



Lion Taming 101: Classroom Management (It's not just about the rules)

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The Teacher

"Concerning a teacher's influence, I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or deescalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized."

--Haim Ginott

Taking Inventory

Please answer each part of each question honestly and candidly. There are no right or wrong answers. What you write will be held in confidence.

1. What is your full name? What do you like to be called? Why?
2. List 10 words that describe you,.
3. List the people that live in your home(s) and put 2 describing words after each name.
4. What do you think you will be like 5 years from now?
5. Of all the things you do in your free time, which ones do you like best?
6. Of all the things required of you in your life, which things do you like least?
7. Who is your best friend? Why?
8. What do you and your friends have in common?
9. At what kinds of things do you excel?
10. At school what are your favorite things to do?
11. At school what are your least favorite things to do?
12. What is your favorite book or movie? Why?
13. If you could change this school, what changes would you make?
14. If you were the teacher in this class, what five rules would you have?
15. What is your major goal (aim, ambition, dream, hope) right now?
16. Who is the person you admire the most? Why?
17. What are you most afraid of?
18. What is it about you that makes your friends like you?
19. What is something I (the teacher) need to know about you?
20. Write your own question and answer it.

Behavior Journal Page

Student's Name _____ Class/Period _____ Date _____

I violated our class code by: _____

I chose to do this because: _____

A more appropriate choice would have been: _____

This is how I feel about what happened: _____

This is what I plan to do in the future to prevent a recurrence of my actions: _____

This is how my teacher can help me implement my plan: _____

Student's Signature _____

_____ Date

Teacher Comments:

Individual Behavior Plan

Student's Name _____ Class/Period _____ Date _____

Long-Range Goals for student: _____

Short-Term Target Goal: _____

What Student Will Do to Meet Target Goal: _____

What Teacher Will Do to Help Student Meet Target Goal: _____

What Parent or Other Will Do to Help Student Meet Target Goal (optional): _____

What will happen if student fails to meet target goal :

1st Time- _____

2nd Time- _____

Positive recognition student will receive for making target goal:

Positive recognition will make for sustaining target goal for _____ (time period).

Date-

Student Signature

Teacher Signature

Parent or Other Signature (optional)

Comments and Dates:

Killer Statements and Gestures

Conduct a class discussion around the following questions:

Have you ever worked really hard at something or been very excited about something and someone "killed" your good feeling by something they said or did? What was said or done?

Have you ever witnessed someone's pride or other feelings be "killed" by something that someone else said or did? What was said or done? How do you think the other person felt?

Introduce the concept of "killer statements and gestures" as anything that is said or done to "kill" someone's good feelings about themselves. These things can be negative comments, body language, or gestures. List together some of the things that are often said in and around the classroom that fit these categories (even those said and done by staff members).

Examples may include:

"That doesn't even make sense!"
"Where did you get an answer like that?"
"Quit showing off!"
"Are you crazy? retarded? weird? strange? nuts? . . ."
"We don't have time for that now."
"Only boys/girls do that!"
"If you'd pay attention this wouldn't happen!"

- Tell the students to keep a list of all the killer statements they hear in one day. Discuss who said them and why.
- Have students make a mural or collage of killer statements and gestures. Display it in the room as a reminder.
- Do the I A L A C role play to demonstrate the impact of killer statements and gestures.
- Discuss how to replace killer statements and gestures with positive comments and gestures.

The most deadly of all sins is the mutilation of a child's spirit.

*Erik H. Erikson
Young Man Luther*

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

Eleanor Roosevelt

Adapted from 100 Ways to Enhance Self-concept in the Classroom. Canfield & Well

Why Students Misbehave

- * To Gain Power
- * To Get Attention
- * To Seek Revenge
- * To Avoid Failure

From Catherine Neale Watson, *Middle Ground*, Spring, 1995

Contemplative Teachers Plan How They Will:

- **React to different situations.**
- * **Reinforce positive behavior.**
- * **Extinguish negative behavior.**
- * **Individualize discipline practices for difficult students.**
- * **Engage all learners.**
- * **Differentiate instruction for diverse learners.**
- * **Foster a classroom community.**
- **Build their own resiliency so that they will be at their personal best.**

Tips for Successful Communication With Students

- Do not begin instruction until all students are focused and attentive.
- Be sure your voice and body language are consistent with your words.
- Use direct eye contact and simple hand gestures to redirect off-task or inappropriate behavior.
- Use close proximity and a quiet voice to make reminders and censures personal and private.
- Be warm and friendly, and be firm.
- Talk to upset students away from other students.
- Practice active listening skills.
- Write e-mails, notes, or letters to students occasionally just to tell them why you are glad that you are their teacher.



Tips for Writing to Students

- Write things that are positive and specific to the individual student. (Some students will compare their messages from you to see if you say the same things to everyone.)
- Make sure everyone gets at least one note from you during the year.
- Be truthful and be sincere. You can even be funny if that's how you interact with students, but be very careful that your words cannot be misinterpreted as sarcastic or negative (humor is tricky without the facial expressions and vocal tone to indicate that you are joking).
- Make sure your positive comments have "no strings attached."
- Don't make a big deal of presenting the note. Be as private as possible (you can even leave it in a locker or mail it).
- Don't ask them if they read it; give it freely, and let it go.
- Don't ask for or expect anything in return.

Things to Consider Before You *React* to a Disruptive Student

- Could this be about your own need to win?
- Could you have misinterpreted the situation?
- Have you confronted the one who wasn't the primary instigator?
- Is this hostility directed towards you actually displaced aggression?
- Is the student just trying to attract attention (even if it is negative)?
- Does the student feel that s/he is not being respected or losing face?
- Is it possible that this student really *did* misunderstand?
- Is this student acting out of a feeling of powerlessness or hopelessness?
- Could this student have been joking?
- Is this student just acting in a way that is typical of his age group?

LIST OF RELATED CITATIONS

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