

# Characteristics of a Top Teacher



*by Becton Loveless*

There are many characteristics, techniques, etc. that make for a successful teacher. These may be as varied as the teachers themselves. However, there are certain time-tested attributes, characteristics, and practices which contribute immensely to teacher success. The following list contains items that students have used to describe their best teachers.

## 1. Enthusiasm

- Students can feel the excitement
- Students easily detect the teacher's love for job and subject

## 2. Preparation

- Teacher knows the subject
- Teacher plans and prepares lessons daily

### **3. Punctuality**

- Always arrives on time
- Begins and ends class on time
- Expects and encourages students to arrive on time

### **4. Support and concern for others**

- Lets students know that he/she cares about their success
- Takes time with students
- Allows for creativity
- Is friendly and courteous
- Is supportive and encouraging
- Is smiling, caring, and loving

### **5. Consistency**

- Does not miss class
- Is consistent in attitude and dealings with students
- Is always well prepared to teach class

### **6. Politeness**

- Treats students with respect
- Does not condescend
- Avoids embarrassing students in class

### **7. Firmness and control**

- Is firm in a kind manner
- Avoids tangents in teaching

## **8. Does not play favorites**

## **9. Provides personal help**

- Takes time to explain concepts
- Gives individual attention

## **10. Accepts individual differences**

## **11. Employs an effective delivery**

- Clarifies for understanding
- Creates a sense of fun with the learning task
- Eliminates bad, irritating, and/or distracting habits

## **12. Does not make students lose face**

- Avoids criticizing students

## **13. Sets high expectations of students**

## **14. Is humble**

## **15. Is fair**

## **16. Uses variety**

- Uses a variety of learning activities
- Experiments
- Allows for spontaneity

## **17. Has a sense of humor; is relaxed**

## **18. Makes use of engaged time**

- Sets a good pace and provides for a change of pace
- Avoids engaging students in "busy work"

## **19. Use of text**

- Is not a slave to the text
- Uses text as a road map

## **20. Keeps within 1-2 days of the scheduled course outline**

## **21. Provides field trips and other activities**

- Applies student experiences to classwork

## **22. Does not always teach from a sitting or leaning position**

## **23. Maintains appropriate interpersonal relationships with students**

- Does not allow students to call him/her by first name
- Does not try to win a popularity contest
- Maintains a healthy teacher-student relationship
- Respects students (remember that sometimes what you think is healthy, fun joking with students may be interpreted by them as disapproval and dislike.)

## **24. Does not allow just a few students to monopolize or dominate the class**

## **25: Keeps accurate records of:**

- Work completed
- Attendance
- Test results
- Grades