

Chapter 2: Reflective Practice

Take a look at a class you are now teaching, but this time do so through the lens of natural selection. In completing this reflection, consider the following.

1. Think of a time when you chose to challenge or confront a student in the classroom in front of his or her classmates. Why did you choose to engage the student in front of their peers rather than talking to them privately? How did this work for you? For the student? What were the long-term repercussions of your actions in terms of your working relationship with this student?
2. Name the different student groups that you see in class (think in-groups—student groups that choose to belong together for whatever reasons). Use whatever labels you feel are fitting. Name the leader or leaders of each of these groups and the students who are their followers—the members of each of these groups.

Groups in My Classroom	Group Leaders	Group Members

3. Choose the group that you feel is the most influential in your class. Think about your relationship with this group. Good teachers know that it is extremely useful to have class leaders on their side because these leaders can help them steer the class in a positive direction.
4. If you feel you have a good working relationship with this group and they support your efforts in the classroom, take a look at one of the other groups you have noted. If you find that your relationship with one of these groups is not where you want it to be, think about three ways in which you could attempt to improve that relationship. In doing this, remember the concept of payoff, and try to devise a strategy that has payoffs for the students as well as yourself. List three ways you could attempt to improve your relationship with the target group.

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

Important note: If you find there is a group or group leader that you want to target, but at this point, you find yourself struggling to come up with effective strategies to utilize with this goal in mind, set this step in the exercise aside for now. The rest of this book is dedicated to showing you effective influence strategies that you can implement in the classroom to improve your relationship with students and increase their levels of cooperation and achievement in your class. If you can immediately name three strategies, revisit your answers after reading this book, and consider if you need to make changes.