Common Novice Teacher Mistakes

1. Not securing attention before making announcements or beginning discussions.

2. Doing too much work and thinking for the pupils, i.e., talking too much, answering own questions, performing all of the demonstrations.

3. Habitually calling upon a certain few pupils to carry on class discussions.

4. Attempting to work with individual pupils without maintaining group control. Failure to be aware of the whole group.

5. Failure to use blackboards, supplementary reference materials, and other teaching aids.

6. Excessive use of such stereotype expressions as “OK,” “all right.”

7. Inattention to lighting and ventilation.

8. Standing in front of the windows while promoting class discussion.

9. Complying only with suggestions from supervisors without demonstrating initiative and creativeness.

10. Accenting the I instead of the we, i.e., “Tell me,” “I want you to…”

11. Pacing nervously in front of the room while talking.

12. Using a weak or unspirited voice – too low and monotonous.

13. Attempting to submit a daily lesson plan on the day to be taught.

14. Trying to be a “regular guy” with the pupils before first winning their respect

15. Assuming no responsibility for bulleting boards or room appearance.

16. Merely assigning pages of a textbook as the lesson, and using the threat of a test as the motivation.

17. Adherence to “Joe College habits,” i.e., gaudy or overly-informal dress, improper puns or humor, excessive use of slang.

18. Constant use of incorrect oral grammar and of slurred word endings.
19. Failure to demonstrate forcefulness in teaching situations or to exhibit enthusiasm about teaching.

20. Making excuses or trying to project plan for failure to fulfill all student teaching responsibilities.

21. Not planning carefully as to details of questioning, handling materials, or making assignments.

22. Failing to know the “subject matter” so that the class stays a “jump ahead of the teacher.”

23. Not making assignments clear. Failing to check with the class to be sure that they all understand.

24. Timing problems when the lesson runs over the alloted time because the teacher spent too much time on trivial matters.

25. Feeling persecuted when criticisms are offered or taking one favorable judgment as sure sign the teaching is of “A” quality.