



KIM BEARDEN

Building Relationships and Communicating with Students

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Book: [Talk to Me Talk to Me: Find the Right Words to Inspire, Encourage, and Get Things Done](#)

A little bit about Kim

- ❑ Cofounder, executive director and Language Arts teacher at the [Ron Clark Academy](#)
- ❑ Teacher for 32 years

The transformational effect of good relationships and communication with students.

- We know that when a child is misbehaving that there is more to the story but often in the moment we don't always take that into consideration in our interactions.
- **It's vital to understand that every child in our classroom has a story.**
- The principle of motivation
 - Our motivation has to be: we want what's best for this child.
- Let every child know that they are being seen and heard.

Principles for communication

- Applies to everyone as we communicate with others in our daily lives.
- The words that you say are not as important as the sincerity with which you say them.
 - Identify your motivation for communication and be sincere in your exchanges with others.
 - Do something wonderful for someone else and don't tell anyone.
- Consideration and motivation
 - Take into consideration that everyone has a story.
 - **Lead with empathy.**
 - People have motivation for their communication.
 - Motivation is either positive or negative.
 - Many times misbehavior comes from negative motivators.
 - If a group has an unhealthy relationship it's often because the glue that holds them together is a negative motivator.

- When you go into an interaction identify what your motivation is for the communication.
 - Think about what the other person is thinking.
- Appreciation
 - **Learn to appreciate that people are sharing their story with you.**
- Validation
 - Digging deep and letting people know that you see and hear them.
- Celebration
 - I'm so glad we had this time together.

Elements of effective conversations can be transformative.

- **Participation**
 - Pull in every single student.
 - Make sure every student has a voice.
 - Encourage students to listen to one another. Show them that listening is just as valuable as speaking.
 - When in a group conversation try to pull everyone in.
- **Hesitation**
 - The power of hush.
 - Listen as much as you speak.
 - A powerful rule in Kim's class is that students are not allowed to raise their hand while another student is talking.
 - Wait time is as important as "listen time".
 - Give students listening white space so that they have time to process.
 - Encourage students to validate one another as they hesitate and use wait time.
- **Clarification and information**
 - It saves teachers time and frustration if students can explain your instructions in their own words.
 - Kids can speak each other's language and can translate your directions to one another.

Parent communication

- **Appreciation and validation are incredibly important when working with parents.**
 - Learn to appreciate those that come to you with their frustration or happiness. It is much better that they come to you rather than tell everyone else.
 - If we don't know then we can't fix it.
 - We have to remember that parents work very hard and are almost blinded by their love for their child.
 - Parents need to hear that they are good parents.
 - They need to know that just because their child makes a bad choice it does not make them a bad parent.
- There are times when you need to be tough and stand your ground but it's important to identify your motivation.

Ways to create memorable experiences without spending a ton of money.

- Use resources you already have and use them in a different way.
 - [Crash Course: The Life Lessons My Students Taught Me](#) by Kim
 - **Use your artistry as a teacher to create experiences for your students.**
 - Beach towel lesson
 - Punctuation restaurant
 - More videos of lessons at kimbearden.com/videos
 - Weave magic into your lessons with everyday items.
 - You can create memorable experiences without having the “Pinterest perfect” classroom.
 - Ask to borrow things from a local store and offer to share their generosity with your parents.

Resources:

- [Ron Clark Academy Educator Training](#)

Related posts on the Ditch That Textbook blog:

- [25 ways to create experiences your students will remember](#)