

We have designed each “White Paper” to explore a fundamental educational principle and key issues engaging the education community we serve. It is our goal to partner with our readers as they meet the challenges they face.



Student Review, Testing & Assessment
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Student Accountability, Classroom Behavior and Castle Learning Online

The reasons may be as diverse as the students in the classroom, but there is no getting around the fact that some students **don't listen to their teachers**, are **disruptive** and are **not engaged in the learning experience**. Others **don't show up on time**, are **not ready to work** and **have poor time management skills**. Perhaps they are bored with the content or misbehave simply out of a frustration with their own inability to keep up with their classmates. Yet educators and parents are drawing the same conclusion—these students may not be ready for the **life skills of adulthood**.

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) admits that there is no one set of terms embodies a definition of **life skills**, but they believe that decision-making plays a role in conjunction with **critical thinking**; ex. “What are my options?” and **values clarification**; ex. What is important to me?” Behavioral outcomes are often the result of the interplay of these skills.

The simplicity and structure of *Castle Learning* assignments engages students when they are challenged and can see feedback, especially when we help them set goals that can be realistically achieved. It isn't surprising that when we treat students with behavioral problems as individuals who are deserving of respect and consideration, they will respond! Patient educators who are sensitive, good listeners, fair and consistent in the treatment of students with behavioral problems will see them improve when using *Castle Learning*.

Castle Learning can help to curb misbehavior and support student success because they are engaged in the process. The Prof Bill image-as-teacher and *Castle Learning* have become synonymous with students becoming independent learners. Whether using *Castle Learning* as a supplement or a primary instructional tool in the classroom or at contained locations on a short-term basis, teachers and administrators have found that behavior problems are modified and lessened, while students become **more accountable** and **learn some life skills**.

In my early visits to schools, an Assistant Superintendent remarked that “**on a Friday evening the day spring break began, I realized that a student who was typically winding up in detention was actually using *Castle Learning* heavily.**” *Castle Learning Online* has been shown to be an excellent ISS or OSS (in-school or out-of-school suspension) tool, the basis of creating sound Credit Recovery programs, and through instant reports, a very effective self-assessment tool.

What drives these conclusions? Character education calls for students to become **responsible for their own education** by supplementing the **teacher driven model** with the **student responsibility model**. Some *Castle Learning* features can abate student misbehavior by improving academic performance and gaining self-esteem through success. Trusted with their education and encouraged by praise for good performance, behavior may change. One educator wrote that *Castle Learning Online* “**benefits so many students, because they are able to take their time and go back to an assignment, as well as see the instant feedback of whether or not they answered the questions correctly. They seem to want to do better and are impressed with themselves when they do well.**” Another educator saw improved confidence in students by explaining that “**I usually see a distinct improvement in student performance as the year progresses. They gain confidence in their abilities as they begin to understand the strategies to use in answering questions.**”

Students are very perceptive and recognize concerned adults when teachers and parents team up with *Castle Learning Online*. The combination can often help to defuse the anger about learning and begin to trust parents and teachers as they begin to gain confidence and learn responsible **life skills** that will carry them into their adulthood, whether it is work or further schooling.