

**If You Can Encourage People to See the Fun in Something, You Can
Get Them to Paint the Fence.
Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer**

Marion Steiger

Tom Sawyer convinced the kids that painting the fence was fun. Precision Teaching can make learning and behaving fun by putting students in control of their own behavior and their own learning. Students lose their fear of pressure to recall facts, of being tested, and of speed drill, through non-threatening and structured timings. They learn to feel capable of painting the fence.

Research has shown that the greatest need of people is to feel valued, needed, and significant, and to believe that they have some influence or control over their own lives. Precision Teaching can empower kids through structure and consistency in timings, tracking student progress, increasing successful situations, building fluency, and helping students feel secure in quickly generating and expressing their thoughts and answers.

Adolph Moser, in a letter to readers of his book, *Don't Feed The Monster On Tuesdays!*, said, "I am important to me. I want to feel good about myself, to like myself, and to enjoy being me. I am pleased when I do things well. I like for people to tell me when I've done something right." He went on to say, "I know some people can do

some things better than I can. But most of the time, I try to do my very best. When I make improvements. I am pleased."

The approach described in this presentation results in students taking the reins of their own management and learning through identification of personal strengths and weaknesses. They learn to set target goals in a variety of situations and curriculum areas in order to plan for success. Precision Teaching has assisted students at Copperview Elementary School in Midvale, Utah in developing their skills in writing, spelling, math, and self-control. As their skills have improved, so has their self-esteem.

Lily Eskelson, Utah Education President, in October of 1990 said, "...have a plan or vision of where we want to be. The difficult we can do in a day. The impossible takes a little longer if we have a plan."

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