

# Classroom Habitudes: Teaching 21st Century Learning Habits and Attitudes

By Angela Maiers

What is a "habitude?" **A habitude is the combination of habits and attitudes.**

*Why do we need to teach Habitudes?*

As a classroom teacher, I spend many years checking off lists the skills my students needed to be successful. Yet, I wonder, is the checklist we operate from, our scope and sequence of traditional; skills and lessons, enough for our students to invent, create, collaborate, and solve their own problems?

*And we need to start teaching them in the classroom...now!*

I know – not another checklist! We already have too many of those to work from.

As a teacher I understand. In a world with mounting pressures to "get things done", checklists have become our salvation. I too love them! There is an exhilarating feeling that occurs after each mark is successfully checked off. The harder the task, the harder the checkmark, right?

So, let's uncheck this list and explore together **the behaviors, habits and attitudes** that will know with conviction will ensure our students for success both inside and outside our classroom walls.

## **HABITUDE 1: IMAGINATION**

A cardboard box; a basket of unfolded laundry; an individual blade of grass. To a child, these everyday, unnoticed items become a fort; clothing for a king and queen; a harmonica that plays symphonic music. Imagination is not just for kids. Discovery, innovation, creativity, and learning all begin with imagination. Everyone says imagination is important, but it's something we take away by forcing students to memorize and repeat rather than think and envision.

## **HABITUDE 2: CURIOSITY**

Champion learners are curious about everything. They ask questions and get themselves involved in all stages of learning, without worrying about the answer, but relishing in the process. They have learned that by posing questions, they can generate interest and aliveness in the most exciting or mundane situation. This inquisitive attitude fuels their unrelenting quest for continuous learning.

## **HABITUDE 3: PERSEVERANCE**

I think of times in my life that it took more than "I think can" to get me to my goal. Most recently, I completed running in my first half marathon. Without resolve, determination, firmness, and endurance, I know I could not and would not have physically or mentally gone the distance.

## **HABITUDE 4: SELF AWARENESS**

We all have strengths and weaknesses in regard to our learning performance and capabilities. Knowing yourself, knowing your strength, preferences, and areas of need is a critical characteristic of a successful learner. Yet, self-awareness is more than just recognition of what you can or cannot be, do, have. This innate ability to stay in tune serves multiple purposes. They can foresee problems and use their strengths to overcome difficulties encountered.



**HABITUDE 5: COURAGE**

Courageous learners understand that safe is risky. Success is the byproduct of taking risks, closing our eyes, saying I will not let fear hold me back, and taking the plunge. I want them to understand that it takes courage to address the voices in your head that echo doubts, questions, or other paralyzing thoughts.

**HABITUDE 6: ADAPTABILITY**

Adaptability is more than just serving change; it is using change as a growth opportunity. In fact, with anticipation of change, you can control change. This kind of development requires robust adaptively. The world opens up for adaptable learners, as they approach each task, each challenge willing to be a beginner. They approach their learning and life with a beginner's mindset. These learners embrace challenge with openness, flexibility. Those who don't embrace change with adaptability usually get blind-sided by it.

Come join me as we step outside the lines?