Managing the Classroom Environment

The greatest sign of success for a teacher . . . is to be able to say, "The children are now working as if I did not exist."

—Maria Montessori

Before We Begin

What are some responsibilities that today's children have in the classroom and at home? What additional responsibilities will they have as adults? How can teachers prepare them for these responsibilities? Be ready to compare your view with classmates.

OVERVIEW

Every day we hear about the importance of leaving no child behind, yet, unfortunately, we are leaving American teachers behind! Did you know that up to 50% of American teachers leave their classrooms behind within the first 5 years of entering the profession? One of the major reasons has been the teachers' frustration with their lack of preparation to effectively manage their classrooms (Latham & Vogt, 2007).

This chapter will focus on **classroom management**. Students cannot learn and teachers cannot teach in a chaotic environment. Therefore, teachers must deal effectively with students' misbehavior and promote student self-control so everyone can meet their emotional needs and academic goals. All teachers have management challenges. How they deal with students' behavioral choices depends on their educational philosophy and their preferred management approach. To prepare you for that venue, we will examine the principles of three current approaches to classroom management.

Next we will explore such issues as beginning the school year on a positive note, establishing classroom guidelines and rules, monitoring students' behavior, identifying causes of misbehavior, and administering appropriate consequences. Finally, you will learn teacher-tested ideas for structuring the classroom environment and for conducting daily classroom business.

OBJECTIVES

After completing your study of Chapter 3, you should be able to

- define *classroom management*, and identify its various aspects;
- describe the **self-discipline approach**, **instructional approach**, and **desist approach** to classroom management;
- specify causes of classroom misbehavior;
- describe organizational techniques that lead to effective classroom management;
- summarize teacher-tested techniques for proactively preventing classroom management problems; and
- discuss the use of appropriate consequences.

Many beginning teachers harbor concerns about their abilities to manage students' behavior. These concerns might be well-founded because teachers, administrators, parents, and students report that misbehavior often interferes with the ability of a teacher to teach and with the ability of students to learn (Charles, 2002; Evertson, Emmer, & Worsham, 2003; Gallup & Elam, 1988). Although such reports suggest that there are serious management and discipline problems in the public schools, it would be a mistake to assume that students are out of control. Let's explore how effective elementary and middle school teachers use classroom management techniques to encourage students to assume responsibility for their own behaviors.

THE ROLE OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Classroom management is the process of organizing and conducting the business of the classroom. Many perceive it as the preservation of order through teacher control. Classroom management is much more than that, however! It also involves the establishment and maintenance of the classroom environment so that educational goals can be accomplished (Savage & Savage, 2010).

Effective classroom managers create orderly, safe environments where students feel valued and comfortable, thus setting the stage for teaching and learning. To achieve that, they strategically arrange classroom space to support a variety of independent, small and large group activities (Crane, 2001). Elementary teachers also designate a large area of floor space where students can gather for read-alouds, demonstrations, and class meetings. In all classrooms, there should be no "blind" areas in the room where students can be out of view. To structure "traffic flow" and minimize disruption, teachers separate high-traffic areas such as group work areas, learning centers, students' desks, the teacher's desk,

the pencil sharpener, bookshelves, computer stations, and storage areas. Teachers ensure plentiful room for student movement, especially for students who have physical handicaps. Furthermore, they decide how to store classroom materials, including students' personal items, textbooks, resource books, instructional materials, frequently used materials, and equipment. Finally, they decide what materials will be accessible by students and which areas are designated for teacher use only.

Although not its sole component, discipline is another highly important aspect of classroom management. Discipline is a systematic way of teaching students to assume responsibility for their behavioral choices; punishment focuses upon negative consequences for misbehavior. This chapter will focus on discipline rather than punishment even though your success as a classroom teacher will depend on your adequacy in making sound decisions in both of these areas.

Effective elementary and middle school teachers create optimal learning environments by establishing and enforcing rules, creating caring teacher–student relationships, addressing problem behaviors, and using quality communication. Students of all ages may have behavioral, attitudinal, and social issues. Older students' problems, however, are more long standing and thus more difficult to address. Many middle school students resist authority and place greater importance on peer norms. Furthermore, because most middle school students have more advanced reasoning skills than younger students, they generally demand more elaborate and logical explanation of rules and discipline. Keep these differences between elementary and middle school students in mind as we explore effective classroom management strategies.

There are a number of classroom management strategies available to teachers. Let's begin by taking a look at three management approaches. These three approaches to classroom management form a continuum, from the self-discipline approach at one extreme, to the instructional approach, to the desist approach at the opposite extreme.

The Self-Discipline Approach

The self-discipline approach is built on the premise that students can be trusted to reflect upon and regulate their behaviors to benefit themselves and others. Advocates for this democratic view of classroom management argue that teachers need to exhibit the dispositions of respect, realness, trust, acceptance, and empathy toward students so they can build and establish working teacher-student relationships. Different variations of this management approach include William Glasser's (1965, 1977, 1986) **reality therapy**, Thomas Gordon's (1974) **teacher effectiveness training (TET)**, Barbara Coloroso's (2002) **inner discipline**, and Alfie Kohn's (1996) **beyond discipline**.

The Instructional Approach

Teachers who use the instructional approach to classroom management prevent most management problems by actively engaging students in high-interest lessons geared to meet their interests, needs, and abilities. Thus, students are motivated to attend class, positively participate in activities, and manage their own behavior. Jacob Kounin (1970) and Frederick Jones (1979) advocate the instructional approach to classroom management.

REFLECTIONS ON TEACHER PRACTICE 3.1: Getting Students Motivated

1. What evidence suggests that many adolescents are self-centered?

2. If adolescents are self-centered, how would you use this characteristic to make your teaching more effective?

Always keep one fact in mind when working with adolescents: developmentally, adolescents ARE self-centered. This is the time they are trying to figure out who they are and how they fit in the world around them. They want to be unique, but they want to fit in. Rather than trying to work against that developmental characteristic, we'd do better to use it to our advantage.

Relevance is a huge issue regardless of what subject or grade level we teach. Most of us have at some point in our lives asked, "Why do I have to learn this?" (I cried it almost daily while taking Geometry in high school; I didn't see relevance until I took Trigonometry.)

I think the key is to NOT water down the curriculum, but, rather, look for ways to bring the curriculum into our kids' real lives. It is a task that really forces us to think outside the box and to get to know our kids and their interests well. For example, when teaching point of view—specifically the concept of, "How would the story change if this other character told the story?"—I have to start with something they already know, usually what they call "He say—she say" stories. Every time I have skipped that step, they continue to change all the events of the story instead of merely telling it as that other person has interpreted it. Point of view now gets a nod because it makes sense in their own lives.

I think the real key with adolescents is to start with them and move the concept outward. It's not always easy, but my kids are always more successful when I figure out a way to do this.
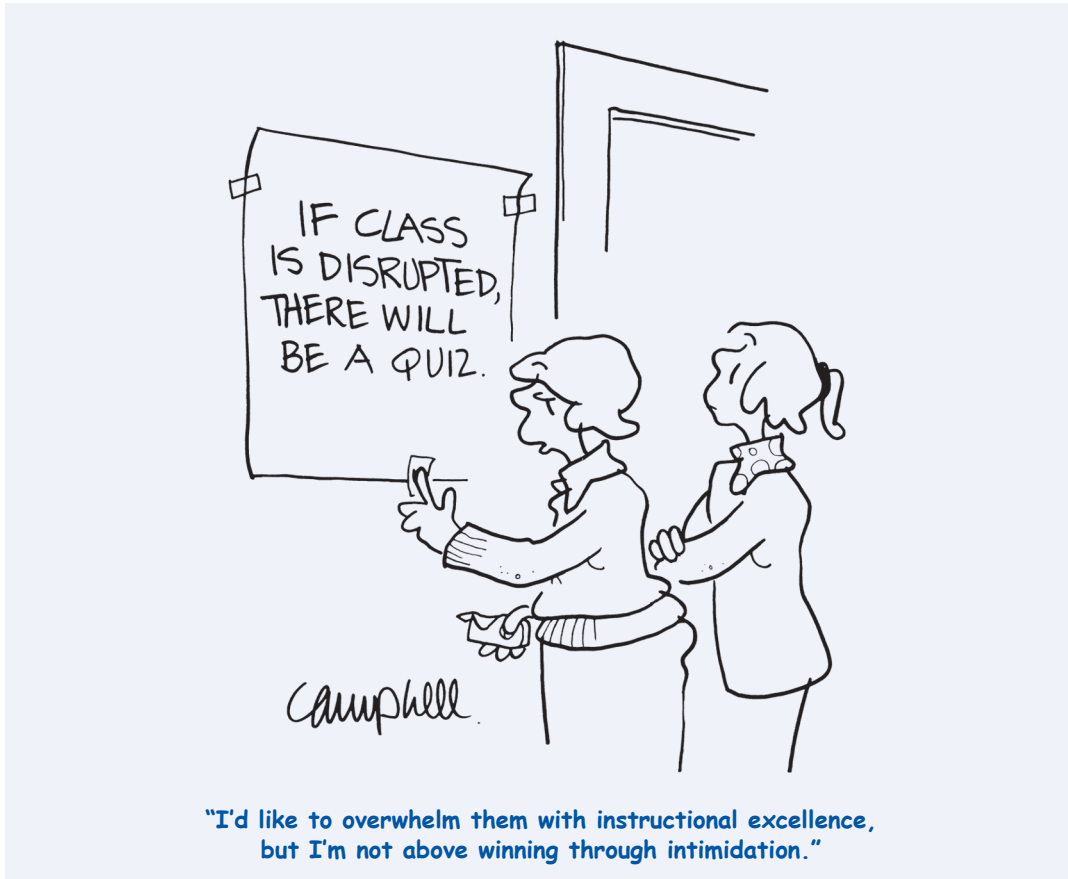
—*Ellen, middle-level teacher*

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The Desist Approach

The desist approach to classroom management gives the teacher full responsibility for regulating the classroom. The teacher establishes and enforces a set of specific rules to control student behavior in the classroom. Because the desist approach models of classroom management give teachers power to deal forcefully and quickly with misbehavior, they can be viewed as power systems. This approach probably is the most widely used classroom management strategy in today's schools. The desist approach is advocated by Lee and Marlene Canter (1976) in their **assertive discipline** model and by B. F. Skinner (1968, 1971) in his research on **behavior modification**.

"I'd like to overwhelm them with instructional excellence, but I'm not above winning through intimidation."

The three management approaches are summarized in Table 3.1. To help you determine your own modus operandi, or managerial style, please study the additional information provided on the web-based student study site (**www.sagepub.com/mooreteachingk8**). How you respond to management problems will depend on which classroom management approach best fits your educational philosophy and your perception of the cause of the students' misbehavior.

TABLE 3.1   Management Approaches

Approach	Description
Self-discipline approach	View that students can evaluate and change to appropriate behavior
Instructional approach	View that well-planned and well-implemented instruction will prevent classroom problems
Desist approach	View that the teacher should have full regulatory power in the classroom

Let's now look at some of the reasons students misbehave. But first review the approach summary and complete Reflect and Apply Exercise 3.1.

REFLECT AND APPLY EXERCISE 3.1: Approaches to Classroom Management

Reflect

- What classroom management approaches have your past teachers used? Were they successful? If not, how would you change them?

- Compare and contrast effective classroom management at the elementary and middle school levels. Which classroom management approach would be the most effective at the grade level you expect to teach?

Apply

- Describe how you will arrange your classroom space to promote student self-regulation and to provide a safe, orderly learning environment.

- Conduct additional research on one of these approaches to classroom management: Reality Therapy, TET, Inner Discipline, Beyond Discipline, Instructional Approach, Assertive Discipline, Discipline with Dignity, CHAMPS, Achieve, or Boys/Girls Town Social Skills Programs. Be ready to share.

CAUSES OF MISBEHAVIOR

Teachers who are ineffective classroom managers spend much of their time frantically putting out small "fires." They need to learn a lesson from professional firefighters—the best way to deal with a fire is to prevent it from happening in the first place. Proactive classroom managers create "fireproof" classroom environments by addressing causes of misbehavior that might fuel emotional explosions. Some misbehaviors are sparked by conditions that are not readily obvious. According to Maslow, once their physiological needs are met, students are motivated by the need to be physically and emotionally safe, loved and accepted, admired and respected, and personally fulfilled. A careful examination of students' classroom behaviors, desirable as well as undesirable, can reveal that they are influenced by forces and pressures inside and outside the classroom. Identifying and addressing these issues will proactively prevent future behavioral conflagrations (Belvel, 2010).

Home Environment

Students do not leave their concerns and confusion about family situations at the classroom door. Parents are students' first teachers. Not all parents teach their children to

respect themselves and others, to respond to authority figures, and to follow the golden rule. Parents' attitudes toward the importance of education are often mirrored by their children. If parents do not see the purpose of studying hard to prepare for a future career, their children will balk at school work, too.

Lack of supervision in the home is a common problem in our society. Many students come from single-parent homes or from homes where both parents are too busy with their own lives to be concerned with the children. Therefore, you may have students who stay up too late or who watch television past midnight. Other students may live on junk food or come to school without breakfast. These students sometimes lack the energy to carry out assignments or even to pay attention. You need to counsel these students, and perhaps the parents, on the importance of rest and proper diet. Enlist the assistance of the school nurse, counselor, and principal if you suspect deeper home issues such as sexual abuse, neglect, or drug abuse.

ALEX: A REFLECTIVE CASE STUDY

Alex was having a no good, very bad day. His mother and her friends had partied all night long. Alex had given the last of the Raisin Bran to his little brother and sister before getting them dressed and walking them to their bus stop. He'd earned a one-legged A on his essay—evidently Ms. Wright didn't think he'd written it right. When Mr. Data handed out a pop quiz in algebra, Alex threw his books onto the floor, slumped in his chair, and let out a loud moan.

1. How might an ineffective teacher deal with Alex's disruption?

2. Describe how an effective classroom manager might handle the disruption.

The Teacher

Effective classroom managers provide a structured, caring environment that meets students' personal and academic needs. Such teachers are perceived as authority figures in the classroom. They share high behavioral expectations, design/implement developmentally appropriate lessons, and establish and enforce behavioral guidelines. Because effective teachers respect students as individuals with rights, values, and feelings, they carefully choose their words and actions to protect students' dignity. They actively engage students in meaningful, challenging educational experiences and provide plentiful positive feedback. In short, they set their students (and themselves) up for success.

Ineffective teachers are poor planners. They do not start class on time; become sidetracked easily; use limited, low-interest teaching strategies; create a disorganized environment; and hold unclear academic and behavioral expectations. Furthermore, they abdicate responsibility for helping students to make good behavioral choices by trying to be the students' friend instead of their teacher. When that approach generates misbehaviors, ineffective teachers use ridicule, sarcasm, and put-downs to "put students in their place." Students' disrespect for these teachers is evidenced through increasingly frequent classroom disruptions and exceedingly poor behavioral choices.

Once you have formulated your personal philosophy of classroom management, you are poised to proactively address potential problems by removing the causes that kindle misbehavior and by immediately addressing misbehaviors with consistent consequences. This cannot be accomplished by smoke and mirrors; it takes reflective thought and careful strategizing. You need to have a plan in place to extinguish the flame before it becomes a classroom-wide behavioral forest fire.

REFLECTIONS ON TEACHER PRACTICE 3.2: Managing the Classroom

1. Why is classroom management a major problem for many teachers?

2. Can teachers really treat all students equally?

I believe the selection of a classroom management strategy has to be based on the teacher's personality and the characteristics of the class being managed. To use a system that doesn't fit you will create unnecessary stress and you won't use it well. If it doesn't suit the students, it will not work either. So, I suggest that you study as many strategies as you can and evaluate them in terms of your personality.

My biggest suggestion is, whatever strategy you choose, do not attempt to teach until it is working. If you begin the year insisting on proper discipline and behavior, it will become a habit that will continue through the rest of the year. If you let things slide at the beginning, the students will expect it to last till the end. This doesn't mean that you have to be an ogre until Thanksgiving. It does mean that you must find a way to create the atmosphere you want before you do any serious amount of teaching.

As for respect, the students will respect you when you are consistent. Students, as a group, don't like surprises. There can be few, if any, exceptions to rules and procedures. If any exceptions should become necessary, you should explain to the students why an exception has been made. The other side of respect is to respect students in return. Whatever forms of respect you demand from your students you should extend to them as well.

—John Vose, elementary school teacher

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ORGANIZING FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

When you are forming your personal philosophy of classroom management, please note that the three approaches to classroom management have their advantages and limitations. You do not have to select one approach over another. Effective classroom managers often blend together the best parts of different approaches. Be sure your classroom management plan enables you to build trusting relations with students, prevent misbehavior, redirect minor misbehavior, stop major disruptive behavior, and teach self-control. Let's now look at some other key classroom problem prevention areas.

Through the Eyes of an Expert

School Safety

Passing by the office on the way to your kindergarten classroom you hear loud voices and you see the back of a male visitor who seems agitated. Quickly, you stand at the classroom door as the students come back from music. A few of them stop to sing a piece of a song they learned. You rush them into the room as the noise from the office spills out into the hall. The principal and two other teachers are following a crazed man who has just withdrawn a two-foot machete from under his trench coat. The principal jumps the man in front of your door but he is able to get into your classroom, still brandishing the machete. What would you do? Could this really happen? It already has, February 2001 in Red Lion, Pennsylvania. The principal and two teachers were severely wounded and 11 kindergarteners sustained injuries.
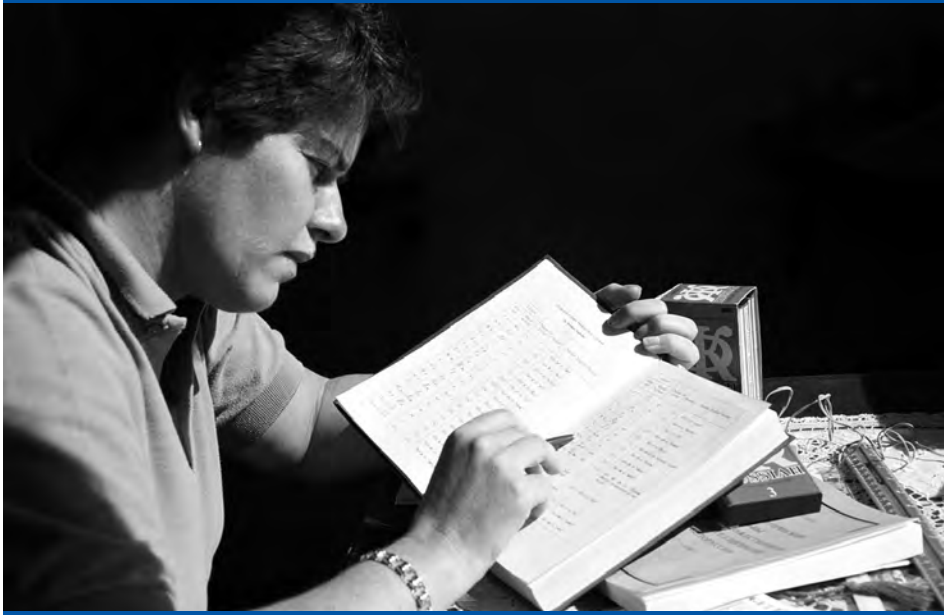
Because schools are dealing with more challenges than ever before, they must proactively prepare to respond to a wide range of emergency situations ranging from natural disasters to threats of violence. Effective school safety planning is developed in collaboration with community partners, school staff, and students. These school specific plans should be reviewed regularly and tested in order to ensure that all affected persons are aware of their role in an emergency. Effective school safety planning involves four phases of emergency management:

- Mitigation/Prevention
  - Mitigation is the action schools and districts take to eliminate or reduce the loss of life and property damage related to an event that cannot be prevented.
  - Prevention is the action schools and districts take to decrease the likelihood that an event or crisis will occur.

- Preparedness
  - Preparedness is the process of deciding what you will do in the event of an emergency before the emergency actually occurs.

- Response
  - Response is the process of implementing appropriate actions while an emergency situation is unfolding. In short, responding means "doing what you planned to do."

- Recovery
  - Recovery is the process of assisting people with the physical, psychological, and emotional trauma associated with experiencing tragic events.

Locate and familiarize yourself with your school's emergency plan. Within your classroom assure easy access to the response protocols, evacuation procedures, and your emergency supplies. The plan is a living document that needs to be updated, reviewed, practiced, and revised regularly. Schools need to be ready to respond to any type of crisis before returning to the serious business of learning and teaching as quickly as possible.

Visit these websites to learn more about emergency planning:

- Kentucky Center for School Safety: http://www.kycss.org/clear/EMGpage.html

- Practical Information on Crisis Planning—U.S. Department of Education: http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/crisisplanning.html

Effective planning is often the key to a smooth-running classroom.

Planning

Effective teachers plan carefully to maximize learning time and minimize behavioral problems. They know exactly how they will teach the lesson and have all the necessary instructional materials in place. They carefully plan every moment of instructional time, maintain a brisk, appropriate instructional pace, and ready additional extension/enrichment activities in case their original lesson doesn't take as much time as anticipated.

Effective teachers consider the school calendar when planning. For instance, the day before a major holiday, the day of an afternoon assembly or special school event, and the weeks before Christmas or spring break are apt to require special attention and preparation. At such times, it is essential that students be involved in highly motivating, fast-paced, and interesting activities that will compete successfully with other, external events.

Establishing Routines

Many school and classroom activities are basically routine—for example, taking attendance, issuing hall passes, and collecting papers. The school establishes some routines; individual teachers establish others. When you first begin teaching, familiarize yourself with the school routines by consulting the school handbook and talking with your principal and colleagues. Honoring established routines creates an orderly environment, minimizes student uncertainty, and decreases discipline problems.

Take time the first few days of school to establish simple classroom routines. Teaching routines and procedures saves time and prevents stress because the students know what

Student busing often impacts what teachers can do in the classroom.

to do and you do not have to nag students or repeat expectations. For example, kindergarten teachers can save time by teaching students to take turns at the drinking fountain, on the playground, and at the pencil sharpener. Other common classroom routines and procedures include lining up, sharpening pencils, starting class, checking attendance, taking lunch count, distributing materials, and collecting and checking homework. Devise ways to save time. For example, have students line up by small groups instead of individually, and use seating diagrams to take attendance. Provide meaningful bellringer activities for students to complete independently while you're taking care of routine duties. Elementary students might complete a penmanship practice page, daily oral language grammar activity, or set of math problems. Middle school students could journal to a provided prompt, check homework, or have sustained silent reading.

Because unnecessary amounts of time spent on routine tasks often lead to student misbehavior, teachers need to streamline the collection and distribution of papers and materials. Instead of handing each individual a paper, distribute a set of materials to each row or group. During group activities, one team member can collect the necessary resources. For major projects, lay out the materials in a central location and call up one group at a time to select the materials they need. Whenever possible, empower students by having them assist in the distribution or collection process.

Taking care of excused absences is another time-consuming and challenging administrative chore. Elementary teachers can label one large manila envelope for each absent student. Place missing assignments inside the envelope; write student-friendly directions on the outside. When necessary, have a parent, peer tutor, or teacher's aide assist the student with missed content. Middle school students should get notes from at least two classmates. Teachers can also create a bulletin board featuring a monthly calendar

(see Figure 3.1) plus a container or clip with handouts from missed classes. Students know what classroom activities and assignments were completed on a given day. The calendar also gives stronger students the opportunity to work ahead so they can work on other individual projects. Teachers can use computers to generate personalized calendars that feature classroom announcements, student accomplishments, and birthdays.

FIGURE 3.1 Monthly Calendar

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1 Welcome back to class, Jesse.	**2** Text pages 450–451. Do practice 1–10. Do pages 452-453: Apply section.	**3** Text pages 454–455. Do practice work 1–10. Persevere! you can do it!	**4** Text pages 456–457. Do all practice work.	**5** Text pages 458–459. Do all practice work. This one is a "piece of cake."	**6** Spelling test. All assignments must be in baskets today!	**7** Birthdays this month are Kevin, Kendra, Thomas, Alison, Jennifer, and Hope!
8 Failing notices go out Friday. Don't be caught off balance. Turn in all work NOW.	**9** Spelling. Text pages 462–463. Do all practice work.	**10** Text pages 464–465. Do all practice work. Stretch your neck out and try Part C.**	**11** Text pages 468–469. Do A&B.	**12** Text pages 470–471. Do all practice work.	**13** NO SCHOOL TODAY!	**14** ALCOHOL IS A DRUG.
15 Welcome back to class, Carlos.	**16** Tune into Spelling! 50 words this week for the spelling spin-off on Friday.	**17** Text pages 472–475. Do all practice work. Challenge** Try the Apply*	**18** Film today on preparing speeches!	**19** TIME FOR TALK. DISCUSS TOPIC FOR SPEECHES TODAY.	**20** SPELLING SPIN-OFF** Today!	**21** Character Comes from the Heart! Students Persevere** **************
22 "Write On" with Learning. Essay winners this month are Jay and Natalie****	**23** Library to begin research.	**24** Library work. Bibliography due end of class today. See page 339.	**25** Library work. Topic outlines due today!! See page 340 for help.	**26** Library work. Rough drafts due today. See page 343 for help.	**27** Library work. Final drafts due today. See pages 347–349 for help.	**28** Remember to say "NO" to drugs.
29 Don't forget to vote this month for the most improved student in your class.	**30** Text pages 502–504. Do all practice work.					

Students with special needs respond favorably to an environment that is structured, predictable, and orderly. These students may have difficulty transitioning from one activity to another. Teachers need to give students with special needs private 5-minute, 2-minute, and 1-minute warnings that an activity is about to end and another activity will begin to help them successfully transition to the next activity.

You should never become a slave to routine; however, when routines will expedite classroom business efficiently, they should be used. Determine and use the routines and procedures that are appropriate for your particular classroom.

Establishing Limits

Effective classroom managers create emotionally safe, orderly environments by establishing limits specifying acceptable and forbidden classroom behaviors. Creating limits helps teachers maintain classroom order so more teaching and learning can take place. Teachers who avoid setting limits and imposing necessary structure will often find that chaos results. However, take care not to have too many rules, unenforceable rules, and unnecessary rules; concentrate on the essentials.

Elementary teachers can use quality literature such as *Miss Nelson Is Missing!* (Allard, 1977) to introduce the importance of having classroom rules. Middle school teachers can host a class discussion about how classroom rules contribute to a learning community. Ask elementary or middle school student teams to generate lists of proposed classroom rules. Emphasize that rules should always reinforce the basic idea that students are in school to study and learn. Record all ideas on the whiteboard. Impeach ridiculous or unnecessary rules. It is often better to have a few general rules that cover a wide range of desirable behaviors rather than to list all the specifics. Write the rules in student-friendly talk. Use positive wording—tell students what to do instead of what they should not do. Clarify and combine ideas until no more than five rules remain. Elementary students respond well to these general rules:

1. *Keep your hands and feet to yourself.*

2. *Always use nice words.*

3. *Follow directions.*

4. *Raise your hand to get attention.*

5. *Respect others.*

Examples of appropriate middle school general rules and rationales might include the following:

1. *Be prepared with books, paper, pencil, and so on when you come to class.* You should discuss exactly what is to be brought to class.

2. *Be in your seat and ready to work when the bell rings.* You may want students to begin working on a warm-up activity that is written on the overhead, you may require that they have homework ready to be checked, or you may ask that they have notebooks open and ready to take notes when the bell rings.

3. *Take care of your classroom, and respect other people's property.* This means school, teacher, and fellow student property is to be left alone.

4. *Be polite and respectful.* This conduct covers verbal abuse, fighting, talking back, and general conduct.

5. *Obtain permission before speaking or leaving your seat.* Address exceptions to this rule, such as when to sharpen pencils, where to dispose of trash, and how to seek assistance.

After students generate rationales for each rule, they can create a classroom poster depicting the rules using pictures and words. Have all students sign the poster as their "behavioral contract." Then they copy the rules to share with their families. Requiring signatures ensures students and parents understand the rules.

Considering Consequences

As soon the rules are established, you must decide on the consequences for breaking a rule. It is often rather difficult to make this decision at the time the rule is broken. The appropriate response is often to have the student "right the wrong." For example, messes can be cleaned up, incomplete papers can be finished or redone, and broken property can be replaced.

To cover unforeseen situations, you will need to create some generic consequences as well. Be sure to create consequences you are comfortable with enforcing. The key is consistency. A sequence of consequences might be verbal warning (remind student of the rule and the desired behavior), time-out, phone call home (students make the call first and then you get on the phone), separate seating for one day (choice of designated desks), principal intervention, in-school suspension, and expulsion.

When you have established the rules for your classroom and the consequences for breaking the rules, you have taken the first step in making students aware of what will and will not be tolerated in the classroom. You must now think about managing the classroom on a daily basis.

MANAGING THE CLASS

Effective classroom managers ensure their students get off to a positive start and then work daily to keep the class moving smoothly toward established goals. How can you meet this challenge your first year of teaching?

Getting Started

Wong and Wong (1998) contend that the first days—or even the first few minutes—of school or a class will determine your success or failure for the rest of the school year. During these initial days, it is essential that you establish your credibility as a classroom manager and effective teacher worthy of students' respect.

"First, you have to get their attention."

Initially, you should focus upon establishing a caring classroom climate conducive to learning. Teach classroom routines and procedures, share expectations, and work with students to create classroom rules. By following the established rules and procedures, more learning will occur. Furthermore the likelihood of finding time to have fun learning through group activities and special events will increase if time isn't wasted dealing with misbehavior. Use plentiful, specific praise while students are learning and practicing the new behaviors and procedures. Create a positive classroom environment, and establish a supportive learning community.

Involve students in meaningful, motivational activities from the very first day. Thoroughly plan high-interest lessons using differentiated instruction to teach authentic content. Clearly communicate high academic expectations, and establish an atmosphere of free exchange. Involve students as much as possible in the learning process. Finally, monitor student behavior closely, and deal with misbehavior quickly, fairly, and firmly.

Using time productively on the first day is especially critical. Here are some things to consider when planning:

Elementary teachers might use these activities on the first day:

1. *Preparation.* For kindergartners' very first day of school, arrange tables and chairs, place carousels of supplies in the centers of tables, ready cubbies for students' personal items, and set up learning stations. Before older students' first day of school, match up the various-sized desks and chairs, tape on name labels and penmanship strips, stack textbooks atop the desks, and lay out basic school supplies (if provided by your school district). Prepare colorful bulletin boards, designate a common classroom meeting area, and post a list of student names outside the doors.

2. *Greeting.* Stand by the door to greet students as they enter. Help them locate the right-sized desk, and show them where to stow their book bags, lunch boxes, and coats.

3. *Morning Routine.* Teach the morning routine (line up outside door; enter room quietly; put away personal items; indicate lunch preference; sharpen pencil; sit down; complete bellringer activity). Practice, practice, practice! Take attendance and lunch count once they've learned the routine.

4. *Introductions.* Share a me-box full of a few items that represent you. Have students do a mixer activity to identify classmates with similar interests.

5. *Rules.* Cooperatively establish classroom rules and consequences using the procedures discussed earlier in this chapter.

6. *Classes.* Teach content areas according to the normal schedule. When possible, preassess students' content knowledge using various games and activities.

7. *Routines and Procedures.* Concurrently teach classroom routines and procedures as they naturally occur. For example, before going to the lunch for the first time, teach students how to line up properly; right before recess, teach them safety procedures. Practice, practice, practice for the next several days.

8. *Closing.* Teach students the end-of-the-day routine (writing in the class daily journal, cleaning floor area, clearing off desk, stacking chair).

Middle school teachers would have a different sequence of events because they are teaching a different age of students and are teaching multiple classes in one day. They might consider using these activities:

1. *Seating Slips.* Pass out seating slips, and have students sign them. Collect them in order, separating each row with a paper clip. It is often wise to count and inspect the slips as they are collected so you don't find slips signed by "Snow White" or not signed at all.

2. *Introductions.* Introduce yourself. Share appropriate information that will make you a "real" person; express your vision for the semester or school year. Begin building a learning community by having students participate in a mixer activity.

3. *Books.* Assign books to students, keeping an accurate record of assigned book numbers. Remember, you or the student will replace any lost, stolen, or destroyed book. Have a short activity for students to do as you distribute books.

4. *Class Rules.* Cooperatively create class rules according to the procedures discussed earlier in this section.

5. *Assignment Sheet.* Distribute and explain an assignment sheet representing at least one week's work. Make your first assignment short, interesting, engaging, and not dependent on the textbook.

6. *Class Discussion.* Discuss unique contributions of your subject that make it important and relevant to them.

7. *Homework.* Discuss the assigned homework topic. Pose some provocative questions.

8. *Marking System.* Give a brief explanation of your policies and procedures for grading, homework, testing, and so on.

9. *Dismissal.* Save some time at the end of the period for needed cleanup and for giving assignments. When—and only when—you are ready, you should dismiss the class. Don't let the bell dismiss (or start) the class. This should be understood from the first day.

Completing all of these tasks will be difficult on the first day, but accomplishing a great deal the first day may serve you well. Be sure to review procedures and rules multiple times over the next few days until they become a habit. Students will be impressed with your organization and businesslike manner, and first impressions are important (and lasting).

Complete Application Activity 3.1 to generate ideas for starting the school year at the grade level you expect to teach.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.1 Getting Started

The first few weeks of school are critical to a smooth-running classroom. What do you need to do before the students enter the door? Using the elementary/middle school first day lists as a guide, ponder how you would conduct first-day activities for your preferred grade level. How would you communicate your expectations to students? How would you make sure they understood your expectations? Share your thoughts with classmates.

Managing Technology

In today's "wired" classrooms, effective classroom managers need to organize, manage, and monitor student use of in-class technology. Some teachers have in-class computer labs, Internet access, DVD players, SMART Boards, and televisions. Others have school-wide labs and technology carts (with computers, printers, and monitors) available on a checkout basis. Thoughtful scheduling, rotating, and monitoring will ensure equitable access to available technology. See the web-based student study site (**www.sagepub.com/mooreteachingk8**) to learn more about managing classroom technology.

Establishing Rules

Lax enforcement makes already-established rules worthless. Students will test your limits to see if you will consistently enforce the rules. When this happens, quickly, firmly, and calmly apply the consequence. If a student tries you—and one always will—you cannot ignore the infraction because the behavior will ripple to other students, and they will also want to test you. Conversely, if you are firm but fair when a student tests you, this action, too, will ripple out to other students, and they will be less likely to test you in the future. The use of the **ripple effect** is especially effective with high-status students. Consequently, you should be firm with these students, and other students will give you fewer problems.

Be consistent and fair in your enforcement of the rules. Treat all students the same, but be humane. Sometimes you must consider the reasons for misbehavior and make exceptions with regard to punishment. Remember, fair is what is right for the individual, not necessarily the masses.

Monitoring the Classroom

When left unsupervised, some students make poor behavioral choices. Therefore, you need to be aware of what is going on in the classroom at all times. This is not an easy task. You need to arrange your classroom so that you can see students at all times from any vantage point. When a potential problem arises, a simple pause in conjunction with eye contact (a teacher look) usually curbs the misbehavior. A well-designed floor plan also allows you to move quickly from place to place so you can address potential problems through proximity. Therefore, when arranging your room, eliminate barriers that may keep you from seeing or readily accessing all areas of the room.

Through the Eyes of an Expert

Bullying

The word bullying conjures images of one student being victimized repeatedly by classmates. However, here are a few facts that might surprise you:

- 80% of adolescents reported being bullied during their school years.

- 90% of 4th through 8th graders report being victims of bullying.

- 15% of students bully regularly or are victims of bullies. Up to 7% of 8th graders stay home at least once a month because of bullies.

- Students reported that 71% of the teachers or other adults in the classroom ignored bullying incidents.

- Bullying most often occurs at school where there is minimal or no supervision (e.g., playground, hallways, cafeteria).

- Most bullying is verbal. (Maine Project Against Bullying, http://lincoln.midcoast .com/~wps/against/bullying.html)

Bullying can be physical, verbal, or emotional and is usually repeated over time. New teachers need to be able to recognize potential bullying and be willing to collaborate with other teachers, staff members, school counselors and administers to develop an approach that both controls the behavior when it happens and works toward prevention. When students complain or report that other students have offended them either verbally or through unwanted physical contact, teachers should immediately address and document the suspected bullying and complaint. With so many students reporting bullying behavior, many schools have

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implemented a broad definition as to what constitutes bullying type behavior. In fact, many schools have a zero tolerance bullying policy. New teachers need to become familiar with local school board policies, the student code of conduct, and state laws on bullying and harassment. The following may indicate that a child is being bullied:

- Loss of interest in school or play activities

- Appears sad or moody most of the time

- Afraid to ride the school bus or walk to/from school

- Frequently complains of headaches, stomachaches, or other ailments

- Experiences a loss of appetite

- Suffers from low self-esteem

- Seems uneasy around certain groups or individuals

- Plays or stays alone during free time

- Has visible cuts or bruises

In this digital age, we also have to address online or cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is any harassment that occurs via the Internet. Vicious forum posts, name calling in chat rooms, posting fake profiles on web sites, and mean or cruel email messages are all forms of cyberbullying.

It is the teacher's responsibility to eliminate bullying in the classroom. The school counselor is a resource for developing a classroom plan. Working toward a school-wide program to combat bullying is the most effective approach. This type of all inclusive blanketing of the environment provides for a cohesive management system. For more information on bullying, visit these sites:

- Stop Bullying Now http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adult/indexAdult.asp

- PACER Kids Against Bullying http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/

- Kentucky Center for School Safety http://www.kysafeschools.org/index.html

Schools have a collective responsibility to protect students and to provide a nurturing learning environment; therefore, bullying should not be taken lightly. It continues to be an extremely serious school problem.

Applying Consequences

Sooner or later, no matter how well you plan to prevent problems, student misbehavior is going to demand that you administer punishment. Some student behavior will be so severe that some kind of adverse stimulus must be employed to decrease the occurrence of

the behavior. You must be aware, however, that what is considered punishment by one individual might not be considered punishment by another; in fact, it may even be considered rewarding. Also, when applying adverse consequences for misbehavior, be sure that you communicate to students that by choosing to misbehave, they have also chosen the consequences.

The most common consequence used for curbing disruptive behavior is a verbal reprimand, or "warning." Describe the misbehavior, and then identify the desired behavior and its correlating rationale. Beware: Too many verbal reprimands become nagging. Older students want to be treated as adults, not nagged or criticized—especially in front of their peers. Choose your words carefully because criticism, sarcasm, and ridicule may provoke student hostility or outbursts, resulting in a power struggle between the student and teacher, which can escalate the frequency and volatility of the behavior problem.

To protect student's dignity and avoid a confrontation, administer the reprimand privately rather than publicly. When a student "saves face," there is no need to engage in a power struggle. Use active listening strategies to build a closer personal relationship with the misbehaving student. If private interactions fail to solve the problem, more severe consequences must be administered. Such consequences might include loss of privileges, a visit with an administrator, detention, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension.

Loss of privileges is a common and effective form of punishment. Depending upon the age of the students, they may lose their choice of playground equipment, eat lunch alone in a supervised setting, sit away from their peers, lose computer time, or remain in the classroom while everyone else attends a special event. Unfortunately, the problem with this form of punishment is the lack of privileges commonly available for use in most classrooms and, consequently, the shortage of privilege to be denied.

Detention is another common form of punishment. After a private verbal reprimand and a reminder that students chose to misbehave, elementary students oftentimes put their heads down on their desks for a specified amount of time, usually no more than 1 minute per year of age. During this time they still can listen to, but not participate, in the class activities. After the time is up, the teacher privately visits with them about how they can choose an alternate behavior in the future, checks for understanding, and praises them for cooperating. Then they proceed with the daily activities. It is important to have an immediate time-out so that elementary students connect behavioral choices and consequences.

At the middle school level, detention generally comes in two forms. One type requires that all students serving detention report to a detention hall at a specified time (e.g., Monday after school or Saturday morning). The other kind requires that the students report back to the teacher's classroom after or before school. But because many students ride buses, many teachers have students return to the classroom during a break during the day (e.g., part of their lunch break). When using detention as a punishment option, the student should be required to complete a serious academic task. Moreover, the teacher should avoid engaging in conversation with students serving detention. Conversation with the teacher may be perceived as enjoyable, and, hence, the misbehavior might be repeated for more of the "enjoyable" detention.

Video Link 3.2: Watch a video about managing classroom diversity.

On occasion, misbehavior becomes so serious or persistent that you must solicit outside assistance from the school administration (e.g., the vice principal or principal) and parents. When a student is sent to the principal's office, you should phone or send a message to the office, reporting that a student is being sent and why. A call to parents about a behavior problem usually yields positive results. Most parents are concerned about the behavior and progress of their children and are willing to work cooperatively in correcting any misbehavior. There are exceptions; some parents feel that taking care of school misbehavior is your job.

In-school suspension is becoming very common at the middle school level; it is used occasionally at the elementary level, too. This technique involves removing misbehaving students from a class and placing them in a special area where they do their schoolwork. They generally are placed in a bare room, furnished with only a table and chair. They report to this room at the beginning of the school day and remain until the end of the day. Meals are sent in, and teachers send in the class work for the day. If the in-school suspension does not correct the misbehavior, out-of-school suspension usually follows. However, out-of-school suspension should be used with extreme cases and as a last resort.

Teachers should not assign extra work or deduct from academic grades for misbehavior. Associating grades and subject work with punishment only creates a dislike for school. It is often good policy, however, to request that students redo sloppy or incorrect work. Indeed, accepting sloppy work or incorrect work only encourages more of the same.

Punishment of the whole class for the misbehavior of one or two students has negative repercussions. Although this approach may curb the inappropriate behavior temporarily, other students may perceive it as unfair and, as a result, develop a negative attitude toward that teacher. On the other hand, if the teacher is well-respected and viewed as fair, the use of peer pressure, especially at the middle school level, can be an effective approach to discipline. Proximal praise, or praising the actions of students who are behaving appropriately in close proximity to the misbehaving student, works well at the elementary level.

To this point, we have not mentioned the use of corporal punishment as an option. It is illegal in most states for teachers to administer corporal punishment. Moreover, corporal punishment often fails to address the long-term problem. In short, corporal punishment has proven to be ineffective and can lead to allegations of brutality and legal difficulties. The other disciplinary techniques presented in this chapter result in students' assuming responsibility for their own actions.

When used, the consequence should be administered immediately after the misbehavior, and it should be fair—the punishment should fit the crime. Certainly, the same consequence should not be administered for constant talking as for harming other students. Of course, you must deal with all misbehavior. Therefore, keep your emotions under control, and deal with problems consistently, fairly, and professionally. When you do use punishment, make it swift, fair, and impressive.

When administered appropriately, punishment can be an effective deterrent to misbehavior. Punishment should only be used, however, when no other alternatives are available. If the misbehavior is not severe, a warning should first be issued. State the misbehavior and possible consequence if the student chooses to continue to misbehave. If a warning does not work, consider punishment.

Table 3.2 summarizes the control aspect of classroom management. Review the summary and complete Reflect and Apply Exercise 3.2

TABLE 3.2	Control Techniques

Element	Description
Routines	Classroom activities that are repetitive and follow a common procedure
Limits	The accepted and nonaccepted actions in the classroom
Monitoring	Being aware of what is taking place in the classroom
Punishment	The application of a negative stimulus or removal of a positive stimulus for inappropriate behavior

Reflect and Apply Exercise 3.2: Techniques for Effective Classroom Management

Reflect

- What are some problem behaviors your future students might exhibit? In view of your own current skills, how prepared are you for dealing with these problem behaviors?

- Based on your personal experiences and classroom observations, how will you manage your future elementary or middle school classroom? What standards of "good" behavior will be nonnegotiable? Will you be flexible about some things? Explain.

Apply

- How can you establish an effective learning environment?

- What strategies will you use to start off the year on a positive, productive note?

- Describe how you will deal with serious discipline problems.

SUMMARY

This chapter focused on classroom management. The main points were as follows:

- A classroom must be organized and orderly for learning to take place. Student motivation and positive management strategies are essential to effective teaching and learning.

The Role of Classroom Management

- Three common classroom management methods are the self-discipline approach, the instructional approach, and the desist approach.

- Principles of the self-discipline approach to classroom management are supported by the Glasser reality therapy model, the Gordon TET model, the Coloroso inner discipline model, and the Kohn beyond discipline model.

- Principles of the instructional approach to classroom management are emphasized by the Kounin model and the Jones model.

- Principles of the desist approach to classroom management are integral components of the Canter assertive discipline model and Skinner's research on behavioral modification.

Causes of Misbehavior

- Misbehavior sometimes can be precipitated by teacher actions, student attributes, home environments, or community events.

Organizing for Effective Management

- Effective classroom managers organize the classroom space, plan well, establish routines, and set limits.

Managing a Class

- Teachers must establish credibility at the beginning of the year—and then keep it. They must be fair, firm, and consistent with students. They must monitor their classrooms and apply consequences for misbehavior.

- Teachers should use punishment only as a last resort. They should establish a positive classroom atmosphere, where students have an opportunity to develop a sense of self-discipline.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. **Discipline Approaches.** Conduct additional research about the three approaches to classroom management on the accompanying website and through the Internet. Identify some basic concepts that all three approaches have in common. Which approach, if any, do you prefer? Combine elements of the different approaches to develop an eclectic model that would work for you. Be ready to share.

2. **Causes of Misbehavior.** Reflect upon disciplinary incidents you have witnessed in classrooms. Identify the misbehaviors and possible causes. Were any of the misbehaviors caused by the teachers' words, actions, or inaction? How might knowledge of the causes of these incidents influence a teacher's actions?

3. **Rules and Consequences.** Prepare a list of rules and rationales for a classroom at the grade level you expect to teach. Create a list of consequences for breaking these rules.

4. **Maintaining Control.** What procedures will you use to maintain control throughout the year? What measures will you take for severe misbehavior problems?

TECH CONNECTION

The Internet offers numerous resource sites that will assist teachers in managing a multidimensional classroom. Completing these application activities will help you identify ideas that will make managing the classroom easier.

- Access these websites: www.theteachersguide.com/ClassManagement.htm and www.pacificnet.net/ ~ mandel/ClassroomManagement.html. Analyze the ideas presented on organizing a classroom. Form small groups to discuss which ideas will be most useful to you at the grade level you expect to teach.

- Access www.disciplinehelp.com. The site gives a list of 117 problem behaviors and suggestions for handling the problems. Select five problems that you think will cause you concern at the grade level you expect to teach. Analyze the website's advice for the five problems. Present your five problems and analyses to classmates.

CONNECTION WITH THE FIELD

1. **Behavior Observation.** Complete several observations in various classrooms at different grade levels. Analyze the effectiveness of the classroom management approaches using the following prompts:
   a. What are the classroom rules?
   b. How are these rules enforced?
   c. Do students appear to assume responsibility for their own behaviors? How do you know?
   d. How do teachers' words and actions impact students' behavioral choices?

2. **Teacher Interviews.** Interview several teachers at different grade levels. Do they have management problems? If so, how do they handle these problems? Do they support the self-discipline, instructional, or desist approach to classroom management? Make a list of ideas you can use when you become a teacher.

3. **Interview Counselors.** Interview school counselors at elementary and middle schools. Ask them to describe the discipline policies at their schools and how well they work. Could you support any or all of the policies?

4. **Student Handbooks.** Examine and compare several student handbooks from different school districts. What are the school procedures and behavioral guidelines? Discuss similarities and differences with your classmates.

STUDENT STUDY SITE

Visit the Student Study Site at **www.sagepub.com/mooreteachingk8** for these additional learning tools:

- Video clips
- Web resources
- Self quizzes
- E-Flashcards
- Full-text SAGE journal articles
- Portfolio Connection
- Licensing Preparation/Praxis Connection
- Part I View from the Classroom
- Part I Public View of Education