



How To Avoid Losing Control The Final Days Of The School Year

By Michael Linsin on May 27, 2017 5

As the school year draws to a close, voices tend to grow louder.

Routines get sloppier.

Students become distracted, excitable, and primed for misbehavior.

After all, they can feel the warmth of summer on their skin.

The smell of sunblock and freedom is in the air.

It's a happy time, no doubt, but a dangerous one for teachers. If you're not careful, it's easy to lose control.

It's easy to get stressed out and tired of your class. It's easy to find yourself raising your voice, [lecturing your students](#), and becoming yin to their yang.

An ogre to their life of Riley.

While coming down on your students may indeed help keep a lid on your classroom, there is an easier and more effective way to avoid [losing control](#)—and thrive while you're at it.

It entails tweaking three areas of your day-to-day practice: transitions, routines, and academics.

1. Transitions

The key here is to slow down. Take more time than usual explaining/modeling what you expect before moving on. Keep it simple,

but **allow greater pauses** and silences between sentences, phrases, and even words.

Affect a pleasant, easygoing demeanor, as if you're in no particular hurry. Just smile and breathe, move gracefully, and exaggerate your peaceful state. It's a simple little change, but gradually your students will begin doing the same.

They'll mimic your calmness, your motion, your mannerisms. Their nervous energy will subside. Tension will leave the room. Your class will be settled, free to listen, and ready for whatever comes next.

2. Routines

Students become complacent and lose motivation as they near the end of the school year. In particular, they grow bored and lazy with the same old routines. Thus, they get off track and misbehave.

The solution (oddly, given that we want to slow down transitions) is to speed up routines. Model how to perform them double or even triple-time. If you use a timer, then shorten the allowable limit.

This is an easy way to bring a newness and freshness to tired routines. It grabs their attention and makes lining up or putting away materials more interesting. It engages students by increasing the fun and requiring a greater level of concentration.

3. Academics.

Rather than easing up as the year winds down, it's best to keep pushing. Ask more of your students, not less. Give them a head start on next year by teaching new skills, concepts, and techniques beyond their current grade level.

Pressing forward, even accelerating, helps maintain their interest, gives them challenges to overcome, and demands another gear of concentration. It makes your classroom worth staying in the moment.

The end of the school year should come as a surprise, not a slow, clock-watching trudge to the finish line.

Keep The Fire Burning

Between slowing down transitions, freshening up routines, and keeping the pedal to the metal academically, try infusing your classroom with the same passion you brought to [the first week of school](#).

Turn the amplifier up to eleven and take advantage of the opportunity to give your students a leg up.

Yes, take time to visit with them and play learning games. Laugh and enjoy their company and revel in wrapping up another school year.

But keep them busy and in the present. Make the small adjustments that sustain motivation and sabotage complacency.