



## What Makes a Great Teacher?

*A great teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning.* - Brad Henry, former Governor of Oklahoma

Great teachers leave a legacy. They captivate student interest and make the subject material come alive. Among their exemplary skills are the way teachers plan lessons, manage the classroom, motivate/encourage achievement, adapt, and are team players.

**Plan Daily Lessons.** There are well-constructed lesson plans that outline tangible learning goals. These goals are based on school, district, and state learning standards. The great teacher employs various resources to invigorate lessons, and in turn, engage all types of students with differing abilities and learning preferences. Learning is positive and fun. Lessons are carefully prepared to have a captivating introductions to grab student attention. There is direct teaching of the skill/concept and continual guidance throughout the instructional period so students can practice the targeted skill/concept. Students are encouraged to ask questions and share connections, thus seeing the relevance. Student learning is assessed throughout the instructional lesson, followed by closure to sum up what was learned.

**Manage the Classroom.** A great teacher has a bag of management tools to guide behavior and responsibility of all students. Clear classroom rules are enforced fairly and consistently. The teacher is observant and chooses disciplinary techniques to encourage positive behavior. Facial expressions while circling the room and simple verbal reprimands help redirect student behavior. Preferential seating helps selected students to be more easily monitored. Another option is the face-to-face student conference to gain insights about the behavior and how, together, there can be improvement. An individual contract may be developed that lists the desired behavior and consequences to shape the behavior.

**Motivate and Encourage Achievement.** A great teacher is the eternal cheerleader. They have a knack of knowing just how to motivate/encourage every student to do their best. These teachers capitalize on individual strengths/interests while working to bring up weaker areas. They provide immediate feedback and give praise frequently. Student assignments are graded in a timely manner. Student work is shared and displayed. Students play an active role in goal-setting and self-assess some of their own work. They contribute to data walls to further gauge individual, class, and grade level learning progress.

**Adapt to the Needs of the Students.** A great teacher is flexible. For example, if something needs to be re-taught or explored more in-depth to meet the needs of students, then that takes precedent than following a time schedule. They are patient, realizing that students learn in different ways.

**Be a Team Player.** There is quality collaboration with co-workers as the great teacher is open to share ideas to help other teachers in their classrooms. They care about their leadership, colleagues, and the entire body of students. They are not afraid to expand time and hard work to help out.

Great teachers leave a legacy. Their students achieve at the highest level possible, and excel at being well-rounded individuals who embrace life-long learning, and grow up to leave their own legacies.