

12 Ways to Eliminate Monkey Business in the Classroom

Much of what we are about involves finding ways to reach ALL kids and involve students in the leaning experience. If students are involved and engaged in learning, they won't be as likely to become distracted and create issues in your classroom. The following ideas will help you eliminate monkey business in the classroom and include all your students in the learning process.

1. In addition to lecture, present class information in a variety of ways to include more than just the verbal/linguistic learners.
2. Teach students effective study and review techniques. Model effective study strategies during class study time.
3. Explore ways to include all students in learning by pairing or grouping slower learners and fast burners together or in groups with your average students.
4. Teach and model memory strategies such as mnemonics, memory games, visualizations, and rhyming. Limit rote memory and worksheet activities.
5. Assign fewer worksheets. Make sure that worksheets you do use employ appropriate font sizes and include adequate white space.
6. Encourage the use of gel pens or color markers on assignments and in notebooks.
7. Consider all learning styles when planning whole class presentations. Look for ways to help students challenge themselves without losing those who are less capable.
8. Use size 14 pt. fonts, minimum, on all handouts and provide enough white space for comfortable reading. Use at least a 24 pt. font on your overheads so that students can see clearly from anywhere in the classroom.
9. Only use the textbook publisher's version of unit tests after proofreading to see whether you've covered all that material. Prepare your tests BEFORE developing your lesson plans. Never use last year's version of a test without matching it up to this year's lesson plan first.
10. Give students many opportunities to move. Incorporate structured movement activities in your lessons and have students practice getting back to their seats efficiently.
11. Move students who have trouble up front to more effectively monitor their progress. Take the time to 'notice' each student in the classroom throughout the lesson.
12. Do not embarrass students by using their poor work or disorganized materials as an example for the rest of the class. Also, remember that praising some students in front of everyone can be embarrassing. Be tactful when dealing with these issues.

If you do all these things, you will minimize monkey business in the classroom and students will reach higher behavioral and academic standards.

About the Author



Susan Fitzell is a nationally recognized speaker and author of several educational resource books. She has over two decades of experience with differentiated instruction, teaching youth with special needs, students with behavioral and anger management issues, and students who experience bullying. Susan's company, AIMHI Educational Programs, focuses on building caring school communities.

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