and quick daily evaluations of which methods worked and did not work" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 362). MacSuga-Gage et al. (2012, p. 8) discussed open-mindedness and preparing for the future through engaging in professional development, "Effective teachers engage in reflective and proactive professional development to create a strong foundation of positive classroom practices." Professional development can take many forms and essentially is any type of continuing education effort made by educators to improve their skills and abilities to help students achieve more.

TWO MINDSETS
CAROL S. DWECK, Ph.D.
Graphic by Nigel Holmes

Reflective

        To be a reflective educator one must collect relevant data, identify the problem, and construct a plan of operation. Collecting relevant data can be a challenge at times but is necessary to reflect on what needs to be changed in order to improve. Data can be anecdotal through personal evaluations of what is seen, heard and felt from students (e.g. body language, facial expressions, tone of voice,etc). However, anecdotal evidence has its limitations so it is important to collect observable and measurable data from teaching practices (MacSuga-Gage, 2012); this can be quantitative or qualitative. Teachers can gather this data through student scores and reflections but also through self evaluation, through video recording of oneself (Hager, 2018) as well as evaluation from a colleague or administrator. The latter can be intimidating to any teacher but to truly be reflective, an objective set of eyes is necessary as everyone is subject to their own personal bias. Once observed, feedback can be given in order to focus on specific areas of improvement, which leads to identifying problems or issues. There are plenty of times in which teachers can self identify problems in their classroom through data collection, but having an objective observation allows for identification of a problem that one did not even know existed. Once an issue is identified, evaluating the results and processes used is the next step. It is essential to discover what the root cause of this issue at hand is, rather than just putting a bandaid and hoping the problem stops. Once the evaluation portion is complete, a plan of operation needs to be constructed. Figuring out there is a leak is nice, and processing why the leak occurred is helpful, but without a concise plan of action to stop the leak and prevent it in the future, the leak will continue. The same is true in any classroom. Problems are identified but too many times there is no plan of action to alleviate the issue at hand. Specific steps must be laid out in order to be a successful plan of operation.

Some areas to reflect on when striving to improve effectiveness include, but are not limited to: Instructional strategies, classroom management, communication, and relationships. Instructional strategies, which will be discussed later in this literature review, are various methods and strategies the teacher incorporates into each lesson to boost engagement and retention. Effective teachers continuously reflect on their instructional strategies and if they are benefiting all learners. Just as each individual is different, each student is different and learns in a multitude of ways (e.g. auditory learners, visual learners, kinesthetic learners, etc). Therefore it is imperative that teachers instruct students in a variety of ways. Gathering data from student progress, colleague evaluations, student reflections can all help distinguish the effectiveness of instructional strategies. The same process is true for reflecting on classroom management.

Managing a classroom (which will also be discussed later in this thesis) includes behavioral issues but also includes the engagement of the classroom environment as a whole. Reflecting and gathering data on how well students are behaving as well as how engaged they are can benefit the function of any classroom. Which leads right into communication. Are students clear in understanding the classroom rules and expectations? If not, communication is lacking and needs to be addressed. As discussed above, communication plays a variety of roles in any classroom. Not only is it important to communicate expectations, but also the actual content matter, feedback on student work, and communication directly with families as well. This can all be assessed and measured. Do the students understand the subject at hand, are they clear on the feedback given and what is expected to be proficient, are families 'in the know' about what is going on in the classroom and their child's progress? Through the collection of information and reflection these areas can all be improved. Finally, we have relationships. As it is well known, relationships are hard to quantify and assess, but can be reflected upon in this

simple manner: How well does the educator know their students? Does one know their interests, backgrounds, cultures, strengths, and struggles? It is not to say that an educator will reach such levels with *all* their students, but it is vital that they try and have some level of connection with each student. Reflecting upon how well one knows each individual can give an appropriate plan of action of who the teacher should focus on getting to know next.

Open Minded

Having an open mindset is one of the most important things one can do as an educator. From trying to improve different qualities and practices in the classroom as well as staying up to date on current professional developments to always striving to learn more and never thinking one knows it all. Embracing change as Smittle (2003, p. 6) discussed what effective teachers are willing to do, "Effective teachers are constantly embracing change in their quest for improvement and also applying findings from evaluation outcomes to enhance teaching effectiveness and student success." There are many changes that happen in any school from year to year, so those able to embrace change and take in feedback with an open mind are the ones who will be most effective. This is paramount when it comes to understanding one's students, especially their background and culture and how it fits into the social context of schools from year to year. The first step one can take as an open minded educator is to remain current with social issues and challenges that may be facing one's students. Students are not always in the right mental space to learn when they have external stressors in their lives, so understanding various struggles and feelings can help them re-enter a better mental state to learn and grow.

Secondly, one should seek to question common assumptions and personal biases held and to hold oneself accountable to rid themselves of such biases. However, this needs to be done with objectivity - or at least as close to objectivity as one can get. Too many times individuals are

unaware of any personal biases they may hold and unwilling to deal with them. On the other hand, we have individuals who take this practice too far and place collective guilt on themselves and others for biases that may not even exist. An example of this is a teacher who feels guilty solely because they feel as a non-minority educator they have some subconscious vendetta against minority students. In both instances, this is wrong. A healthy balance of open minded evaluation and objective truth on a case by case basis is necessary for ridding any biases held, the moment one starts placing collective blame to any group of people they are making assumptions based on things other than truth.

Thirdly, one should seek to be just and knowledgeable about their students' cultures and lifestyles. To be just is to be objective. For example, when it comes to behavior management, each educator should be cognizant to recognize if they are unjust in the treatment of their students based on anything other than the displayed behavior. If teacher bias is not recognized and students are judged solely based on their culture or ethnicity, it can lead to drastic consequences for the student and ultimately is wrong. On the other hand when the student's behavior is overlooked and blame is thrown at the teacher for disciplining 'solely because of the student's culture and ethnicity' without any evidence to back this accusation, this creates its own set of problems and does nothing to benefit the student; and is also wrong. Once again we see that a healthy balance of open mindedness and objective truth is needed to truly benefit students.

Lastly and maybe most importantly, open minded teachers not only seek out but also teach diverse perspectives in their classroom. For example in social studies, history is generally taught from one side - which is generally from the victor. It is important to seek out other perspectives on the matter or event so that students can learn and understand different viewpoints, and in some cases a more accurate version of history. This skill transcends social

studies and even school itself and propels them into the real world. As educators, the main objective is to prepare students for the world ahead and teaching multiple perspectives allows them to see and understand different groups of people better. In any society, conflict generally comes from a lack of understanding. When students have the skillset to think critically and evaluate multiple perspectives on any issue they can help alleviate conflict (or at least handle it justly) and strive for a better world.

Modeling

As discussed above there are many benefits and positives that come from being reflective and open minded, and yet there is still another value that cannot be overlooked. When educators are open and reflective they are directly demonstrating to their students how to act and they are ultimately modeling the desired behavior to be reproduced by their pupils. Students are able to discover first hand and see the process in which their teachers think through various obstacles and challenges. Subsequently, students are able to witness first hand problem solving strategies that they can take and use in their own lives. They acquire skills not only to solve a single problem but the skills to think critically and solve a multitude of problems. Because the goal should be "to require your students to develop higher-order thinking: to elicit motives, make inferences, speculate on causes, consider impact, and contemplate outcomes" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 224). They also get to see a person in a position of authority demonstrate humility, not acting like they know everything but willing to find out if they don't. When educators are reflective it produces reflective learners and when students are open and reflective they are "able to employ the same care and attention to their learning that [educators] give to theirs" (Philpott, 2009, p. 95).

Section 2: Practices / Strategies of Effective Teachers

Effective teaching relies, not only on the qualities of the teacher, but also on their practices. Effective strategies can make all the difference in the classroom and provide students with a fun, warm, challenging and growth filled learning environment. In contrast, without effective practices, classrooms will be filled with chaos, confusion, lack of structure, and the inability to grow and learn. This section will review the practices and strategies effective educators use to impact student achievement including: classroom management, instruction, assessment and accounting for student differences. There is some crossover between the actual quality displayed by the teacher and the practice they put into place, in which case those will be briefly reviewed before discussing other strategies.

To start, effective teachers must be relational as established above. This is a personal quality but can also be a practice that must be deliberately planned in order to reach all students. If one is not relational by nature, this is all the more prevalent. Strategizing opportunities to build relationships comes from positive interactions and building positive rapport with students. Effective educators understand that when compassion and empathy are shown trust is cultivated, when trust is established respect follows, when respect is demonstrated both ways positive interactions occur naturally and frequently. Through these positive interactions and a strong rapport, relationships can grow and students can be challenged to grow as well. There are many obstacles and challenges that will enter the classroom every day and the relationship each educator has with their students serves as the foundation to strive beyond any adversity.

Another quality, that is in itself a practice for effective teaching, is communication. The everyday practice of communicating clearly with students and families opens up opportunities that would, otherwise, be closed. Most importantly communicating high expectations for each

student no matter their background and communicating clear standards and objectives so there is no confusion. Setting high expectations and communicating those expectations for each student had one of the largest effects on student achievement (Hamzah et al., 2008). It establishes the belief that they can achieve more and do better, never settling for anything less than their best. To restate Kyriacou (2009), a student's level of need for achievement comes from the expectations of others (teachers, parents, peers) which influences their aspirations and how they interpret success and failure to themselves. In essence teachers who set high expectations set high standards, ultimately telling students this is what they can achieve and this is expected of them. Students will generally rise or fall to what is expected of them, so setting the bar high will bring students to new levels they didn't even know they could achieve. An effective educator sees a child for who they can become, not who they currently are.

Classroom Management

As any educator knows, classroom management is the centerpiece of the class. The goal of education is to help students learn and become proficient with new concepts and skills so effective classroom management promotes an environment that supports learning with desired behaviors. Ineffective classroom management can lead to undesired behaviors, which then leads to chaos, confusion and limited growth. "Much pupil misbehavior is often simply a reaction to ineffective teaching or to behavior by the teacher that is felt to be unfair, which serves to undermine their respect for the teacher" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 109).With such wide differences in outcome, classroom management should be the first practice effective teachers put into place. This is supported by Bozkus and Tastan's (2016) findings that classroom management was the most important practice for teachers.

The goal of classroom management is to simply "control and manage the instructional environment" and there are three key elements of effective classroom management: planning and preparing a classroom, selecting and establishing usable rules, keeping student records (Orlich et al., 2010). In these components one prepares a plan of action for the classroom, selects and implements rules that are applicable and maintainable, and lastly keeps record to evaluate results of said plan. It was previously thought that teachers needed to maintain absolute control and the emphasis was placed solely on the student to have discipline. This was established through physical punishment, order, and obedience. Although discipline is a key factor in any setting, the definition of discipline in the classroom has changed slightly and the share of responsibility has shifted from the student towards the educator, because student attitudes are influenced by the teacher's ability to manage a classroom. Discipline is usually defined as "the preservation of order and the maintenance of control" (Orlich et al., 2010), however this definition is limited especially when dealing with today's classrooms. Teachers today must make split second decisions and problem solve quickly to various situations that arise, so absolute control is not always feasible.
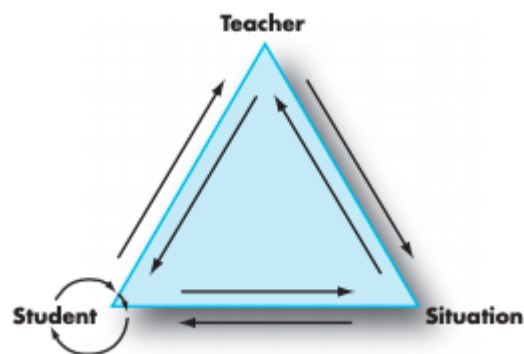
Instead, with the shift in responsibility and development of social and behavioral research, *democratic discipline* has been proven to be a better option. There are two principles that are essential for the use of democratic discipline in the classroom: "the teacher must add the

rational dimension to the rule-making capacities of the group and the rules administered by the teacher should reflect the wisdom, fairness, and patience of a judge" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 173). Placing the responsibility on the educator means more is asked of teachers, so logic, rational, wisdom and fairness need to be constantly implemented in managing the classroom. Working *with* the students rather than *against* them can make all the difference. For example, instead of confiscating a cell phone abruptly, make sure the rules are clear and agreed upon at the beginning of the year. Perhaps what is obvious and apparent as a distraction in class to adults is not so obvious to children. Another example would be, instead of constantly getting upset with the amount of 'horsing around', one can do a better job of planning transitions from activity to activity - thus increasing structure and limiting misbehaving opportunities. When one shifts from blaming the student to taking responsibility for his or her classroom the environment and atmosphere can improve because the educator now has the power. When an educator blames and points the finger, they are effectively giving the students all the power to either behave or misbehave, so when one takes back the responsibility they also take back the power of the classroom. Effective educators always ask "What can I do better to solve the problem?"

Power in the classroom is to be used with restraint and something teachers should not take lightly. Unrestrained power "creates insecurities and resistance among students." To be an effective classroom manager "one must learn to exercise the least amount of power necessary to accomplish the desired academic results and maintain essential classroom norms" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 175). *Norms* are group accepted rules or patterns of behavior (e.g. raising one's hand before speaking, respecting and showing kindness to one's peers, etc). Norms are not necessarily recorded the same way laws are, but instead they are overarching themes and standards directing how each member of the group should act. Since norms are agreed upon by the group, there is a

high degree of regularity and predictability which guide their social interactions. Establishing and agreeing upon norms sets the standard for the entire class, and allows for a reduction in teacher enforcement while still providing control of individual and group behavior.

After power and norms comes *awareness*. This is a teacher's insight and attention about the ongoing classroom environment, and gaging student interactions and communication. Usually this happens with the gathering of anecdotal evidence from verbal and non verbal clues. One difference between an effective teacher and a non-effective teacher comes from understanding which communications to ignore or to address quickly. Another difference would be a non-effective teacher simply complaining that their class was "lousy" today. But in what way? They have not adequately analyzed the anecdotal evidence presented by students. Were they off task? Did they not complete their work? Were they unprepared? Were they disorderly? Effective teachers are able to specify what behaviors were observed and are able to clearly state what behaviors are desired. This goes back to our previous sections of clear communication. Power, norms, and awareness are all part of a humanistic approach; which views the human first and the student second, understanding that students are diverse individuals who are simply seeking acceptance and fulfillment.

One way to help students feel accepted and fulfilled is to bridge the gap between school and home. Fostering parental involvement helps create active parents. An active parent "follows the development of their children, reinforces the expectations of the schools, and monitors student behavior and participation" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 179). When both the school and parents are involved, students not only grow academically but also social and emotionally. Lloyd et al. (2015) indicated that the inclusion of community in school life is "fundamental" and helps

ensure the transition between home and school is "continuous rather than disruptive". There are three components to each child: the child him/herself, the teacher, and their parent/guardian - creating a triangle of success. When it is simply a line rather than a triangle, growth and success can be hard to achieve. If the teacher and student are on the same page but the child goes home and enters a chaotic, non-committed environment, they generally will succumb to the lower standard. It is rare that when the teacher and family are both involved the student does not follow suit. This means effective teachers strive to get families involved to better support the student through continuous transitions.

Classroom Management - Models

There are many strategies that teachers can use to manage the classroom and maximize student achievement. However, most of these strategies lie along a continuum from 'self-discipline' to 'imposed discipline'. Self discipline would be a "voluntary adherence to norms" compared with imposed discipline which is "student code of conduct prescribed by the teacher" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 183). In this section, three theories from Orlich et al. (2010) will be briefly discussed leaning toward self discipline (Maslow's hierarchy of needs; moral reasoning / character development; and reality therapy) and three theories for imposed discipline (desist strategies, assertive discipline, and behavior modification).

Self discipline is based on the premise that students have the power and will to discipline themselves, but depends heavily on effective relationships not only from teacher to student but also student to student. The teacher still needs to be involved at a high level, which requires empathy, genuineness, and acceptance of the student. This generally comes in a one on one setting to address issues and goals. The teacher would help the student identify any problems, establish a plan, revisit to check on progress, make revisions if necessary, and constantly strive

for success. Involvement also includes parent involvement as touched on above. Self discipline requires a positive perspective and positive expectations on the part of the teacher, also addressed above. This can be through positive feedback, positive interactions, and building a positive rapport.

Abraham H Maslow, an American Psychologist, established his Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943) theory which stemmed from his humanistic approach. He stated that an individual's behavior at any time is determined by his or her needs (e.g. a hungry student will have a difficult time focusing on learning new skills). His theory suggested that a teacher can determine what need is not being met thus causing the behavior problem, then helping to address and meet the need of the child. As one can see in the graphic below, the foundation of human needs is hunger, thirst, comfort, safety, security, belongingness, etc. There certainly are limitations as to how much a teacher can step in to address needs, but every student should feel safe and secure in any classroom, as well as feel valued, respected and a sense of belonging. Next effective teachers establish structure through routines, consistency, and creating a supportive environment - this can help students develop a positive, constructive self image. Even when a student may be "in trouble", it is simply the behavior that should be corrected, not the individual. The more needs that are met at the bottom the higher the student can go in the hierarchy, eventually reaching self actualization and transcendence where they can find intrinsic motivation.

Tran-
scendence:
Helping others
find self-fulfillment

Self-actualization:
Self-fulfillment, realizing
one's potential

Aesthetic needs: Symmetry,
order, and beauty

Cognitive needs: Knowing,
understanding, and exploring

Esteem needs: Achieving, gaining
approval and recognition

Belongingness/love needs: Affiliating with
others and being accepted

Safety/security needs: Safeguarding one's existence

Physiological needs: Hunger, thirst, bodily comforts, etc.

Research has shown that schools are not focussing enough on students' moral reasoning and character development (Orlich et al., 2010). On the other hand many believe that public schools should only focus on cognitive development and stay away from character development. Orlich et al. (2010) believed that "the process of schooling necessarily affects the way children think about issues of right and wrong, so it is important to purposefully address those issues." They suggest a practice for providing moral education by presenting "moral dilemmas" to students. Encouraging them to discuss personal choice, develop a better understanding of motivations of others, raise their consciousness, sharpen their reasoning skills, and grow their character. Six pillars are stressed for character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship. When students are taught moral reasoning and character development they can take the skills they have acquired and apply them in their own journey as learners, thus becoming self disciplined.

Reality Therapy requires students to take responsibility for discovering the answers to their own problems. Before students can reshape their behaviors and failures, they need to recognize their own reality and discover their personal responsibility for becoming successful. No labels, situation or family history are holding them back. It sure may make it more difficult, but they themselves have the power to change their own lives. This requires positive, genuine care from the teacher and these seven principles: demonstrating human involvement from the teacher, focussing on the current behavior, examining current inappropriate behavior, creating a plan of change, requiring evidence of student commitment, reevaluating the plan as one progresses, and removing 'punishment' (as it may hinder personal involvement) and instead replace with 'positive reinforcement'. Teachers ultimately help throughout the process encouraging and guiding the students themselves to complete the steps and grow in self-discipline.

Imposed Discipline is based on "the teacher's recognized authority to set standards within the classroom and to dictate appropriate classroom behaviors and consequences of misbehavior" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 188). This differs as the teacher is the one imposing discipline on each student rather than them doing so themselves. This authority comes from societal expectations as well as statutes and laws. When a teacher's authority is challenged they typically use various forms of discipline through rewards and punishments to maintain control. The following are three strategies that teachers can use to exercise discipline within their classrooms.

Desist strategies is one of the most common forms of discipline in education and as Orlich et al. (2010) called it the "granddaddy" of imposed disciplines, because it serves as the foundation for most strategies. Desist strategy involves the teacher communicating that the

students' behavior either stops or changes. This is accomplished through *force* (low, moderate, and high) and *types of communication* (public or private), as shown in the graphic below. Although there are certainly circumstances that dictate a teacher discipline in a public, high level of force manner (e.g. breaking up a classroom fight), the majority of disciplines should be private and with low level of force.The two principles of using the desist strategy is to first establish the expected behavior standard clearly to the class and if the standard is not followed then use a desist strategy that helps the child reach the standard with the least amount of disruption to the rest of the classroom. Correct a child quietly, praise them loudly; because at the end of the day students are human first and need to feel accepted. Discipline is simply trying to correct a behavior, not tear them down to feel inadequate. When higher levels of force are used, it can actually not only have an adverse effect on the specific child but the rest of the class as well - making them feel anxious, restless and uninvolved. Authority and power are to be used wisely and not something to be taken lightly. Discipline to teach and correct but love them up and praise loudly when they do things correctly.

| Level of Force	Definition	Desist Strategy
Low	Nonverbal, a signal or movement	Glancing at child, shaking head, moving over to child unobtrusively in the instructional activity
Moderate	Verbal, conversational, no coercion	Appealing to a child to act reasonably, removing disturbing objects, commanding the child to stop
High	Verbal and nonverbal, changed voice pitch, may use coercion	Raising voice and commanding child to stop, removing the child from group, threatening, punishing, physically restraining the child
Type of Communication	**Definition**	**Desist Strategy**
Public	Intended to be noticed by most of the children in a class	Acting and/or speaking in a way that commands attention
Private	Intended to be noticed only by small groups of children	Using unobtrusive actions or moving close to a child when speaking

Assertive discipline is "designed to assist teachers in running an organized, teacher-in-charge classroom environment," helping teachers "become the stewards of their

classrooms, while positively influencing their students' behavior" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 191). The goal of the strategy is to establish a positive classroom environment that is safe and orderly through fair and consistent interventions from the teacher. There are three parts to this strategy, the first being *classroom rules*. These must be clear and concise (limited to 5 at most), observable, applicable at all times, directed toward behaviors not academics, and are selected with student participation. Next is *positive recognition*, in which teachers must be observant to notice quality behavior that needs to be pointed out and praised loudly (this also helps establish relationships as it increases positive interactions between students and teachers). Lastly are *consequences*, when disruptive behavior occurs it must be dealt with immediately and calmly. There is a natural hierarchy to the consequences used when a child breaks a rule the 1st time compared to breaking it the 3rd time. Ultimately, this strategy believes that teaches can " mold a student's ability to control his or her behavior through a program of positive recognition and consequences" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 192).

Finally there is behavior modification, which is the "process of changing behavior by rewarding desired actions and ignoring or punishing undesired actions" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 192). This strategy maintains a humanistic approach while still addressing behavioral issues in the classroom by the recording of data. There are four phases to this approach, as demonstrated in the graphic below. Phase 1: *Charting baseline behaviors*. Here one records instances of the target behavior that is to be changed, to see if there is even evidence that the problem actually exists. From this chart we have Phase 2: *Intervention and Experimentation*. Using the collected data allows for a better educated selection of a strategy that is appropriate and effective in eliminating the problem. Depending on the specific situation and the strategy used, it should include reinforcers. Reinforcers are a critical part of behavior modification as they are "rewards

that encourage students to repeat positive behaviors" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 193), and are

extremely personal to each individual student. Example reinforcers include: recognition,

rewards, increase in activities and responsibilities, status indicators, incentive feedback, bonus

privileges, etc. Once the desired behavior is obtained, teachers can slowly wean off the student

from their reinforcers, as they no longer need to be rewarded for displaying the standard

behavior. Phase 3: *Reverals to baseline conditions*. Most of the time, no further intervention is

needed. However, if the behavior reemerges after the reinforcer was taken away, it is necessary

to chart this information, but only for a short period of time before reinstate another intervention.

Which leads to Phase 4: *Reinstating the intervention conditions*. If the reintroduction to the

intervention does not change the behavior, the teacher was simply lucky in phase 2 and needs to

start all over again with a new strategy (It can be noted that most educators dislike phase 3).

Charting an Effective Behavior Modification Strategy for "Turning in Homework"
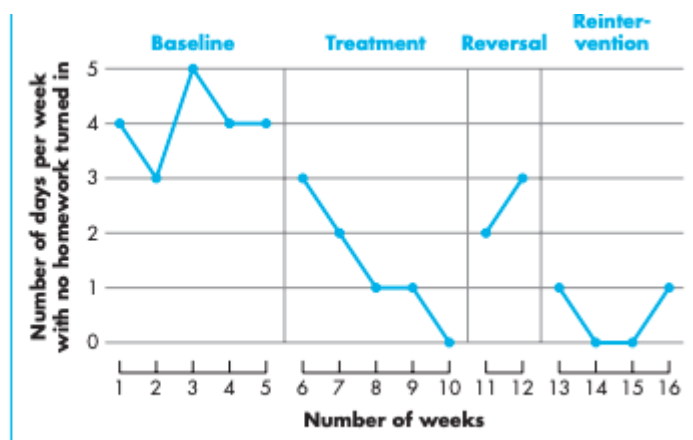
It is to be noted that these strategies discussed above fall on both ends to the spectrum: self

discipline and impose discipline. It is a spectrum, however, so educators are not inclined to use

just one side but can fall in the middle or lean one way or the other. What works best for one

teacher may not work for another; so knowing one's personal strengths and preferences will help

dictate which of the above strategies, or a combination of strategies, will work best for them. No matter what practice is used, every teacher should be clear with their expectations, aware and monitor the class behaviors and intervene when disruptions occur.

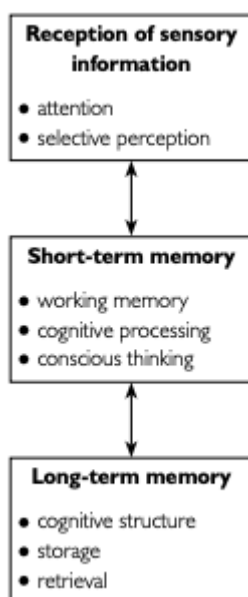## Instruction (Teaching Methods)

When focusing on instructional strategies it is important to start with the student first. Before one can effectively teach a child they need to know how they operate to make the best use of their instructional time, because it is about the learning *process* not just the *product*. How a child learns is just as important as what they are learning. There is a vast amount of research and understanding on how children learn and the depth one can go is almost unlimited, however this section will cover the basics of the proces.

How Students Learn

The learning process can be simplified into three sections: reception, short term memory, long term memory (Kyriacou, 2009) which is displayed below in the next graphic. The first stage is focused on the initial reception of sensory information. "This involves taking account of the learner's level of attention and the degree to which such attention is directed towards aspects of the whole range of sensory inputs available in the classroom" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 22). Instructions should be given in such a way that it grabs the learners attention. Paired with initial reception is selective reception, which allows the learner to filter the most important pieces of the information. This first step takes only a fraction of a second.

In the second section, the learner begins to process what was received through reception creating their short term memory. This is where conscious thinking and cognitive processing get involved. Working memory is also used which Kyriacou (2009, p. 23) defined as "the mental capacity used when manipulating ideas in order to carry out a task or series of tasks." For many

students with subpar working memory academic demands can take its toll and create many

challenges, as learners can be paralyezed by complex and multi-step processes. However

effective teachers can help these students by repeating or restating instructions and information,

restructure complex tasks into simpler segments, and use a visual to aid their memory.

Reception of sensory information
- attention
- selective perception

Short-term memory
- working memory
- cognitive processing
- conscious thinking

Long-term memory
- cognitive structure
- storage
- retrieval

Lastly, learners transition the information into their long term memory. "This is

concerned with the changes that take place in the learner's cognitive structure as a result of the

processing of information within short term memory" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 23). In essence the

learner has processed the new information and is creating storage for it within their brains, thus

having the ability to retrieve this information later on. Most of education is teaching and

developing one's students in their thinking skills and processing strategies which will

subsequently change the cognitive structure of the learner. In helping students with their short

and long term memory it is imperative that they make meaningful connections from what they

have learned to what they are currently learning. Effective educators bridge the gap by

organizing lessons and content to overlap allowing students to make connections to their

previous knowledge and understanding. In its simplest form the learning process can be thought

of as attention - thinking - storage. Having students retrieve information that is stored will help strengthen their knowledge and deepen their understanding.

Engaging Students

Now that it has been established how students learn, it should be discussed how to engage them in the classroom. Often time engagement and motivation overlap, but it is often asked 'how to engage students' rather than 'how to motivate them'. This question "reflects the idea that effective teaching can enable pupils who are otherwise poorly motivated to become engaged in learning" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 28). Back to the point of power and responsibility, motivation can be a tricky thing that relies heavily on the student - however student engagement relies on the teacher. Educators do not always have control over their students but they always have control over themselves. Seeking to engage students is more attainable than motivating them. Just as the model of learning comprises three parts, so is engaging students. The aspects of engagement are: attentiveness, receptiveness, and appropriateness (Kyriacou, 2009).

Attentiveness requires the student to be attentive or mindful to the learning experience. This comes from how well the teacher "can elicit and maintain high levels of pupil attention and concentration" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 28). Effective educators can achieve this by mixing up the learning activities, involving students actively in the instruction, and including student interests in the lesson. Receptiveness requires the student to be receptive to the learning experience or having a willingness to learn and respond. This occurs when educators make use of the various degrees and sources of student motivation to " facilitate and encourage motivation towards learning" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 28). They can achieve this by prompting curiosity, offering opportunities to be successful, and creating a classroom dynamic that cherishes learning. Appropriateness requires the learning experience itself to be level appropriate for the intended

learning outcome. This comes taking into consideration the students age, ability, previous knowledge and understanding. From there one can build to make the current lesson more appropriate and applicable to the student. Effective teachers are able to achieve this by collecting data, monitoring student's progress, and checking that students can demonstrate the desired outcome. When one can grab the students attention, ensure they are receptive to the lesson because it is level appropriate, engagement generally occurs and students are ready to digest instruction.

Instructional Methods

Instructional methods or teaching methods are ways in which educators engage and elicit understanding from their students. There are many strategies in which to instruct a class however, the most important task of effective instruction is to set up a learning environment in which students can actively participate in mental activities that elicit changes in the students cognitive structure that hit the desired learning target. The two different instructional methods that will be discussed in this section are: teacher exposition and academic work. To determine which method is best for the lesson at hand, there are two aspects to consider. First, what type of mental activity is being generated by the teaching method used? Secondly, what type of education outcomes will this mental activity foster? (Kyriacou, 2009).

Teacher Exposition

Teacher exposition is generally through whole class teacher-student interaction where the teacher describes and explains new information. However, it goes much deeper for students than simply listening. It also involves thinking and responding generally through questioning and discussion. Teacher exposition, or also called direct instruction, is typically given to the whole class. There has been some backlash toward this model but research suggests that, "pupils taught

via direct instruction showed progress in the higher-order intellectual areas associated with problem solving" (Orlich et. al., 2010, p. 35). This shows that instruction to the whole class can still transfer skills across a broad range or learners and subject areas, when conducted properly. There are three steps to effective teacher exposition. They include; making clear the structure and purpose of the learning experience - informing, describing and explaining - and using questions and discussion to facilitate and explore student learning (Kyriacou, 2009).

Across the literature, the most important thing an effective teacher can do is clearly state the learning objectives as well as the purpose of the learning experience. Goe and Stickler (2008) indicated that providing students with clear learning objectives is associated with student achievement. One is essentially letting students know what is the end goal and what they should expect to accomplish through the learning activity. Kyriacou (2009) pointed out the importance of debriefing students after they have finished about the nature of what they just learned. Too often this step gets overlooked and it is just assumed they know what they accomplished. He summed up the philosophy like this, "Tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, and then tell them what you've told them." As discussed above, there can never be too much clear communication in any classroom. Another important function of teacher exposition is to stimulate interest and curiosity as well as emphasizing the learning activities importance and usefulness. A strategy to bring out curiosity is to pose a question or problem to start off then lead to how the lesson will help them solve this problem.

Informing, describing and explaining are used in the first step however, its usage in the second step comes from "the transmission of the intellectual content of the subject matter itself" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 41). Essentially teachers now dive into the explanation and discovery of the objective. Exposition should not be for extended periods of time (e.g. full length lectures) This is

never the best method because students are not capable of engaging for that long and passively listening is not meaningful learning. Even when taking notes, students need to think and respond to activate their short and long term memory. There is a vast array of ability levels in each class, so it is imperative to use differentiated instruction to hit all levels of learners. Using different techniques to explain the same concept allows for more students to grasp what is being taught. For example: using various words and sounds to support auditory learners; using pictures, graphics, videos and more to support visual learners, engaging students with activities and problem solving quests for the kinesthetic learners, etc. In summation, a teacher's ability to explain complex concepts in simple terms is one of the most important skills an effective educator can have. Kyriacou (2009) offered the following aspects to improve one's explanations: Clarity - clear and level appropriate. Structure - linking past knowledge with present knowledge. Length - brief with questions, problems and activities. Attention - engaging to sustain attention and interest. Language - explains new terms, able to break apart large concepts into smaller ones. Exemplars - gives great examples, attempts to relate to students experiences and interests. Understanding - aware of student progress and understanding.

Using questions, dialogue and discussion to facilitate and explore student learning has to be one of the most underrated skills an effective teacher can have. It can be used in a number of different ways from complex, deep thinking questions that are an integral part of the lesson to quick and simple checks for understanding. To determine which question type is most appropriate for each class, one must consider the type of thinking they are trying to elicit, high order vs low order. Low order are generally close questions with one answer that are simply a recall or information. High order questions are open ended with a multitude of answers that are asked to elicit reason, application and evaluation. There are five key aspects to effective

questioning. The first being *quality*, the quality of the question itself in terms of clarity and appropriateness for the objective. The next is *targeting*, or matching specific questions to specific students based on level or distributing questions to as many students as possible. Following would be *interacting*, how the teacher asks the question - which includes eye contact, tone of voice, pauses to give time, prompts to help, follow up questions to have students elaborate, etc. Next is *feedback*, avoiding judgement, showing appreciation for students contributing even though they may be vulnerable, and creating a supportive environment. Lastly, *extending students' thinking*, this comes from taking the discussion one step further and continuing the train of thought through conversation, dialogue and discussion or even debate.

Making learning interactive is key which can be characterized by being collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful. Teachers should strive to get as many students involved as possible to make contributions. Also teachers should take this one step further and encourage students to develop their contributions, whether they want to refine their thought or completely change it as they gather new information. Giving students more and more ability to contribute can lead to full participation. "Full discussion takes place when pupils are given more control over the course of their contributions and indeed when pupils begin to comment on each other's contributions. The teacher's skill in relaxing control over the direction of contributions, while at the same time retaining appropriate control over the nature and procedure of the discussion is important" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 45). Effective teachers sometimes just need to act as a guide and get out of the way of learning.

Academic Work

Academic work is the activities and tasks used by teachers to enrich student learning either by themselves or in groups. Many times it is in combination with teacher exposition but

does not have to be. Ultimately, this is learning by doing. The learning process generally occurs during the act of completing the academic work through the thinking involved. Many times however students will ask, 'what do i need to do and how do I do it?' This is focused on the performance rather than the learning process, "if a teacher wishes to foster understanding rather than performativity, this must be reflected in the nature of the academic demands made" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 46). Students will often ignore what they know they will not be tested on, so the structure of the activity and assessment need to dictate precisely what should be accomplished. Students also take into consideration the degree of risk and cost involved in the academic work (i.e. how likely they are to succeed, nature of work, mental effort involved and apparent value). This leads effective educators to make sure there is a degree of freedom to student work as well as both high and low risk/cost tasks in order to reach all students. According to Kyriacou (2009) there are six main academic works: structured reading and writing, investigational work, individualised programmes or work, small group work, experiential learning, and the use of ICT. This section will discuss four of them.

Structured reading and writing tasks refer to a tightly prescribed and directed activity for students. This method often asks students to elaborate or consolidate what has been discovered, generally taking place with a list of questions given to students to showcase their comprehension of the material or being asked to read specific sections of text. This practice is highly valuable to students as it supports them in their practice and application of many skills. This category is also great for building and adding content literacy skills for one's students. In a world full of flashing lights and screens, reading has sadly exited portions of the classroom. The more one can have students read brief and level appropriate texts will allow students to practice and increase their reading ability. Whenever possible, educators should strive to have students read on paper rather

than on a screen, for a number of reasons: to limit their exposure to blue light, less distractions popping up in front of their faces, for many children this may be the only time they hold a book in their hands. Accompanying reading, educators should also have students write short and level appropriate passages. Writing can help students articulate and establish clear thought processes. Usually in the brain, thoughts and concepts are jumbled up and need to be articulated carefully to produce fluent words. So structured reading and writing will help them adjust and improve their thinking ability to articulate clearly.

Investigational work refers to works where students have a bit of freedom and autonomy towards planning and constructing their own learning by investigating certain topics. One major component needed is a problem to address or solve. This category derives its value from the qualities and skills it fosters in students (Kyriacou, 2009) and has been widely accepted to develop deeper understanding. This learning model requires teachers to clearly establish the problem, teach the information-gathering skills that are needed, and debrief with students what they have learned. It is important to note that with this freedom students may be more inept to appear to be busy rather than actually investigating and learning, so teachers should look for proof of progress. Another vital aspect is moving past simply recording and describing but having students interpret and explain - giving reasons, cause and effect, etc. When done correctly, investigational work develops students' intrinsic motivation, creative thinking and other qualities and skills that will prepare them for their life outside the classroom.

Small group work refers to academic work that involves groups of students - requiring collaboration, reflection and discussion. Most small groups work best when they are between two to five students. The main value of this method is the development of social skills that can translate into relationships and the work environment, which is just as important as the

intellectual value. It is to be noted that this requires students to actually collaborate with one another rather than simply working next to each other. The value of small groups includes creating an atmosphere where students can work together with a sense of security and self confidence, offering a plethora of opportunities for students to talk and reflect with one another, fosters cooperation and mutual respect. Kyriacou (2009) indicated there are two main types of small group work. The first being, giving students a specific task to achieve which is detailed on producing a tangible end product. The second being, asking students to explore an issue through information gathering and discussion which is open ended to discovery. It should not be overlooked that students still need to be taught the skills and qualities needed to work in a group setting. This should not be assumed and it also should not be avoided if they do not seem ready to handle this method, when prompted and taught correctly they can display the appropriate behavior necessary.

Experiential learning refers to "providing pupils with an experience that will totally and powerfully immerse them in 'experiencing' the issue that is being explored, and will as a result influence both their cognitive understanding and also their affective appreciation" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 52). Examples of experiential learning are: role playing, watching plays or performances by acting professionals, viewing films that focus on a person's perspective, or a direct experience. Even though limited in many capacities, direct experiences tend to be the ultimate teacher. So whenever applicable, educators should strive to give their students direct access to an experience. As with most methods- careful planning, briefing and debriefing are vital to the success of experiential learning, thoughtful discussions and reflection should follow the experience. The environment of the classroom should be conducive and supportive of one anothers reflections. Many times teachers and students are uncomfortable with experiential

learning as teachers want to constantly interject and students are unsure what to expect. Nonetheless, teachers and students need to develop the skills necessary to make it a success as experiential learning is the ultimate teacher.

There are many ways to instruct any class through exposition and academic work or even a combination of both. What is necessary for effective teaching involves a plethora of skills "concerned with the planning and organisation of such tasks and their presentation, and with matching the tasks to the educational outcomes the teacher wishes to foster" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 55). Just as children are different in many ways, learning and instruction need to also have a level of diversity and differentiation to accommodate all learners.

Assessment

Goal & Reasons

More often than not people associate assessment with standardized tests, pop quizzes, grades and many negative aspects, when in all actuality the function and goal of assessment is to enhance learning by measuring student understanding and proficiency, that is all. According to Orlich et al. (2010) effective educators use assessments for a number of reasons. First, to provide *feedback* to students. This is vital to the learning process, teachers cannot simply just mark incorrect without providing feedback to the student as to why they got it wrong and generally offer a chance to correct this mistake so they can learn from it. Secondly, to make *informed decisions* about students. This could help teachers better understand where a child is coming from or give them the proper resources they need. It can also set the basis for futuring planning in the classroom if many students are unclear about something more time can be spent in that area, or if students clearly grasp a concept less time can be spent there. Thirdly, to *monitor*, make judgments about, and document students' academic performance. It is important to document a

student's progress to see if they truly are making progress or if they are struggling to grasp certain concepts. Fourthly, to *aid student motivation* by establishing short-term goals and feedback. Giving constant and quick feedback allows students to associate their hard work with their accomplishment, this can increase motivation to do the same again. If feedback is delayed, students can lose out on that association. Fifthly, to *increase retention and transfer of learning* by focusing on learning. Assessments are great for measuring student understanding as well as measuring how much is retained at a later point. Also assessments, when done properly, focus on the process of learning and achieving rather than simply on the outcome, they are learning about learning. Sixthly, to *evaluate instructional effectiveness*. Just as data is important to measure student performance it is also imperative to measure teacher performance and how effective they were or were not in their instructional time. Lastly, to *establish and maintain a supportive classroom learning atmosphere*.

Purpose

In any classroom setting assessment will be used in four major ways: placement, diagnosis, formative assessment and summative assessment (Orlich et al., 2010). Placement is used to determine if a student has the required skills to begin a lesson. This means that effective educators use a pretest before instruction to determine their students current knowledge basis. Orlich et al. (2010, p. 323) offered three reasons for doing this, "First, such a test will identify students who do not have enough prior knowledge to begin the new material; the teacher can then provide these students with prerequisite work. Second, assessing the general level of students' prior knowledge helps determine where to begin instruction and what to present. Finally, scores on a valid and reliable pretest can serve as a baseline from which to measure progress." The pretest can be teacher produced whereas a Diagnosis assessment is generally

commercial made. Diagnosis is used to determine causes of continual learning problems or areas of specific learning difficulty. These assessments are generally given by specialists (reading teachers, special education teachers, etc). The next forms of assessment are what Bhowmik et al. (2013) calls meaningful assessment and what Goe and Stickler (2008) found to be positively associated with student achievement, that is formative assessment and summative assessment.

Formative assessment at its basis is used to monitor students in their progress by giving feedback to correct errors and reinforce learning (Orlich et al., 2010). It is assessment *for* learning not the assessment *of* learning, there is a key distinction between those two. When assessments are used to enhance student achievement then one is assessing for learning. Formative assessment is dedicated to just that, to enhance student learning and achievement. Feedback is a critical component of formative assessment, as it reveals the gap from where the student currently stands and where they will end up (the learning target). Goe and Stickler (2008, p. 8) found that "frequent assessment and feedback is one of the practices that distinguishes high-[performing] from low-performing." Timely and relevant feedback allows students to reassess their work giving the opportunity to revise and enhance it. Timely and relevant are the key words. Timely in the fact that students should receive feedback shortly after allowing them adequate time to improve their work. Relevant in the fact that one does not simply state "not quite" or "needs revision" but is specific on what they need to improve on and give steps to how they can do that.

Formative assessments generally come from questioning - either through worksheets, daily check up 'quizzes', short responses, homework, etc. It should be noted when giving homework, one should make sure that students are clear on how to complete the homework. Sending students home to practice can form bad habits that are even harder to break if they

practice incorrectly, so homework should be met with caution and careful articulation. From the completion of their work educators can give timely, relevant feedback. Formative assessments do not always have to come from formal records; they can also come from self-assessment ratings by the students, scales, and even anecdotal data such as teacher observations. Above all, for a teacher to give effective feedback they need to know exactly what they want from their students and need to effectively communicate their expectations as well as communicate how the student performed. There is a difficult dichotomy when giving feedback because, on one hand, honest feedback is the only way a student can improve; however effective educators see the whole child and strive to build them up emotionally. This means it is imperative to remember to give positive feedback as often as one can, to build up each child so that when it is time to correct students they are confident in themselves and are more open and willing to take risks to improve.

Summative assessment is simply a final summary or overview demonstrating what was learned. Traditionally this occurs at the end of a unit with a test or project (later in this section, the importance of assessment variation will be discussed). The data collected from formative assessments generally provide a snapshot of where the student currently is compared to data collected from summative assessments that is typically used to show student achievement. Although there is a difference between the two purposes of assessments it was found that students who did not make a strong distinction between the two assessments, and considered them both to be part of the learning process, were generally more successful than those who treated them differently (Orlich et al., 2010). Formative assessment is sometimes viewed as less valuable than the summative assessment, when in reality the formative is what guides and prepares the student for the summative. There are many ways and variations to conduct a summative assessment that will be discussed later in this section.

Alignment of Instruction and Assessment

For the students to truly gain a learning benefit from assessment, the assessment itself must be directly aligned with the learning objectives and instructions. This means that the formatives are strategically placed throughout the learning process to measure progress on hitting whatever the target may be and the summative is directly aligned with measuring students' achievement of that target. If students are not doing well on their formative assessments, they are clearly not comprehending the concepts or target, which means the instructional model or method should be adjusted. Too often in education, summative tests or projects have little to nothing to do with what was covered and practiced previously, it is simply the next topic to cover and is brand new to students without opportunities to practice (formatively). This is to be avoided at all costs, there should be no surprises to students what is being assessed as the objective should have been clearly defined, discussed and practiced repeatedly. Goe and Stickler (2008) found that when instructional content is aligned with assessment there was a positive association with student achievement and that serves as a major difference between high performing schools and low performing schools.

Design/Structure

One way to ensure that instruction and assessment are aligned is through proper design and structure of the assessment. One strategy effective teachers use is backward design. The first step is establishing the learning targets or objectives. Then one will design the summative assessment and determine how they will measure student achievement on the specific targets. Next, once that is set in place, they can work and plan backwards from the summative assessment - covering how they will formatively assess progress and how they will introduce the concepts or topic.

Two more important aspects of structuring assessments are making sure that they are valid and reliable. Validity refers "to the degree to which a test measures what it is intended to measure" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 322). In essence one should ask themselves these three questions, 'does this test measure what it is supposed to measure?', 'can I make sound decisions about achievement on the basis of these test scores?', and 'does this test sample a representative portion of the content being assessed?'. Validity is directly related to purpose whereas reliability refers to the consistency of the test results. If the same group of students could take the same test multiple times (hypothetically, without knowing the answers from the previous time) and they achieve the same score the test can be considered reliable (Orlich et al., 2010). Two questions effective educators can ask themselves to determine the assessment's reliability are, 'does this test give similar results with each use?' and 'are the results of this test consistent with those of similar measures?'. Directly aligning instruction and assessments as well as making sure they are valid and reliable will help, not only educators in their teaching but also, students in their path toward success.

Lastly, when structuring assessments, one needs to make sure that the assessments are supporting learning (Watkins et al., 2007). This is achieved through shifting the focus from what the teacher does, to what learners do. The whole point of education is to support student learning, therefore the student should be the prime focus. Assessments should be active not passive, prompting students to consider 'how will you tell whether the product you create is of high quality?' and 'how will you tell if the process you chose to complete the assessment is wise?' These questions focus on the student and draw them into considering the process and quality of their work. Also, teachers can make sure assessments support learning by balancing both the product as well as the process of learning. Yes, there are certain goals and objectives students are

striving to hit, however the focus should also be on the process in which they hit their objectives. Seeking to understand and become proficient rather than simply just 'knowing'.

Assessment Variation

We all are unique with different learning styles and abilities which is why it is important to use differentiated instruction to reach all students. Effective educators must also use alternative modes of assessment as each child expresses their understanding in multiple ways. Assessment variation is critical to student centered learning but can be difficult to accomplish. It often means looking past the standard paper and pencil test and allowing students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. A few examples include allowing students to demonstrate their understanding by writing an essay, recording a podcast, making a powerpoint presentation, making a video, making a poster board, producing a demonstration, and the list goes on and on. It is up to each teacher how many options they would like to provide to students. No matter what assessment is being used a detailed rubric is necessary for students, communicating clearly the overarching question, theme and/or expectations.

Kyriacou (2009, p. 151) discussed the importance of alternative modes of assessment, "The increasing variety of assessment practices has undoubtedly helped to enhance the quality of educational experience in schools….. an opportunity to show what one can do rather than be tested on what one does not know." This is especially useful when working with multicultural and multilingual students as middle school teachers in Florida "strongly endorsed the value and need for a variety of assessment methods to effectively and accurately evaluate the progress of multicultural and multilingual students in their classrooms" (Allison & Rehm, 2007, p. 6). This is because assessment variation can allow learners to demonstrate their cognitive understanding without a high level of language proficiency.

Another reason for giving a student options in the way they are assessed is because "there is a real danger that the first time some pupils have to cope with a particular form of assessment is when it is being used to grade something of importance" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 151). For example, if a teacher requires all students to write a 5 page essay to express understanding - this could be troublesome for a couple of reasons. First off, it assumes that all students know how to write an essay properly with an introduction, body and conclusion. Secondly, it assumes that all students express themselves best through writing, when in actuality some may express themselves best verbally or kinesthetically.

Now if this assessment is for English class, that is one thing, but if it is for social studies, science, etc. giving them other options to demonstrate their understanding will help them express themselves adequately. Now, if one would like students to become proficient writers in a social studies class that is completely acceptable, but it should be noted that students need proper instruction and practice on how to write an essay effectively. It cannot just randomly be dropped on them as a summative or the only means to express their understanding of a certain subject as this could lead to some struggling heavily with the writing process, even though they have proficient understanding of the topic at hand. Giving students choice of options allows for freedom and creativity in the assessment process, which ultimately allows for deeper understanding because when they can express their ideas and thoughts clearly they have a higher chance of retaining the knowledge or concepts.

Areas to Assess

Students can be assessed in a multitude of domains, there are three main areas that every educator should assess: knowledge / conceptual understanding, thinking and skills (Orlich et al., 2010). When measuring <u>knowledge and conceptual understanding</u> it is important to realize there

are different types of knowledge that require different methods of assessment. For example if the learning objective is memorization (e.g. multiplication flash cards) then one would need to assess students' recall of the information. Or if the learning objective was conceptual understanding (e.g. the process of photosynthesis) then one would need to assess students' understanding by having them explain the concept in their own words or having them identify or create their own examples of it. Effective educators ask themselves, 'how can each student demonstrate understanding?' (Orlich et al., 2010).

The next domain to assess would be that students are <u>thinking</u> clearly and effectively as well as assessing their thinking process. Although thinking can be regarded as a skill it emcompasses so much more beneath the surface. One can measure that students are thinking by conducting assessments and problem solving exercises. One can check their thinking process by having them explain, verbally or in writing, what they are thinking in each stage of the problem. Overall, effective educators ask themselves 'how can each student demonstrate their thinking process?' (Orlich et al., 2010).

Lastly, <u>skills</u> are to be assessed. Now there are many types of skills whether that be physical, social, mental, etc. that require many types of assessment. For math problem solving, a paper/pencil or whiteboard/ marker can be used. For physical education, a demonstration would be necessary to assess a physical skill. For art, students can establish a portfolio of work demonstrating multiple skills. No matter what skill one is assessing there are many ways to measure and one should ask themselves 'what indicators can students use to demonstrate their skills?' (Orlich et al., 2010).

Errors to Avoid

There is never a one size fits all approach to assessments, above are tips and strategies to consider when assessing students but each classroom and school will be slightly different. However, there are a few errors to avoid at all costs when grading from Orlich et al. (2010). First would be to avoid using pretest scores to determine grades. Pretests are used as a baseline for where to begin instruction and to mark the beginning of the students journey toward the learning objective. This should not be used against them in the grade book. Second would be to not adequately inform students of what to expect on an assessment. Through the learning objectives and discussion students should know clearly what they are striving for and what is most important. Next would be assigning zeros for missing or incomplete work. Zeroes have a huge impact on grades and misrepresent achievement, so one should allow students to turn in late work because educators are measuring *if* they are proficient not *when* they become proficient. However, this can be a difficult task and a tough dichotomy to balance because many times when students know that if they do not complete assignments and there will be no repercussions they simply do not complete them, on the other hand grades should simply represent student achievement and proficiency. This should be discussed carefully with administrators and colleagues to have a uniformed position on missing/incomplete work and whether or not to implement healthy deadlines.

The same dichotomy is difficult with the next error to avoid, that is using grades for rewards or punishments (typically with behavior). Assessments and grades should be viewed as a source of insight and help not for "meting out rewards and punishments" (Watkins et al., 2007). Though the development of character and morals are essential when effectively teaching from a holistic approach, the process of improving in those areas should not impact the grades received

for demonstrating proficiency with academic content. Again this should be discussed carefully with administrators and colleagues to have a uniformed policy on how to address this. Lastly, although educators love to see improvement with their students, an error to avoid would be assigning grades contingent on improvement. Even if they improve a great amount but fall short of the learning objective they should be graded accordingly against the learning target, so that they can improve and hopefully meet the standard. There are plenty of other errors to avoid when assessing students, these were just a few to note. Assessments come in all shapes and forms, but effective educators use assessments to measure understanding and support learning.

Accounting for Student Differences

An effective educator is an advocate for his/her students, supporting them and valuing them as human beings. To truly advocate for students one needs to understand and become aware of how diverse they really are. Students can differ in ability, motivation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and gender just to name a few. Diversity is a tremendous strength for any community but it can also be its largest challenge. It is important for teachers to understand this and to consider various viewpoints before making classroom decisions, as the goal is to set up a learning experience that will benefit *all* students, not just some groups of students.

Ability

When looking at someone's ability and if they are exceptional or not, it is often associated with intelligence; how well one can "learn and to meet cognitive and intellectual demands through the application of current knowledge, understanding and intellectual skills" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 57). However, intellectual capabilities are only a portion of the many different categories of exceptionality. Orlich et al. (2010) indicated there are up to 27 different categories and discusses the six most agreed upon selections: intellectual, communicative, sensory,

behavior, physical, and multiple. Within each category there is a vast range of differences from those who have learning disabilities to those who are gifted and talented. There are many contributing factors that go into one's abilities but it is important for educators to meet them where they are at and to help them achieve more.

In response to the wide range of abilities, effective teachers can utilize differentiation in their teaching methods. Kyriacou (2009) offered seven types of differentiation to better help meet students where they are at. Teachers can differentiate by *task* where students can cover the same content but at different levels. They can differentiate by *outcome*, where the task is generally the same but they are flexible enough for students to work at their own level. They can differentiate by *learning activity,* where students address the same task at the same level but in a different way. They can differentiate by *pace*, where students cover the same content at the same level but at a different rate of speed. They can differentiate by *dialogue*, where the teacher can discuss the work individually with students in order to tailor to their specific needs. They can differentiate by *support*, where the degree of support is tailored to the needs of each student whether that be more or less support. And lastly they can differentiate by *resource*, where the type of resources used is tailored to the student's ability and skills.

Motivation

A lot of focus has been placed on students ability but an equally important aspect is student motivation. Students have a vast array of motivational levels both intrinsically and extrinsically and their differences should be noted and accounted for. Student motivation is heavily influenced by a range of factors such as experiences in their upbringing with family and peers as well as experiences in their past success and failures. The role of their home environment cannot be underestimated as having a support system of two parents or guardians is

a strong indicator of success. A sad reality students and educators face today is the fact that, "More students now live with single parents than at any other time in history, and this number is increasing" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 173). This is troubling for a number of reasons, but the one this section will focus on is its impact on academic motivation. There is not always a causation between having a two parent home and high student motivation but there is a correlation, "Studies of child rearing practices have highlighted how such pupil motivation to do well at school can be fostered by parents through developing the child's self-confidence regarding their own capabilities as individuals, and praising them whenever they have undertaken tasks successfully. This also reinforces the child's belief that doing things well is valued.... In contrast, some pupils from homes where there was less opportunity to develop proschool attitudes and values and to engage in school-type work, may well find school an alien place at first, and fail to adapt and thrive as quickly as other pupils. For these pupils, a vicious circle can develop if early failures are allowed to engender lower motivation, as this can soon result in gross underachievement in school." (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 61). This shows the differences in upbringing vary from family to family and the impact it can have on the child.

There are many other factors that impact student academic motivation but the importance for educators is not necessarily in listing every excuse as to why students are not motivated, but instead to equip educators with strategies to overcome this lack of motivation and help their students see the value of success. There are three key steps effective teachers can take to help improve student motivation, foster positive and enthusiastic approach to their studies, setting high expectations and giving students a degree of autonomy in regards to their learning. Developing a positive and enthusiastic approach to student learning starts with the teacher. Each educator must demonstrate first hand why the academic work is interesting, has value and merit

to students, and why it matters. If teachers do not do this, it can severely undermine students' efforts and will generally lead to a lack of interest and value from students.

Another important factor of increasing motivation for students is conveying high expectations for the students. As discussed earlier in this literature review, when students know they are expected to achieve more they generally will. Just as parental expectations and involvement play a significant role in a child's motivation and achievement, a teacher's expectations will raise the standard of work in the child. If a teacher sets low expectations for a student, the student will generally perform poorly as they will only reach the level expected of them. Lastly, effective teachers can help improve motivation in their students by giving them more control over their learning. When students have a choice in their learning process it fosters greater self confidence and increases their perceived relevance and interest in the academic material (Kyriacou, 2009). One can help their students not only by giving students some control over their learning but also by making them aware of their 'locus of control'. Meaning, they have power over their lives and their achievements. Fostering a view that things in their life are, to a large extent, within their own control compared to believing they are largely outside of their control. When students can understand how much power they have in their own life, they become a victor rather than a victim in their academic work and in life.

Again there are a plethora of reasons for a variation in student motivation as well as different degrees of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that need to be considered. Eliciting curiosity or making learning interesting is one way to improve a student's intrinsic motivation, rewarding/praising a student's efforts can help raise their external motivation. These are just a few examples, as there are many more and student's differ in how they are motivated - many times a mixture of both intrinsic and extrinsic. There are also underlying factors for low

motivation such as maybe a lack of understanding, poor self confidence, reluctance to apply required mental effort and fear of failure. That is why it is important for educators to be aware and able to appropriately strive to identify the source of a student's low motivation so they can best support the student.

Ethnicity/Race

An ethnic population is a group of individuals which are associated according to common traits, customs or social views. Common ehtnic traits include heritage, values and rituals (Orlich et al., 2010), "Heritage refers to inherited cultural models for housing, foods, clothing, music, family structure, and education. Values include group behavioral norms, ethics, religious beliefs, and commonly held attitudes. An ethnic group's rituals frequently include aspects of festivals, dance, sports, medicine, and religion" (p. 42) Across the United States in central city schools, classrooms are extremely diverse. According to Orlich et al. (2010) 28% of students were African American, and 30% were Hispanic - with 20% of students speaking a language other than English in their home. There are many cultural differences in the United States and this translates directly to the classroom. The challenge many teachers face is to balance a concern for ethnic diversity with an equal concern for academic and social norms, "The educator's task is to provide a developmentally appropriate instructional program that values diversity while fostering achievement" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 42). What has made the United States such a success is it's diversity of ethnic participation and contributions, which should be reflected in each classroom.

The following are what Orlich et al. (2010) suggested to incorporate students' ehtnic heritage into instruction. 1) Effective educators should discuss diverse ethnic groups' heritages, values, and rituals. It is imperative to show students that there exist cultures that are different from their own. 2) Use local representatives of ethnic groups as resources and role models for

achievement, demonstration, and explanation. It is important for students to see heroes who look like them, so they know they can achieve just as their role model did. 3) Incorporate activities and materials that reflect local traditions and appropriately augment the more traditional curriculum. This is closely related to the next suggestion in number 4) Discuss different ethnic groups' participation in historic events and provide literature that illustrates different ethnic groups' heritages, values, and rituals. This is also known as culturally relevant content, which showcases various ethnic groups' contributions to modern day society that may otherwise have been left out of traditional curriculum. 5) Lastly, acknowledge and affirm each student's unique ethnic background and show how it adds to our national character and unity. As stated above diversity can be a great challenge but also a great strength. Many achievements have come from a vast array of cultures inside the United States that have propelled the U.S. into its prominence today and this should be highlighted in classrooms all across the nation.

Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status can be broken down into two parts. Social class and economic class. Social class comes from the set of cultural values, attitudes and aspirations of different occupational groups. Economic class is derived from wealth and status typically from one's occupation. This distinction leads to various classifications, two being the middle class and the working class. The middle class generally has a higher socio-economic status and typically involves managerial and professional jobs whereas the working class has a relatively lower socioeconomic status and involves semi-skilled or unskilled manual labor (Kyriacou, 2009). Students with middle class parents, on average, achieve higher educational attainment more often than their counterparts who have working class parents.

Research has demonstrated that 3 factors heavily influence student achievement through socioeconomic status: "A stable family, educated parents, and a higher household income are clear predictors of educational success" (Orlich et al., 2010, p. 43). This again shows the importance of students' home lives. Middle class homes are more likely to foster greater intellectual development as well as provide stronger models of achievement that inspire their children to attain the same as the parents. Compared to working class homes which are more likely to contain extreme levels of poverty, poor housing, social tension and distress. These factors all "undermine a child's capacity to deal positively with the demands of schooling" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 64). Motivation and ability influence educational attainment but socio-economic status influences the psychological experience of students.

Another influential factor comes from the world view the middle and working classes take on. For example, the middle class generally emphasises and values independent achievement and personal advancement whereas the working class typically emphasizes collective outlook. As a result, working class students may develop a group solidarity in the classroom towards rejecting a teacher's attempt to encourage them to work harder and may view the student who strives to work hard as a betrayer. Whereas middle class students see competition as a challenge which pushes them to achieve more. This world view can further increase the discrepancy between student achievement and ultimately increase the socioeconomic gap even more. These are just a few notions as to the differences in student achievement from the socio-economic gap. These differences ultimately lead to educational disadvantages (which stem from social and cultural disadvantages). These educational disadvantages generally occur more prevalently in urban schools as urban areas are more likely to experience poverty and a plethora of other socio-economic problems such as gangs, violence

high dropout rates; which is quite different from the problems that suburban and rural schools face (Orlich et al., 2010).

To combat educational disadvantages, schools have enlisted compensatory education programs which are established to meet the needs of said student population. They provide a number of resources and strategies to help ensure that disadvantaged students don't get caught in the vicious cycle of low motivation and underachievement. It is important for effective educators to understand the discrepancies between the various socioeconomic classes and what comes of these variations. Once identified teachers have a better understanding of how to help and what each student needs in order to thrive and succeed. Rather than becoming upset with the different behavioral issues or academic shortcomings, effective educators seek to identify the root cause and strive to help break the cycle, which ultimately uplifts students to achieve what they never thought they could.

Gender

There has been much discussion on today's research about the difference between gender and sex. In this section it should be noted that gender/sex will be combined to discuss the biological differences in the classroom between males and females. Just as stated above, effective teachers strive for culturally relevant content showcasing and incorporating many viewpoints and achievements from various cultures; the same should be true for males and females. Most of the time women are "shortchanged by educational materials" and there are several signs of gender bias in today's classroom discussed by Orlich et al. (2010). First off females tend to be vastly underrepresented in textbooks and in stories used in school, males outnumber females about six to one in different folktales. Secondly, male activities are generally discussed at length and more in depth in textbooks compared to women's activities. Thirdly,

boy-oriented books generally receive more attention and awards than female-oriented books. Lastly, boys are generally portrayed as heroes where girls are shown as dependents. Studies have shown that boys typically receive more praise and criticism from teachers than females, and that females tend to receive neutral reactions from teachers. Overall, it has been shown that teachers tend to expect less from girls which lead to them developing 'learned helplessness' (Orlich et al., 2010).

There is no doubt that there are differences between boys and girls, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. However, men and women compliment each other to form a productive and successful society. Effective educators should showcase the importance of each gender and should strive to teach with instructional equality (for all discussed differences above including now, gender). Gender equality can be promoted in a number of ways in each classroom. Teachers should call on girls as often as boys, rotate classroom responsibilities and leadership roles between both genders, assign the same difficulty of problems to boys and girls, seek to include more stories about women in their content field, assign research reports on women's contributions to the studied topic, place equal number of girls and boys in small discussion groups, model reflection to make sure both genders are treated equally (Orlich et al., 2010).

General Practices

As one can tell there are many differences and vast diversity within each classroom. Not only with ability but also motivation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and gender. For each component strategies have been given but overall these practices by Clark (2000) should be common in every classroom to promote equality. 1) Make sure students are welcomed by yourself and other students. Encourage students to talk with one another. Make sure no student is

isolated and that students do not self-segregate according to gender or race. 2) Use instructional materials that are inclusive, not exclusive. 3) Make sure all students have equal access to and use of equipment. 4) Expect a mutually respectful and welcoming environment. Each student is different and comes from a different background, which means they see the world differently than the teacher and their colleagues. Effective teachers should always strive to treat each student equally, yet understanding where they come from and what specifically they need. Some may need more than others and effective teachers strive to fulfill the needs of each student as well as push them forward to achieve more.

CHAPTER III: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Summary

Effective teaching can be hard to define, however in essence effective teachers set goals and objectives and strive to reach them - not only for themselves but in their efforts to help students achieve. Teachers can make a difference in a child's world and an effective teacher can create a lasting impact that will improve a student's life for years down the road. In this thesis, effective teaching was broken down into two parts - qualities and practices.

Amongst the five qualities of effective teaching, relational showed to have the greatest impact on student achievement. Teachers should strive to be positive, compassionate, and empathetic all the while cultivating trust, respect and a good rapport with their students. Next, effective teachers are communicative. They understand the psychological benefits in their positive verbal and nonverbal communication with their students. They clearly articulate their expectations, content and subject matter, as well as feedback directly to students so the student can improve from their mistakes. Effective teachers communicate early and often with student families as well as with their colleagues to generate new and better ideas. Following this concept is intelligence. There is a multitude of intelligences, including but not limited to: verbal/linguistic, logical, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Through these various methods of intelligence teachers express and articulate their subject matter directly with students by demonstrating deep pedagogical knowledge in how they go about doing so. Another quality of effective teachers is professionalism. This includes demonstrating integrity as well as being ethical, consistent, committed and above all displaying servant leadership. Finally, effective educators have a growth mindset. They are constantly

reflecting on how they can improve, keeping an open mind to suggestions from colleagues, evaluating better processes, and they directly model this behavior to their students.

There are many practices and strategies that effective educators can implement to impact student achievement. In this thesis four areas were highlighted: classroom management, instruction, assessment and accounting for student differences. Classroom management is the most prevalent as it can dictate the efficiency and flow of class. Many times when students misbehave it is "often simply a reaction to ineffective teaching or to behavior by the teacher that is felt to be unfair, which serves to undermine their respect for the teacher" (Kyriacou, 2009, p. 109). Effective teachers implement democratic discipline in maintaining order within the classroom by creating norms that everyone adheres to and "exercising the least amount of power necessary to accomplish the desired academic results and maintain essential classroom norms" (Orlich et al. 2010, p. 175). Following effective classroom management, teachers need to implement effective instruction. First they need to understand how students learn and the three sections of the learning process: reception, short term memory and long term memory. Upon understanding how students' minds operate they can apply a variety of instructional methods and have a more engaging teacher exposition accompanied by academic work. Next the practice of assessing comes into play. In this case each educator needs to identify the purpose as well as the goal for their assessments while making sure their instruction directly aligns with their assessments. There are many variations teachers can use to assess students in a multitude of areas. Lastly, effective educators need to account for student differences. Students can differ in their ability, motivation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and gender just to name a few. It is up to each educator to appropriately support each student.

Limitations of Research

There was a vast pool of data and research available about effective teaching. However, this abundance - at times - was counterproductive as it created paralysis by analysis. It was often difficult to narrow down common qualities and practices as there were so many listings of different researchers who had various results. Some also had different definitions of effectiveness (as discussed earlier) as well as some who had no definition at all. Different studies had different age groups, different subject areas, different countries and continents. Finding common themes across the literature, that are applicable to most if not all teachers, was the most challenging aspect of this thesis. However, I felt the qualities and practices listed and discussed hold true no matter the age or demographic of one's students.

Personal Application

As a young educator, I find myself constantly learning, adapting and improving in efforts to be the best teacher I can possibly be. When it came time to choose a thesis topic I wanted to research something that was not only applicable directly to myself but to as many other educators as possible, no matter their grade level or content area. Going through my own education journey in becoming a teacher, I felt there was an absolutely overwhelming amount of information thrown my way about how to become a good teacher. It was all pertinent and relevant information but it was simply too much. I wanted to uncover, for myself as well as for other educators, a handful of specific yet effective qualities to work on and effective practices to implement in our classrooms. I essentially wanted to summarize what it means to be an effective teacher.

Professional Application and Importance

I know first hand the impact an effective teacher can have on a student, as I myself have had a plethora of excellent teachers and coaches in my own life that have made me who I am today. The research conducted for this thesis paints a picture of what it means to be an effective teacher across content areas and grade levels. My hope would be to share this knowledge with colleagues and administrators not only in my own school but around my state, country and with educators around the world. As Stronge (2010, p. 1) stated, "Effective teachers equals student achievement" it is clear the importance of effective teachers as they have a direct impact on student growth and success. This means schools and districts and departments need to invest in developing quality, effective teachers that can not only improve students cognitive abilities but also impact them holistically.

Conclusion

Education is one of the most important aspects to any society but sadly it is not always regarded that way. Schools and teachers face a number of different challenges and obstacles that must be overcome. The variety of student differences each teacher encounters gets more and more diverse each year. This is all the reason why effective schools need to develop effective teachers. Effective teachers will find ways to develop their students no matter what walk of life they come from. They develop them academically, emotionally, socially, mentally, physically and more. These students go on to become members of society that produce offspring who will also repeat the same cycle. We, as educators, are not just teaching for our students but for our students' children as well as our society as a whole. When education is viewed from a macro lens I think many people embrace the need for effective teachers more seriously, as it can affect generations to come. One teacher can change the course of a life which ultimately changes the

courses of many lives. Effective teachers strive to be relational, communicative, intelligent, professional, and have a growth mindset. They desire to implement effective practices regarding classroom management, instruction, assessment and accounting for student differences. We as teachers owe it to our students, communities, countries and the world to be the best possible version of ourselves. We do not simply just teach but we impact lives.

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