

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

Nearly every text on teaching has a list of characteristics applicable to effective teachers. *Jorolimek and Foster* (1989) present eight guidelines for effective teachers that are based on a review of research on effective teaching. This research indicates that a dedicated, well-organized, and hard-working teacher can make a difference in the success of children.

1. ***Effective teachers realize their level of responsibility to students.*** They have high expectations for their students. Effective teachers are confident in their personal abilities and consider all children as potential learners.
2. ***Effective teachers provide children with the opportunity to learn.*** Research clearly indicates that the more opportunities students are given to learn any material, the greater the success rate of student achievement. However, increasing instructional time, by itself, does not guarantee increased student achievement. Instead, effective teachers combine increased time with meaningful activities and immediate feedback to provide a high level of student success.
3. ***Effective teachers manage their classrooms efficiently.*** They clearly explain classroom procedures to the students at the beginning of the school year and are consistent in their implementation throughout the year. Students are held responsible for following these procedures.
4. ***Effective teachers pace instruction to ensure that learners will be involved in meaningful tasks.*** Student achievement level must be matched with what is to be learned. To ensure success, teachers must be aware not only of students' prior knowledge but also of the required prerequisite knowledge. Effective teachers require more work than do ineffective teachers but do so in small steps.
5. ***Effective teachers are active teachers.*** They assume responsibility for actively directing instruction. Effective teachers utilize small-and large-group instruction, demonstrate skills, and provide practice sessions before allowing students to work on their own.
6. ***Effective teachers have learners master desired outcomes.*** Effective teachers reteach material until it is mastered. Students are asked to accomplish lower-level objectives before being asked to master higher-order objectives.
7. ***Effective teachers recognize grade-level differences that require different teacher behavior.*** Effective teachers utilize more one-to-one interactions with primary age students and more large-group instruction and small-group activities for older children.
8. ***Effective teachers provide a supportive learning environment.*** Effective teachers create a positive classroom climate that supports an academic focus. These teachers require high standards and provide much positive reinforcement and acknowledgement of academic success.

(Jarolimek, J., & Foster, C. (1989). *Teaching and Learning in the elementary School*. New York: Macmillan).