

# Classroom management 1

## Timetables

Allocate of times for subjects

Give consideration to most mentally challenging work in the morning

### Designing your timetable:

- Maths – 1 hr per day
- Literacy - 1½ hrs per day (handwriting, phonics/spelling, reading, written expression/grammar)
- Science, Social Studies, Health - 2 hrs per week (Treat as one topic)
- Music / drama – 1 hr per week (better dispersed throughout the day, not one block)
- PE/Sport – 1½ hrs per week
- Scripture / devotions / values – 40 minutes per week plus 15 minutes daily.
- Art – 2 hrs per week
- Vernacular – 1 hr per week
- Total 21 hours (School hours = 23 hrs)

**Activity:** Draw up a timetable for a class.

## Common problems for teachers in Fiji

- Crowded classrooms, often 45 students per class; little floor space for working with groups.
- Inadequate storage for equipment.
- Lack of loose sheets of paper for writing on and drawing.
- Often lack of basics like pencils, especially coloured pencils

## Basic principles for good classroom supervision

- Students are to line up before entering the classroom.
- Students must put hand up if they want to speak.
- Organize classroom furniture and equipment for easy access by students.
- Set classroom rules (at beginning of teaching year).
- Have in place some management rules for discipline.
- Use rewards and encouragements.
- Keep them motivated and interested, with activities that are at the right level.
- Monitor when students have had enough of one activity, are getting bored, or are having difficulties. Be flexible and be prepared to change course if need be.
- Keep the noise level down it gets too difficult for you to gain control. Shouting does not set a good tone.

## **Ten principles for teaching new skills**

1. Begin a lesson with a short review of the previous lesson.
2. Present new material in small steps with student practice after each step. (Teach only small amounts of new material at any time, and then help students as they work with this material.)
3. Ask a large number of questions. (Questions help students practice new information and connect new material to their prior learning.)
4. Provide students with examples of how the work is to be done – this can be an example of what someone has already done.
5. Set exercises for students, starting with easy ones and progressing to harder ones.
6. Guide students as they practice or work on new material.
7. Check for students understanding at each point, before going on to something new. It is important that students are mastering a skill, or have good understanding, before moving on to something new.
8. Provide support for difficult tasks.
9. Give students plenty of practice at working on their own. Check that students can work on their own without your help, before moving on to something new.
10. Revise what has been learned, weekly and monthly. (Students need to come back to learned material and use it to make connections with new material they are learning.)

*Acknowledgement: "Principles of Instruction: Research-Based Strategies That All Teachers Should Know" by Barak Rosenshine in American Educator, Spring 2012*

## **Ten principles for keeping students interested and focused**

1. Vary your activities.  
Don't stay on one activity for too long. Young children should not be sitting on the floor for more than 15 minutes. After 15 minutes change the activity, or have an activity break – an action song, a game – something to get them moving.
2. Use visual aids.  
These can be pictures, video clips, objects, related to what is being learned.
3. Ask questions and allow children to participate in discussion. Don't repeat a child's answer.
4. Use the morning for the subjects requiring greater concentration, e.g. maths, literacy.

5. Make a set of class rules and make sure the children observe them in learning times, e.g. – ‘hands up if you want to speak’, ‘no one speaks while another person is speaking’, ‘hands and feet to yourself’.
6. Teach the children the meaning of ‘attentive listening’ and tell them when this is required, e.g. for a story being read to the class, or when you are explaining something important.
7. Give children freedom to make ‘working noise’ when they are doing group projects, but maintain a quiet classroom for tasks requiring individual concentration.
8. For messy projects, such as art or group work with equipment, give students a warning 5 minutes before packing up, so that they are ready for pack up.
9. Allocate jobs for pack-up.
10. Give points, praise or rewards to groups who are quick to obey instructions.

### **A safe and supportive school environment**

- Students should feel supported with positive affirmation. Awards, rewards and encouragement should be given.
- Students should not feel threatened. No physical punishments should be given.
- “No bullying” should be the school policy; social skills should be taught for positive playground play; teachers must supervise the playground.

### **Ten tips for positive classroom management**

#### **1. Be in charge.**

Demonstrate that you are in charge by the position you take in the room; keep on your feet as much as possible and be where you can watch everything that is going on. Pupils should be convinced you have eyes in the back of your head! Pick up the good things they are doing, (see number 3 below). Keep moving around the classroom to establish yourself as the focal point of interest and authority.

Remember that the pupils need to feel safe; they can only do this if you are in charge. Do not justify or apologize for your rules, your standards or your insistence on compliance.

#### **2. Use positive classroom rules.**

Pupils need to know what is expected of them in your classroom. Establish a set of rules, no more than 4 or 5, which make desired behaviour explicit; display them prominently in the room and refer to them frequently so that they don’t disappear into the wallpaper!

The rules should tell the pupils what to do, rather than what not to do, e.g.

- Don't call out.
- Put up your hand and wait to speak.
- Don't walk around the classroom.
- Stay in your seat.
- Don't damage things.
- Look after classroom equipment.

Praise good behaviour and refer to the rule being followed. Use the rules to point out inappropriate behaviour, "Remember our rule about ..."

Have a 'feature' rule now and again, written on the board and tied to a special individual or class reward to be given to pupils who follow the rule.

### **3. Make rewards work for you.**

Give pupils relevant rewards for desirable behaviours such as starting work quickly, for completing tasks, following class rules, etc. The goal is to establish the HABIT of co-operation.

Possible rewards:

- a note home to parents
- a certificate
- stars on a special chart which earns a reward later, after say, 10 stars
- being given special responsibilities
- being allowed to go first
- having extra choices

### **4. Catch them being good.**

Praise is the most powerful motivator there is. Praise the tiniest steps in the right direction. Praise often, using descriptive praise, for example, 'It can be annoying having to look up words in the dictionary. I can see you are getting impatient but the dictionary is still open in front of you. You haven't given up.' Or, 'I can see you don't want to line up, but you are facing the right direction for coming in.' Be willing to appreciate the smallest of effort and explain why it pleases you.

Pupils will not think you are being too strict and will not resent your firm decision making if you remember to smile, to criticize less and to praise more. Tell the pupils there will be positive consequences for positive behaviour, then follow through and show them.

Stick to your principles and do not give rewards that haven't been earned.

Don't overlook positive behaviour. Try to remember to praise pupils for

- homework in on time
- working quietly

- neat desk
- not swinging on chair
- smiling
- contributing to class discussion
- helping another pupil
- not laughing at another pupil's mistakes
- promptly following your instructions

### **5. Be specific and clear in your instructions.**

Get a pupil's full attention before giving instructions. Make sure everyone is looking at you and not fiddling with a pencil, turning around, looking at a book, etc. Only give instructions once; repeating can unwittingly train a pupil to not bother to listen properly the first time. Smile as you give instructions.

Don't be too wordy and don't imply choice when there actually isn't a choice, e.g. Don't say, 'Would you like to ...?' Instead just state what the students are to do.

Be very clear in all your instructions and expectations. Have a pupil repeat them back to you.

### **6. Deal with low level misbehaviour before it gets big.**

Low level, or minor, misbehaviour will escalate if they are not dealt with quickly and consistently. A pupil's behaviour is reinforced when he gets attention for it, but don't be tempted to ignore it. Find a calm and quiet way to let the child know that you see exactly what he is doing and that there is a consequence, without making a fuss, getting upset or sounding annoyed.

Give your instructions once only. If the pupil continues to misbehave, instead of repeating your original instruction, try one or more of these actions:

- point to the work they are meant to be doing
- use a description of reality, 'John, you are tapping your ruler.'
- stop everything and look at the pupil pointedly and wait for them to work out why
- descriptively praise those who are behaving appropriately, praise the target pupil as soon as he/she complies

Always follow through, even on minor things, so that pupils know there is no point in testing. They should know what will happen. Only give second chances after a period of good behaviour.

### **7. The consequences of non-compliance.**

Help the pupil to do whatever you've asked him to do. If he has thrown pencils on the floor, help him to pick them up. If a pupil does not obey instructions straight away, do not give up. Keep waiting. Praise every little step in the right direction.

Do not protect the pupil from the consequences of his action or lack of action. The pupil is making a choice and you will have told him this, and given a clear warning of the consequence.

A consequence should be uncomfortable and not upsetting enough to breed more resentment. The purpose of the consequence is to prompt the pupil to think, 'I wish I hadn't done that.'

Have a ready repertoire of easy-to-implement consequences. These might include

- loss of choices (e.g. where to sit)
- loss of recess time
- loss of a privilege
- sitting in silence for a set amount of time

#### **8. Give choices for ways in which they can comply.**

e.g. Would you like to do this work now or at recess?

#### **9. Establish 'start of lesson' routines.**

Never attempt to start teaching a lesson until the pupils are ready. It's a waste of everyone's energy, and gives the impression it's the teacher's job to force pupils to get ready work, and it's the students job to resist, delay and distract.

Have a routine way of starting a lesson; a quiet activity that pupils can get right down to, without needing any explanation, e.g. Copying a sentence or some spelling words from the board, or for maths, some simple mental arithmetic problems. For younger children, read a story. The class must be quiet and attentive before you start to teach.

#### **10. Manage the end of the lesson.**

Give the students warning about how much time they have before the end of the lesson, to complete a certain amount of work. For a messy lesson such as art, give plenty of time for pack up.

#### **Creative ways to quiet a room full of noisy kids**

- Clap out a rhythm.
- Walk over near a few students and in a calm, normal-volume voice say, "Clap twice if you can hear me." The few students will clap. Then, repeat it again. Now, more students are quiet and listening. Calmly repeat (changing the number of claps) until you have the attention of the entire room. Typically, this will quiet a classroom within 20 seconds, and an auditorium or cafeteria of hundreds of students in less than a minute.
- Get kids moving. Call-and-responses that include some kind of physical movement are especially effective.
- Say, "Drop it [they have to actually drop what's in their hands], Zip it [mouths are closed], Lock it [all eyes are locked on the teacher.] Then we all clap once together."

- Say, "Take a seat, take a seat...Take a load off your feet, whoop whoop [raise arms on the whoop whoop]."
- Another idea is to play a Simon Says-like game: "If you can hear me, put your hands on your head" and so on with different directions to get kids
- Say, "Pop a marshmallow in." Puff up cheeks and tap them, and the kids do the same with their own cheeks (which stops them from talking.) Something similar, "putting bubbles in your mouth".

### Individual star charts

For particularly difficult students, highlight their behavioural weaknesses, write them on a chart and give them stars or point for compliance. These charts have been made for individual children with challenges that match their particular problems.

**Today I have:**

	M	T	W	Th	F
not copied					
spoken when necessary					
behaved properly when given an instruction					
behaved properly when corrected					
co-operated with homework					

**Today I have:**

	M	T	W	Th	F
Listened to the teacher					
Not answered back					
Co-operated with homework					
Willingly done the things I was asked to do					
Made another person happy					

**Today I have:**

	M	T	W	TH	F
Put my hand up before speaking					
Not distracted other people					
Not interrupted the speaker					
Concentrated on my work					
Done my homework and brought it back					

## **Behaviour consequences in 5 steps**

1. Verbal warning
2. Name on board
3. 5 minutes time-out
4. Go to another classroom
5. Go to the office

## **Ten classroom rules**

1. The teacher is in charge of the room, and the class. The teacher's instructions must be followed.
2. No calling out. Every student must put his or her hand up to speak.
3. If the teacher is speaking, the class must listen attentively and with respect.
4. If the teacher has asked anyone else to speak, the class must listen attentively. If a student disagrees with a teacher or feels unfairly treated, they will ask the discuss the issue with the teacher at recess, lunch or after school and not during a lesson and in front of others.
5. Every student should be responsible for their own equipment and treat books and equipment with care.
6. Students should stay in their assigned seats, unless asked by the teacher to move.
7. All homework should be handed in on time and done to the best of your ability.
8. All class work will be completed to the best of your ability.
9. No one is permitted to leave the room, or walk around the room, interfere with another student's property without permission.
10. All students should show manners to every other member of the class, the teacher, and to any guests in the room.

## **Give me Five!!**

We must have:

1. eyes looking
2. ears listening
3. lips closed
4. hands still
5. brain ready

## **Practical steps to help students respond well to correction**

### **Before you speak to them:**

- Don't react, do respond. Take time to be sure you have dealt with any of your own emotions before you speak with the student. (Don't act or speak in anger.)
- Do not touch the student (don't grab their arm or hit them).
- Don't raise your voice.
- Take a few moments before you begin; consider what you will say.
- Take them aside; do not correct them in front of others.
- Have them wait for you (inside or outside the class) until you can give them some time without leaving the class in disorder.
- Don't make empty threats. Be prepared to follow through with whatever you say.

### **When you speak to them:**

- Pray with the student before you speak about their behavior. Let them hear you asking God for wisdom, thanking God for their lives.
- Affirm the student and your commitment to them.
- Ask questions to fully understand what happened. They had a reason for acting as they did. Don't accuse, or presume you know why they made those choices.
- Ask how you can help them with the problems behind why they misbehaved.
- Explain why the behavior is unacceptable and what you DO want – the positive behavior.
- Explain what the consequences will be and WHY – how the consequences will help build the positive behavior and restore the relationships.

### **Serious misbehavior**

For constant, long term or serious misbehavior, it's wise to let the principal know and call the parents unless there's possible abuse in the family. It is VERY helpful to develop agreement with parents on how to deal with their student, and you may gain some understanding of why the student may be misbehaving. The stronger the communication with the family, the more consistent the follow through between behavior and home and in the classroom, the more likely the student will be able to change serious problems with behavior.

### **Physical punishment**

This is not acceptable in the school situation. Instead we should find ways of helping the student manage their own behavior. As teachers, we need to be praying about root causes of misbehavior and trust God for divine direction in helping the student to grow into a person who loves, honours and obeys the Lord.

2 Cor 8: 20, 21 Paul says we are to be careful to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord *and* in the eyes of men, to avoid even the appearance of evil.

### **Some guidelines to avoid any appearance of evil to the student or others:**

- Don't touch a student on their torso, only on arms and above. Do not allow a student to sit on your lap when you are in a private place.
- Immediately discuss any questionable situations with your school leadership, e.g. you suspect a student may be abused or you have found yourself in a situation that may appear questionable to others.

### **Top Tips for seating plans**

- Separate trouble makers
- Mix up gender
- Mix up ability
- Keep the difficult students seated near your desk
- Insist on the seating plan - don't give in to 'Please may I sit with someone else?'

### **Multi-class teaching**

How does a teacher manage a subject in different class levels?

Younger children, (e.g. Composite Years 1 & 2):

Have plenty of play-based and drawing activities so that while a teacher is working with one group, the other group can work independently. Students must learn that they cannot interrupt the teacher when he/she is working with a group (unless it is an emergency).

For Maths and English lessons it will be important to teach students in ability groups, but for other subjects such as science, Social Studies, Health, Art, Music, the composite class can be taken as a whole.

Have plenty of extension activities for early finishers, so no student is wasting time.

### **Evaluation and Assessment**

What is the difference between formative and summative assessment?

#### **Formative assessment**

The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning as they go, to see if they are understanding.

Examples of formative assessments include asking students to:

- draw a concept map in class to represent their understanding of a topic
- write one or two sentences to summarize the main point of a unit of study
- answer questions orally

Formative assessments:

- help teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work
- help recognize where students are struggling and address problems immediately

## Summative assessment

The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit, or term, by comparing it against some standard or benchmark, i.e. it shows whether the student is measuring up to the national standard.

Examples of summative assessments include:

- a written test or exam
- a final project
- to submit a report

## Evaluation checklist for teachers

<b>Engagement of faith perspectives</b>	✓
Are students responding and growing in their faith?	
Are students involved in discussing the faith perspective at a deep level?	
Are students interested in the Christian dimension of the class lesson?	
Is the teacher displaying a Christ like manner in teaching, assessing, engaging and disciplining?	
When teaching about the faith, is the teacher encouraging open discussion and not just delivering a sermon?	

<b>Quality of teaching</b>	✓
Are the students learning or just doing busy work?	
Is the student output of satisfactory standard?	
Do the students ask questions, work together and show initiative?	
Are the students following routines, rules and procedures well?	
Are students involved in active learning and not just lectures from the teacher?	

<b>Student progress</b>	✓
Are students progressing at an acceptable rate?	
Are there extension options for more capable students?	
Are students in need of support able to access simpler activities?	
Is the teacher assessing student understanding?	
Are teacher expectations of the students high enough?	

<b>Quality of logistics</b>	✓
Does the room display learning materials, posters, and book resources?	
Do the book resources and posters match to student attainment levels?	
Is the classroom effectively set up to maximize learning?	
Are any posters or displays reflecting a God-centred curriculum?	
Are students in the most remote part of the room able to see, hear and feel included in the lesson?	

<b>Progress of students</b>	✓
Is there evidence of use of formative and not just summative assessment?	
Does the teacher use open-ended questions to gauge understanding?	
Does the teacher differentiate when assessing rather than all are to produce to identical standards?	
Is the teacher encouraging students to aim for a high standard?	
Is the teacher providing opportunity for students to express their individual learning styles?	

# Classroom management

## Promoting kindness and caring in your classroom

The best way to promote kindness and caring behaviors in our classrooms is to model them. When we show our students what it LOOKS like and SOUNDS like to be kind, there is a far greater chance they will repeat those modeled behaviors. And it is important to remember that children watch their teachers all the time and listen to everything they say. Essential caring behaviors and kindness are more often “caught” than they are “taught” in the classroom.

### Listen with your heart

We teach our kids that listening is part of being “ready to learn,” but it is important to go one step further with regard to this vital life skill. In my classroom, I teach my students how to “listen with their hearts” from day one. When you teach children to truly listen for the meaning of what is being said, you are teaching them how to be kind and empathetic.

### Random acts of kindness

Last year our school started a Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) Secret Buddy program. It is an optional activity for staff to be a part of. The program is easy to organize and a great way boost morale and do kind things for one another.

Remember, "A little spark of kindness can put a colossal burst of sunshine into someone's day!" (author unknown). Have fun spreading kindness and joy in your classroom!

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/blog-posts/shari-carter/creating-culture-kindness-your-classroom/>

### Scenario of ways to show / or not show kindness

#### Children are learning to count by 2s

##### *How not to show kindness:*

Teacher says, “We are going to count by 2s.”

“Say after me: 2,4,6,8,10.” (All children repeat.)

Teacher shouts, “Again!”. Children repeat. Teacher shouts “Again”. Teacher shouts, “Again”

Teacher says, “Now I’m going to hear each one of you say the numbers.” Teacher picks a child at random.

This child says number sequence and gets it wrong.

Teacher says, “No, that’s not right! Say it after me!” “and again!”

##### *How to show kindness:*

Teacher says, "We are going to learn to count by 2s today. That means we can count things much faster than counting by ones. Wouldn't that be fun! (Teacher smiles and shows bright eyes.)

"I'm going to get some counters and count them. 2,4,6,8,10" (touching counters)

Do you think you could do that? I'd like everyone to get 10 counters and put them out in 2s like mine."

Now we are ready to count. Ready... 2,4,6,8,10.

I think we could try that again....2,4,6,8,10. Ready ...

That's great. Now you are learning to count by 2s! (Teacher sounds happy.)

Let's do it one more time...2,4,6,8,10

You are all getting so good! Would someone like to do it on their own?

Child volunteers. :2,4,6,8,9"

That was such a good try. But there's just one number that needs to be fixed. Would you like us to help you to find which number it is?

Now let's all count together. Ready... 2,4,6,8,10

To the child: "Did you find which number you had to fix?... Yes, that's great!"

### **39 Effective Strategies for Classroom Management:**

1. Say "Hello" and greet your students with a smile every day (if possible, stand in the doorway and say hello to each student by name as they enter the classroom). Show them that you are happy to see them.
2. Make time to hear your students' thoughts, ideas, and opinions. Take a genuine interest and give a response that shows you care.
3. Use redirection (e.g., say "finish writing your sentence" instead of "stop talking" or "look up here" instead of "stop looking out the window"). Nonverbal redirection, like tapping the student's paper or book in the spot where they should be, as a reminder to get back on task, is often effective as well.
4. Tell your students what you want them to do instead of what you don't want them to do (e.g., say "quiet in the hallway" instead of "no talking in the hallway", "keep your hands to yourself" instead of "no hitting.") Children respond better when you tell them what to do instead of what not to do.
5. Leave out extraneous comments about behavior (e.g., "No one else is doing that; why are you?" "I don't know how you act at home, but you are not going to act like that here." "Lower your voice, no one else wants to hear you."). These kinds of comments often lead to other students chiming in with negative comments, embarrassment for the student, and an opening for the student to talk back to you. The same goes for negative comments about

learning such as “How do you not get this? We already went over it three times!” Stay calm and re-explain it.

6. Show empathy to your students (e.g., “You seem frustrated. Let me see how I can help you.”)

7. Give choices to your students.

Examples of choices can include:

- Read a book of your choice and do a book report on it
- After you read this paragraph, draw a picture or write a few sentences to summarize what you read
- For homework, make a poster or write a poem about your favorite activity
- Write or type your essay

8. Teach your students to treat others nicely, use kind words, and be tolerant of differences. Let them know that you are proud of them and they should be proud of themselves when you see them being helpful or kind to others. Remind them of class rules to be respectful and speak nicely to their peers. Report any bullying to your school team and be aware and follow your school’s protocol for bullying.

9. For younger students, teach them how to share with each other. For example, if a child snatches a toy out of another child’s hand and that other child hits the child who took the toy, teach them and model how to appropriately ask for a toy (e.g., “Can I have a turn playing with that please?”) and how to respond if the other child says “No, I am playing with it.” (e.g., show them how to find another toy to play with). Teach the child who hit to use his words (e.g., “I do not like when you snatch a toy from my hand, I was playing with this”). Teach the children to ask for help from an adult if they cannot work it out on their own. Also encourage children to share and set limits for how long your students can play with a particular toy before they must let another child have a turn. Give appropriate praise when you see nice sharing among students (“I love how you shared the cars with Brian today! Keep up the good work!”).

10. Allow your students to have opportunities for movement throughout the day (other than recess).

Examples of movement activities include:

- getting up and stretching
- doing jumping jacks or running in place
- dancing to music
- passing out or collecting papers
- going to the bathroom
- getting drinks at the water fountain
- running an errand
- taking the class outside on a nice day
- incorporating academics into a movement activity (e.g., you can do a counting activity while you do jumping jacks)

11. Do not take away recess as a punishment. Children need to move and get energy out to be effective learners.

12. Have a class routine that pretty much follows the same schedule every day (this pertains more to Preschool and Elementary School, but can be done at any grade if needed). Routines are helpful for students who have trouble transitioning from one activity to another or for students who have anxiety about what is coming up next. Have the routine posted in written form and in picture form for students who have trouble reading or understanding language. Again, talk to your school administrators for how you can obtain pictures or see our article [How to Use Schedules to Improve Children's Behavior](#) for suggestions.

13. Have some changes in the routine on certain days to teach flexibility. If you have students that struggle with change in routine, prepare them for upcoming changes. For example, change the schedule for that day to reflect the change, remind the students when the change is coming (e.g, after math we are watching a science video today), and point to the schedule when you remind them of this change. Use pictures for students with trouble understanding language.

14. Give students reminders that they will soon be transitioning from one activity to the next. (e.g., in five minutes we will turn off the computers and start a writing assignment for science). See the article [How to Use Timers to Motivate Children](#) for using timers to facilitate transitions and using visual timers with children who have trouble understanding the concept of time. Point to the timer as the activity is winding down to the end.

15. Give students jobs in the classroom.

Examples of jobs include:

- passing out papers
- collecting papers
- running errands to the office
- being a monitor for a younger classroom
- reading to students in a younger classroom
- peer tutor
- erasing the board

Rotate jobs. You may choose to give more responsibility to students who consistently follow the rules, complete their work, and treat others with respect.

16. Have a box and allow students to write down topics they want to learn about and put them in the box. Pick a certain time each week to teach about one of the topics from the box.

17. Use random selection to call on students to encourage everyone's participation. For example, write each student's name on a Popsicle stick, and pull sticks out of a cup to call on students. Put the stick back in the cup after you call on a student, so they know they can be called on again.

18. Randomly say students' names during instruction to keep their attention.

19. Walk around while you teach so you are in close proximity to all students, rather than standing in the front of the room and being far away from the students in the back. Some teachers like to put their students in a half semi-circle so it is easier to be close to all of them and they can all see you easily.

20. Randomly check students' comprehension (e.g., call on someone to summarize what you said, have a student show an example on the board of something you just taught, or ask students to write a paragraph about what they just learned). If you frequently check comprehension and students never know when you might do a random check, it will help keep them on their toes.

21. Teach students how to use graphic organizers during lectures to take notes on important points. See our article [How to Use Graphic Organizers to Improve Reading Comprehension, Writing, Listening, Note Taking, and Study Skills](#) for more on this topic.

22. For children who have trouble with language, give them a chance to show their skills receptively (e.g., pointing to the correct answer rather than saying the correct answer). For example, if you are a kindergarten teacher and you are asking children to name letters, show a child with language difficulties four choices and ask him to point to the letter you want them to identify. ("Point to the letter A").

23. Due to different learning styles in the classroom, use various teaching modalities to keep students engaged. This means to have lessons that encourage participation with different senses. Use visuals, allow students to participate in hands on activities, and explain things verbally. Some students learn best from hearing, others from seeing, and others from doing. Music and movement is also a great way to keep students engaged.

24. Praise individual students for making an effort (e.g., "You worked really hard on that math assignment, Brian!" "Great participation during science today, Maria!"). Again, use positive body language, at times, to show your approval (e.g., smiling, giving thumbs up, nodding in approval).

25. Make an effort to have communication with your students' parents. Let them know how their child is doing in your class. Parents are thrilled to hear good things about their children, so let parents know when their child is following the rules, being kind to others, completing their work, participating, and/or making progress. Also, be open with parents when children need to make improvements in a certain area. Tell the parents exactly what their child needs to do to improve.

26. Hold class meetings once a week or once every two weeks to talk about the things that your class is doing well with and the areas that need improvement. Allow students to ask questions, make suggestions, or express concerns at that time.

27. If possible, meet with students individually (monthly, every other month, quarterly- whatever you can make time for) to discuss student's strengths, areas that need improvement if any, and allow the student to ask questions, give input, or express concerns at that time.

28. Keep a calm demeanor. Do not let your students see you get worked up or bothered by their behavior. Some students enjoy seeing you get frustrated and this can lead to an increase in inappropriate behavior.

29. Have a sense of humor with your students. Smile often, make up silly bonus questions on tests, say quirky things, sing something you might normally say, allow time for jokes, etc.

30. Say goodbye to your students at the end of every day (if possible, stand in the doorway and say goodbye to each student as they leave the classroom).

### **THIS NEXT SECTION SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSES HOW TO IMPLEMENT RULES IN THE CLASSROOM**

1. Post rules where everyone can see them and phrase rules in the positive. (I personally like to call them expectations rather than rules, but that is up to you).

Examples of class rules phrased in the positive:

- Quiet while working
- Follow class routine
- Complete assignments
- Raise hand to ask questions or make comments
- Stay in your assigned area
- Show respect to others (e.g., hands and feet to self, use kind words, ask to borrow belongings)

For children who have language-based difficulties, post pictures of rules.

2. Have each child sign a contract in the beginning of the year agreeing to follow the rules.

3. Review your rules every morning until everyone in the class is following them regularly. Go back to reviewing them every morning if any student stops following the rules on a regular basis.

4. Use verbal praise to reinforce rules (e.g., “You worked so quietly today and completed all your work! Nice job!”). Also use positive body language, at times, to show your approval (e.g., smiling, giving thumbs up, nodding in approval).

5. When a rule is broken, point to the rule, make eye contact with the student or students who broke the rule, and restate it using a neutral, business like tone (we raise our hands in class, we remain quiet while working, etc.). Eliminate the word can (e.g., “can you raise your hand?” “can you be quiet?”). It is not up to them. It is a directive from you that they are expected to follow. Some children respond well to a simple visual gesture to remind them of the rule, rather than stating it verbally. A visual gesture could be raising your own hand (to remind the student to raise his hand) or pointing to the area where the student is supposed to be, for example.

6. Allow students to earn privileges (fun activities) for completing work and following class rules. Depending on your classes’ age, developmental level, frustration tolerance, and ability to sustain attention for long periods of time, you may want to have them work to earn fun activities two times a day (e.g., once before lunch and once at the end of the day) rather than just one time at the end of the day. Some classes may even benefit from earning fun activities three times a day. You have to assess what type of schedule will benefit your classroom.

Remind students that they are working towards privileges (e.g., we have to remain quiet and complete our work to earn game time) rather than threatening that you will take away privileges (e.g., if you don’t stop talking you are not having game time). This type of negative

phrasing leaves more room for students to argue with you and defy you (e.g. I wasn't talking! Take away game time, I don't care!).

7. Do not threaten students with a different person in authority (e.g., "Do you want me to call your mother?" or "Am I going to have to get the principal?"). This takes away from your authority and tells the child that you need to get someone else because you can't get them to follow the rules or listen to you.

8. Do not yell at your students. People often think that some kids only listen when they get yelled at. It may work in the short term. The child may sit quietly after you yell at him, but inside he may feel embarrassed, angry, upset, or anxious. When a child feels this way inside he/she cannot effectively listen and put forth his/her best effort. Children who are repeatedly yelled at over time could end up with ongoing anxious feelings, making learning and work completion difficult or even impossible. Also, yelling at one child could actually cause anxiety for another child who is doing the right thing.

9. Use logical consequences as much as possible. Logical consequences are consequences that directly coincide with the broken rule or inappropriate behavior. For example, if your student throws pens on the floor, a logical consequence would be to have him pick up the pens. An illogical consequence would be to take away recess while you pick up the pens. Children who are angry or in the middle of a tantrum probably will not pick up the items right away. If this is the case, wait until the child is calm and then tell him/her to pick up the pens. If the items thrown on the floor present a trip hazard for other students, move them over so they're out of the way, but still have the student pick them up once he/she is calm. Make sure he picks them up before joining a fun activity (e.g., pick up the pens and then you can join game time).

#### **Scenarios of Imposing Logical Consequences:**

Two students are talking during literacy not working on their written assignment. You point to and restate your class rules "Quiet While Working" and "Complete Assignments." The students continue to talk. You ask the students if they need help with the assignment. They say no and still continue to talk. You go over to them and ensure they understand the task and are capable of completing it. You ask them to get started and they still continue to talk.

**Scenario 1:** You tell the students that if they continue to talk you will separate them. The students stop talking and return to their work.

**Scenario 2:** Even after telling the students that you will separate them, they continue to talk. As a result, you separate them.

**Scenario 3:** When literacy is over, you notice these two students did not complete their assignment. You tell them that they need to complete the assignment when the rest of the class is participating in one of the earned privileges. Once the assignment is completed they can join the rest of the group.

You may need to send the students to a quieter location in the building (they should be separated in the quiet location) to complete the assignment if the rest of your class is engaged in a noisy activity such as "talk to peers" time.

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