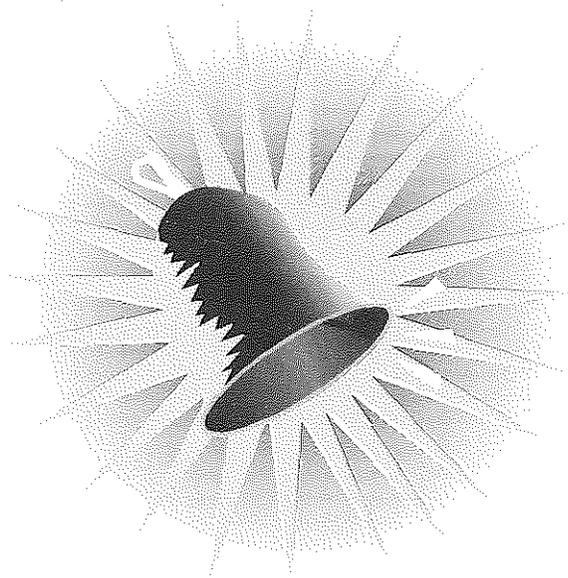


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A TECHNICAL REPORT

*Managing the*  
**CLASSROOM**  
ENVIRONMENT

*to facilitate* EFFECTIVE  
INSTRUCTION

YETC  
LB  
3013  
.M36  
1992

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*Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, September, 1992*

## TECHNICAL REPORT

Managing the classroom environment to facilitate effective instruction remains as one of the greatest concerns in education. School teachers and administrators across the nation either lack the skills or struggle with inadequate tools to effectively manage a classroom environment.

This video tape training program was designed to equip educators with skills and tools they need to create, operate, and maintain an environment in their schools and classes that allows them to spend more time teaching and less time controlling behavior.

The content of the videos is drawn from the scientific literature of education and psychology, but presented in a non-technical way using hundreds of graphics, visuals, and classroom-based vignettes.

One of our primary concerns, of course, was that the training program would provide teachers with valuable and useful skills and tools. Also, we wanted to develop a program that educators would enjoy using. We used the following three measures to determine the effect and usability of the program:

1. Participants' ratings of the quality of the training.
2. Pre-post testing of knowledge gained by the trainees.
3. Pre-post testing of selected teachers' classroom management skills.

## RESULTS

Over 700 teachers, paraprofessionals, related service personnel and administrators at 36 sites in 16 states that spanned the continental United States participated in the training. Training was provided via satellite teleconferencing. Given this large and geographically diverse population it was not possible to collect in-depth evaluative data from each participant at each downlink site; therefore, a variety of evaluation measures were taken from

a randomly selected sample of 130 participants. This sample of participants was predominantly female (79%) with a mean of 8.8 years experience in education or a related field (sd = 7.8, md = 6). They were on average 38 years old (sd = 9). Forty percent (40%) of the participants were special education teachers, 34% were regular educators, 7% were paraprofessionals, 15% were related service personnel, and 4% were educational administrators.

Participants' Rating of the Quality of Training

Overall, the evaluations well positive. The lowest ratings were given to the length of the training. To control costs, the training was given in one day; too little time to adequately learn the volume of material presented. Respondents completed a Likert-type forced-choice scale (4= strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree) to provide feedback regarding their perceptions of this training. Table 1 summarizes the responses. Table 1.

Table 1.			
Participants' Rating of the Quality of the Training (N=125)			
Questionnaire	Mean	Median	sd
Learned New Information	3.5	4.0	.6
Information was Useful	3.6	4.0	.6
Amount of Time	2.9	3.0	.9
Enjoyed Training	3.2	3.0	.7
Was Clear	3.4	3.0	.6
Will Help	3.4	3.0	.6
Met Need	3.2	3.0	.7
Quality Instruction	3.3	3.0	.7
Enjoyed Method	3.2	3.0	.8
More Sessions	3.3	3.0	.8

Participants were also asked to respond to two open-ended questions and express their general feelings about the strengths and weaknesses of the training program. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of these comments were positive. The only negative comments (1) addressed the length of training (too little time), and (2) some of the content of Session 6, Controlling Distractors. Three respondents felt that too negative a light was cast on selected extra-curricular activities. Because of this, some retaping was done to clarify the points being made.

Pre-post testing of Knowledge Gained by the Trainees

The second measure of the effectiveness of the training comes from a statistical comparison of pre-test and post-test scores taken from a 26 question short-answer test of how well the program taught content. This comparison revealed statistically significant gains (at the  $p=.000$  level) between the mean pretest (21% correct) and post-test (76% correct; essentially meaning that students went from a grade of F to a grade of B). Given the large standard deviation among both pre ( $sd = 13$ ) and post-test ( $sd = 15$ ) scores, and the effect that outliers can have on the mean, a second data analysis was conducted using a non-parametric procedure known as the Mann-Whitney test. This process is similar to a T-test comparison; however, it focuses its comparison upon the median scores (pre 20% and post 80%). These results also clearly demonstrate that the effects of the training cannot be attributed to chance for this sample of participants. Given that the training was conducted in a single day, these results seem all the more significant. Table 2 displays those data.

Table 2.			
Pre and Post test comparisons using T test and Mann-Whitney procedures (N=126)			
Test Score	Probability	cf	df
T = -31.88	p = 0.000	95%	242
W = 28676.5	p = 0.000		

Pre-post testing of Selected Teachers' Classroom Management Skills

Though pretest and post-test results of this training provide evidence that the program resulted in positive learning outcomes, we also wanted to determine its ability to produce measurable behavioral change in the participants; that is, did they behave differently in the way they managed their classroom. To explore this question, 9 randomly selected teachers were observed in their classrooms 1 week prior to the training and 3 weeks after the training was completed<sup>1</sup>. Data were taken on selected teachers skills (i.e., communicating expectations, ignoring inconsequential behaviors, differentially reinforcing appropriate behavior, stopping and redirecting inappropriate behavior, and applying consequences), students' time-on-task, opportunities for student responding, quality of teacher-to-pupil

interactions, and frequency of classroom distractions. Changes in teacher behaviors relative to these dependent variables were observed in 8 of 9 classrooms. Teachers noted that the training provided them with practical ideas for improving student behavior in their classrooms and expressed a desire for more training to aid them in their professional growth.

### CONCLUSION

In every domain - cognitive, affective, and psychomotor - the satellite training was successful by increasing teachers' skills in their ability to effectively manage the classroom environment to facilitate instruction.

<sup>1</sup> Three weeks was selected as a sufficient period of time to assess the effects of the training and to reduce the possibility that observed changes were a short lived phenomena.

YETC LB 3013 .M36 1992

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