

F CONNECTION

Behavior Modification

Much debate has arisen regarding the use of behavior modification. Some educators swear by it while others swear at it. One thing is for sure, the idea behind the concept of behavior modification is to change behavior. Consider the pros and cons of behavior modification.

Positive Aspects of Behavior Modification

1. Changes conditions.
2. Reinforces learning through desired behavior.
3. Teaches desirable behavior by reinforcement process.
4. Behavior is learned when it is consistently reinforced.
5. Helps student resolve his/her own problems.
6. Helps the teacher resolve conflicts within the classroom setting.

The basis of behavior modification is accentuating the positive: rewarding the student who does a good job and causes little or no problem in the classroom.

Negative Aspects of Behavior Modification

1. It makes discipline a system of rewards.
2. It prepares students for a non-existing world.
3. It encourage students to act as if they are learning in order to obtain rewards.
4. It emphasizes short-range rather than long-range effects.
5. It is a concept that indicates rewards are more important than learning.
6. It undermines existing internal control.

There are strong arguments for both sides. A teacher's stand will depend on his/her own educational philosophy on discipline. If you use behavior modification, make sure you use good judgement as to how to set up your classroom program and use of rewards. Behavior modification can be one means of solving conflicts within your classroom. If you use it, use it wisely!