



Context

Social environment and climate is integral part of learning ambient, as it weights in the success and apprenticeship of the lesson contents. To gain the label of positive and safe, the learning environment must ensure to be a place where the learning process a conducted by the teacher to success and protected from possible negative outcomes. This mood can be set with a few social conditions by establishing a clear set of **behavioral rules, organization of classwork and constructive reinforce system**. Satisfaction of the students' social necessities and break moments must be also ensured in order to give them time and opportunity to destress from the previous worktime and confront between pairs.



Behaviour and rules

Organizing a class can mean to deal with a group of young and often energetic students. Episodes of outing, emotional inconveniences and overreactions are daily occurrence. Solving this kind of issues can be very frustrating for both teachers and students: unexperience and biological growth path of the students can influence their behaviour in unconscious ways; repressing these situations one by one can be consuming and unproductive.

To support the creation of a productive group system, **establishing rules** and present them clearly to the class to remind them your objectives and the consequences their behaviour can have, can make a difference on the class conduct.

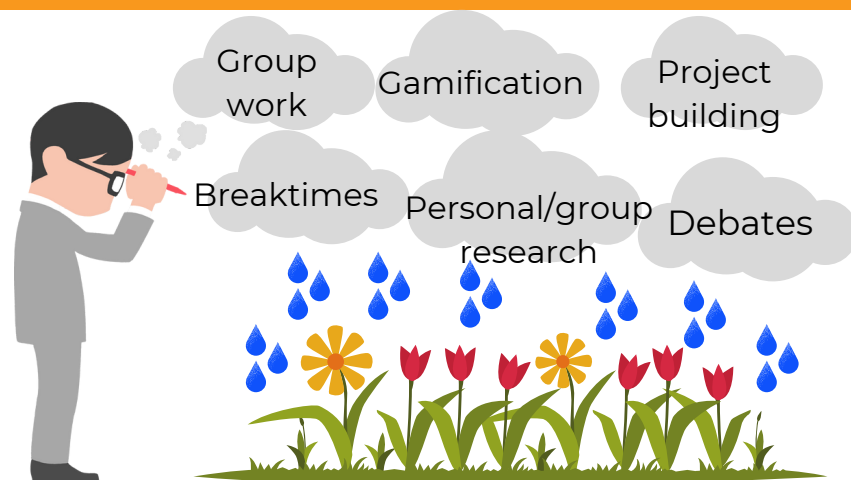
To suppress unproductive behaviour:

- show interest for students' personal problems
- create a dedicated space of public/personal discussion with the students about the problems encountered
- check regularly for needs of discussion
- positively reinforce good behaviour and productive attitude



Organization of classwork

Classwork can differ from the classic front lesson, by creating alternative and **differentiated** learning moments, going towards the didactic goals while satisfying the students' necessities of social contact, amusement and mind off. Regularity in lesson planning, if percieved positively, can bring a steady and productive classmood.





What is a positive learning environment?

A positive ambient can be promoted by paying attention to the students' necessities and planning lesson in consideration of these:

- social exchange necessity
- peer learning
- expressing personal opinions
- considering their personal achievements
- considering their personal limits
- mental breaks and freetime



Reinforcement is a practice still exploited from the educational field, that was developed by behavioural psychology following the idea that:

"an individual will tend to repeat a suggested behavior with more/less frequency based on the answer that same behaviour recieved from its social ambient".

Hereby we intend **positive reinforcement** as educational conditioning that consists in "positively reinforce good and desired behaviour" or "negatively reinforce or avoid bad behaviour".

Behavioural psychology long studied positive/negative reinforce systems to determine which is the most profitable for educational purposes: positive reinforce shows the best long term results.

Positive reinforce

- Compliment good behaviour and notes.
- Assign a prize for reaching a goal.
- Show the desired behaviour.
- Pay attention to good behavior.
- Find a personal space of discussion.



Negative reinforce

- Criticize poorly done work and low notes.
- Punish not reaching a goal.
- Permit bad behaviour.
- Pay attention to bad behavior.
- Ridiculize in front of the class.

You can establish a **reward system** based on positive reinforce and adapted to the students' age:

- token economy
- podium of productive students
- mood stickers

There is the possibility to establish a small prizes for reaching higher goals, but these should be agreed with the students directly, be appealing and must consider the age of the students.



Resources

To deepen your knowledge in this topic chek ch.3 of the **Guide** or consult the book "**Student-teacher Interaction in Online Learning Environments**" by Robert D. Wright. This publication faces the dynamics of student-teacher relation in digital environments, provides suggestions and practical advice concerning development of productive online learning environment.