

18 Ways to Warm Up A Chilly Climate

Classroom Strategies to Ensure Equity

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Examine Your Teaching Behavior

How do you use-

- Praise for a specific achievement
- Criticism or evaluation
- Remediation or correction
- Acceptance

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Use Praise

- Use praise as a deliberate strategy
- Couple with feedback about
 - Quality of work
 - What if anything needs to be done
- Praise good answers
- Recognize all students' talents

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Give Criticism in the Form of a Question

- Ask the student what the outcome would have been had s/he considered something else
- Include praise along with criticism
- Include specific ways to improve
- Engage students in solving their mistakes not just recognizing them

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Don't Always Call on the First Hand That Goes Up

- Tell all students to think and not raise their hands
- Ask students to write down their answers
- Then ask students to indicate their willingness to respond
- More students will participate when given the time to formulate a response

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Coach All Students

- Conveys the belief that the student is bright enough to say more
- Use questions such as "Why do you think that is?"
- Use statements such as "Tell me more about this."
- Ask questions that have no wrong answer

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Look at All Students When Asking a Question

- Eye contact is a simple engagement tool
- Eye contact can indicate an expectation that the student should respond
- Be sure to look at all your students not just those you expect to respond

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Listen Attentively to All Students

- Even if their answer is wrong
- Even if they speak slowly or hesitantly
- Even if they speak English as a second language
- Use strong body language to indicate attentiveness such as
 - Nodding
 - Gesturing
 - Eye contact

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Intervene When Students Show Disrespect to One Another

- When you ignore it you condone it
- Zero tolerance in your classroom
- Expect and model respect
- Use as a teachable moment for those involved
- Handle quickly and quietly to keep situation from escalating

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Do Not Allow Students to Interrupt Each Other

- Interruption indicates a lack of value for the other person's contributions
- Examine your own interruptions of students
- Male students often interrupt female students
- Give students time to respond

Use Small Groups to Foster Cooperative Learning

- Encourage everyone to participate
- Teacher manage group arrangements
- Attempt to have evenly mixed gender groups
- Don't isolate one or girl or one boy
- Rotate leadership responsibilities

Avoid Comments, Jokes and Stories that Denigrate Any Group

- Most jokes about women demean females
- Comments that lump all males or females together can create a chilly climate
- Single out individuals for praise or feedback

Give Credit Where Credit is Due

- Be sure to give credit to the individuals who deserve it
- When in doubt don't give credit
- Giving credit is a very powerful form of praise
- Encourage students to identify the successes of their peers and bring it to your attention

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Judge Contributions by Content

- Judge contributions to the class by the content of the idea rather than the presentation style of the student
- Do not assume that students who tend to be self-deprecating are less intelligent than those who are more self-confident
- Listen to the message not the messenger

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Use Parallel Terminology When Describing Both Genders

- Use inclusive terms when communicating
 - Men and women
 - Girls and boys
 - She or he
 - Flight attendant, not stewardess
 - Fire fighter, not Fireman
- Doing so communicates a concern about gender equity
- Use of the generic "he" or "guys" is viewed by listeners as pertaining to males only

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Do Not Group Students By Gender

- Single gender groupings often imply that females are not as qualified as males
- Mixed gender groups are the most effective
- Reinforces sex stereotyping
- Single sex CTE classes is a violation of Title IX

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Do Not Make Seemingly Helpful Remarks that Disparage Females' Abilities

- Don't reinforce stereotypes based on gender
- In assessment situations this can trigger "stereotype threat" and decrease the identified groups performance

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Ask Males and Females the Same Kinds of Questions

- Level of questioning sends strong messages as to your expectations
- More complex critical thinking questions infer higher expectations
- Track your question interaction levels with students to see if you have any bias patterns

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Call All Students By Name

- Know the names of all your students and use them
- Use parallel names, such as all first names or all last names
- Calling males by their last names and females by their first names implies that the females are seen as less serious students
- Don't use terms of endearment – "honey" – when calling on students

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WARM UP THE CHILLY CLIMATE

REFERENCES

From Eighteen Ways to Warm Up The Chilly Climate by Bernice R. Sandler, Senior Scholar, Women's Research and Education Institute, 1350 Connecticut Ave., NW Suite 850, Washington, DC 20036, www.wreinstudies.org. Sandler, who speaks and writes about the chilly climate and related issues, can be reached at bsandler@wreinstudies.org.

To learn more about ways to warm-up the chilly climate and to find resources regarding gender equity in career and technical education go to www.stemequitypipeline.org

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