

MOTIVATION & DISCIPLINE

Middle and High School
Instrumental Ensembles

Understanding Teenagers

- * In transition from childhood to adulthood
- * Tension of both accepting and rejecting adulthood at the same time often becomes love/hate relationship with parents and teachers
- * Leads to increased reliance on peers and need for peer acceptance
- * Are developing their very important *self-image*

Motivating Teenagers

Possibilities in Ensembles:

1. Service awards
2. Group uniforms for public performance
3. Let student invest, buying inst, etc.
4. Names of all members in the program
5. Involve students in the operation=committees
6. Make a recording
7. Have the ensemble be successful (give them information to judge what is successful)

Teacher Attitude

- * Since, in music, we are dealing closely with feeling (affective) it requires a higher degree of pupil-teacher rapport than other classes.
- * Students will not try to improve if they hear nothing but criticism.
- * The teacher should show a basic optimism about the students' ability level.
- * Be diplomatic when correcting-try to say something good as well.
- * Let students know that mistakes are part of being human.
- * A teacher can be firm with high expectations and still show optimism about the groups' success.

Membership Problems

- * Be sure the reason you have for wanting a band with good instrumentation is apparent to all: *We need a group with sufficient variety and size so that all can have a better educational experience.* (e.g. An orchestra without violas and basses is like a football team without guards and tackles)
- * The most effective way to get students to join is to have a successful organization.

Membership Building

1. Meet returning students before the school year begins.
2. Work with principals, curriculum people, counselors for schedule changes where possible.
3. Talk with the students and invite with enthusiasm. Students like to feel that they are being recruited-helps their self-image.
4. Ask present members for leads on other students.
5. Make the first rehearsal a successful and pleasant experience. Save syllabi and other logistical matters for later.
6. Try to keep the membership drive open for one week only and then work with what you have.

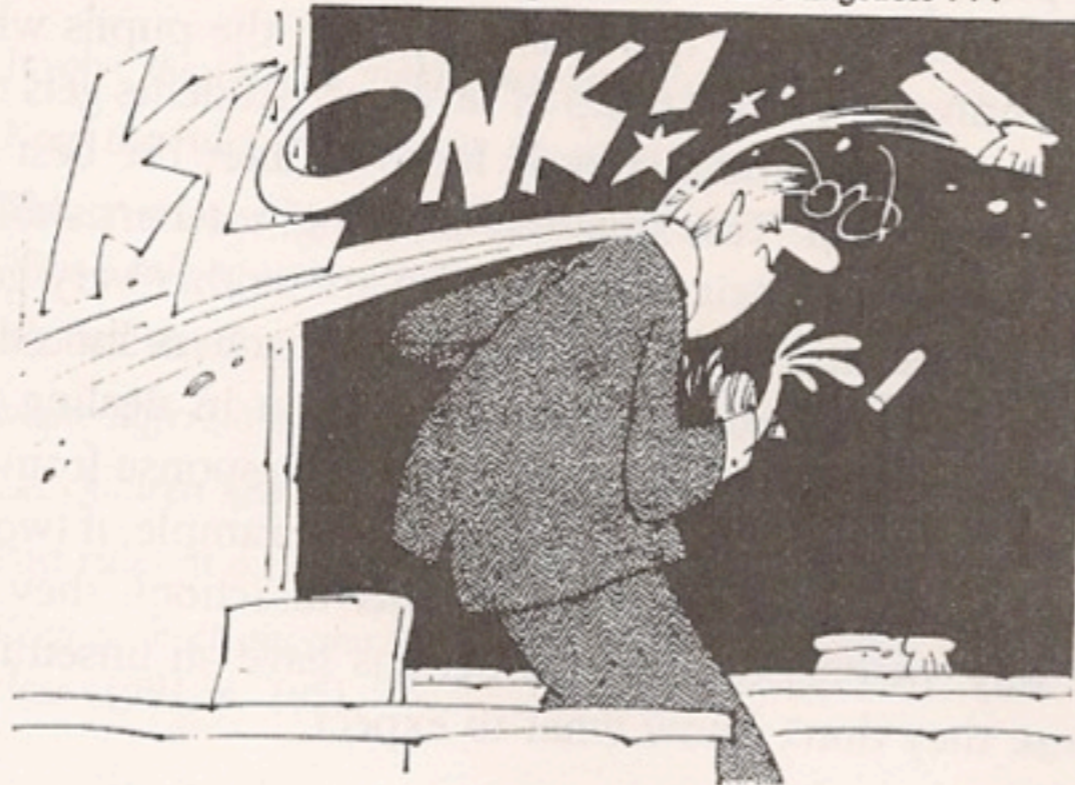
Discipline and Teaching

MISTAKEN SUPPOSITIONS

- * Teaching is positive, discipline is negative
- * A teacher should not have to “teach” students to behave, they should know better.
- * Social skills should be taught by parents, we should not have to do it
- * Bad behavior should just be tolerated since that is the way kids are
- * Time is wasted when we deal with discipline problems

THE PROBLEM

The kids in your class are disrespectful and unmanageable . . .



THE WRONG APPROACH

All right . . . I've got all day, and all night! Either the person who threw that eraser admits it, or this entire class will sit here till **Midnight**, if necessary! I've had it with you kids!

You don't study! Most of you are going to flunk anyway! And none of you have an appreciation for the marvelous opportunity that's being given you here to prepare for later life! You're a bunch of lazy slobs and I'm fed up with the whole darn lot of you!

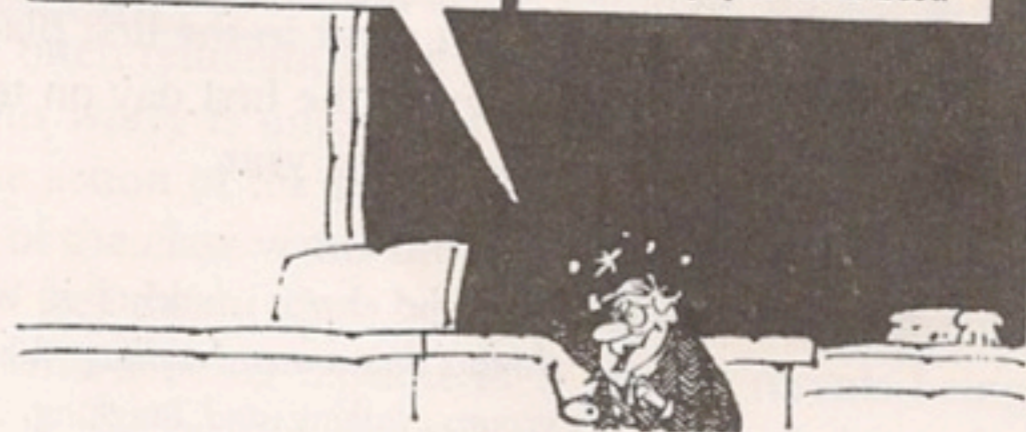


THE MAD APPROACH

One . . . one of you just hit me on the head with . . . an eraser!!

Please don't be short with me! I know my faults—that I'm not qualified to teach this course, and my methods are old-fashioned! Help me to find myself! Just tell me what you want to study! Teach me how to teach you!

I need this job! I've got a wife and kids! So please don't express your contempt for me by throwing erasers! The Principal might see it and fire me! Tell me what to do! You're the students Naturally, you know best!



Developing Desirable Behavior in Class

1. Reinforce good behavior, withhold reinforcement for bad. Reinforcers can be words, looks, granting privileges having to do with music, etc.
2. Work on correcting specific actions, not “You have a bad attitude.”
3. Be positive-praise for good things often.
4. Be consistent and mean what you say.
5. Involve the class in developing guidelines for behavior.
6. Do not be afraid that you will be disliked by the class for dealing with problems.
7. Appeal to students’ desire to be adults (connect maturity and good behavior)
8. Remain calm and rational (10 seconds silence?)

Problem Areas in Music

- * TALKING:

Do not give suggestions or directions to the class if some students are talking.

- * INABILITY TO PARTICIPATE: (sore throat or finger, broken instrument, lost music):

Student must report this BEFORE class, then sit in ordinary place participating as much as possible. NO other homework or being excused from class.

- * GUM CHEWING, SLOUCHING: Wastebasket on way in, stand often.

- * ATTENDANCE:

Follow school policies for in school.

For out of school time performances:

Students must know that this is part of the course requirements.

Students and parents must be notified well in advance (and often) (Newsletter email to parents?)

Attendance Conflicts

* WITH SPORTS, PLAYS, OTHER CLASS ACTIVITIES:

1. Get to know the other teachers, coaches, before problems
2. Work directly with the coach or other teacher. Don't let student decide.
3. Be understanding but firm
4. Be willing to compromise in good faith
5. Have a policy in place:
 - a. Student may miss a rehearsal for a game or play or other class trip.
 - b. Students may not miss a rehearsal for a practice (may come a few minutes late, however, or come in sports clothes)
 - c. Students may not miss a performance for a game. (Try to avoid this by careful scheduling. Let all know that there are far fewer concerts than games. Don't get into which is more important.)

Handling Problems in Class

* MINOR DISTURBANCES

1. Stop talking, look at student, perhaps short reminder of rules
2. If persistent, deal with outside of class
3. If many students are disturbing, **10 seconds silence (no movement)**

* PERSISTENT RULE VIOLATORS

1. Friendly private conference outside of class (avoids giving troublemaker class attention)
2. Be honest, stress difference between liking student and what he/she did.

* SERIOUS PROBLEMS

1. Work with principal, counselor.
2. Be careful about just lowering grade, since often these students don't care.
3. Under certain circumstances, remove from class since membership is a privilege
 - a. Document all dealings with the student up to this point.

ASSIGNMENT

Write your own procedure for dealing with the following problems:

1. Student forgot instrument.
2. Student forgot music.
3. Student didn't practice as assigned.
4. General talking when working with another section.
5. Percussionists hitting each other when not playing.
6. Student talking back to you when corrected.
7. Student tells you the day of the concert that he/she can't come tonight because parent needs him/her to babysit.