

Working with My Teachers - Monday 9/23

The Basics	Objectives	Start Here
Grade 9 - 12 Theme: Support Network Duration: 15-20 Minutes	Students learn how to work to create a partnership with their teachers.	In order to get the most out of a class, it is important to create a partnership between students and teachers.

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES:

1. Team Building Activity: **A Shrinking Vessel**
 - a. This game requires a good deal of strategy in addition to team work. Its rules are deceptively simple: The entire group must find a way to occupy a space that shrinks over time, until they are packed creatively like sardines. You can form the boundary with a rope, a tarp or blanket being folded over or small traffic cones. (Skills: Problem-solving; teamwork)
2. Students read about working with teachers, including
 - a. Communicate
 - b. Be Responsible
 - c. Be a leader
 - d. Get to know your teacher
3. Use Marking the Text strategy with students to read the article "Getting Along with Your Teachers".
4. Students list at least four ways they will begin to develop a relationship with their teacher
5. Students make a plan to begin to work on one of their ideas.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

1. Provide your own experience building partnerships with students.
2. In groups, allow students to brainstorm how to create partnerships with teachers
3. Create a list with the class on the benefits of creating partnerships with teachers

ADDITIONAL ESSAY

1. Describe your favorite teacher. What makes your relationship productive?

What is it?

Marking the text is an active reading strategy that asks students to identify information in the text that is relevant to the reading purpose. This strategy has three distinct marks: numbering paragraphs, underlining, and circling.

How do I use it?

Based on the reading purpose, students will use marking the text to identify information as they read. They will begin by numbering the paragraphs they have been asked to read. Then, as they identify information that is relevant to the reading task, they will underline or circle this information, making it easier to locate for notes or discussion.

Even though the reading purpose will determine what students mark, the types of marks should not change. A student's ability to learn and apply a reading strategy relies heavily on the consistency of the strategy. If marking the text is understood to mean any pen or pencil mark on the paper, the student will never learn how this particular strategy aids his or her comprehension of the text.

When should I use it?

A fundamental strategy, marking the text ought to be used whenever students are asked to read academic texts. When students are asked to read arguments, students should underline the author's claims and circle key terms and names of people who are essential to the argument. While reading passages from a textbook, students should underline information that pertains to the reading purpose and circle names, places, and dates that are relevant to the topic being studied.

In the beginning, encourage students to read the text one time before they go back and mark the text while they read it a second time. Eventually, students will become comfortable with this strategy and begin marking the text during their first read.

Why should I use it?

When students mark texts purposefully, they are actively engaged in meaning making. To mark texts effectively, students must evaluate an entire passage and begin to recognize and isolate the key information. Once the text is marked, students will be able to quickly reference information that pertains to the reading purpose. Students might also use their markings to assist in summary writing, to connect ideas presented within the text, or to investigate claims, evidence, or rhetorical devices. Numbering paragraphs is also essential for class discussions. Once paragraphs are numbered, students can easily direct others to those places where they have found relevant information.

Marking the Text¹

AVID Teacher Reference

Number the Paragraphs

- ① Before you read, take a moment and number the paragraphs in the section you are planning to read. Start with the number one and continue numbering sequentially until you reach the end of the text or reading assignment. Write the number near the paragraph indention and circle the number; write it small enough so that you have room to write in the margin.
- ② Like page numbers, paragraph numbers will act as a reference so you can easily refer to specific sections of the text.

Circle Key Terms, Names of People, Names of Places, and or Dates

In order to identify a **key term**, consider if the word or phrase is...

- repeated
- defined by the author
- used to explain or represent an idea
- used in an original (unique) way
- a central concept or idea
- relevant to one's reading purpose

Underline an Author's Claims

A claim is an arguable statement or assertion made by the author. Data, facts, or other backing should support an author's assertion.² Consider the following statements:

- A claim may appear anywhere in the text (beginning, middle, or end)

- A claim may not appear explicitly in the argument, so the reader must infer it from the evidence presented in the text
- Often, an author will make several claims throughout his or her argument
- An author may signal his or her claim, letting you know that this is his or her position

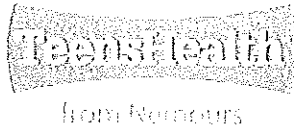
Underline Relevant Information

While reading informational texts (i.e., textbooks, reference books, etc.) read carefully to identify information that is relevant to the reading task. Relevant information might include:

- A process
- Evidence
- Definitions
- Explanations
- Descriptions
- Data/Statistics

¹ Marking the text is a strategy used by the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies at SDSU.

² For more on this definition see Stephen E. Toulmin's, *The Uses of Argument* (11-13).



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Getting Along With Your Teachers

Your algebra teacher wears clothes from 1985 and always mispronounces your name. Your English teacher loves to start classes with pop quizzes. It can be hard to think of these givers of grades as real people. But they eat pizza, watch movies, and enjoy sports on the weekends, just like you.

So how can you get along with your teachers? Here are some tips.

Why Work on Good Relationships With Teachers?

A good relationship with a teacher today may help you in the future. You will need teachers' written recommendations to apply to a college or for a job after high school. And if you're thinking about going into a career in science, who better to ask about the field than your science teacher?

Teachers are often plugged into the community and may be the first to find out about local competitions, activities, or contests. They also may know about grants and scholarships. Sonia's Spanish teacher found out about a contest for exchange program scholarships in Brazil and Spain. Her teacher encouraged and guided her, and Sonia's months and months of work earned her a scholarship as an exchange student.

Teachers are often asked to appoint students to student offices or they may recommend students as volunteers for special community programs. All of these activities can help you get into college or get a good job.

Teachers are another group of adults in your life who can look out for you, guide you, and provide you with an adult perspective. Many are willing to answer questions, offer advice, and help with personal problems.

Developing Good Teacher-Student Relationships

We all have our favorite teachers — those who seem truly interested and treat us as intelligent beings. But what about teachers we don't know as well (or even don't like much)?

You can do lots of things to get a good connection going with your teacher. First, do the obvious stuff: show up for class on time, with all assignments completed. Be alert, be respectful, and ask questions.

Show an interest in the subject. Obviously, your teachers are really interested in their subjects or they wouldn't have decided to teach them! Showing the teacher that you care — even if you're not a math whiz or fluent in French — sends the message that you are a dedicated student.

You can also schedule a private conference during a teacher's free period. Use this time to get extra help, ask questions, inquire about a career in the subject, or talk about your progress in class. You may be surprised to learn that your teacher is a bit more relaxed one-on-one than when lecturing in front of the whole class.

It is possible to try too hard, though. Here are some things to avoid when trying to establish a relationship with your teacher:

- **Not being sincere.** Teachers sense when your only motivation is to get special treatment, a college reference, or a job recommendation.
- **Trying to be teacher's pet.** Your behavior will come off as phony and your classmates may start to resent you.
- **Giving extravagant gifts.** It's OK to offer a small token of appreciation to teachers if they've been helpful to you. But flashy, expensive items could send the wrong message, and a teacher is usually not allowed to accept anything expensive.

Common Teacher-Student Problems

If you're having problems with a teacher, try to figure out why. Do you dislike the subject? Or do you like the subject but just can't warm up to the teacher?

If you don't like the subject being taught, it can affect your relationship with the teacher. Some students say it helps them to think of classes that seem like chores as stepping stones toward a bigger goal, like getting a diploma or going on to college. This allows students to keep the class in perspective.

Other students say they try to find the practical value in classes they don't like. You may hate math, but learning how to calculate averages and percentages can help you in everything from sports to leaving a tip.

If you find a subject hard, talk to your teacher or a parent about extra tutoring. If you find it boring, talk to your teacher (or another favorite teacher, friend, or parent) about ways to see the subject in a different light. Ian constantly fell asleep in his sophomore history class because the past seemed so removed from reality. But things changed when he mentioned his struggle over a project to his homeroom teacher. The teacher talked to Ian and found out that his great-grandfather had fought in World

War II. The teacher suggested Jan use his great-grandfather's letters in his project. Not only did Jan get an A, he also learned a lot about a family member he barely remembered from childhood.

What if you just don't like the teacher? When it comes to working with teachers, personality can come into play just as it can in any relationship. People naturally just get along better with some people than with others — it's impossible to like everyone all the time. Learning to work with people you don't connect with easily is a good skill to have in life, no matter what your goals are.

If you feel at odds with your teacher, pick your battles carefully. Questioning a grade or asking to retake a test once is fine. But second-guessing a teacher's judgment on your grades all the time may annoy him or her. Constantly squabbling over a few points on every assignment can cause friction in your relationship.

Common courtesy and respect are basic building blocks of any relationship. Just as teachers need to be fair and treat everyone equally, students have responsibilities, too. You don't have to like your teacher or agree with what he or she says, but it is necessary to be polite. If you need to be out of school for medical or other reasons, let your teacher know. And it's your responsibility to make up the work from missed classes. Don't expect your teacher to hunt you down or take class time to fill you in.

Just like personal problems can sometimes slow you down, the same is true for your teachers. Job stress, family issues, or health problems are all factors that can affect a teacher's performance, leaving him or her cranky, irritable, or unable to concentrate.

Keep in mind that too much disciplinary action can show up on a student's permanent record. This means that when someone asks for your high school record, they can see the things you did — even if they happened years ago.

What to Do if You Don't Get Along

Before you try to get out of a class to escape a teacher you don't like, here are a few things you can try to make a difficult relationship work:

- Meet with the teacher and try to communicate what you're feeling. Tell him or her what's on your mind, using statements such as, "It embarrasses me in class when I feel like my intelligence is being put down" or "I can't learn in class when I feel like only a few people ever get called on to participate." See if you can work it out between the two of you.
- Ask yourself, "What can I learn from this teacher?" Even if you don't worship his or her personality or lectures, dig deep until you find a subject in which your teacher is very knowledgeable. Focus on that part of the teacher's personality, and use it as a tool for learning. Not only will you gain more knowledge in that subject, but a closer relationship with your teacher may help you understand one another better.
- Talk to students who are doing well in the class and ask them for tips, tools, and a plan of action to get along with the teacher better. Sometimes having a second set of notes can be helpful, so asking a classmate who is willing to share them with you is a great idea. If you're too shy to talk to other students, study their actions and behavior in the classroom and try to follow that lead.
- If you still can't get along, make an appointment with the school guidance counselor, who can offer many tips and suggestions for getting more out of difficult teacher relationships. Sometimes a guidance counselor can act as a mediator between you and the teacher.
- If your relationship problems can't be solved in school, then it's time to tell your parents or guardians. Let them meet with your teacher and try to work it out.

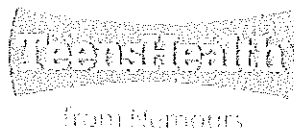
Chances are that you won't encounter physical or verbal abuse (like racist or sexist comments) in the classroom. But if a teacher has done or said anything that makes you uncomfortable, immediately report it to your parents, your guidance counselor, another teacher, the school principal, or an administrator.

Teachers are there for more than just homework, and they know about more than just their subject matter. They can help you learn how to function as an adult and a lifelong learner. Undoubtedly, there will be a few teachers along the way who you'll always remember — and who might change your life forever.

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Llevarse bien con los profesores

Tu profesor de álgebra va vestido con ropa de 1985 y siempre pronuncia mal tu nombre. A tu profesor de inglés le encanta empezar las clases con exámenes sorpresa. Puede ser difícil pensar en estos "repartidores de notas" como en personas reales. Pero los "profes" comen pizza, ven películas y disfrutan practicando deportes los fines de semana, igual que tú.

Entonces, ¿cómo puedes llevarte bien con los profesores? Aquí tienes algunas ideas.

¿Por qué fomentar buenas relaciones con los profesores?

Mantener una buena relación con un profesor en el presente puede ser una gran ayuda el día de mañana. Necesitarás recomendaciones por escrito de los profesores para solicitar una plaza en la universidad o un trabajo cuando acabes la escuela. Si estás pensando en seguir una carrera de ciencias, ¿quién mejor que tu profesor de ciencias para que te informe sobre el tema?

Los profesores a menudo tienen conexiones sociales y pueden ser lo primeros en enterarse de competiciones, actividades y concursos. También pueden tener información sobre becas y subvenciones. La profesora de español de Sonia averiguó que había una convocatoria de becas para un programa de intercambio en Brasil y España. La animó y la orientó, y tras meses y meses de trabajo, Sonia ganó una beca de intercambio.

A menudo se pide a los profesores que designen estudiantes para la oficina de estudiantes o que recomienden estudiantes para trabajos especiales de voluntariado. Todas estas actividades pueden ayudarte a entrar en la universidad o a conseguir un buen trabajo.

Los profesores son otro grupo de adultos en tu vida que puede velar por ti, orientarte y ofrecerte el punto de vista de un adulto. Muchos responderán a tus preguntas, te darán consejos y te ayudarán en tus problemas personales con mucho gusto.

Desarrollar una buena relación profesor-estudiante

Todos tenemos nuestros profesores favoritos, los que nos parece que se interesan de verdad por nosotros y nos tratan como seres inteligentes. ¿Pero qué pasa con los profesores que no conocemos tanto (o que no nos gustan mucho)?

Puedes hacer muchas cosas para mantener una buena relación con tus profesores. En primer lugar, lo más obvio: llegar a clase puntualmente y con todas las tareas terminadas. Estar atento, ser respetuoso y hacer preguntas.

Muestra interés por el tema. Obviamente, a tus profesores les interesa la asignatura que explican, o no habrían decidido enseñar esa asignatura. Si demuestras a tu profesor tu interés —a pesar de que no seas un genio en matemáticas o de que no hables francés con soltura— le transmites que eres un estudiante con interés.

También puedes pedir tener una entrevista personal con un profesor en las horas libres. En estas entrevistas puedes pedir que te explique algo que no entiendas, hacer preguntas, averiguar sobre las salidas profesionales relacionadas con esta materia o hablar de tu evolución en clase. Te sorprenderá comprobar que tu profesor está algo más relajado cuando hablas con él personalmente que cuando está enseñando ante la clase entera.

Sin embargo, es posible esforzarse de un modo equivocado. Éstas son algunas cosas que deberías evitar cuando intentes establecer una relación con tu profesor:

- **No ser sincero.** Los profesores se dan cuenta de cuándo tu única motivación es obtener un trato especial, una referencia para la universidad o una recomendación para un trabajo.
- **Intentar convertirte en el enchufado del profe.** Tu comportamiento puede verse como falso y tus compañeros de clase pueden empezar a sentirse molestos contigo.
- **Dar obsequios excesivos.** Está bien ofrecer pequeñas muestras de aprecio a los profesores si se han mostrado atentos contigo. Pero los regalos ostentosos y caros pueden dar un mensaje equivocado, y normalmente a los profesores no se les permite aceptar nada caro.

Problemas habituales entre profesores y estudiantes

Si tienes problemas con un profesor, intenta averiguar por qué. ¿Te desagrada su asignatura? ¿O te gusta la asignatura pero no te cae bien el profesor?

Si no te gusta la asignatura, esto podría afectar a tu relación con el profesor. Algunos estudiantes dicen que les ayuda pensar en las clases como en tareas que es necesario llevar a cabo para alcanzar un objetivo mayor, como obtener un título o ir a la universidad. Esto les permite relativizar las asignaturas. Otros estudiantes cuentan que intentan encontrar la utilidad práctica de las asignaturas que no les gustan. Puede que odies las mates, pero saber cómo hacer un promedio o calcular un porcentaje puede servirte para todo, desde para los deportes hasta para dejar una propina.

Si una asignatura te resulta difícil, habla con el profesor o con tus padres para que te den clases de refuerzo. Si te parece aburrida, habla con el profesor (o con otro profesor que te guste, con un amigo o tus padres) para que te ayude a ver la asignatura de otras maneras. Ian siempre se dormía en las clases de historia, porque el pasado le parecía algo muy lejano a la realidad. Pero las cosas cambiaron cuando comentó sus dificultades para hacer un trabajo de historia a su tutor. El profesor habló con Ian y éste le contó que su abuelo había luchado en la Segunda Guerra Mundial. El profesor le sugirió a Ian que utilizase las cartas de su abuelo para hacer el trabajo. Ian no sólo sacó un excelente, sino que además descubrió un montón de cosas sobre un miembro de su familia al que apenas recordaba de su infancia.

¿Y si no te gusta el profesor? Al relacionarte con los profesores, la personalidad puede también tener su importancia como en cualquier otra relación. Es normal llevarse mejor con unas personas que con otras; no todo el mundo puede gustarte todo el tiempo. Aprender cómo trabajar con personas con las que no conectas fácilmente es una habilidad que puede ayudarte mucho en la vida, sea cual sea tu objetivo.

Si no te entiendes con tu profesor, por atención en cómo te enfrentas a él. Protestar por una nota o pedir hacer de nuevo un examen está bien una vez. Pero cuestionar siempre las decisiones de tu profesor sobre las notas puede hacer que se moleste. Discutir constantemente algunos aspectos de los trabajos puede provocar una tirantez en vuestra relación.

La educación y el respeto son requisitos básicos en cualquier relación. Del mismo modo que los profesores deben ser justos y tratar de modo equitativo a todos, los estudiantes también tienen responsabilidades. No es necesario que te guste tu profesor ni que estés de acuerdo con lo que diga, pero es importante que seas educado. Si tienes que faltar a la escuela por alguna enfermedad o por otra razón, díselo al profesor. Y es tu responsabilidad recuperar el trabajo de las clases que te pierdas. No esperes que el profesor te persiga o que ocupe el tiempo de la clase para ponerte al día.

Del mismo modo que tus problemas personales puede afectar a tu rendimiento, lo mismo puede ocurrirles a los profesores. El estrés en el trabajo, los problemas familiares o de salud son factores que pueden influir en el rendimiento de un profesor, haciendo que esté malhumorado, irritable o con dificultades para concentrarse.

Ten en cuenta que si eres objeto de demasiadas acciones disciplinarias, eso puede dejar una huella permanente en tu historial. Esto significa que alguien podría pedir tu historial de a escuela y ver las cosas que hiciste, aunque hayan sucedido muchos años atrás.

Qué hacer cuando no te entiendes

Antes de salir de una clase para escapar de un profesor que no te gusta, aquí tienes algunas ideas de cosas que puedes hacer para mejorar la relación:

- Ve a ver al profesor y comunícale cómo te sientes. Dile lo que te pasa utilizando frases como: "Me da vergüenza estar en clase cuando siento como si se estuviera menospreciando mi inteligencia" o "No puedo aprender en clase cuando siento que sólo a unos pocos se les permite participar". Trata de ver cómo podéis encontrar una solución entre los dos.
- Pregúntate: "¿Qué puedo aprender de este profesor?". Aunque no te vuelvan loco su personalidad o sus clases, busca a fondo hasta encontrar un tema en el que tu profesor sea un entendido. Céntrate en esa parte de la personalidad de tu profesor, y utilízala como una herramienta para aprender. No sólo aprenderás más de esa asignatura, sino que tendrás una relación más cercana con el profesor que puede ayudaros a entenderos mejor.
- Habla con los estudiantes a quienes esa asignatura les vaya bien y pídeles que te den consejos, herramientas o un plan de acción para poder llevarte mejor con el profesor. A veces puede ser útil tener unos segundos apuntes, por lo que pedirselos a algún compañero que esté dispuesto a compartirlos contigo es una gran idea. Si eres demasiado tímido como para hablar de esto con otros alumnos, estudia sus actos y su comportamiento en clase y trata de seguir su ejemplo.
- Si sigues sin entenderte bien, pide tener una entrevista con el consejero escolar, que puede darte muchos consejos y sugerencias para mejorar la relación. A veces un consejero puede actuar como mediador entre tú y el profesor.
- Si no puedes resolver tus problemas de relación en la escuela, díselo a tus padres o tutores. Deja que se entrevisten con el profesor e intenten buscar una solución.

Es poco probable que en la clase te encuentres con situaciones de maltrato físico o verbal (como comentarios racistas o sexistas). Pero si un profesor hace o dice algo que hace que te sientas mal, díselo inmediatamente a tus padres, consejero escolar, otro profesor, el director o el subdirector de la escuela.

Los profesores no sólo están para darte deberes para casa, y saben más cosas además de su asignatura. Pueden ayudarte a que aprendas a actuar como un adulto y a que sepas cómo seguir aprendiendo a lo largo de la vida. Sin duda, a algunos de tus profesores los recordarás siempre, e incluso podrían cambiar tu vida.

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