

PART ONE

Students and Student-Teacher Relations

Conclusion

The considerations discussed above can assist teachers in distinguishing the qualities of their students, in knowing students' faults, and in guiding teachers in developing good order in the classroom and school. But these alone are not enough to give teachers a complete knowledge of teaching and the education of young people, a knowledge that each teacher must grasp in order to fulfill worthily the role of a teacher. In conducting a class there are a thousand details, a thousand circumstances teachers run into in practice that cannot even be conceived of before the circumstances arise. These will naturally disconcert a young teacher completely new to teaching and inexperienced in the ways students act.

It is necessary then to join to what has already been said some other counsels related to the running of a school. They can help a young teacher make up for the lack of experience that is naturally lacking in those who are beginning to teach and that often weakens the authority they need for success. Young teachers must not come to believe that it is age, body size, tone of voice, or threats that give teachers authority and inspire respect among students. It is none of these external advantages, but rather a character that is fair, firm, and modest, one that is consistent at all times and that never acts without reason or through outbursts. It is these qualities that keep everything in order, establish good discipline, see that regulations are observed, make reprimands few, and forestall punishments. Actually, the authority a teacher exercises over students depends, above all, on the way in which the teacher begins. Nobody knows a teacher then; they wait to see how the teacher presents himself or herself and then judge the teacher. Teachers who do not grasp this favorable moment, who do not put themselves in charge of the class from the first day, will then have all the trouble in the world in getting back the authority that they did not seize in the first place. The ideas contained here are meant to help teachers not fall into this trap due to a lack of good principles.

