

Individual ATTENTION

Every child can really benefit from a bit of individual attention.

Too many children in the class? Find a way to see every child. This is the skill of being a teacher.

As the children are writing, walk around and look over each shoulder and comment and encourage.

If you haven't got around the whole class and some have finished, let them go and look at the posters on the wall. Don't miss the children in the back corners, and the less beautiful children.

They are uncomfortable when you do that? That's only because they are not used to it.

If the children are trying to hide their work from the teacher it's because they are afraid of criticism, and not expecting encouragement. Train them to expect and appreciate your attention and hard work!

Some teachers like to sit at their desk and have the children queue up to show their work and receive a cursory tick. What happens? Fighting and pushing in the line, and some children just never join the line, and you are too busy keeping things calm to look at what they wrote.

Give each child encouragement and attention in front of the whole class

This may seem a little awkward at first because you need to be very careful to limit embarrassment, but get children, or groups of children, to present writing on the board. Then talk about it together, being very careful to find positive points and encouragement as you correct the work. As the others are all listening, you shouldn't need to repeat yourself too many times on the same points.

- **Surprise** them by asking them to put their work on the board.
- **Challenge** them to do the best they can, or to work together.
- Don't forget to encourage and **reward** them for anything that is correct, or just for trying.

Ask children to come to the front and read aloud or present their written work to the class while you make sure you encourage and correct them, and give them personal attention. Make sure not to embarrass, and not to miss out any children.

Keep a record. Know what you are looking for.

If you regularly carry and use a smart phone or tablet you can record quick notes or mark a check list as you go around the class.

For the more old-fashioned teacher, a notebook works fine.

You are a good teacher, so you will have considered what outcomes you are hoping for.

In this piece of writing are you looking for:

- certain vocabulary,
- interesting ideas,
- use of capital letters,
- use of a particular grammar form
- neat handwriting

Don't try to look at and correct everything every time. Keep a checklist and mark whether or not they have mastered whatever it is you are looking for.

Don't miss any children. Don't embarrass any children.

Later you might look at your checklists and notes and realise that there are some children who need special attention in particular areas, or maybe there is a lesson you need to reteach.