



Helping
Students



Motivate



Themselves

Practical Answers to
Classroom Challenges

An **Eye On Education** Book

LARRY FERLAZZO

Helping Students Motivate Themselves

Practical Answers to Classroom Challenges

Larry Ferlazzo

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
New York London

First published 2011 by Eye On Education

Published 2013 by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © 2011 Taylor & Francis

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notices

No responsibility is assumed by the publisher for any injury and/or damage to persons or property as a matter of products liability, negligence or otherwise, or from any use of operation of any methods, products, instructions or ideas contained in the material herein.

Practitioners and researchers must always rely on their own experience and knowledge in evaluating and using any information, methods, compounds, or experiments described herein. In using such information or methods they should be mindful of their own safety and the safety of others, including parties for whom they have a professional responsibility.

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ferlazzo, Larry.

Helping students motivate themselves : practical answers to classroom challenges / by Larry Ferlazzo.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-1-59667-181-2

1. Motivation in education. 2. Effective teaching. 3. Classroom management. I. Title.

LB1065.F47 2011

371.102—dc22

2011006834

ISBN: 978-1-596-67181-2 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-317-93026-6 (ebk)

Also Available from EYE ON EDUCATION

**The Passion-Driven Classroom:
A Framework for Teaching and Learning**

Angela Maiers and Amy Sandvold

Battling Boredom: 99 Strategies to Spark Student Engagement

Bryan Harris

ENGAGING Teens in Their Own Learning:

8 Keys to Student Success

Paul J. Vermette

What Great Teachers Do *Differently*: 14 Things That Matter Most

Todd Whitaker

Rigor is NOT a Four-Letter Word

Barbara R. Blackburn

**Classroom Motivation from A to Z:
How to Engage Your Students in Learning**

Barbara R. Blackburn

**50 Ways to Improve Student Behavior:
Simple Solutions to Complex Challenges**

Annette Breaux and Todd Whitaker

What Do You Say When...?

Best Practice Language for Improving Student Behavior

Hal Holloman and Peggy H. Yates

**How the Best Teachers Avoid the 20 Most
Common Teaching Mistakes**

Elizabeth Breaux

'Tween Crayons and Curfews: Tips for Middle School Teachers

Heather Wolpert-Gawron

Critical Thinking and Formative Assessments:

Increasing the Rigor in Your Classroom

Betsy Moore and Todd Stanley

But I'm Not a Reading Teacher:

Strategies for Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas

Amy Benjamin

Online Resources

Helping Students Motivate Themselves offers readers several online resources for further research, supplemental materials, and user involvement. For ease of access, these links have been posted on the book's product page on Eye On Education's website: www.routledge.com. From the home page, search by author or book title to locate the page for *Helping Students Motivate Themselves*. Then scroll to the bottom of the page and click on **Online Resources** for an index of easily clickable links.

Free Downloads

Many of the tools discussed and displayed in this book are also available on the Routledge website as Adobe Acrobat files. Permission has been granted to purchasers of this book to download these tools and print them.

You can access these downloads by visiting www.routledge.com/9781596671812 and click on the Free Downloads tab.

Index of Free Downloads

1.1. Semester Goal Form.....	page 9
1.2. Weekly Goal Sheet	page 10
1.5. Sleep Survey: Part One.....	page 25
1.6. Sleep Survey: Part Two.....	page 26
1.7. Helping in the Future Data Set	page 30
2.2. Taking Personal Responsibility Questionnaire.....	page 39
2.3. Taking Personal Responsibility Survey	page 41
2.4. Handouts.....	page 45
3.1. Reflection Card	page 48
3.2. Student Survey	page 55
4.1. Classroom Diagram	page 64
5.2. Improvement Rubric	page 79
5.3. Improvement Rubric Questions.....	page 80
6.1. Introduction Poster	page 91
6.2. "Looking Back" Survey	page 92
7.1. Sequencing Activity Sample.....	page 96
7.2. ARW Class Evaluation Form.....	page 99
7.3. Theory of Knowledge Class Evaluation	page 100
8.1. Transfer Assignment Example	page 118
10.1. Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (from Lowest to Highest, with Examples of Verbs for Objectives)	page 133
10.2. Jobs Cloze	page 137
10.3. Cloze Answer Sheet	page 138
11.1. Important Quality in a Neighborhood.....	page 161
11.2. Neighborhood Research Sheet	page 162
11.3. Neighborhood Field Trip Checklist	page 163

This Page is intentionally left blank

Meet the Author

Larry Ferlazzo teaches English and Social Studies at Luther Burbank High School in Sacramento, California. He has written two previous books, *Building Parent Engagement in Schools* (with coauthor Lorie Hammond) and *English Language Learners: Teaching Strategies That Work*.

He writes a popular education blog at <http://Larryferlazzo.edublogs.org> and has won numerous awards, including the Leadership for a Changing World Award from the Ford Foundation. He also was the Grand Prize Winner of the International Reading Association Award for Technology and Reading and was given The Education Partnership Award by the College of Education at California State University, Sacramento.

His articles on education policy appear regularly in the *Washington Post*, *Teacher Magazine*, and *The Huffington Post*. In addition, his work has appeared in publications such as *The New York Times*, *Educational Leadership*, *Social Policy*, and *Language Magazine*.

Larry was a community organizer for nineteen years prior to becoming a public school teacher.

He is married and has three children and two grandchildren.

This Page is intentionally left blank

Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank my family—Stacia, Rich, Shea, Ava, Nik, Karli, and, especially, my wife, Jan—for their support. In addition, I need to express my appreciation to Kelly Young at Pebble Creek Labs and my colleagues at Luther Burbank High School, including Katie Hull Sypnieski and Principal Ted Appel, and many other teachers there who have taught the lessons you'll find in this book and improved upon them. Last, but certainly not least, a big thank you goes to Burbank students, from whom I have learned so much.

This Page is intentionally left blank

Contents

Online Resources.....	iv
Free Downloads.....	v
Meet the Author.....	vii
Acknowledgements	ix
Introduction.....	xvii
Part I Classroom Culture	1
Question 1 How Do You Motivate Students?	3
The Dangers of Incentives and Rewards.....	4
Immediate Actions	5
Praise Effort and Specific Actions.....	5
Build Relationships.....	6
Use Cooperative Learning.....	6
Show Students the Economic and Health Advantages of Doing Well in School.....	6
Creating Opportunities for Students to Help Make Decisions	7
Setting the Stage.....	7
The Brain Is Like a Muscle.....	7
Setting Goals	7
Reviewing Goals Regularly	8
Partner Support	11
Asking Questions	11
Making Goals Public.....	11
Designing Action Plans	12
Getting Enough Sleep.....	12
Recognizing That What Is Being Learned Is Useful	13
“The Brain Is Like a Muscle” Lesson Plan	14
Goal-Setting Lesson Plan.....	19
“Why We Should Sleep More” Lesson Plan	23
Helping in the Future Lesson Plan	27
Question 2 How Can You Help Students See the Importance of Personal Responsibility?.....	32
Immediate Actions	33
Helping Students Develop a Positive Self-Image.....	33
Reminders	33
Writing Exercise to Build Self-Esteem.....	33

Setting the Stage.....	34
Blaming Others Lesson Plan	34
Self-Esteem Lesson Plan.....	34
Blaming Others Lesson Plan.....	34
Self-Esteem Writing Lesson Plan.....	42

Question 3 How Do You Deal With a Student

Who Is Being Disruptive in Class?	46
Immediate Actions	47
Reflection Cards	47
Emphasizing “Positive-Framed” Messages	49
Emphasizing What Students <i>Can</i> Do Instead of What They <i>Can’t</i> Do.....	49
Telling Students That You Are <i>Not</i> Going to Call Their Parents	50
Physical Proximity, Saying “Please,” Compliance Recognition, & Requests Instead of Orders.....	50
Remaining Calm.....	51
Setting the Stage.....	51
Replenishing Glucose.....	51
Asking Students How They Feel During Good Moments.....	51
Stress Balls.....	52
Writing Students a Letter	52
Have Students “Pack Away Their Troubles”	53
Self-Control Lesson Plan.....	53
What if None of These Strategies and Tactics Work?	53
Self-Control Lesson Plan	56

Question 4 How Do You Regain Control of an Out-of-Control Class?

How It Works	63
Beginning the System	66
Using It as a Warmup/Do Now	66
Weaning Students Off the System and Dealing with Reoccurrences	66
Using the System Before a Class Gets Out of Control.....	67

Question 5 How Do You Help Students See

Problems as Opportunities, Not Frustrations?.....	68
Immediate Responses	69
Giving Students Feedback.....	69
Setting the Stage.....	70
Helping Students See Their Own Growth.....	70
Grit	71

Grit & Growth Mindset Lesson Plan	71
Improvement Rubric Lesson Plan.....	76

Question 6 What Are Some Ways You Can Get the Year Off to a Good Start?.....	81
Criteria	82
Building Relationships	82
Set & Enforce High Expectations.....	82
Engaging Lessons with the “Why?” Built into Them.....	82
Assessments.....	83
Connecting with Parents.....	83
First Week Unit Plan.....	83

Question 7 What Can You Do to Help Keep Your Students—and Yourself—Focused at the End of the School Year?.....	93
Introducing the Idea of a Strong Finish.....	94
Engaging Student Projects.....	95
Students’ Own Unit Plan	95
Field Trip—Real and/or Virtual	95
Other Technology Projects.....	97
Other Cooperative Learning Projects.....	97
The Last Few Days of School	97
Celebrate and Appreciate	97
Agitate and Evaluate	98
Student Evaluations of Teachers.....	98
Talking About Themselves	101
Getting a Head Start on Next Year’s Class.....	101
How Can Teachers Stay Energized?	102
“Strong Finish” Lesson Plan	103
Student-Created Unit Lesson Plan.....	106

Part II Classroom Instruction.....113

Question 8 What Are the Best Things You Can Do to Maximize the Chances of a Lesson Being Successful?.....	115
Elements to Consider, Including in Lesson Plans.....	116
Strategic Introductions	116
Novelty.....	116
Relevance.....	117
Written and Verbal Instructions	119
Modeling.....	119

Activate Prior Knowledge.....	120
Translating.....	120
Movement.....	120
Choices.....	120
Minimize Lecture & Maximize Cooperative Learning.....	121
Wait Time.....	121
Visuals.....	122
Explicit Pattern Seeking.....	123
Fun.....	124
Feedback.....	124
Formative Assessment.....	125
Reflection, Review, & Summarization.....	125

Question 9 How Can You Best Use a Few

Minutes of “Leftover” Time in Class?	126
Review.....	126
Summarize.....	127
Relate.....	127
Reflect.....	127
Intellectually Challenge.....	129
Technologically Engage.....	129
Read.....	130
The Importance of Good Endings.....	130

Question 10 How Can You Help Students

Develop Higher-Order Thinking Skills?	131
Immediate Steps.....	134
Helping Students Develop Metacognition.....	134
Asking Questions.....	134
Teachers Modeling Their Thinking Process.....	135
Setting the Stage.....	136
Graphic Organizers.....	136
Use a Bloom’s Taxonomy Chart in Your Lesson Planning.....	138
Incorporating Inductive Learning.....	139
Cooperative Learning.....	141
Explicitly Teach the Revised (or Original) Bloom’s Taxonomy.....	141
Bloom’s Taxonomy Lesson Plan.....	142

Question 11 What Are the Best Ways to Incorporate

Cooperative Learning in Your Lessons?	148
A Few “Universal” Guidelines.....	149
Cooperative Learning Strategies.....	152
Think-Pair-Share or Think-Write-Pair-Share.....	152

Jigsaw	153
Project-Based Learning & Problem-Based Learning	154
Neighborhood Comparison Lesson Plan	155

Question 12 What Are the Easiest Ways to Use Educational Technology in the Classroom?..... 165

Very Easy Ways to Integrate Technology in the Classroom	166
Using a Computer Projector	166
Using a Document Camera.....	167
Easily Creating an Authentic Audience for Student Work	167
To Make It Easily Viewable by Other Classmates	167
To Make It Easily Viewable by Others Beyond the Classroom	167
Annotating the Web	169
Engaging Reluctant Readers	169
Searching the Web.....	169
Organizing Research.....	169
Easy Ways to Integrate Technology in the Classroom	170
Videotaping Student Presentations	170
Connecting With an Online Sister Class—Ideally in Another Country	170
Participating in & Creating Virtual Field Trips.....	170
How Should Students Work with Computers?.....	171

Question 13 How Can You Best Use Learning Games in the Classroom?..... 173

“Low-Tech” Games	175
Games Using Small Whiteboards.....	175
Games That Require Students to Create Materials	176
Online Games.....	176
Games Where Teachers and/or Students Can Create the Content.....	176
Games Where the Content has Already Been Created	177

Afterword	179
References	181

This Page is intentionally left blank

Introduction

This book comes out of my seven years of teaching at Luther Burbank High School in Sacramento, California, and out of my previous nineteen years working as a community organizer.

It comes out of my recognizing that for me to be as effective as I wanted to be as a teacher, I needed to identify ways that I could help my students both learn content knowledge and develop higher-order thinking skills and the attributes that good community leaders must have, including self-motivation, personal responsibility, and perseverance. Increasingly, research shows that these qualities are critical for success in careers, college, and in life (Hampel, 2010). In fact, a 2011 review of more than 200 studies covering nearly 300,000 students found that simple lessons taught by teachers covering these kinds of topics resulted in substantial student academic gains (Sparks, 2011).

And this book comes out of my understanding that developing these kinds of attributes needs to be done in conjunction with students gaining the academic skills they need to learn. In most of our schools today, for better or worse, both teachers and their students are primarily held accountable for teaching and learning academic skills—no matter how important we believe other life skills might be.

This book shares classroom-tested strategies to accomplish both goals simultaneously.

Most, although not all, chapters follow a similar structure. They begin with a question relating to a common classroom problem, which is followed by an imaginary complaint/concern voiced by a teacher. Even though it is “imaginary,” I’d bet most of us have either said or thought something like each concern at some point during our teaching career.

Next is a section on immediate responses that teachers can take *today* to deal with the issue. Each response is accompanied by research supporting it. Almost all of the suggestions support developing higher-order thinking skills and enhancing self-motivation, personal responsibility, and perseverance. However, there are a few ideas sprinkled throughout the book that, while not necessarily designed to further those specific qualities, don’t undermine them either—I have just found these ideas to be effective. As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in “Self-Reliance”: “A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds...” (Emerson, n.d.).

A “Setting the Stage” section comes next and provides ideas (and supporting research) on what teachers can do to provide longer-term solutions.

The final section of each chapter includes detailed lesson plans, including reproducible plans, to implement some of the “Setting the Stage” recommen-

dations. Each lesson plan includes the *Common Core Anchor State Standards for English Language Arts, Grades 6–12* (“The Standards,” 2010) that are covered by the lesson. A webpage containing all Internet links for use with these lessons can be found both at my blog (<http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/>) and at the Eye On Education website (<http://www.routledge.com/>).

The lessons have specific suggestions for incorporating technology into the activities. Even though each lesson has a different technology suggestion, most of the suggestions are appropriate for all of the lessons in the book. Those ideas, along with the activities recommended in the free-standing chapter on using technology in the classroom in Question 12, provide a wealth of different ways to effectively use technology to enhance student learning.

This book is not designed as a road map; rather, it should serve as a compass to point us and our students in the right direction.

Part I

Classroom Culture

This Page is intentionally left blank