

Classroom Management Philosophy

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Teaching is both an art and a science. Lesson plans and classroom activities are thoroughly and carefully crafted ahead of classroom instruction; though, being an effective teacher requires the ability to respond to unthinkable situations at any given time. Successful classroom management not only prepares teachers for those unthinkable situations, but it enhances learning opportunities by establishing clear and consistent routines and expectations for the students in the room. According to the results of a study conducted by Gage et. al. (2018), effective classroom management decreases problem behaviors while simultaneously increasing academic achievement. Not every teacher has the same classroom management philosophy; likewise, not every teacher uses the same methods to manage their classroom. In my classroom, I will foster positive relationship, use procedures to encourage appropriate, mature behavior, and implement classroom rules that set clear expectations for my students.

Forming Positive Relationships

I believe that students are more likely to listen to and learn from people that they like. Because of this, it is important for me to form positive and appropriate relationships with all my students. My goal is for each of my students to feel valued and appreciated by me and for them to respect me and each other.

One strategy that I will use to form positive relationships across the classroom is to greet my students at the door as they walk in. By saying the name of each student as they walk in, I show them that I value them and notice them. According to Wong & Wong (2014, p. 53) “As you greet your students each day, you connect with them. You show that you care that they are in your classroom.” This simple daily routine will also help me manage my classroom. By greeting the students at the door, I show them that as soon as they walk in, they need to behave according

to my rules and procedures. I show them that goofing around only happens outside the classroom. As soon as they walk in, they need to be ready to learn.

In the same way, I will dismiss all my students at the door each day with either a high five, fist bump, or a hug (they get to choose). This will help me to continue forming positive relationships with my students because my goal is to make them feel appreciated as they both enter and exit my classroom.

While the students are in the class, one of the ways that I will encourage and strengthen the relationships with my students is through affirming their positive attributes and successes. This will be a common practice in my classroom because “positive feedback has been associated with improving student outcomes including increased academic engagement and decreased disruptive behaviors” (Gage et. All , 2018, p.304). Positive feedback will help my students feel valued, and in turn, they will value their learning opportunities.

Student Procedures

In my classroom, there will be procedures that address appropriate ways to behave in numerous circumstances (see appendix A for a complete list of second grade classroom procedures as well as where they will be posted). The procedures that I have created address three main areas: how to enter, exit, and move around the room, silent signals to ask something specific, and guidelines for assignments. According to Wong & Wong (2014), procedures in the classroom need to be taught, rehearsed and reinforced. By teaching, practicing, and reinforcing these procedures in my classroom, I will be able to manage student behavior and save more time for instruction and activities.

When students enter my classroom, they have specific jobs. In this way, I send them on their mission to hang up their coat, make their lunch choice, sharpen their pencil and work on

their bell work. By giving the students a specific task and framing it as a “mission” the students will be excited to get prepared for the day. Additionally, whenever students are walking in the room or in the hall, they need to have bubbles in their lips and hands on their hips. This will help them increase their self-management and decrease many of the problem behaviors that occur during this time.

Along with this, other procedures that are a part of my second-grade classroom are silent signals. I believe that “simple signals for attention—whether visual (a raised hand) or auditory (a chime, rain stick, or other pleasant-sounding instrument)—are an essential classroom management tool” (“Success with Signals,” 2010). I will have signs posted around the room to remind my students of the signal to use when they need to ask a question, use the restroom, or get a drink. By having specific signals for these instances, the students will be able to effectively communicate their needs to me without disrupting the class.

Another problematic issue within every classroom that can have the potential to cause disruption or confusion and take away from learning time is how students turn in their assignments and what to do when they are done. I have made three classroom procedures that address assignments specifically. They will help the students take ownership and responsibility of their work and their time, while allowing me to address the learning question rather than housekeeping questions in the classroom.

Classroom Rules and Discipline Plan

The rules that I have created for my classroom are simple and concise, yet explicitly state appropriate expectations (see Appendix B for a list and explanation of my classroom rules as well as my discipline plan). I will teach these rules and give numerous examples and non-examples so all my students understand them. According to Shalaway (2005), I should teach

these rules explicitly and give the rationale for the rule so students can understand its importance. In my classroom, the students are expected to use integrity to self-monitor their own behavior according to the classroom rules.

The first rule that I will implement in my classroom is to use kind words and actions. I believe this the number one rule for my classroom because the learning of my students will be inhibited when this rule is broken. It is my highest priority to keep the students safe and to give everyone a fair opportunity to learn. When unkind words and actions are used, this becomes increasingly difficult.

The second rule that I have created for my future classroom is to follow directions. Unless the students follow my directions, the lesson plans and activities that I have prepared are meaningless and do not have learning value. The second reason that students must follow directions is to ensure the safety and appropriateness of behaviors. This rule will help me manage problem behaviors. Lastly, I believe this is an important rule for my classroom because it promotes the life skill of respect. Not only do the students need to follow my directions, but they must also follow the directions of other staff members.

The third and final rule that I will implement in my future classroom is to always try your best. I believe that every student is capable of learning and their best effort is necessary to do that. For this reason, trying your best inside my classroom is not just a guideline, it is a rule. Additionally, this rule will help me manage the problematic behaviors that occur when a student rushes through an assignment just to be done. If they did not try their best, they must continue working. By using the discipline plan I have created, I will encourage the students to self-monitor their behavior to ensure that they follow this rule.

Conclusion

I believe that I have effectively manage my classroom by establishing and fostering positive relationships, teaching, rehearsing, and reinforcing procedures, and utilizing clear and concise rules. Though, teaching is a profession that will always keep me on my feet as I experience unthinkable situations. Inevitably, there will be situations that I could have never expected and am not prepared for. In this case, I will rely on the strategies I have learned, the advice and support from mentor teachers and school staff, and communication with the families of my students to help me manage my future classroom. Most importantly, I will take every opportunity to learn and improve upon my classroom management skills because my students deserve it.

References

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