

The academic benefits of a structured classroom environment

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The Academic Benefits of a Structured room Environment A significant number of academicians are of the view that a structured physical arrangement of a classroom serves as a powerful tool in facilitating instruction and maintaining effective communication between the teacher and the students. Research has shown that a predictable classroom environment with clear expectations provides the students with a safe, supportive infrastructure that not only promotes academic success but also prevents behavioral problems. (MacAulay, 1990; Walker, Colvin,&Ramsey, 1995; Walker & Walker, 1991)

Preparing the emotional base of the classroom where-in the students are more open to the academic curriculum is as important as structure in spatial arrangements. By setting clear academic and behavioral expectations, the teacher helps the students understand the relationship between an action and its consequence. This helps in avoiding confusion due to miscommunication, thus increasing academic productivity. Some tried and tested methods in building structure in the classroom to increase academic success are:

1. Creating a familiar environment with built-in routines. Students know the rules, schedules and routines and know what to expect. This puts them at ease and builds a sense of security in them.
2. Clearly explaining the rules regarding respect for others, property and assignment completion to the students with constant reminders makes the students more aware of what is expected from them.
3. Having realistic consequences for the student's actions that are consistently and firmly enforced inspires them to make better choices. The

inherent lesson is to teach students that they can control life consequences by controlling their behavior.

4. Establishing clear cut expectations and directions . Students function better when they know what is expected from them. Probability of completion of assignments increases when precise directions are given for completing every assignment and when students know exactly how the teacher will be assessing their projects.

5. Giving constant feedbacks during large tasks and break-up of large tasks into smaller manageable ones increases success rate for completion especially with young children.(Zeiger, volume2, number2).

With a million definitions and explanations in research books and web sites of what is meant by structure in a classroom , one can safely conclude that it might not mean the same to different people. When contemplating about structure, some might conjure up a vision of passive, docile children sitting in rows desperately focusing on the teacher standing in front of them, while others might not arrive at quite such a literal translation. They might argue that structure need not necessarily mean rigidity and tradition. It can be both dynamic and stimulating when viewed in terms of structure in communication, expectations and rules.(Zeiger, Volume2, Number2).

Whatever the definition, t cannot be denied that structure in classrooms is one of the most critical elements of success. It is clearly up to the teacher to interpret the different elements of structure and modify them if needed according to any given situation to promote a healthy and supportive learning environment for young minds.

Works Cited

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