

Workshop, Grades K-1

Classroom Management

The success of Workshop depends primarily on the ability of the teacher and students to efficiently manage their time and materials. Time and continued reinforcement are required to achieve this level of organization. Mrs. Stolfus has followed the suggestions for setting up and conducting Workshop as presented in ***Open Court Reading***. In addition, she has used her own experience and knowledge of her students' limitations and abilities to make Workshop engaging and valuable.

General Guidelines

1. Establish and discuss rules for Workshop with your students. Write the finalized rules on the board or on a poster. Suggested rules include:
 - Be polite.
 - Share.
 - Whisper when you need to say something.
 - Take only the materials you need.
 - Put materials away when you are finished.
 - Don't interrupt the teacher.
2. Introduce and demonstrate every activity and game before you give them to students to do on their own. Provide complete instructions for each activity before the students begin working.
3. Make sure that every student knows exactly what to do and what is expected of him or her during Workshop. This is essential if you are to be free to work with small groups.
4. Be sure that students know what to do when finished with an activity and where to put their finished work.
5. Make sure students know where materials are located.
6. Establish time-out procedures if the class becomes noisy or distracted.

Adhere to Workshop guidelines so that the students will feel confident by the time they have completed the first 10 lessons. Early Workshops should run no more than 10 or 15 minutes. The time may gradually increase to 30 minutes as students gain independence.

Mrs. Stolfus spends time discussing her Workshop rules with her students (see **Teaching Example 1**). She makes absolutely sure that students know and understand the rules and that they must abide by them. She also explains her reasons for each rule. Students are less likely to ignore rules and more likely to act responsibly if they understand the reasons for those rules.

Managing Space

To ensure that Workshop progresses smoothly and effectively, carefully set up your classroom to accommodate different activities. While setting up, keep the primary Workshop activities and stations in mind. During Workshop, students will be doing independent and collaborative reading and writing, as well as individual and small-group projects. Note how Mrs. Stolfus has arranged her classroom:

- She has materials readily available. They are clearly marked and in containers organized by activity.
- Desks are arranged leaving enough space to allow students to work in small groups.

- She has a table in the back of the room where she meets with individual students and small groups. This allows her to separate these small groups as well as watch the other students as they participate in their Workshop activities.
- She has a computer station set up where small groups of students can work together.

Organize your class to best fit the needs of you and your students. You may choose to spread Workshop areas, such as the writing, listening, reading, and computer areas, around the room. Or you may choose to put all the various Workshop areas in a certain location of the room, such as in a bookcase or in a number of bins, tubs, or boxes.

Additional Workshop Tips

- Encourage responsibility and independence by reminding students to follow the rules.
- Establish areas and times for students to display and present their work to you and their peers.
- Color code materials so pieces don't get lost. For example, code the decks of the ***Individual Sound/Spelling Cards*** so if a card happens to fall to the floor, you and the students know with which deck it goes.
- Encourage students to tell each other what they like about their work and offer help and suggestions.
- Look for talents and abilities in each student; provide opportunities for your students to show off these talents.
- Encourage students to challenge themselves during Workshop by encouraging them to solve their own problems.