

What Works in Schools

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Chapter 10. Classroom Management

Another teacher-level factor is classroom management. It is mentioned in some form in virtually every major study of factors affecting student achievement. Classroom management received its strongest endorsement in a comprehensive study by Margaret Wang, Geneva Haertel, and Herbert Walberg (1993) in which they combined the results of three comprehensive studies. Their content analysis of 86 chapters from annual research reviews, 44 handbook chapters, 20 government and commissioned reports, and 11 journal articles produced a list of 228 variables affecting student achievement. They asked 134 education experts to rate the impact of each variable. The experts concluded from this massive review that classroom management was rated first. This makes intuitive sense—a classroom that is chaotic as a result of poor management not only doesn't enhance achievement, it might even inhibit it.

Although the importance of classroom management is widely recognized, its definition is elusive. Walter Doyle (1986) defines classroom management as “covering a wide range of teacher duties from distributing resources to students, accounting for student attendance and school property, enforcing compliance with rules and procedures to grouping students for instruction . . .” (p. 394). Daniel Duke (1979) defines classroom management as “the provisions and procedures necessary to establish and maintain an environment in which instruction and learning can occur” (p. xii). Jere Brophy (1996) defines classroom management as “. . . actions taken to create and maintain a learning environment conducive to successful instruction (arranging the physical environment of the classroom, establishing rules and procedures, maintaining attention to lessons and engagement in academic activities” (p. 5).

I define classroom management as the confluence of teacher actions in four distinct areas: (1) establishing and enforcing rules and procedures, (2) carrying out disciplinary actions, (3) maintaining effective teacher and student relationships, and (4) maintaining an appropriate mental set for management. Only when effective practices in these four areas are employed and working in concert is a classroom effectively managed.

Establishing and Enforcing Rules and Procedures

Carolyn Evertson and her colleagues (Evertson, Emmer, Clements, Sanford, & Worsham, 1984) attest to the necessity of establishing and enforcing rules and procedures:

Rules and procedures vary in different classrooms, but we do not find effectively managed classrooms operating without them. It is simply not possible for a teacher to conduct instruction for children to work productively if they have no guidelines for how to behave, when to move about the room, and where to sit, or if they interrupt the teacher frequently and make whatever amount of noise pleases them. (p. 17)

Although these comments by Evertson and her colleagues are intended for elementary teachers, the comments of Edmund Emmer and his colleagues (Emmer, Evertson, Sanford, Clements, & Worsham, 1984) are intended for secondary teachers and are nearly the same (pp. 17–18). Thus, establishing and enforcing rules and procedures is a prerequisite for effective instruction in all K-12 classrooms.

Rules and procedures both refer to stated expectations regarding behavior. Where a rule identifies general expectations or standards, a procedure communicates expectations for specific behaviors (Evertson et al, 1984;

Emmer et al., 1984). For example, a teacher might establish the rule “respect others and their property.” This rule covers a wide range of expected behaviors. This teacher also might establish procedures for collecting assignments, turning in late work, or participating in class discussions. By definition, procedures are fairly specific in nature.

Different classrooms will have different rules and procedures depending on the needs and dispositions of the teacher and the students. However, in general, rules and procedures are commonly established for the following areas:

- general expectations for behavior,
- beginning and ending class,
- transitions and interruptions,
- materials and equipment,
- group work, and
- seatwork and teacher-led activities.

These areas covered under rules and procedures are discussed in more detail in the Action Steps section.

Carrying Out Disciplinary Actions

One of the more hotly debated aspects of classroom management is discipline. Some appear to hold the position that disciplinary actions in almost any form are not only ineffective but counterproductive for student achievement. Alfie Kohn, for example, has articulated this sentiment in a series of works (Kohn 1993, 1996). Consider his comments about the various ways children and students are punished:

How do we punish children? Let us count the ways. We incarcerate them: children are sent to their rooms, teenagers are “grounded” and forbidden to leave the house, students are sent to “detention,” and all may be forcibly isolated through “time-out” procedures. (1993, p. 165)

Although Kohn and other like-minded individuals make some useful points (see Wlodkowski, 1982) about inappropriate use of discipline and over-reliance on punishment, the categorical rejection of disciplinary techniques is simply not supported by research. Quite the contrary, the research strongly supports a balanced approach that employs a variety of techniques.

To illustrate, a meta-analysis by Scott Stage and David Quiroz (1997) included more than 99 studies, 200 experimental comparisons, and 5,000 students. Their overall finding was that the “interventions analyzed in this study resulted, on the average, in a reduction of disruptive classroom behavior among 78% of the treated subjects” (p. 356). Four of the categories of disciplinary techniques they identified are particularly relevant: (1) reinforcement, (2) punishment, (3) no immediate consequences, and (4) combined punishment and reinforcement.

Disciplinary techniques that fall into the category **reinforcement** involve some type of recognition or reward for positive behavior or timely cessation of negative behavior. Practices classified as **punishment** involve some type of negative consequences (e.g., loss of privileges, time-out) for inappropriate behavior. Interventions classified as **no immediate consequence** do not involve immediate consequences for inappropriate behavior but do involve some type of reminder when an inappropriate behavior appears imminent. For example, the teacher might remind a student who typically acts out at recess that she should remember to keep herself under control. Finally, the category of **combined punishment and reinforcement** involves recognition or reward in conjunction with consequences for inappropriate behavior. The effect sizes, means, and related decreases in disruptive behavior for these categories are reported in Figure 10.1. Note that the effective sizes in Figure 10.1 are interpreted as a “decrease” in disruptive behavior, where the effect sizes discussed in previous chapters were

interpreted as increases in student achievement. To illustrate, the effect size of .78 reported in Figure 10.1 for punishment means that the average number of disruptive behaviors in classes where punishment is employed is .78 standard deviations and 28 percentile points lower than the average number of disruptive behaviors in classes where punishment is not used.

Figure 10.1. Effects of Disciplinary Techniques on Classroom Behavior

Disciplinary Technique	Average Effect Size	Number of Effect Sizes	Percentile Decrease in Disruptive Behavior
Reinforcement	0.86	101	31
Punishment	0.78	40	25
No immediate consequence	0.64	70	24
Punishment and reinforcement	0.97	12	33

Source: Stage, S. A., & Quiroz, D. R. (1997). A meta-analysis of interventions to decrease disruptive classroom behavior in public education settings. *School Psychology Review*, 26(3), 333–368.

Three striking aspects of the findings are reported in Figure 10.1. First, the interventions that include no immediate consequence—positive or negative—have the lowest average effective size (0.64). This makes sense. Human beings need feedback to distinguish between those behaviors that are appropriate and those that are not. Second, the interventions that include a combination of both punishment and reinforcement or negative and positive feedback have the highest average effect sizes. This conclusion is also reached by Andy Miller, Eamon Ferguson, and Rachel Simpson (1998) in their review of the research literature: “Clearly, the results of these studies should permit schools to strike . . . a ‘healthy balance’ between rewards and punishments” (p. 56).

Finally, in contrast to those who reject any form of punishment, the average effect size for those interventions that employ punishment is quite respectable (0.78). These findings on punishment should not be interpreted as an indication that any form of punishment is viable. Indeed, in his review of the research, George Bear (1998) strongly warns that the research supports the effectiveness of mild forms of punishment only.

Another striking aspect of the Stage and Quiroz study is depicted in Figure 10.2 (p. 92). The figure reports the overall findings by grade-level intervals. Except for the findings at the upper elementary level, the effect sizes across all levels are quite consistent and quite high. Assuming that the low effect size for the upper elementary level is an anomaly, these findings indicate that disciplinary techniques are useful at every level.

Figure 10.2. Effects of Discipline Across Grade Levels

Grade Level	Effect Size	Number of Effect Sizes	Percentile Decrease in Disruptive Behavior
Primary	0.91	76	32
Upper Elementary	0.64	85	24
Middle School	0.82	19	29
High School	0.86	17	31

Source: Stage, S. A., & Quiroz, D. R. (1997). A meta-analysis of interventions to decrease disruptive classroom behavior in public education settings. *School Psychology Review*, 26(3), 333–368.

The findings of this meta-analysis speak quite strongly to the efficacy of disciplinary techniques. In fact, these findings lead Stage and Quiroz (1997) to comment

In summary, this meta-analytic study demonstrates that interventions to reduce disruptive behavior work in public schools. . . . We hope that these findings serve to separate the myth that disruptive classroom behavior cannot be effectively managed from the reality that interventions widely used in our schools do, in fact, reduce disruptive behavior. (pp. 361–362)

Teacher and Student Relationships

The third aspect of effective classroom management is effective teacher and student relationships. An effective relationship may be the keystone that allows the other aspects to work well. If a teacher has a good relationship with students, then students accept her rules, procedures, and disciplinary actions. Without the foundation of a good relationship, students commonly contest them. Again, this makes good intuitive sense. What then constitutes an effective relationship between the teacher and students?

Researchers have made attempts to identify general characteristics of teachers that render them more likable and, consequently, more likely to have good relationships with students (Barr, 1958; Good & Brophy, 1995). They have identified characteristics including consideration, buoyancy, and patience, but they have not focused on the dynamics of the teacher and student relationship per se. At least two major research efforts have focused either directly or indirectly on this dynamic.

One effort to identify the dynamics of an effective teacher and student relationship is by Theo Wubbels and his colleagues (Wubbels, Brekelmans, van Tartwijk, & Admiral, 1999; Wubbels & Levy, 1993; Brekelmans, Wubbels, & Creton, 1990). Building on the early work of Timothy Leary (1957), Wubbels (Wubbels & Levy, 1993; Wubbels et al., 1999) articulated two continuums whose interactions define the relationship between teacher and students: high dominance versus high submission and high cooperation versus high opposition.

High dominance is characterized by clarity of purpose and strong guidance. That is, the teacher is clear about his purposes and provides strong academic and behavioral guidance. These are certainly positive characteristics, but high dominance is also characterized by lack of concern for the opinion or needs of students. The other end of this continuum—high submission—is characterized by lack of clarity, purpose, or direction. Neither extreme can be characterized as an optimal teacher and student relationship.

High cooperation is characterized by a concern for the needs and opinions of others and a desire to function as a member of the team. Again, these are positive traits. High cooperation is also characterized by an inability or lack of resolve to lead. The other end of this continuum—high opposition—is characterized by active antagonism toward others and a desire to thwart the goals and desires of others. Again, neither extreme can be characterized as the type of teacher and student relationship conducive to learning. The right combination of moderate dominance (as opposed to high dominance) and moderate cooperation (as opposed to high cooperation) provides the optimal teacher and student relationship for learning. As Wubbels et al. (1999) note

Briefly, teachers should be effective instructors and lecturers, as well as friendly, helpful, and congenial. They should be able to empathize with students, understand their world, and listen to them. Good teachers are not uncertain, undecided, or confusing in the way they communicate with students. They are not grouchy, gloomy, dissatisfied, aggressive, sarcastic, or quick-tempered. They should be able to set standards and maintain control while still allowing students responsibility and freedom to learn. (p. 167)

Interestingly, when teachers first enter the profession, they readily exhibit behaviors that would be characterized as high in cooperation. Given their lack of experience in leadership positions, they are not very good at exhibiting behaviors that are high in dominance (Wubbels & Levy, 1993). With six to ten years of teaching experience, they become quite competent at dominant behaviors. Unfortunately, they also become less cooperative. As Wubbels and colleagues (1999) put it: “Teachers appear to decline in cooperative behavior and increase in oppositional behavior, a change that negatively affects student attitudes” (p. 166).

A second line of research that addresses the teacher and student relationship regards the needs of different student types. Jere Brophy conducted the most ambitious study to this end, commonly referred to as the Classroom Strategy Study (Brophy, 1996; Brophy & McClasin, 1992). The study involved in-depth interviews with and observations of 98 teachers; some were identified as effective managers and some were not. The heart of the study involved presenting teachers with vignettes regarding specific types of students (e.g., hostile-aggressive students, passive-aggressive students, hyperactive students) in specific situations. Among the many findings, the most effective classroom managers tended to employ different types of strategies with different types of students, whereas ineffective managers did not. Although Brophy did not couch the findings in terms of teacher and student relationships, the link is an obvious one. Effective managers do not treat all students the same, particularly in situations involving behavior problems. Where some students need encouragement, other students need a gentle reminder, and still others might require a firm reprimand. In fact, Brophy (1996) strongly recommended that teachers develop a set of “helping skills” to employ with different types of students.

Maintaining an Appropriate Mental Set

The final aspect important to effective classroom management is an appropriate mental set. The appropriate mental set for a classroom teacher has two essential and distinguishing features: (1) withitness, and (2) emotional objectivity.

The term “withitness” was coined by Jacob Kounin who is generally considered the first researcher to systematically study the characteristics of effective classroom managers. Kounin (1983) carried out his initial research by comparing the behavior of effective and ineffective classroom managers. He concluded that the primary difference was not in how they handled disruptive behavior, but in the disposition of the teacher to quickly and accurately identify problem behavior and act on it. Kounin referred to this disposition as withitness:

Classroom management is unrelated to how you handle misbehavior and how you handle misbehavior is unrelated to the amount of misbehavior you get. There is one exception. For example, two boys are in the back of the class during an arithmetic lesson. One of them grabs the other's paper and the second one grabs his paper. Then the first one pokes the second in the shoulder jokingly and the other one pokes the first, then they chase each other around the table laughing, then one pulls the shirt off the other and the second pulls his shirt off. Then he unzips the second's fly and he unzips the first guy's fly and the teacher says, “Boys, stop that!” We said that was too late. So it wasn't how she said “stop it” or whether she walked closer or didn't walk closer. Or whether she threatened or didn't threaten. It was whether she demonstrated to the class that she knew what was going on, that she had eyes in the back of her head. It was not whether she came in right away but whether she came in before something spread or became more serious. And we gave that the technical term of withitness. That is the only thing that correlated with management success. (p. 7)

Brophy (1996) describes withitness in more technical and less anecdotal terms:

Remaining “with it” (aware of what is happening in all parts of the classroom at all times) by continuously scanning the classroom, even when working with small groups or individuals. Also demonstrating this withitness to students by intervening promptly and accurately when inappropriate behavior threatens to become disruptive. This minimizes timing errors (failing to notice and intervene until an incident has already become disruptive) and target errors (mistakes in identifying the students responsible for the problem). (p. 11)

The second distinguishing feature of an appropriate mental set is “emotional objectivity.” An effective classroom manager implements and enforces rules and procedures, executes disciplinary actions, and cultivates effective relationships with students without becoming upset if students violate classroom rules and procedures, react negatively to disciplinary actions, or do not respond to the teacher's attempts to forge relationships. As Ron Nelson, Ron Martella, and Benita Galand (1998) note, emotional objectivity allows the teacher to address disciplinary issues in an “unemotional, matter-of-fact” manner (p. 156). Robert and Ruth Soar (1979) also emphasize the importance of emotional objectivity.

Some teachers have reacted negatively, noting that this seems to take the “personal element” out of teacher and student interactions. If the teacher is objective, then she, by definition, is keeping a distance from her students. Although keeping a certain psychological distance from students is useful and perhaps even necessary for effective management, this does not have to translate into aloofness. It simply means carrying out the various aspects of classroom management without becoming emotionally involved or personalizing students' actions. This is very difficult to do since the normal human reaction to student disobedience or lack of response is to feel hurt or even angry. Such high arousal emotional states do not provide a good basis on which to implement rules, execute disciplinary actions, or establish relationships.

Action Steps

I recommend seven action steps to promote effective classroom management. I have categorized each action step under the elements discussed.

Rules and Procedures

Action Step 1. Have teachers articulate and enforce a comprehensive set of classroom rules and procedures.

Both elementary and secondary teachers should have a well-articulated and comprehensive set of rules and procedures. Each category of rules and procedures (listed below) should probably be addressed.

General Classroom Behavior

At the elementary level, rules and procedures for general classroom behavior commonly address the following areas (Doyle, 1986; Evertson et al., 1984; Brophy, 1996):

- being polite and helpful when dealing with others,
- respecting the property of others,
- interrupting the teacher or others, and
- hitting or shoving others.

At the secondary level, rules and procedures commonly address the following areas (Emmer et al., 1984; Brophy, 1996; Doyle, 1986):

- bringing materials to class,
- being in the assigned seat at the beginning of class,
- respecting and being polite to others,
- talking or not talking at specific times,
- leaving the assigned seat, and
- respecting other people's property.

Beginning of the Day and Class Period

At the elementary level, rules and procedures commonly address the following areas (Evertson et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- beginning the school day with specific social activities (e.g., birthdays, important events in students' lives),
- beginning the day with the Pledge of Allegiance,
- handling administrative activities (e.g., attendance, lunch money),
- ending the day by cleaning the room and individual desks, and
- closing the day by putting away materials.

At the secondary level, rules and procedures commonly address the following areas (Emmer et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- taking attendance,
- addressing students who missed the work from the previous day because of absence,
- dealing with students who are tardy, and
- setting clear expectations for homework.

Transitions and Interruptions

At the elementary level, rules and procedures commonly address the following areas (Evertson et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- leaving the room,
- returning to the room,
- using the bathroom,
- using the library and resource room,
- using the cafeteria,
- using the playground,
- behaving during fire and disaster drills, and
- acting as classroom helpers.

At the secondary level, rules and procedures commonly address the following areas (Emmer et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- leaving the room,
- returning to the room,
- behaving during fire and disaster drills, and
- behaving during split lunch period.

Use of Materials and Equipment

At the elementary level, rules and procedures commonly address the following areas (Evertson, et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- distributing materials;
- collecting materials;
- storing common materials;
- using the teacher's desk and storage areas;
- using students' desks and storage areas; and
- using the drinking fountain, sink, pencil sharpener.

At the secondary level rules and procedures commonly address the following (Emmer, et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- distributing materials,
- collecting materials, and
- storing common materials.

Group Work

At the elementary level, rules and procedures commonly address the following areas (Evertson et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- moving in and out of the group,
- behaving within the group,
- behaving while not in the group, and
- communicating with the teacher.

Rules and procedures at the secondary level commonly address the following areas (Emmer et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- moving in and out of the group,
- acting as group leaders (and other group roles),
- relating as a group to the rest of the class or other groups in the class, and
- communicating with the teacher.

Seatwork and Teacher-Led Activities

Rules and procedures at the elementary level commonly address the following areas (Evertson et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- paying attention during presentations,
- participating,
- talking among students,
- obtaining help,
- behaving while out of seat, and
- behaving when work is completed.

Rules and procedures at the secondary level commonly address the following areas (Emmer et al., 1984; Doyle, 1986; Brophy, 1996):

- paying attention during presentations,
- participating,
- talking among students,
- obtaining help,
- behaving while out of seat, and
- behaving when work is completed.

Disciplinary Interventions

Action Step 2. Have teachers use specific strategies that reinforce appropriate behavior and recognize and provide consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Teachers can use several specific disciplinary strategies to achieve necessary disciplinary interventions. Schools must provide training in the use of these strategies so individual teachers can select those with which they feel most comfortable.

One of the simplest classroom disciplinary procedures is to exhibit **nonverbal disapproval**. This commonly manifests as a simple facial expression directed at the student who has misbehaved. This might also take the form of a physical gesture that has been previously communicated to students as an indication of disapproval. Simple, nonverbal disapproval has been shown to decrease student misbehavior (Madsen, Becker, & Thomas, 1968).

Token economies involve the use of some type of token (e.g., points, chits) as reinforcement for engaging in appropriate behavior or avoiding inappropriate behavior. The research on token economies was once focused on improving positive behaviors only (O'Leary, Becker, Evans, & Saudargas, 1969). However, research has demonstrated that tokens are most effective if awarded for positive behaviors and taken away for negative behaviors (Kaufman & O'Leary, 1972).

Isolation time-out involves sending the student to a room or location reserved for disruptive students. Although this strategy was originally designed to be used in special education settings for students with severe behavior disorders (Drabman & Spitalnik, 1973), it has been used quite successfully in regular education settings (Zabel, 1986). Isolation time is easily abused if teachers simply wish to get rid of a behavioral problem as opposed to addressing it (Harris, 1985).

Overcorrection is a procedure that is used when a student has misbehaved in such a way as to destroy or alter some physical aspect of the classroom. The student is then required to restore the classroom to the original state and practice the appropriate behavior that would have avoided the damage (Foxx, 1978).

Differential reinforcement requires teachers to first set a limit on the number of particular types of disruptions. Once the limit has been exceeded, some type of negative consequence occurs. Reinforcement can be used to enhance positive behaviors. Again, the teacher establishes a preset goal of positive behaviors (e.g., a student raising his hand before asking a question). When the goal is reached, some form of reward or recognition is provided (Deitz & Repp, 1973; Irvin & Lundervold, 1988).

Group contingency techniques are like token economies except that they apply to a pre-established group of students. **Interdependent group contingency** techniques require every student in the group to meet the group's behavioral criterion to earn credit. **Dependent group contingency** techniques require a specific individual in the group to meet the group's behavioral criterion to earn credit (Litow & Pumroy, 1975).

Finally, **stimulus cueing** relies on providing a cue to students prior to inappropriate behavior (Carr & Durand, 1985; Lobitz, 1974). For example, a teacher might determine that a specific student usually starts talking to students around him before he engages in a more severe disruptive behavior. With this prior condition identified and communicated to the student, the teacher might place a mark on the whiteboard every time the student begins talking to others around him, thus providing a cue to the student that he is about to engage in an activity that will result in negative consequences.

Action Step 3. Institute a schoolwide approach to discipline.

A schoolwide discipline policy does not preclude teachers using some of the individual strategies described in Action Step 2; however, it communicates powerfully to students and parents that teachers speak *with one voice* on how discipline should be addressed. In this section, only one of many useful programs is described (for reviews of other effective schoolwide programs, see Bear, 1998; Brophy, 1996; Nelson, Martella & Galand, 1998). For example, Think Time is a discipline program by Ron Nelson and Beth Carr (1999). The program

- provides for consistent consequences across all teachers in the school when students engage in disruptive behavior,
- provides students with feedback for their disruptive behavior and allows for planning to avoid future incidents of such behavior, and
- enables teachers and students to cut off negative social exchanges and to initiate positive ones.

For a synthesis of the research on Think Time, see Sugai & Colvin, 1996. Execution of Think Time involves the following basic components.

Catching Disruptive Behavior

Teachers immediately note inappropriate student behavior. If the student acknowledges and ceases the behavior, the class continues without further action. However, if the behavior does not cease, the student is sent to the Think Time Classroom or TT Classroom.

Accessing the Think Time Classroom

For most disruptive behaviors, students are asked to move independently to the Think Time Classroom. However, the amount of time it takes students to get to the TT Classroom is tracked. If problems occur, an escort may be sent.

Think Time Debriefing

A written debriefing on the behavior that resulted in assignment to the TT Classroom is critical to the overall process. The teacher in the TT Classroom conducts the debriefing at his convenience. The debriefing usually involves asking students to identify

- their inappropriate behavior,
- what they need to do differently when they return to the classroom (i.e., identify possible replacement behaviors), and
- indicate whether they think they can perform the replacement behaviors.

It is not uncommon to use “pictorial” debriefings with younger students.

Checking the Debriefing Form

The TT classroom teacher examines the debriefing form before a student is dismissed from the TT Classroom. If the form has been correctly filled out, then the student can rejoin the regular classroom.

Rejoining the Regular Classroom

Students rejoining the regular classroom wait by the door. The regular classroom teacher then checks to see if the debriefing form is correct. If the student has missed work, a peer is assigned to help the student catch up.

Think Time is a fairly demanding approach to discipline in that it requires a separate classroom and dedicated teacher for each period of the day, resources not always readily available. In fact, most schoolwide approaches to discipline require similar commitments and resources. However, a school-wide program communicates a strong sense of solidarity among school staff regarding discipline. Many other programs exist with established research bases, including Assertive Discipline (Canter & Canter, 1976, 1992); Skillstreaming (Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw, & Klein, 1980); the Improving Social Awareness and Social Problem-Solving Project (Elias & Clabby, 1989; Elias & Tobian, 1996); the Social Problem-Solving Program (Weissberg, Jackson, & Shriver,

1993); the Interpersonal Cognitive Problem-Solving Program (Shure, 1992); and Cooperative Discipline (Albert, 1989).

Teacher and Student Relationships

Action Step 4. Help teachers develop a balance of moderate dominance and moderate cooperation in their dealings with students.

The core of effective teacher and student relationships is a healthy balance between dominance and cooperation. One thing that makes such a balance difficult is that students rely primarily on teacher behaviors to indicate whether the teacher is providing guidance or is cooperative. As Theo Wubbels, Mieke Brekelmans, Jan van Tartwijk, and Wilfred Admiral (1999) explain

We consider every behavior that someone displays in the presence of someone else as a communication and therefore we assume that in the presence of someone else one cannot *not* [original emphasis] communicate.... Whatever someone's intentions are, the other persons in the communication will infer meaning from that someone's behavior. If, for example, teachers ignore students' questions, perhaps they do not hear them, then students may not only get this inattention but also infer that the teacher is too busy or thinks that the students are too dull to understand or that the questions are unimportant. The message that students take from the teacher's negation can be different from the teacher's intention....(p. 154)

Thus, teachers must identify those behaviors they engage in that communicate a proper level of dominance balanced by a proper level of cooperation.

Behaviors that convey appropriate levels of dominance include many of the instructional techniques addressed in Chapter 9, particularly those dealing with establishing clear instructional goals. For example, a teacher conveys the impression of appropriate dominance when she

- establishes the learning goals at the beginning of a unit of instruction,
- provides feedback on those goals,
- continually and systematically revisits the goals, and
- provides summative feedback regarding the goals.

Appropriate dominance is also exhibited by providing students with clear understanding of performance levels for specific learning goals. To this end, rubrics are an excellent tool. Assume that the teacher has identified “understanding and utilizing fractions” as one of the learning goals for a unit. The teacher might present students with the following rubric as a guide to performance expectations:

- **4** You understand the characteristics of fractions along with the different types. You can accurately describe how fractions are related to decimals and percentages. You can convert fractions to decimals and can explain the process.
- **3** You understand the basic characteristics of fractions. You know how fractions are related to decimals and percentages. You can convert fractions to decimals.
- **2** You have a basic understanding of the following, but have some small misunderstandings with one or more of the following: the characteristics of fractions, the relationship between fractions, decimals, and percentages, how to convert fractions to decimals.
- **1** You have some major problems or misunderstandings with one or more of the following: the characteristics of fractions, the relationship between fractions, decimals, and percentages, how to convert fractions to decimals.

Behaviors regarding learning goals can also convey appropriate levels of cooperation. Allowing students to set some of their own learning goals at the beginning of a unit or asking students what they might like to learn conveys a sense of cooperation. Demonstrating personal interest in each student in class also conveys cooperation (McCombs & Whisler, 1997; Combs, 1982). Behaviors that communicate this include

- talking informally with students before, during, and after class about their interests;
- greeting students outside of school such as at extracurricular events or at stores;
- singling out a few students each day in the lunchroom and talking to them;
- being aware of and commenting on important events in students' lives, such as participation in sports, drama, or other extracurricular activities;
- complimenting students on important achievements in and outside of school;
- including students in the process of planning classroom activities, soliciting their ideas and considering their interests; and
- meeting students at the door as they come into class and saying hello to each child, making sure to use each student's name.

Engaging in equitable and positive classroom behaviors also communicates appropriate levels of cooperation (Kerman, Kimball, & Martin, 1980; Sadker & Sadker, 1994; Grayson & Martin, 1985). Such behaviors include

- making eye contact with each student in the room by moving about freely and scanning the room as you speak;
- deliberately moving toward and being close to each student;
- attributing ideas to the students who initiated them (for instance, “Dennis has just added to Mary's idea by saying that . . .”);
- allowing and encouraging all students to be part of class discussions and interactions; and
- providing appropriate “wait time” for all students, regardless of their past performance or your perception of their abilities.

A final behavior that conveys appropriate levels of cooperation is the manner in which teachers respond to incorrect responses or lack of response (Hunter, 1969). Useful behaviors in these situations include

- emphasizing what was right about an incorrect response;
- encouraging collaboration among students;
- restating the question and allowing time for students to think before you expect a response;
- rephrasing the question to give students a better understanding;
- offering hints or cues;
- providing the answer and asking for elaboration (asking the student to say it in his own words or provide another example of the answer); and
- respecting the student's option to pass, when appropriate.

Action Step 5. Provide teachers with an awareness of the needs of different types of students and ways of alleviating those needs.

Effective classroom managers are aware of important differences among students. Identifying the differences helps the teacher to better understand individual students and leads students to believe that the teacher has a personal interest in them. Jere Brophy (1996) and Brenda Freeman (1994) have identified categories of various types of students and their related needs. In an attempt to make the research and theory of others more applicable to the classroom, Marzano and Marzano (in preparation) have consolidated this research, identifying five general types of students and the actions that are most useful with each type. For example, Figure 10. 3 (pp. 103–105) defines the source of student misbehavior, provides general personality characteristics of misbehaving students, and offers suggestions on improving teacher-and-student relationships.

Figure 10.3. Student Types, Characteristics, and Behavior Actions

Brophy	Freeman	Marzano & Marzano	Definitions & Source	Characteristics	Suggestions
shy/withdrawn	invisible	fear of relationships	Behavior that is structured to avoid the domination of others or the pain of negative experiences. The child attempts to protect self from criticism, ridicule, or rejection.	Avoids connection with others, is shy, doesn't initiate conversations, attempts to be invisible, has negative self-talk.	Provide safe adult and peer interactions and give protection from aggressive people. Give assertiveness and positive self-talk training. Reward small successes quickly. Withhold criticism.
failure syndrome underachiever/alienated low achiever	low achiever conformer	passive fear of failure	Is a possible reaction to abuse and neglect. Can have a biochemical basis such as anxiety.	Gives up easily, is convinced he can't succeed, is easily frustrated, has negative self-talk.	
hostile-aggressive		hostile	Behavior that is structured to overpower, dominate, harm, or control others without regard for their well-being. Few true success experiences have occurred. The child has often role modeled other aggressive people. Has had minimal or ineffective limits set on them.	Rages, threatens, or intimidates others. Can be verbally or physically abusive to people, animals, or objects.	Describe the student's behavior clearly. Contract with them to reward corrected behavior and give them consequences for uncorrected behavior. Be consistent and provide immediate rewards and consequences. Encourage and acknowledge extracurricular activities in and out of school. Give student responsibilities to help teacher or other students to allow for success experiences.
defiant	alienated disengagers	aggressive oppositional	Is a possible reaction to abuse and neglect. Can have a biochemical basis such as depression.	Does opposite of what is asked. Demands that others agree or give in. Resists verbally or nonverbally.	
passive-aggressive		covert		Appears to agree, then does the opposite of what is asked. Often acts innocent while setting up problems for others.	
hyperactive		attention problems hyperactive	Behavior that demonstrates either motor or attentional difficulties resulting from a	Has difficulty with motor control, both physically and	Contract with the student to manage behaviors. Teach basic concentration, study,

distractible		inattentive	neurological disorder. The child's symptoms may be exacerbated by family or social stressors or other biochemical conditions such as anxiety, depression, or bipolar disorders.	verbally. Fidgets, leaves seat frequently, interrupts, talks excessively. Has difficulty staying focused and following through on projects. Has difficulty with listening, remembering, and organizing.	and thinking skills. Separate student in a quiet work area. Help them list each step of a task. Reward successes, assign peer tutor.
perfectionist	perfectionist	perfectionist	Behavior that is geared toward avoiding the embarrassment and assumed shame of making mistakes. The child fears what will happen if errors are discovered. Has unrealistically high expectations of self. Has possibly received criticism or lack of acceptance while making mistakes during the process of learning.	Over focuses on small details of project. Will avoid projects if unsure of outcome. Focuses on results and not relationships. Is self-critical.	Ask the student to make mistakes on purpose, then show acceptance. Have them tutor other students.
peer rejected		socially rejected	Behavior that is based on the misinterpretation of nonverbal signals of others. The child misunderstands facial expressions and body language. Hasn't received adequate training in these areas and has poor role modeling.	Attempts to make friends but is inept and unsuccessful. Is forced to be alone. Is often teased for unusual behaviors, appearances, or lack of social skills.	Teach the student to keep the appropriate physical distance from others. Teach the meaning of facial expressions such as anger and hurt. Give instructions regarding appropriate voice intonation and volume. Make suggestions regarding hygiene, dress, mannerisms, and posture.

Sources:

Brophy, J. E. (1996). *Teaching problem students*. New York: Guilford.

Freeman, B. (1994). Power motivation and youth: An analysis of troubled students and student leaders. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 72(6), 661–671.

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Appropriate Mental Set for Management

Action Step 6. Have teachers employ specific strategies to maintain or heighten their awareness regarding the actions of students in their classes (“withitness”).

Withitness might appear to be a characteristic that does not lend itself to development. You are either a with-it teacher, or you're not. In fact, there is at least one aspect of this disposition that can be practiced and cultivated. Almost all examples of withitness explicitly note that with-it teachers frequently scan the classroom, particularly when working with a small group of students or an individual (Berliner, 1986; Brophy, 1996; Kounin, 1983). If anything inappropriate is occurring, they turn attention to it immediately. Teachers who do not have a high awareness of their students' actions can practice the simple behavior of looking around the room frequently and periodically for indications of disruption.

Some aspects of withitness are far more subtle. Experienced teachers who have developed these subtle dispositions to a high degree might visit the classrooms of teachers who have not. After class, the mentor teacher might point out behavioral incidents that should have been recognized and acknowledged. The less experienced teacher might also visit the classroom of the mentor teacher to identify behaviors associated with withitness.

Action Step 7. Have teachers employ specific strategies that help them maintain a healthy emotional objectivity with their students.

Maintaining a healthy emotional objectivity with students might also appear to be resistant to behavioral strategies. However, even something as simple as trying to understand the reasons for misbehavior can help teachers establish and maintain healthy objectivity. Student misbehavior usually has nothing to do with a specific teacher (Dreikurs, 1968; Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1982). Once a teacher realizes this, she has a better chance of treating student misbehavior as impersonal. When a specific student misbehaves, a teacher can explicitly identify reasons why the student might have misbehaved that do not imply disrespect for or aggression toward the teacher. This strategy is a simple variation of a time-honored strategy from clinical psychology sometimes referred to as “reframing” (Ellis, 1977; Meichenbaum, 1977).

Teachers might also monitor their own attitudes about specific students (Good, 1982; Rosenshine, 1983; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Most teachers are aware that when their attitudes toward specific students are positive, they can operate in an objective manner with those students. However, many teachers are unaware of the extent to which their negative attitudes toward specific students interfere with their objectivity toward those students. The following process has been recommended to counteract this bias (Marzano, Pickering, Arredondo, Blackburn, Brandt, Moffett, Paynter, Pollock & Whisler, 1997):

- mentally review your students before class, noting those with whom you anticipate having problems (either academic or behavioral);
- imagine these “problem” students succeeding or engaging in positive classroom behavior; and
- keep in mind your positive expectations when interacting with these students.

Summary

Although classroom management is on nearly every list of factors associated with student achievement, it is not a simple construct. Four integrated aspects of this factor were identified: establishing and enforcing a comprehensive list of rules and procedures, using disciplinary interventions that strike a balance between positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior and negative consequences for inappropriate behavior, establishing relationships with students that involve appropriate levels of dominance and cooperation, and developing the mental dispositions of withitness and an emotional objectivity toward students. I recommended seven action steps to address these four aspects of classroom management.