



**Illinois Wesleyan University**  
**Digital Commons @ IWU**

---

John Wesley Powell Student Research  
Conference

2011, 22nd Annual JWP Conference

---

Apr 9th, 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

## Creating a Community Within the Classroom

Kelsey Porter

*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Robin Leavitt, Faculty Advisor

*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

Porter, Kelsey and Leavitt, Faculty Advisor, Robin, "Creating a Community Within the Classroom" (2011). *John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference*. 26.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc/2011/ESposters/26>

This Event is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@iwu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@iwu.edu).

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.



# Creating a Classroom Community

Kelsey Porter

Department of Educational Studies

kporter@iwu.edu



## Defining a Classroom Community

A classroom community is a classroom in which students cultivate supportive friendships, feel safe to share, are respectful, value honesty, and above all care about each other and their teacher.

## Research Questions

1. How can I create a community environment within the classroom?
2. What does a classroom community look like within a fourth grade classroom?
3. What are the positive impacts that a classroom community has upon students and teachers?

## Strategies for Creating a Classroom Community

### Modeling

- Modeled Specific Behaviors and Values: respect for others, responsibility, honesty, and showing support for fellow classmates
- Modeled methods of communication
- Lesson that incorporated and modeled specific behaviors and values
- Created and implemented classroom bonding activities after school
- Had open dialogue with students that involved active listening
- Genuinely cared about each student in the classroom and supported them each day academically, socially, and emotionally
- Treated mistakes as a part of the learning process
- Promoted social problem solving skills. Helped students to talk through and solve problems
- Conducted classroom discussions about behaviors and exceptions almost daily
- Greetings and Goodbyes each day
- Fostered expectations that students were to do their best and were to be proud of the work they turn in
- Made a "Meet Miss Porter" scrapbook. I continually shared appropriate aspects of my life with students
- Bag About Me: students brought in five objects that were important to them and helped describe them as a person (I also participated in the activity)

### Differentiating Instruction

- Tailored curriculum to meet needs of all students to ensure all students were able to participate and understand lessons and concepts.
- Connected curriculum to students lives and interests

### Collaborative learning

- Created "Follow Through Friends." Students paired by ability level in order for them to learn how to help one another, make new friendships and work together towards a common goal.
- Also worked on how to effectively work with others in the classroom.



## Results

- Implementation of strategies for creating classroom community were successful. Students cultivated supportive friendships, felt safe to share, demonstrated respect, honesty, and care for each other and their teacher.
- Promoting and modeling caring behaviors and respect towards others led students engage in caring and respectful acts
- Differentiating instruction-promoted a caring environment within the classroom in which students felt their needs were met.
- The "Follow Through Friend" program helped students learn how to work cooperatively and created a sense of togetherness within the classroom.
- Students work together towards a common goal of education. They feel supported and encouraged by one another and cared for by their teacher.
- Students felt more confident to take educational risks within the classroom, and treated their peers and teachers with kindness and respect.
- Less class time spent on classroom management

## Acknowledgements

### I would like to give a special thanks to...

- My cooperating teacher, who supported and encouraged me throughout this entire study.
- The wonderful students in my classroom
- The professors from IWU's educational studies department
- My fellow IWU classmates for all of their advice, support, and constant friendship

## Methodology

### Data for this inquiry was drawn from the following sources:

- Personal reflections
- Field notes
- Lesson plans
- Activities

My study involved modeling specific behaviors and values, such as respect for others, responsibility, valuing honesty, and showing support for fellow classmates, all of which I expected of my students in the classroom. I also developed lessons to further discuss these behaviors and values and authentically incorporated them into the class's everyday routines to increase the likelihood of internalization by students. During the study, I also created a program called "Follow Through Friends." This program was designed to pair students who could benefit from working together. By pairing students, I was allowed to closely observe their interactions and the changes in their behaviors as result of my modeling, teaching, and authentic integrations.

As a teacher I feel I have a moral obligation to help the children in my classroom grow toward becoming full human beings and to feel successful. Teaching cognitive skills is not enough...

-- Jean Medick