



Guiding Young Children's Behavior

Segment 2: Arranging the Classroom

TRANSCRIPT for Objective 1

Arranging Classroom Space

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Host: Classroom arrangement has a powerful effect on children's behavior. Let's take a look at three different ideas you can use to arrange your classroom to guide children's behavior:

- Creating clearly defined learning centers,
- Arranging quiet centers apart from louder centers, and
- Creating wide pathways among play spaces.

Narrator: Teachers can increase desirable behavior by creating clearly defined learning centers in the classroom using partitions and dividers to separate learning areas. The ideal way to partition space is to enclose a center on two or three sides and to keep one side open or at least partially opened so the children can look in and see what there is to do or can move in and out freely.

Dr. Jeffrey Trawick-Smith, Eastern Connecticut State University: In a study that I conducted, I used bookshelves and book display stands and dividers of different kinds to separate learning centers from each other—but also some learning centers from the rest of the classroom. And what I found was that this minor rearrangement of the classroom led to greater play involvement—children were less distracted by some of the other things going on in the classroom. It led to more positive interactions with peers, and there was less running across the whole length of the classroom.

Host: While many teachers use shelves or walls to create clearly defined centers, here is an example of how a teacher used hanging pictures as a way to define a learning center. The next idea is to arrange quiet centers apart from louder centers. This helps children who are working in a quiet area focus on what they're doing and not be distracted by what might be going on in a noisier area. It also allows children in a more active center to be a little louder without bothering anyone. Let's look at quiet and loud centers in different classrooms.

Narrator: In these classrooms, learning centers are arranged in an organized way, and are partitioned with shelves or dividers to lessen distractions. For a productive learning experience, quiet centers need to be placed as far away from loud centers as possible to avoid distraction.

Teacher: Now, what's happening?

Student: One apple.

Teacher: One apple.

Narrator: What would happen if quiet centers were placed next to loud centers?

Classroom: (Lots of noises.)

Narrator: Keeping loud and quiet centers apart from one another is fundamental for a smoothly running classroom.

Host: When quiet centers are placed away from louder ones children remain focused and are less distracted. Now we want you think about the quiet and loud centers in your classroom. Are the quiet centers away from the louder ones? Are there any centers which might need to be moved?

Activity 2A: Quiet and Loud Centers

Voiceover: Create a list of the quiet and loud centers in your classroom. Write Q next to the quiet centers and L next to the loud centers. Now consider, are the quiet centers placed together and away from the louder centers? Make a note of any centers which might need to be moved.

Did you consider ...?

Voiceover: Some examples of quiet centers include:

- A book center
- Computers
- Tables games and puzzles
- The science center
- The math center

Some examples of loud centers include

- The dramatic play area
- The block area
- The water and sensory area
- The motor play area

Host: The third idea for classroom arrangement is to create wide pathways among play centers. Wide pathways allow children to move freely without colliding into to each other, and this prevents conflicts.

Activity 2B: Arranging the Classroom

Voiceover: Draw your classroom or make-believe classroom. Remember to keep in mind the three ideas we looked at that support children's positive behaviors.

Host: Your room arrangement is something that you should review on an ongoing basis. As children's needs and interests change and develop over time, you might need to adapt your space to accommodate those changes.