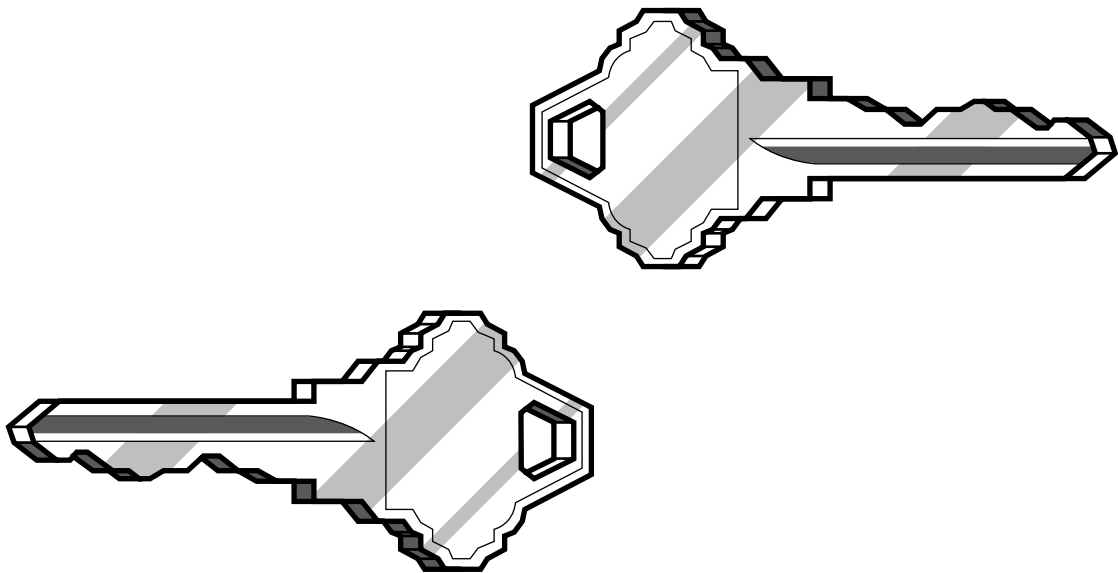


Study Questions for Glenn Latham's *Keys to Classroom Management*



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Stephen F. Ledoux

Foreword by Glenn I. Latham

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Foreword

According to annual polls by the Gallup organization, student behavior—and how to manage it in schools and classrooms—has been the public’s number one concern relative to education for over three decades. This concern is similarly shared by educators, again as determined by the Gallup organization.

One has to wonder how this can be, given all that has been learned through science about how to establish and maintain a well-managed school environment. How to do that has been clearly documented, but evidence of that “how to” is shockingly and regrettably absent from school.

Occasionally, on a random, episodic basis, one will encounter an educator who does an exemplary job at effectively managing a school environment. Though this is commendable, it almost always has a dark side to it. First, that person can *rarely* explain why what he or she is doing is working, nor can she or he identify the science that supports its effects. Second, the effect is typically accounted for by something idiosyncratic to the educator, something someone else cannot replicate: size, demeanor, personality, and so on. Hence, it is seen as not generalizable.

True professions are characterized by practitioners who possess a generalizable set of skills that are anchored in science. Consider physics, chemistry, biology, behaviorology, mathematics, engineering, medicine, and dentistry. All professionals in each of these disciplines and fields share a common, generalizable set of skills which they can articulate and explain in scientific language. Educators typically cannot.

In the book, *Keys to Classroom Management*, I have attempted to teach educators what research in human behavior has taught us relative to the effective, positive management of a learning environment. What is included can be learned and applied by anyone. It is all anchored in science, and it is all generalizable. One does not need to be a 6’5” 290 lb. gorilla who never smiles until Christmas to be an effective classroom manager!

Keys to Classroom Management contains not only practical, school-based suggestions on how to develop and apply the skills of effective classroom management, but it also contains suggestions on how—systematically and objectively—to analyze and treat behavior problems *in* the classroom. And “it” works, if teachers will put “it” to work!

This book of study questions, when used as designed, helps insure that teachers and prospective teachers who use it with *Keys to Classroom Management* will not only learn those skills but also will be able to explain in appropriate scientific language, *why* their skills produce the results they produce. That is, they will be able to explain what they are doing, why it works, and how it is soundly tied to basic behaviorological principles. Do put these books to work, both for yourself and for your students.☺☺

Glenn Latham

Utah State University
2000 December 20

To the Student and Teacher

About the Book

Keys to Classroom Management is a book basically about developing the skills needed to maintain the sanctity of the learning environment. This is accomplished through a shift in emphasis from traditionally punitive classroom disciplinary practices to non-coercive management techniques. Many surprising outcomes are possible. For example, as Dr. Latham reiterated in his six-tape video program on “*Managing the Classroom Environment to Facilitate Effective Instruction*” (also, see his *Behind the Schoolhouse Door* and *Management, Not Discipline*, both of which are listed in the bibliographic appendix of this study questions book) several studies have documented that only 40–50% of class time is actually used for instruction. Most of the rest is lost to classroom disruptions that can rather easily be prevented by teachers making small but specific, easily learned—and experimentally validated—changes in their classroom management practices. (Reviewing these changes with teachers is the point of both the video program and *Keys to Classroom Management*.) Where these changes have been implemented, data show that most of the lost time becomes instruction time. More significantly, and as Dr. Latham points out, computations show that even if only half of the lost time is returned to instruction time, the increase in instruction is equivalent to extending the school year by 40 days, all without incurring the money, time, personnel, and other costs of more calendar school days or year-round school.

In addition, other perhaps more significant benefits accrue from improvements in the classroom management skills covered by *Keys to Classroom Management*. These include increases in pleasant and educationally supportive teacher–student interactions and a concomitant decrease in the general aversiveness of school. Both of these go a long way in reducing the probability of in-school violence and increasing the ability and willingness of teachers and students to embrace and attain high standards. (And this is not a pie-in-the-sky statement, as a perusal of any number of sources detailing the effects of aversive stimulation or punishment on human behavior—such as Murry Sidman’s book *Coercion and its Fallout* [also listed in the appendix]—will show.)

Keys to Classroom Management is 96 pages long and contains six chapters between an introduction and a conclusion. It is perhaps best read in conjunction with the various video programs and recordings that Dr. Latham has prepared on this topic (some of which are also listed in the bibliographic appendix). Readers should also explore www.parentingprescriptions.com which is Dr. Latham’s *Parenting Prescriptions* web site that serves as an important, related resource. The present resource, the study questions in this study question book, have been prepared to help student readers expand their behavior repertoire with respect to the material and the skills that *Keys to Classroom Management* describes.

To order additional copies of *Study Questions for Glenn Latham’s “Keys to Classroom Management,”* contact the publisher, ABCs. The address is in the publisher’s advertisement, which is on the last page of this book.☺