



Looking Through the Lens

Classroom Environment

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During the first few weeks of school you have an excellent opportunity to set up a classroom that is conducive to teaching science. Establishing a climate where every student feels like a scientist can be done by making available scientific tools and giving ample time for exploration. This can be a challenge if you are not sure how to go about creating a learning environment that promotes effective science learning.

There are many components to consider when setting up your classroom environment. The following are six components taken from the National Science Education Standards (1996).

- **Time - allow ample time for extended investigations.** Investigation-based science takes time and is conducted over the long term. Blocks of time are essential for scientific processes to occur.
- **Create a safe working environment.** Supply gloves when working with organisms. Eye protection is a necessity and a great routine for students to form when investigating. Rules and procedures must be posted in the classroom for easy viewing. These should be reviewed before each investigation. Set clear expectations.
- **Make scientific tools, media, materials, and technology available to all students.** Create learning stations with hand lenses, measuring tapes, balances, and graduated cylinders for students to use. Proper use of the tools is a must before any investigation.
- **Engage students in helping to design the learning environment.** Involve your students in creating a science center where they will take responsibility for the resources and upkeep. When involved in the decision making process, students will have a vested interest in keeping the space clean and orderly.
- **Create a setting supportive of scientific inquiry.** Space for scientific learning is a crucial component. Plan space for students to work in groups. Space must also be available for students to display their work. Freedom to express ideas without judgment is also a key component.
- **Use outside resources to support your science instruction.** Contact community leaders to enrich your limited classroom environment. Invite guest speakers from museums, colleges, and science centers to expose your students to different fields of science. Also, use the school grounds for investigations, whenever possible.

Once you have allocated the time, space, and materials for scientific discovery you will see a whole new world open to your students. One in which wonder and engagement occurs during every science experience.



Looking for Science Courses?

Fall Courses Available:

- Intro to Science Notebooks
- Science for Grades 3-5
- Science for Grades K-2
- Science Workshops (available at each grade level)
- Science and Literacy
- Science Through Sketching
- Science Through Photos

Visit rpd.net for a full listing of fall classes.



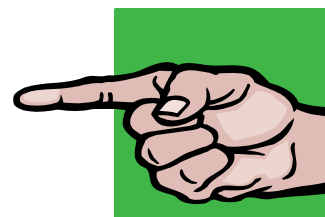
Need help with your science instruction?

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- On-site trainings
- Mentoring
- Model lessons

Go to rpd.net for useful resources and lesson plans that are Nevada State Standards based.



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