



Organizing and planning the physical learning environment is a critical first step to create a culture of learning. The learning environment must be a positive, safe place for students to be actively engaged, take risks, and be responsible for their own achievement.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

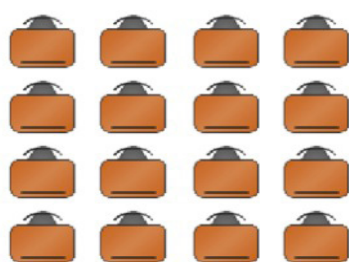
Safe • Accessible
Adjusted to Instructional Purpose
Respect • Rapport
Teacher Enthusiasm

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

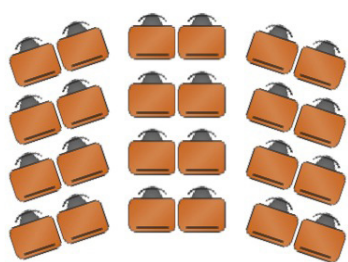
- ✓ How do I create a classroom that is accessible for all students?
- ✓ How do I organize my materials and resources to maximize instructional time?
- ✓ How can I use the board to make learning more clear and purposeful?
- ✓ How do I build rapport with my students?
- ✓ How do I create an emotional connection with the students?



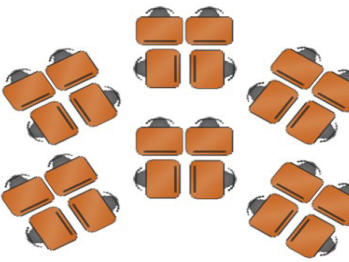
CLASS ARRANGEMENT - The seating arrangement must be aligned with the instructional purpose of the lesson, provide for student-to-student interactions, and allow for teacher proximity and conferring.



Proficient teachers adjust seating to match the learning activity.



Proficient teachers purposefully group students for productivity.



TRADITIONAL

- ▶ High Teacher-directed
- ▶ Low Social Interaction
- ▶ Low Teacher Proximity

MODIFIED TRADITIONAL

- ▶ Medium Teacher-directed
- ▶ Medium Social Interaction
- ▶ High Teacher Proximity

TEAMED

- ▶ Medium Teacher-directed
- ▶ High Social Interaction
- ▶ High Teacher Proximity

LEARNING STATIONS - Learning stations can be a very powerful, student-driven tool to organize learning tasks in any classroom, whether in elementary or secondary. Considerations for learning stations include location, resources, and differentiating learning within the station. A visual rotation schedule will smooth transitions, help learners take responsibility, and develop student independence.

Small Group

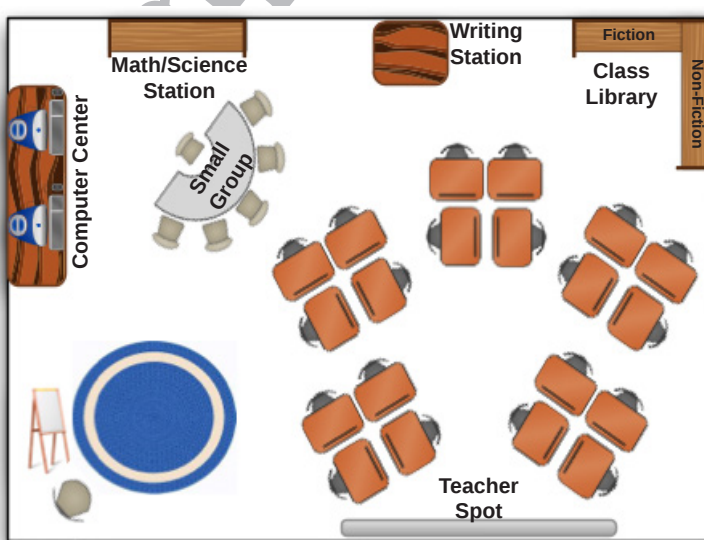
- Leveled Readers
- White Boards
- Graphic Organizers
- Conferring Notes

Computer Station

- User Logs
- Login Procedures
- Headphones
- Printer

Math/Science Station

- Manipulatives
- Used Computer Parts
- Graph Paper
- Ant Farm



Teacher Spot Place in the classroom where students can be addressed and all can see the teacher.

Classroom Library

- Leveled Books
- Magazines/Newspapers
- Graphic Novels
- Comfortable Seats

Writing Station

- Multiple Paper Types
- Pencils/Pens/Markers
- Word Wall
- Resource Books

Gathering Area

- Chart Stand
- Anchor Charts
- Big Books
- White Boards

THE WALLS - Wall space is an important area to help students engage in meaningful learning. The use of wall space can effectively communicate classroom expectations, provide academic resources, and support the instructional outcomes during the learning time. Potential visuals include:

STUDENT WORK
ANCHOR CHARTS
WORD WALLS

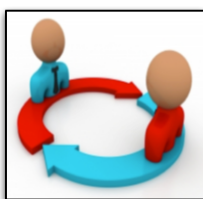
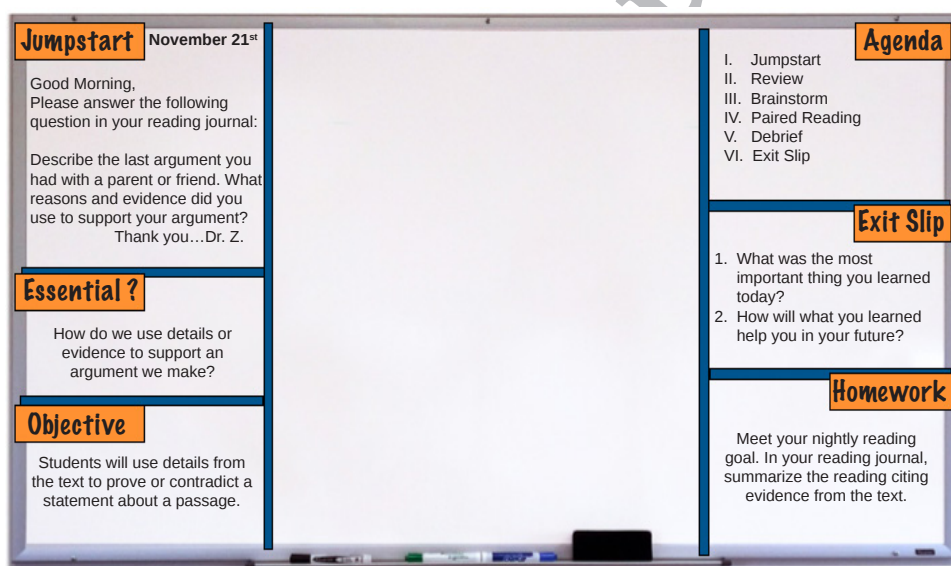
FIRE DRILL
EMERGENCY DRILLS
LINE-UP POSITIONS

SPECIAL SCHEDULE
VOICE LEVEL SYSTEM
CLASS PROMISE

PROCEDURES
DISCIPLINE PLAN
DAILY AGENDA

COMMON BOARD CONFIGURATION

Organizing the board for learning is an essential process to guide instruction during class. Common Board Configuration is a uniform, structured format used in all campus classrooms to provide a consistent, clear focus for the students and teachers during the lesson. This approach helps students take ownership for their own learning by providing clear learning goals, a transparent agenda, and an embedded time for reflecting on learning.



TEACHER / STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS - "Teachers create an environment of respect and rapport in their classrooms by the ways they interact with students and by the interaction they encourage and cultivate among students" (Danielson, 2007). The relationship between teacher and students not only increases student achievement (Hattie, 2009) but also significantly decreases classroom disruptions (Marzano, 2007).



MENTAL SET

- Be positive. Be positive. Be positive.
- Listen. Empathize. Be warm. Encourage. Be genuine.
- Remember the **'dignity'** of the student when you **'discipline.'**
- Catch your students doing well!

TEACHER ACTION

- Greet your students by name when they arrive to class.
- Handshakes. High-fives. Fist pounds. Celebrations!!
- Smile and provide positive non-verbals.
- Use proximity to connect with the kids.
- Make positive phone calls home.
- Use music to enhance mood and create fun.

TEACHER CHOICE

- Use cooperative learning to build positive student-to-student relationships.
- Show enthusiasm for school and classwork.
- Post the students' work on a "Pride" wall.
- Provide a suggestion box for student-to-teacher communication.
- Have high expectations for all of your students. They will live up to them!

"WE ARE THE HUMAN CONNECTION TO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT. OUR LOOKS, WORDS, ATTITUDE, CONSTANCY, KNOWLEDGE, SELF-RESPECT, AND AUTHORITY WILL INFLUENCE HOW OUR STUDENTS REGARD THE REST OF THE ROOM AND THE TASKS AT HAND."
-MARTHA KAUFELDT

