

EDUCATORS AS ROLE MODELS

Developing enduring Faith

Role Model

- ▶ A role model is a person who inspires and encourages us to live to our fullest potential and see the best in ourselves.
- ▶ A role model is someone we admire and aspire to be like. We learn through them, through their commitment to excellence and through their ability to make us realize our own personal growth. We look to them for advice and guidance.

- Ellen G. White admonishes that we should not elevate our standard just a little above the world's standard, but **we are to make the distinction decidedly apparent.** Teachers should help children to grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord through role modelling (Testimonies for the Church Vol.6 pp. 145-146).

Ways in Which Educators Can be Role Models

1. Educating in the Teaching Profession

First and foremost, a teacher's role is to educate. The teacher challenges students to engage their minds and think in new ways. Encourage students' creativity and innovative thinking. Be knowledgeable and enthusiastic about your craft. **When students see you excited and enthusiastic, then they will be excited and enthusiastic about learning.** A great teacher inspires their students to reach their full potential. Every day that you enter the classroom, try your best to ensure your students are on the pathway to success.

- Teachers today use **facilitative teaching** which aims to help students establish meaning and come to an understanding of important ideas and processes. This theory sees the teacher as the facilitator of learning rather than regurgitating information from a textbook.

- The teacher holds the greatest weight of responsibility in shaping the child's ability to reason. This is why parents choose to send their children to church schools, knowing fully well that the Christian teacher can shape the child's perception and acceptance of the church and our beliefs.
- **Teachers are observed in their work by young people more than is the case for any other occupational group.**
- In addition, students also spend time in direct contact with teachers. Therefore, by observing and interacting with their teachers, students learn to '*take the role*' of the classroom teacher.

2. Being humble

- Model right behavior.
- **We also have to show our students what it is like to be wrong, and admit it.** This is never easy, no matter how old we are. We have to show them that right is right, and wrong is wrong, no matter what.
- When a teacher makes a bad choice or does not know the answer to a question, they should let students know they made an error and communicate how to correct it.
- This will help convey to students that everyone makes mistakes and should take responsibility for their actions, whether good or bad.

3. Encouraging students to think for themselves

- Treat your classroom like a group of individuals, and **celebrate their diversity**. Create activities and discussions that foster conversations and discovery about who they are, and how they can appreciate the differences between each other. This type of focus from time-to-time **will build a stronger bond between your students**.
- Additionally, **an environment of trust will build, which can relax the atmosphere and help students focus more on learning**.

4. Performing volunteer work

- Find a way to incorporate community service into one of your lessons, and discuss how you contribute to the community you live in. Ask your students to suggest ways you could perform community service as a group.
- See if you can organize a community service event with your class.
- For example, you can have your class pick up litter at a local market place. The important thing is to instill a sense of pride in **giving back** to the society among your students.

5. Showing empathy

- All you have to do is show that you care. It may sound simple, but we have all had teachers that we did not connect with. **Students can tell when a teacher is tuned in or tuned out and disconnected from them.**
- Just be mindful that your students are looking up to you as an adult with life experience they do not have yet. As they try to figure out how to move into adulthood, ensure they know they can count on you.
- **Try to be in your students' shoes; feel their experiences with them. Show that you care.**

6. Pointing out the positive

- **Create a culture in your classroom that rewards kind behavior.**
- **Teach students to be constructive with their criticism, pointing out positives before negative or suggestions for improvement.**
Practice with exercises that allow students to be positive and critical towards each other.
- **Teaching children to get in the habit of looking for good in others is an excellent role model for behavior.**

7. Use of Life Approach

- **Use a relevant story as an illustration which learners can relate with in daily life.** Through '*Life Approach*', the teacher should spring from the known to the unknown.

8. Be Human or personal

- This teacher type was found to be *'personal'* because he/she not only played the role of teacher, but also allowed the students to see them for who they were.
- Take a real interest in us students”.

9. Fulfilling your promises

- You need to follow through on your promises when you make them.
- We do not want students to think it is acceptable to say one thing and then completely disregard it.
- When you fail to keep a particular promise, be honest about it. ***Do not make up an excuse but try to make up for it.***
- This way, your students will see how to deal with their own shortcomings, and will respect you more for your honesty.

10. Dressing appropriately

- All of us want to look great! However, teachers being role models means remembering you are in a professional environment.
- It is the teacher's job to stand at the head of the class and command respect. After all, you want to model professional behavior for your students from day one. This will help with classroom management issues.
- **Dressing in a professional way will keep students from thinking of you in a less respectful way.** Just make sure you take your job seriously when you show up beginning day one. It is not only good to model for your students, but is important in the eyes of your colleagues and general publics.

11. Stay away from social media with students

- Be careful what you have out there on your personal accounts.
- Have a policy to connect with students on the channels that your school sets up for you.
- Remember, parents are looking at you as well, and know that you are in a role model position with their children.
- When you post on social media, just realize that your students' parents could see your words as well. Just be careful.

12. Encouraging physical activity

- The importance of teachers extends to the physical fitness of their students.
- Encouraging physical activity is good for all groups of students. Even if you do not teach a physical education class, you can still talk about physical activities when you are lecturing or performing other activities.
- Incorporating the topic into your lectures or conversations can help plant the seeds in students' minds that they should look for ways to exercise
See ***NEWSTART***: Exercise comes an important second on the list!

13. Giving lectures about role models

- When you are discussing a period in history, or introducing a new subject to your students, find a way to incorporate a hero story into the lesson. For instance, if you are going to talk about French history and the Hundred Years War, you would **talk about the bravery of Joan of Arc.**
- You could also share the story of **young David vs. Goliath.** When you do that, have your students discuss ways they too can be role models to others. Even if it is just stepping up in small ways to help others.

14. Discussing world events

- Arrange for discussions about world events once in a while. See what your students know and ask questions that make them think. **Teachers being role models include showing students how to make sense of the world, and express different ideas in a peaceful way.**
- This can model for students how they should act when they speak with others, and how to actively listen to other points of view
- Many students will not have heard about some of the events you are speaking about. Find ways to involve them by asking questions that can draw them in.

15. Having pot lucks

- Every once in a while, have a meal with your students that celebrates your time together. Food is another way students can see educators as role models. So have fun with this one. After all, we all love food!
- For a day school, allow students to bring a dish from home. If it is a boarding school, then the cafeteria can bring the students' share. Teachers joining such pot lucks would also bring their share. Use such forums to encourage healthy eating.

16. Working extracurricular activities

- When your students see you working outside of the classroom to help your school function, it says you go the extra mile. **It also shows that you have a strong work ethic**, and you are doing a job that you are passionate about. That is the kind of feeling you want your students to have from their careers later in life.
- Show them that you enjoy your job, and it will pay off in the classroom.
- Additionally, **if you have coaching skills, you can be a role model for the students playing sports** in a similar way.

17. Be organized and Punctual

- Present yourself in a professional way as much as possible. This means more than looking the part and acting the part, it means being the part.
- **The best way you can show your students how to execute their work is to show up on time and be ready to teach.**
- Additionally, if you have a clear vision for how you want the lesson to go, then you will be more effective in delivering your message. **We plan to fail when we do not plan our lessons well.**

18. Asking for input

- Ask for Ideas for lectures, field trips, and other things students think through discussions and suggestions.
- The importance of teachers in showing students **how to participate in conversations is essential to their growth. We are always negotiating**
- Giving them **a feeling of ownership** and participation in the class decisions and idea generating process will give them **a sense of pride** they may not have otherwise; especially if you agree to test their idea out.

19. Inviting guest lecturers

- Find role models in the community who perform valuable public service. This can be notable figures that can inspire students to do well in their lives. It is always fun for students to learn from other people than just their own teacher.
- **Children need a lot of role models in their lives** since most values are learned not by direct instruction but through contact with people who provide inspiration with the example of their lives. Plus, whoever you invite will get to **share a personal story from their life and show them how they work in their profession.**

20. Making them keep journals

- You can inspire your students to understand that it helps to **keep track of your thoughts as a way of organizing your goals, connecting with your feelings, and making sense of the world around you.**
- Your students will improve on their own communication skills through their writing practice, and have a safe space to explore their thoughts.
- When you teach students to understand themselves a little better, they will start to see educators as role models.

21. Provide Guidance

- A role model is an individual who acts as a guide. They are someone who helps direct the life of another in a positive direction. This is extremely important for students who feel they have nothing positive going in their lives.
- **Teachers guide their students throughout adolescence** and help them grow as well as listen to their problems.
- **Be an educator that can effectively guide your students through their formative years,** and model how to think through important situations and dilemmas as students encounter them.

22. Mentoring and Leading

- Teachers serve as mentors, as well as leaders. The presence of a caring adult can help students achieve success at school. Since students spend the majority of their day at school, teachers get the opportunity to really get to know their students on more of a personal level. **A mentoring relationship with a student can develop over time in which teachers help inform, advice, and encourage their students.**
- Teachers also provide leadership for their students. Students learn what a leader is and how to be one by seeing their teacher take charge and successfully lead their classroom. **Teachers that are also exceptional leaders are positive, inspirational, and motivate their students to work hard.**

23. Instill Character and Moral Virtues

- Many twenty-first century children do not have parents that are inspiring them to live a life of integrity.
- The public expects teachers to display behaviors that are reflective of moral virtues. **Display such positive characteristics as fairness, kindness, honesty, and respect.** You cannot teach character, unless you display it.
- When you interact with your students, you are modeling how one should behave. **Children learn through what they see, and when they see a teacher displaying good human qualities, they too will follow.**

24. Worship with your students

- Actively engage in worship activities with your students.
- They will learn from your participation and become role models themselves!

Conclusion

- There are many ways in which teachers can be role models for their students, right from being punctual, fulfilling promises, showing empathy and being positive in outlook, to worshipping with students.
- **Teachers are always being watched.**
- Ensure that you are a role model that students want to emulate.

Thank you and God bless

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