



The Teacher's Playbook: Practical Pedagogy for Classical Educators with Jerilyn Olson

Lecture 2: Culture Introduction

Outline:

This lesson covers ways we can cultivate the classroom culture to best nourish the relationship between the student and teacher in order to promote student growth and development.

Pathos

- Pathos is the key in building a relationship between the student and teacher.
- You look towards the students' habits, dispositions and cultivate their hearts in that pursuit.
- We are not to be indoctrinating the student but instead cultivating and encouraging growth.
- We should think in terms of Classroom Culture instead of Classroom Management.

Preparing the Soil

- Immersion is the best way to learn.
- The space should honor what is noble and lasting.
- The working in preparing starts long before the students enter the classroom.
- Teachers need to consider:
 - Physical Space
 - Ways the students move around the room
 - The way we present ourselves.

Physical Space

- Posters that contain things like motivational slogans tend to have a fleeting effect, not actually inspiring the students or drawing them in.
- We need to put things in front of the student that we love and honor.
- We can put up virtues along with pictures of individuals who we are studying and are great examples of the virtues at work.
 - For example, in a math class you may have images of great mathematicians along side whiteboards that invite the students to explore the proofs and examples of those mathematicians.
- There will be times we have pictures, maps and timelines on the wall but students should also have a chance in the day to gaze a work that is beautiful and enticing.
- Rooms should not be a severe ivory tower but instead a place of joy.
- We should be careful not to try to celebrate everything but instead only the best things.



- Orderly and tidy spaces promote an atmosphere where we can do our best work.

Room Layout

- Rooms can be set up with:
 - Desks in rows and columns
 - Desks in small groups
 - Desks in circular patterns
- Some room set ups are more appropriate to a certain discipline or age group
- The physical arrangement dictates how we move around the classroom and interact with each other.
- Consider activities and then what supplies, furniture and décor are needed to serve the core purpose of the class in order to determine classroom layout.
 - How can the space be orderly and congestion free?
 - How is the teacher going to be visible?
 - How are materials going to be accessible?
 - How will the room be focused?
 - Consider any accommodations for students with certain learning needs, making sure they have access to resources and where they need to be in respect to the teacher.

Teacher

- Teacher is the most important factor in creating classroom culture
- Gravitas: the dignity of a person that creates a sacred space of learning, communicating what we are doing is of the utmost importance.
- Teacher needs to consider how they speak, look, listen, and feel. This helps determine how the student will do the same.

Speaking

- We use a teacher register in our voice which is a little more formal.
- Control of the classroom can be influenced by how a teacher interacts with the class from the beginning.
- A casual tone can invite an atmosphere of recess or chaos in the classroom.
- Teachers do not need to stoop to the student's casual tone in order to relate to them; instead, teachers should lift students up to a new level of behavior.
- When nervous we tend to speak faster and at a higher pitch; this may indicate to students you are barely in control.
- Speaking in a softer tone can indicate more control to the students.
- You can still use humor in the class as long as you have a way to call them back to focus.
- Sarcasm is best avoided; it can be misinterpreted as being at the student's expense.



Look

- Look concerns how we appear to the students and that we are actively looking at students.
- Clothing should not be distracting but should fit the order and elevation of what is being discussed.
- Teacher Radar is the sense that you know what is going on in the room and communicating that you know what is going on.
 - You can make it known by exaggerating your efforts to look at the back of the room either by leaning head, standing on tip toes or using a finger to just scan.

Listen

- Use the student's name, call on students directly.
- Compliment the student

Feel

- We demonstrate our feelings by modeling the kind of emotion we want positively towards our subject area.
- We must deal with any negative feelings that might come up. Students will test you and get you frustrated.
- Frustration that builds and then explodes may only work once in controlling the class.
- Stive for emotional balance (emotional constancy).
- Students need to feel a sense of trust.
- Teachers should deal with feelings by eating right, getting sleep and talking with a coach or fellow teacher.
- Telling a student who is frustrating you that you will deal with the issue later may allow the student to process their emotions and give you the time and space to come up with a decision.
- Teacher is the model in the front of the classroom