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About The Cornerstone

This book is about solutions. It is about what's worked in my classroom and what I know will work in yours. I wrote this book for the same reason I created my website (<http://www.TheCornerstoneForTeachers.com>): to share tools for overcoming discipline issues, disorganization, paperwork overload, and the regimented, boring curriculums that drive so many teachers from the classroom each year.

My advice is based on a tremendous amount of research that I have studied, modified, and implemented in various classrooms over the years. My experience has been with second and third graders, as well as preschoolers in Head Start and severely autistic students in an early childhood special education center. I've worked in eight schools, public and private, in three different school districts in two different states (just over the Washington, D.C. border in Maryland, and later in Miami and Fort Lauderdale, Florida). I've taught in an extremely affluent suburban community and in some of the most challenging urban areas in the country. This book is the summation of what I've learned through it all.

I've included photographs and sample forms wherever possible to help illustrate my points and make my suggestions easier to implement. Unfortunately, the cost of this book would have been prohibitively high if the photos were colorized, so in order to provide a reasonably-priced resource for teachers, I've kept everything in black and white. The good news is that you can view all the photos from this book and countless others in an enlarged and full-color format on the website. There's also a blank version of every form in this book available for free download. All the documents are in Word format so you can type in any changes you want to fit your own needs. You'll also find on the site hundreds of other forms that I didn't have room for here.

All of the photos and ideas in this book are from my own classroom, so another great advantage of the website is that you can access other teachers' ideas. I've collected a massive amount of links to free printable resources and more in-depth information on almost every classroom management topic imaginable. These links are changed and updated all the time, so if there's an idea in this book you'd like to learn more about, chances are good that my website will direct you to additional current resources.

Effective classroom practice is all about trying new ideas, reinventing old ones, and experimenting with whatever it takes to help kids learn. I don't believe there's one right way to manage a classroom, especially since there's no one teaching method or strategy that will reach all students. Only YOU can determine what will work best in your classroom—but you need to be highly knowledgeable about

best practice in order to make those decisions. I hope this book and the accompanying website will be two of many resources you use to help determine the most effective methods for your teaching context and philosophy.

Each time you open this book, I hope that you will find a practical suggestion for improving your classroom management, and each time you close it, I want you to feel inspired, rejuvenated, and full of confidence that you can handle every task that's set before you. My aspiration is to make your teaching life as effective, efficient, and ENJOYABLE as possible!

Angela Powell