

Top Ten Middle School Classroom Management Tips

1. Begin each class with a **warm-up**. This is something for them to get started on **as soon as they enter your classroom**. This gives you time for checking homework, attendance, etc.
2. Have a method for calling on students so that you call on all students - not just those with their hands raised. **Popsicle sticks** work great! You can buy them at craft stores in assorted colors so that you have a color for each class you teach. (For example, 1st period names are written on yellow sticks, 2nd period names are on red sticks, etc.) In addition to calling on students, these sticks are great for putting students in groups, choosing a helper quickly, even attendance - just pull the sticks of absent students to remind you who needs make-up work.
3. Have a **while you were out folder or box** in your room. At the end of the day, use the Popsicle sticks you have pulled for the absent students to gather work for those who were out. Students will know to check this folder/box when they return to school. This puts the responsibility on them.
4. **Organize** your **classroom library** using the alphabet! Group your books by authors, subject, or series. Label the books with letters (For example, all the books in the Clique series may all be labeled with the letter D) and put the corresponding letter on a basket. (So, the Clique books that are labeled with the letter D will be in a basket labeled D.) You'll have an A basket, B basket, and so on. This way, your students know where to return a book.
5. Don't assume that your middle schoolers can organize themselves. At the beginning of the year, provide them with a list of **sections needed in their binders**. Spend time in class labeling the dividers for each section you will need. For example, if you teach language arts, you may need one section for writing, one for notes, etc. Walk around the room to make sure that students are doing this properly. Until your students get the hang of what goes where, tell them things like, "This handout goes in the novel units section". You may want to do random notebook checks to make sure your students are staying organized.
6. To make sure your students do not take advantage of locker and restroom privileges, provide them with a **set number of passes per nine weeks**. For example, you could provide four passes to the restroom per nine-weeks. Once these passes are gone, students are not allowed to go to the restroom. This way, they will only use them when they really need to. To keep the students from losing them, you can keep them in a binder at the front of your room. Each child's name will be on one page of passes. When one is used, just initial it or mark an X through it.

7. **Parent communication** is very important. On the first day of school, why not send home a **brochure** about your class instead of a letter. This way, you can explain all aspects of your curriculum and what you expect. Another good idea is to try to **make contact with parents early in the year to say something positive** about their child. Just a simple e-mail saying something nice will be sufficient. Saying something positive can start you out on a good foot; and if you ever need help later on, you are more likely to find support!
8. Students are going to lose pencils; it is a fact! So, instead of making a big deal about it and losing valuable instruction time, **just give them a pencil!** Buy a huge supply when they are cheap! One suggestion to try to help you get these back at the end of the class period is when a student borrows a pencil, have them give you a belonging with his/her name on it (agenda, binder, etc.). Another suggestion is to purchase a box of those little golf pencils (the ones without erasers). You can get a ton in a box for pretty cheap, and you are less likely to worry about getting these back. Plus, the kids are more likely to make sure they bring their own because they don't really like using them!
9. If you are tired of digging in a file cabinet for lessons, try this! One way to stay organized yourself is to **create binders for each unit you teach**. This is easier for you to keep up with your lessons and handouts from year to year. For example, buy a 2inch binder for poetry, and any handout or lesson you do that has something to do with poetry, house it in this notebook.
10. If you like to give your students rewards, try providing them with **free rewards** like coupons for things like sitting in the teacher's chair, permission to bring a water bottle to class, or a pat on the back.

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