



Classroom Management Tips for RedRover Readers volunteers

Set yourself up for a successful RedRover Readers visit!

- Make sure the teacher or site supervisor is present for the entire visit.
- Be on time and be prepared.
- Ask the teacher what attention-getting techniques he or she uses.
- Know that every group will be slightly different.
- Make sure children have their own personal space.
- Ask children questions and listen to their responses – show genuine interest in what the children have to say.
- Help children understand vocabulary words.
- Model positive communication skills, good citizenship and good listening.
- Be realistic about what you are expecting from the group with whom you are working
 - Younger children have shorter attention spans; older children have longer attention spans.
 - Older children are able to do more complex activities than younger children.
- Remember that it is okay to experience emotions.
 - It is okay if you begin tearing up during a story; you can say something like, “This part of this story makes me cry.” If you are concerned that you may cry, try focusing on your audience.
 - Allow children to experience new ideas the way they need to.

If a child is off task and becomes disruptive during a visit, try some of these helpful tips:

- Remember that classroom challenges happen everyday. Stay calm. The most experienced teachers have children who act up daily.
- Verbally recognize desirable behaviors; doing so may give the disruptive child an idea of how to act more appropriately.
 - Example: During a RedRover Readers follow up activity, a little boy is throwing pens instead of drawing. It is okay to say to the whole class, “Thank you for sitting in your seat and drawing so creatively” or “Some beautiful pictures are being drawn; thank you for thinking about the story we just read.”
 - It might help to go to a child near the one acting up and ask what they are drawing. Then, you can either ask the disruptive child what they would like to draw or ask them about something that was discussed during the reading. Sometimes this is all the reminder or “redirecting” a child needs.
- Try asking a child who is off task to be a helper: “Will you pass these out for me?” “Can you hold this for me until we are done?” “Could you show your friends how to listen carefully to a story?”
- Ask children to pay attention to specific words in a story: “Everyone listen for the words ‘*exercise*’ or ‘*friend*’ in the story.” This will help children focus on you and the story.
- Ask the teacher for assistance: “During my next visit, do you have any suggestions on how to keep Susie engaged in the program?” Teachers are used to dealing with the same children and can often offer helpful strategies for what works for a specific child.
- There is no one way to remedy each situation but there are many that have been tried and have worked well

Teachers suggest these tips:

- Begin with the end in mind! Decide what we want children to gain from visits.
- Over plan: Be prepared, bring materials for activities and practice the questions for the activities that you choose.
- Ask the child who is off task a question to bring his or her focus back to the RedRover Readers program. Sometimes this is all that you will need to do to get a child to stop misbehaving.
- Keep an anecdotal record of major issues that arise in each visit: the time, who was involved, and what happened right before, during and after.

Additional Resources:

- Classroom management: <http://www.theteachersguide.com/ClassManagement.htm>

More information about “time-outs”: <http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/bookstore/ascdtimeout.html>