

***Section***  
***Two***

## ***Developing Standards for Classroom Behavior***

**T**eaching is a demanding, fast-paced job. Each day, the typical elementary school teacher has more than 1,000 teacher–student interactions and teaches six subjects. Secondary teachers often teach 150 or more students with only four minutes between classes. Those demanding working conditions can cause confusion and frustration and limit students’ learning time. Research indicates that effective teachers take time early in the school year to develop classroom rules and procedures that help their classrooms run smoothly and minimize disruptions, and thus maximize students’ learning time.

Research in teacher effectiveness has increasingly stressed that effective teachers organize their classrooms so as to prevent disruptive behavior. Nearly thirty years ago, Good and Brophy (1974) wrote, “Teachers who take time early in the year to listen to students and to explain carefully the rationales underlying rules and assignments are making a wise investment. This ultimately will establish teacher credibility and reduce the students’ tendencies to continue to test the teacher throughout the year” (p. 168). Two years later, Brophy and Evertson (1976) reported a similar result: “Much of the behavior that distinguished the most effective teachers from the less effective ones was behavior that could be called ‘proactive.’ That is, it was behavior initiated by the teachers themselves, often prior to the beginning of the school year or the beginning of a particular school day” (p. 142). Research reviews by Soar and Soar (1979, 1980) also suggest that students’ learning is enhanced by teachers’ developing basic classroom structure. Soar and Soar (1979) wrote that “unless a teacher has established a minimum of structure, relatively strong interactions that are not functional for pupil learning are likely to occur” (p. 117).

Research conducted at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas at Austin (Emmer, Evertson, & Anderson, 1980; Evertson & Emmer, 1982a, 1982b) provides specific information on techniques that effective teachers use during the first few weeks of school. Effective classroom managers at both the elementary and junior high school levels spend time teaching students classroom rules and procedures. Emmer, Evertson, Sanford, Clements, and Worsham (1981) described rules as “written rules which are either posted in the classroom, given to students on ditto or other copy, or copied by students into their notebooks” (pp. 18, 19). *Procedures* were defined as, “Procedures, like rules, are expectations for behavior. They usually apply to a *specific* activity, and they usually are directed at accomplishing, rather than forbidding some behavior” (p. 19). Effective teachers do more than post rules or present procedures. Teachers work with students to ensure that

they understand and can demonstrate rules and procedures. This is an important point. Students' behavior needs to be dealt with much like their academic skills. Teachers spend considerable time during the first few weeks of school assessing students' knowledge, reviewing material, and reteaching academic skills students have forgotten. Similarly, when effective teachers first introduce important academic material, they attempt to provide clear instruction, carefully monitor students' progress, and provide immediate corrective feedback if a student or group of students is having difficulty with the material. In the same manner, teachers must begin the school year by teaching the classroom rules and procedures, carefully monitoring students' behavior, informing students of mistakes, and reteaching rules or procedures that students are frequently failing to follow.

The initial studies involving teacher behavior at the beginning of the school year were correlational; teachers whose students made greater achievement gains were observed establishing rules and procedures and carefully monitoring student work. Following these discoveries, however, several studies were conducted to determine whether teachers trained in the materials in this section were more effective in increasing student on-task behavior and learning than were teachers who did not receive this training and implement these new teacher behaviors. Results from these studies (Evertson, 1985; Evertson, Emmer, Sanford, & Clements, 1983) clearly demonstrate that providing training in these methods can lead to changes in teacher behaviors that are associated with improved student behavior.

Several words of caution are offered before discussing approaches to establishing productive classroom rules and procedures. Rules and procedures should be developed in conjunction with teaching strategies that help students meet their personal and academic needs. In his *Culture against Man*, Jules Henry (1963) vividly depicted an example of a classroom procedure that violates students' personal needs.

Boris had trouble reducing "12/16" to the lowest terms, and could only get as far as "6/8." The teacher asked him quietly if that was as far as he could reduce it. She suggested he "think." Much heaving up and down and waving of hands by the other children, all frantic to correct him. . . . She then turns to the class and says, "Well, who can tell Boris what the number is?" A forest of hands appears, and the teacher calls Peggy. Peggy says that four may be divided into the numerator and the denominator.

Thus Boris' failure has made it possible for Peggy to succeed; his depression is the price of her exhilaration; his misery the occasion for her rejoicing. This is the standard condition of the American elementary school, and is why so many of us feel a contraction of the heart even if someone we never knew succeeds merely at garnering plankton in the Thames: because so often somebody's success has been bought at the cost of our failure. (pp. 295, 296)

Unfortunately, students are sometimes expected to behave in compliance with rules and procedures even though the learning environment does not respond sensitively to their needs and interests. When this condition is found in a classroom, it is understandable that students' behavior begins to oppose the classroom rules. The educational exchange must function effectively in both directions. Students can be expected to support rules and procedures that enhance learning only if the learning process shows respect for students and their needs.

During one of the many reviews this text has received a reviewer objected to the inclusion of a section on strategies for maximizing on-task behavior. The reviewer noted that this emphasized teacher-centered instruction and was not congruent with other sections in this text. Perhaps this perception was caused partially by our failure to place this section in context. As educators, we believe in and practice a constructivist approach to student learning. We utilize cooperative learning, thematic, inquiry-based instruction, a whole language approach to literacy, and many other techniques that actively involve students in construct-

ing meaning. We also believe that, as in all social settings, for students to be safe and productive, classrooms require structure and order. In his previously cited ethnographic study of a second-grade classroom, Noblit (1993), a scholar in the area of power and organizational theory, recounted his personal and professional struggle with the conflict between order and power within a classroom setting. He poignantly shared with the reader his concern about the teacher's (Pam) style he perceived as being overly structured and teacher-centered. He described how his understanding of the power was altered by watching a gifted teacher develop a supportive, caring, and safe learning community partially through the routines and rituals she established in her classroom. In the end he wrote:

I see Pam as understanding and acting not with power, but with moral authority—an authority not only legitimated by the usual mechanisms of our society but also by reciprocal negotiation between people, in this case people of unequal power and knowledge. Pam's authority came from her willingness to take responsibility for creating a context for children to participate in, and from the children themselves who, after all, can and often do deny adults the right to control them. (p. 37)

This section is about working with students to create behavioral norms that help create safety and security within the learning environment. It is also about teachers monitoring their own behavior in ways that facilitate clarity and continuity of instructional activities in classrooms. Safety, security, clarity, and continuity need not suggest control of students. Indeed, without these factors, a classroom can quickly become a setting in which students are not free to be spontaneous, take risks, learn from their mistakes, or become actively involved in the learning process. As educators, we need to ensure that structure is always a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. Additionally, we need to involve students in developing the guidelines that facilitate a safe, supportive environment. The creation of needed structure can be an important aspect of community building. Sergiovanni (1994) stated:

When students share the responsibility for developing norms and when their commitment to these norms is expected, they know they belong. They get the message that they are needed. They feel a sense of ownership in the classroom. They experience community. These ties are the antidote to the loss of community that many students are experiencing in their everyday lives. (p. 121)

Another concept that can help you thoughtfully develop classroom rules is that rules should not be designed to catch children misbehaving so that they can be punished. Instead, rules should provide guidelines or benchmarks that help children examine their behavior, considering its effect on themselves and others. Consequently, behavior that violates accepted rules should be dealt with by discussing the matter with the child. When dealing with unproductive behavior, teachers must help children examine both their motivations and the consequences of their actions. Overemphasis on punishment often obscures the issue of motivation and attitude and simultaneously limits the child's attention to the immediate negative consequences of his behavior. This pressure tends to limit thoughtful consideration of either the effect the behavior has on others or the long-term consequences associated with continuing the behavior. In a real sense, a punishment orientation reinforces a low level of moral development and does not help children develop a higher, more socially valuable level of morality.

## **DEVELOPING CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR STANDARDS OR RULES**

We have some concern about using the term *rules*. The term suggests a compliance orientation to classroom management, while, as presented throughout this book, we believe that

the goals of education and the needs of students are better served by working with students to create a sense of shared community. Therefore, it might be more effective to replace the word *rules* with words such as *behavioral standards* or *norms*. Since we believe the process is far more important than the terminology, and since the term *rules* is used by many schools and better understood by younger children, throughout this section we will variously use terms such as *rules*, *behavioral standards*, *norms*, and *behavioral expectations* to describe the agreements teachers and students make regarding the types of behaviors that help a classroom be a safe community of support.

Several factors increase the likelihood that students will accept and consistently follow classroom rules. First, students need to be involved in developing the behavior standards that apply in the classroom. Second, rules need to be clearly stated. Students have difficulty responding to glittering generalities such as “behave appropriately.” Third, although it is important to state behavioral expectations clearly, it is just as important to develop as few as possible. Fourth, students must clearly indicate their acceptance of the behavior standards agreed on by the classroom group. Fifth, because behavior standards established in the school setting may conflict with those children experience outside of school, it is important that student behavior be monitored and frequently discussed to ensure that it is consistent with the classroom standards. Finally, students will be more likely to behave in accordance with rules if they know that the rules are accepted by significant others, such as their parents and peers.

The specific methods presented in the remainder of this section apply most directly to elementary school classrooms or other relatively small, self-contained settings, such as a special education class or a small alternative school. The basic ideas, however, describe the essential ingredients in establishing classroom rules and responsibilities. Whenever significant variations are needed for secondary classrooms, they are included.

### Discussing the Value of Rules/Behavior Standards

The first step in developing classroom rules is to help students discuss why it is important to develop standards that all members of the class agree to follow. You may want to introduce or stimulate the discussion by asking students why adults have rules such as obeying traffic signals, paying their taxes, and not crowding in lines. Throughout this discussion, reinforce the concept that the classroom group and the school are a society, and, like larger societal groups, it will function more effectively when people agree to behavior standards that help to ensure a safe, caring environment. Help students consider how rules benefit people who must work together. This topic places the focus clearly on the advantages each child derives from class members’ accepting those standards. For example, students may state that rules are important because if everyone did whatever they wanted, the classroom might become too disruptive for effective studying.

In his book, *Judicious Discipline*, Forrest Gathercoal (1997) discussed the value of helping students understand their constitutional rights and the fact that rules exist to ensure that no one has these rights denied. In addition to teaching students about their constitutional rights, Gathercoal introduces students to the concept that a person’s constitutional rights do not include the right to violate the rights of others. This concept, which Gathercoal calls *compelling state interests*, states that students are denied their individual rights when their actions seriously affect the welfare of others. Gathercoal noted that students cannot violate the following rights of the majority:

1. Property loss or damage
2. Legitimate educational purpose

3. Health and safety
4. Serious disruption of the educational process

This means that students may express themselves freely as long as their behavior does not violate the above rights given to all members of the group. For example, a student may want something that belongs to others and may express this, but cannot take or damage property. A student may be limited in the freedom to move down the hall by being asked to do so in a manner that does not infringe on the health and safety of others. Similarly, a student may be angry at another student but may not respond in a manner that violates that student's health or safety or seriously disrupts the learning environment.

Gathercoal described a major advantage of developing behavioral standards based on constitutional law rather than teacher or school values.

A shared knowledge of constitutional principles allows objectivity because educators themselves are not personally identified with the rules. When personal biases are used as the basis for rules and decisions, educators are more likely to interpret rule violations as violations against them personally. This often leads to an adversarial relationship. On the other hand, educators are far more successful with misbehaving students when those students feel they are working together with someone trying to help them understand and find ways to live within society's reasonable expectations. (Gathercoal, 1996 personal correspondence)

Likewise, students and parents are more likely to accept the necessity for behavioral standards when they understand that these standards are derived not from the teacher's biases but from constitutional and case law. Most teachers have had a parent tell their child that it is acceptable to hit another student or to make sexual comments. Although physical violence or expressing their opinion about someone's anatomy may be permitted in their home, these parents and students need to know that this conduct may also be a violation of basic human rights and will not be allowed to occur in a school setting.

Students' statements on why it is important to develop classroom rules can be written on the chalkboard or a large piece of butcher paper. The latter approach has the advantage of making the list easier to save and discuss later should the group have difficulty in following its rules. Secondary teachers generally use a less elaborate discussion of why rules are needed. Nevertheless, teachers should elicit students' comments about why agreed-on behavioral standards are needed when a group of people work for some time together in a relatively small space.

### **Developing a List**

The next step in developing functional behavioral standards for the classroom is to have the students list all standards they believe are important. Students may be asked to describe "the way we want to act in our classroom so it is a good place for everyone to learn." During this stage, help the students state all standards in a positive manner. If a student states, "Don't talk while others are talking," help the student phrase this rule thus: "Each student should listen quietly while another person is talking." Similarly, "Students should not steal from each other, the teacher, or the school" could be stated as, "If anyone needs something, he or she will ask to borrow it." Once the students and you have completed their list of standards or rules, help them cross out any that do not apply and combine as many as possible.

Forrest Gathercoal (1997) recommends having students develop a rule to cover each of the compelling state interest rights that must be protected. Therefore, students might develop the rules or behavioral standards, "Treat others respectfully" and "Act in a safe manner" to cover the compelling state interest of health and safety. Similarly, they might develop the

rule, “Solve problems nonviolently” to establish a guideline for committing to protect the compelling state interest of serious disruption of the educational process.

Secondary teachers may not want to develop a separate list for five or six classes. Some teachers prefer to present their own behavioral expectations and ask students in each class to discuss and edit them. The teacher then combines the various classes’ editorial comments and presents the edited version to all classes the next day. Some teachers present their own rules and ask each class if they believe one or two additional rules might help their class.

Figure 2-1 lists classroom rules that can be used in either an elementary or secondary classroom. Rules need to be general and all encompassing. When developing such a list with young children, teachers can increase students’ understanding by discussing, role-playing, and initially displaying (pictorially or in writing) several specific behavioral examples of following and violating each rule. Activity 2-1 (at the end of the section) offers you an opportunity to practice developing classroom rules that would be appropriate and effective with the students with whom you work.

### **Getting a Commitment**

When the final list has been developed, lead a discussion to clarify each rule and ask students to indicate whether they can accept the behavioral standard. During this important stage, several students may state that they do not believe they can abide by a particular rule. You can then ask the students whether the rule seems to be one that does not help people or whether they agree that it is a good rule but do not believe they can consistently act in accordance with it. If they express the latter, you can explain that they are not expected to be able to act perfectly all the time. Just as they will learn how to solve new math problems and read more efficiently, they will also learn how to behave in ways that are more effective. The initial question is not whether the students can already solve all their math problems or consistently behave appropriately, but whether they believe that these skills are helpful to them and if they will attempt to improve these skills. If the students state that a rule is not acceptable, you can help them clarify why they believe it to be undesirable. In most cases, students will quickly acknowledge the basic value of the rule. If one or more students persist in stating that a rule is unacceptable, however, you have the option of deleting the rule or asking to postpone further discussion of the item until you have had an opportunity to discuss it with the small group of students who disagree.

A number of teachers have their students take the list of rules home (usually with an accompanying statement about how the teacher will handle persistent rule violation) for parents to sign and return. This strategy is particularly useful when working with young adolescents or a group of students who a teacher expects may have difficulty consistently demonstrating responsible behavior. The fact that everyone responsible for the students’ behavior understands the rules and consequences can have a positive effect on student behavior and can minimize the confusion and tension associated with instances when parents must be contacted about a student’s inappropriate behavior.

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**FIGURE 2-1**  
Classroom Rules

1. Treat each other politely and kindly.
  2. Treat school and personal property respectfully.
  3. Follow teacher requests.
  4. Be prepared for class.
  5. Make a good effort at your work and request help if you need it.
  6. Solve conflicts nonviolently.
-

When sending a list of rules and consequences home, it is important to include a general philosophy statement about your classroom management and instruction. This lets you present the issue of rules in a positive manner that indicates their relationship to effective instruction and student learning. For example, your statement might begin:

As an educator, I believe all students can learn, demonstrate concern for others, and choose to act responsibly in the classroom. My goals as a teacher are to help all students learn to the best of their capabilities and to assist students to work effectively with others. My goal is to create a classroom environment that encourages mutual respect and cooperation and that provides opportunities for students to make choices regarding their behavior. In order to create a positive and productive learning environment in which all students can achieve and learn to take responsibility for themselves, I have worked with the students to create a list of rules and procedures that will guide our behavior. Because I know you share my deep concern for the quality of your child's learning, I would appreciate your discussing the attached material with your child, signing it, and returning it to me by \_\_\_\_\_. I look forward to working with your child and to communicating with you concerning his or her progress, special achievements, and any concerns that may arise.

### **Monitoring and Reviewing Classroom Rules**

Once students have developed reasonable rules and agreed to behave in accordance with them, the next step is to help them recognize and monitor their behavior. One approach helpful with primary-age children is to have them take turns acting out the rules. Each child can be asked to role-play both the appropriate and inappropriate behavior, and you can ask their peers to raise their hands whenever the student is behaving appropriately and place their hands in their lap when the student is behaving inappropriately. This activity is helpful in ensuring that every child clearly understands the rules.

Especially in elementary school classrooms, it is important to review the rules frequently for several weeks. A good approach is to review them every day for the first week, three times a week during the second week, and once a week thereafter. It is also helpful to have the rules displayed in a prominent place in the classroom. During the first week, it is desirable to discuss them briefly at the beginning of each day and to end the day by having the class evaluate their behavior and consider whether improvement in any area is needed. If the entire class consistently displays appropriate behavior or shows considerable improvement over the previous day, you may want to send a positive note or award home with each student. Significant individual improvements can be similarly rewarded. After the first month of school, there are several occasions on which the rules should be brought to the class's attention. First, it is a good idea to review these rules every two weeks to determine whether they are still meaningful and whether any rules need to be added or deleted.

Classroom rules also need to be reviewed with each new student who enters the class. Many students who transfer during the school year come from highly mobile families. Some of these students have often had a pattern of difficulties in school. It is important that these students get off to a good start, which can be facilitated by their knowing the expectations for classroom behavior. A student who does well in class and is respected by other students can be assigned to help new students learn classroom rules and procedures.

Rules should also be discussed when a student or the teacher indicates that violation of one or more of the rules is detracting from learning or is infringing on a student's rights. Recently, a secondary intern teacher met with one of the authors to express concern about a sophomore class he viewed as very difficult to manage. The intern noted that students talked incessantly while peers were answering questions and that there was a very high rate of put-downs. The

intern, who had been skeptical of some of the materials presented in this text, decided that things were going so badly that he had nothing to lose by taking several class periods to discuss the problem with the students and attempt to establish some expectations and procedures for the class. The teacher discussed his concern with the class and allowed them to brainstorm a set of expectations they thought would be realistic. Students edited these as a whole class and signed an agreement to attempt to follow their new expectations. The teacher then asked students to give input on what should occur if students chose to violate these expectations. Students developed the procedures they believed the teacher should follow. The next day, the intern presented a typed copy of the decisions to students and everyone signed it. The expectations and procedures for responding to violations were posted on the wall. The intern commented that he simply could not believe the difference in the class. Indeed, he shared with his colleagues that on the following day, when two of his most disruptive students started to talk out, he simply nodded toward the posted lists and the students apologized and returned to their work.

## ■ CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

As mentioned earlier in this section, research indicates that effective teachers not only work with students to develop classroom rules but also teach the procedures they expect students to follow during specific classroom activities. This research also provides specific information on the types of classroom activities for which effective teachers develop procedures. In their research in elementary classrooms, Evertson and Emmer (1982b) found five general areas in which effective teachers taught students how to act:

1. Students' use of classroom space and facilities
2. Students' behavior in areas outside the classroom, such as the bathroom, lunchroom, drinking fountain, and playgrounds
3. Procedures to follow during whole-class activities, such as whether to raise a hand to speak, where to turn in work, and how to get help during seatwork
4. Procedures during small-group work
5. Additional procedures, such as how to behave at the beginning and end of the school day, and when a visitor arrives

### Effective Procedures

Figure 2-2 outlines the major classroom activities for which elementary teachers who are particularly effective managers develop and teach procedures. For junior high school classrooms, researchers found four key areas in which effective teachers developed procedures:

1. Beginning the class
2. Whole-class activities
3. Procedures related to academic accountability
4. Other activities, such as the end of the class period, interruptions in the class, and fire drills

Figure 2-3 outlines the major classroom activities for which secondary teachers who effectively manage their classrooms develop and teach specific procedures. Figure 2-4 outlines the areas in which effective classroom managers teach specific procedures related to student accountability for academic work.

An example from junior high school can clarify the concept of procedures. Most junior high school students have only four or five minutes between classes. Therefore, they usually enter the classroom excited or agitated, having had little time to review what they learned in their previous class or to get mentally prepared for the coming class. The teacher discussed

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- I. *Room Areas*
    - A. Student desks, tables, storage areas
    - B. Learning centers, stations
    - C. Shared materials
    - D. Teacher's desk, storage
    - E. Fountain, sink, bathroom, pencil sharpener
  - II. *School Areas*
    - A. Bathroom, fountain, office, library
    - B. Lining up
    - C. Playground
    - D. Lunchroom
  - III. *Whole-Class Activities/Seatwork*
    - A. Student participation
    - B. Signals for student attention
    - C. Talk among students
    - D. Making assignments
    - E. Passing out books, supplies
    - F. Turning in work
    - G. Handing back assignments
    - H. Make-up work
    - I. Out-of-seat policies
    - J. Activities after work is finished
  - IV. *Small-Group Activities*
    - A. Student movement into and out of group
    - B. Bringing materials to groups
    - C. Expected behavior of students in group
    - D. Expected behavior of students out of group
  - V. *Other Procedures*
    - A. Beginning of schoolday
    - B. End of schoolday
    - C. Student conduct during delays, interruptions
    - D. Fire drills
    - E. Housekeeping and student helpers
- 

**FIGURE 2-2**  
Elementary  
Classroom

this problem with the students in his class and worked with them to develop procedures for making a smooth transition when entering the classroom. First, the class and the teacher listed warm-up activities for the first four minutes of class. These activities, which changed every month, included:

1. An instructional warm-up activity
2. Sharing something they had learned in school during the past day
3. A relaxation activity
4. Listening to music selected by the teacher
5. Listening to music selected by the students
6. A “brain teaser” activity such as droodles or plexers

Students daily selected the transition activity, each activity being used once each week. The teacher also developed a procedure for tardy students to report to class, a procedure for taking roll, and a signal for gaining the students’ attention at the end of the transition activity. Similar procedures were developed for summarizing the day’s lesson and leaving the classroom.

Procedures can also include involving students in running the classroom. For years one of the authors, like many teachers, has had her students decide on classroom jobs students could accomplish in order for the classroom to run more smoothly. In addition to

**FIGURE 2-3**  
Secondary  
Classroom  
Procedures

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- I. Beginning Class**
    - A. Roll call, absentees
    - B. Tardy students
    - C. Behavior during PA
    - D. Academic warm-ups or getting ready routines
    - E. Distributing materials
  
  - II. Instructional Activities**
    - A. Teacher-student contacts
    - B. Student movement in the room
    - C. Signal for student attention
    - D. Headings for papers
    - E. Student talk during seatwork
    - F. Activities to do when work is done
  
  - III. Ending Class**
    - A. Putting away supplies, equipment
    - B. Organizing materials for next class
    - C. Dismissing class
  
  - IV. Other Procedures**
    - A. Student rules about teacher's desk
    - B. Fire drills
    - C. Lunch procedures
    - D. Bathroom, water fountains
    - E. Lockers
- 

such traditional classroom jobs as line leader, caring for pets, running errands, and so forth, students can learn to take responsibility for such tasks as starting the school day and assisting substitute teachers. Not only does this create a greater sense of significance, competence, and power for students, but it can dramatically assist the teacher by having students take responsibility for tasks that may take considerable time away from a teacher's availability for students. Students may need to receive some training to effectively carry out the requirements of their jobs. This can take place during lunch or recess times. Activity 2-2 gives you an opportunity to consider the procedures you wish to establish in your classroom.

### Teaching and Monitoring Classroom Procedures

A procedure is best taught by:

1. Discussing the need for the procedure
2. Possibly soliciting student ideas
3. Having students practice the procedure until it is performed correctly
4. Reinforcing the correct behavior

When introducing the procedure of developing a signal to obtain students' attention, you might work with the class to develop the signal, set a goal (everyone facing the teacher and quiet within five seconds), use the procedure while students are engaged in an activity, and reinforce them when they respond within the determined time limit. For a procedure such as lining up, you might elicit ideas for behaviors students display when lining up, practice lining up, and reinforce the class when they line up in the desired manner.

Classroom procedures must be carefully monitored during their initial acquisition. Early in the school year, teachers should respond to almost every violation of a rule or procedure. When you notice that the class or an individual student is not correctly following a procedure, the best approach is to ask the student to state the correct procedure and then to demon-

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- I. *Work Requirements*
    - A. Heading papers
    - B. Use of pen or pencil
    - C. Writing on back of paper
    - D. Neatness, legibility
    - E. Incomplete papers
    - F. Late work
    - G. Missed work
    - H. Due dates
    - I. Make-up work
  - II. *Communicating Assignments*
    - A. Posting assignments
    - B. Requirements/grading criteria for assignments
    - C. Instructional groups
    - D. Provisions for absentees
    - E. Long-term assignments
  - III. *Monitoring Student Work*
    - A. In-class oral participation
    - B. Completion of in-class assignments
    - C. Completion of homework assignments
    - D. Completion of stages of long-term assignments
  - IV. *Checking Assignments in Class*
    - A. Students' exchanging papers
    - B. Marking and grading papers
    - C. Turning in papers
  - V. *Grading Procedures*
    - A. Determining report card grades
    - B. Recording grades
    - C. Grading stages of long-term assignments
    - D. Extra credit
  - VI. *Academic Feedback*
    - A. Rewards and incentives
    - B. Posting student work
    - C. Communication with parents
    - D. Students' record of their grades
- 

**FIGURE 2-4**  
Accountability  
Procedures

strate it. If a class lines up poorly after having once demonstrated the correct procedure, you should politely comment that you know the class can line up more effectively and ask them to return to their seats so that they can practice the procedure. You might then ask students to describe the behaviors associated with lining up correctly. The class could then be asked to demonstrate their skill and be reinforced for their improved effort. Effectively teaching procedures to students is similar to good athletic coaching. The skilled coach first demonstrates the new procedure—often having the athlete perform the maneuver in slow motion. The athlete is then asked to perform the task and receives feedback on the performance, sometimes in the form of videotape replay. The coach has the athlete practice until the feat is performed satisfactorily. Later, perhaps under game conditions, if the athlete performs the task incorrectly, the coach reteaches it in a subsequent practice session. Figure 2-5 lists a number of interesting and fun methods for teaching classroom rules and procedures to students.

One teacher recently found that her classroom was becoming quite noisy during an afternoon study period. Despite several clear I-messages from the teacher as well as several students, the classroom continued to be unproductively loud during this time. Consequently, at the beginning of the study period the next day, the teacher asked the class to discuss the rule

**FIGURE 2-5**  
Creative Ways to  
Teach Rules and  
Routines

Source: Deborah  
Johnson,  
Lidgerwood  
Elementary School,  
Spokane,  
Washington.  
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1. **Puppet Plays:** Use puppets to role-play responsible behaviors. Have students discuss what was appropriate. Have students identify what behaviors were not appropriate, what rules relate to the behaviors, and what behaviors should have happened instead.
2. **Storytime:** In September, read books to students that teach lessons on following rules and procedures and the rewards from self-discipline.
3. **Posters:** Have students make good behavior, good study habit, safety rules, etc. posters for the classroom, school hallways, cafeteria, and so on. Hang them where appropriate to remind students of your expectations.
4. **Letters:** Teach how to write friendly letters. Have students write letters to playground aides, bus drivers, cooks, custodians, the principal, etc., regarding the rules and their plans to be self-disciplined in the area of interest to whom the letter is written.
5. **Oops, I Goofed!:** Conduct a class discussion on student experiences when they broke a rule. Have students share a personal experience when they goofed in their behavior. Have students share what they should have done instead. Focus in on the idea that we all make mistakes and it is OK if you learn from the mistake and don't repeat it.
6. **Create a Play:** Have students write and produce a play on rules and procedures. Have students present the play to other classes in the school.
7. **School in Relation to Community Rules:** Have students share how school rules and the reasons for following them relate to community rules and their responsibilities as citizens.
8. **Rule Unscramble:** Have your class/school rules stated in phrases. Mix up the words in the phrase. Have students put the words in correct order so they make sense. Or mix up the letters of the words in a rule and have students put the letters of each word back in order so rules make sense.
9. **Rule Bingo:** Make bingo cards with classroom/school rules listed in each square. Have a student or the teacher act out the rule. Students cover the square if they have the rule listed that is being acted out.
10. **Wrong Way:** Have students role-play the wrong way to behave or the wrong way to follow procedures. Videotape the role-playing and have the whole group review and discuss not only what was done wrong but also how to do it the right way.
11. **Hug or Handshake:** When the teacher or students "catch" others following the rules, ask them if they want a hug or handshake and reward them with their wish.
12. **Contract for Success:** Have students write a letter to their parents listing the rules for the class and their plan for successful behavior and self-discipline for the school year. Have students take the letter home and review it with their parents. All persons sign the Contract for Success. Student returns the contract to school the next day.
13. **Picture Signals:** Have pictures as signals for each classroom rule. For example, ears for the rule "We listen politely." or chair for "Sit correctly in your chair." Then use the pictures to signal students if they are not following the rule. The picture signals allow silent management rather than having to stop teaching to tell students what they are doing wrong.
14. **Rules in the Sack:** Write rules on cards and put them into a paper sack. Have a student draw out a rule from the sack and explain it to the rest of the class.
15. **Hidden Rules:** Fold paper. On the inside write the class rule. On the outside of the folded paper give clues to the rule. Students read clues and guess the rule. They open the folded paper to see if they are correct. This also works well for a bulletin board display.
16. **Numbered Rules:** Give each classroom rule a number. When a student is following a rule correctly, ask students to hold up the number of fingers which related to the rule being followed. Or when teaching rules, give clues for a specific rule and students hold up the correct number of fingers for the correct numbered rule.

17. **Discrimination:** Develop a list of correct and incorrect behaviors relating to the rules and routines of the classroom and school. Have students read through the list and separate the correct from the incorrect, thus making two lists from the one. Use this discrimination activity during a reading class.
18. **Wheel of Fortune:** Play *Wheel of Fortune* where rules are the puzzles to be solved. Students guess letters of the puzzle and try to guess the rule in the puzzle.
19. **Awards:** Design certificates or bookmarker awards for classroom rules. Give students the awards when their behavior reflects appropriate behavior in relation to the specific rule.
20. **Picture Posters:** Have students bring pictures of themselves to school. Use student pictures on posters to highlight a school rule. "The following students believe it is important to respect all teachers." Show their pictures listing their names and grades. Post the posters throughout the school. Use positive peer pressure for pride in school.

FIGURE 2-5  
Continued

of maintaining a noise level that was conducive to studying. The class decided that they often became too loud and agreed to reduce their noise level. At the end of the period, the teacher asked the students to examine the amount of work they had completed. Most students acknowledged that they had accomplished much more work. The teacher brought the issue to the attention of the class again the next day and every other day for six days. Because the noise level appeared to maintain an acceptable level, the discussions were terminated. The procedure had been reestablished.

Although it is obvious to any veteran teacher that there were other factors involved—including the teacher's respect for his students and his attempt to actively engage them in the learning material—the teacher himself noted that he believed the key variable was his actively involving students in solving the problem and committing to their decisions.

## CREATIVE EXAMPLES OF TEACHING RULES AND PROCEDURES

### Case Study: Dealing with the Dilemma of Gum Chewing

In his thoughtful text *Judicious Discipline*, Forrest Gathercoal presented a marvelous true story about how one administrator handled the issue of gum chewing. Gathercoal (1997) wrote:

Instead of using rules and punishments as a means of banning gum, for example, why not approach the matter as an educator would—teach students how to use gum properly. Students are far more likely to develop good character and become accountable for their behavior when they are respected as student/citizens capable of learning personal responsibility.

I remember an anecdote an elementary principal shared with me about his experience with "the gum problem." He had been a teacher in his building before being appointed principal and was familiar with the problems they had with gum damage. The custodian was constantly complaining about the wrappers on the floor and gum under the furniture. The punishments for chewing gum were harsh, but the problem continued.

When he became an administrator, one of his first acts was to revise some of the rules. One change in particular reversed the ban on gum chewing. His new plan suggested that the faculty spend some time during the first day of class teaching students how to use gum properly. Teachers instructed their classes in the appropriate way to chew gum, how to wrap it in paper when out of their mouths, where to discard the gum, and how to care for the empty wrapper.

Curious about the effect of this educational approach, a few weeks into the school year the principal asked the custodian if there was a problem with gum in the building. The custodian replied that he was surprised by the fact there was no gum anywhere around school, not even the wrappers on the floor. "I don't know what you did," he said, "but you are the toughest principal we ever had here."

Another three weeks passed. The conversation again surfaced and still no evidence of gum damage was found. "You really are tough," the principal was told. "What did you do?" The principal explained that the old rules were replaced by a more positive educational approach to teaching responsibility. The custodian listened in disbelief and, without a word, walked away shaking his head. (pp. 82, 83)

### **Case Study: Developmental Recess**

A number of years ago, one of the authors was asked to assist an elementary school staff in solving the problems of repeated referrals for playground misbehavior. The staff was concerned that their responses to continued misbehavior were not severe enough and wondered if they needed a more progressive approach to disciplining the repeated offenders. The author took two approaches to assisting the staff with their concern. First, the staff involved in playground supervision, along with the schoolwide student management committee, examined data to determine the type and frequency of misbehavior leading to a referral. This was done to determine whether there were key procedures (such as how to use a particular piece of equipment or how to play a game) that needed to be taught or retaught.

Following this, the committee was asked to consider how they were defining discipline. When confronted with continued behavior problems, it is more effective to consider what procedures or skills need to be taught to the students involved. Based on the belief that many behavior problems can be dealt with by providing students with new skills, the author assisted the staff in establishing a developmental recess. Developmental recess removes students who have had a designated number of behavior problems on the playground and provides them with an opportunity to learn and practice the procedures for successful participation. After demonstrating acceptable behavior for a designated number of days in the developmental recess, the student may return to the normal recess activities. Physical education teachers, parent volunteers, instructional assistants, and principals have staffed this activity.

One of the authors recently worked with a staff who implemented a developmental lunch in which they provided students who had difficulty using acceptable cafeteria manners with an opportunity to learn and practice these behaviors. Figure 2-6 presents an outline of a developmental recess procedure developed by a state director of special education.

### **Case Study: Teaching Students to Respect Physical Space**

One of the authors recently worked with a staff whose elementary students were frequently involved in inappropriate (violent or sexual) touch. A staff committee developed a plan for teaching students about individuals' personal space. In a large assembly followed by work in classrooms, students were shown (by a flashlight hanging over a student in a darkened room) that everyone has some physical space. Students were then asked to use yarn to circle themselves with the physical space they needed in various situations. This was then utilized during classtime and recess for several days. The staff reported that students quickly learned the procedure of not invading another person's physical space and that inappropriate touch on the playground, while still present, occurred at a much lower rate.

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### The Concept

Developmental recess is one technique for helping children learn the specific skills they need to behave successfully while at recess. Since successful recess experience requires skills important to success in many other areas of life, developmental recess is viewed by many as an important component of comprehensive school curriculum.

If a child is having difficulty behaving appropriately during recess, it is very likely that the child has social skill or other playground skill deficits. Although appropriate consequences for irresponsible choices can be valuable teaching tools, the application of negative consequences as a stand-alone intervention does little to remediate playground skill deficits. When a child has difficulty reading, schools teach specific reading skills. The child is not placed in time-out with the hope that reading will be better in the future. When a child has difficulty with playground behavior, it is just as essential that appropriate replacement behaviors be taught and rehearsed.

This concept may be used with activities and situations other than recess. Such structured teaching of prosocial skills may be of value in relation to cafeteria behavior, school assembly behavior, and so on.

### Sample Developmental Recess Model

Developmental recess is a relatively new concept, and a number of developmental recess models are being developed. All derive from the basic concept of teaching prosocial replacement behaviors. One model gaining popularity in a number of Oregon schools involves the following:

1. Teaching prosocial skills in small groups just prior to recess
2. Monitoring student choices during recess
3. Positive debriefing with those students immediately following recess

The following specific steps may be useful to those implementing this model for the first time:

1. Identify two school adults who are skilled and willing to work with students who have behavior difficulties at recess. One of these adults might be a school counselor, school psychologist, behavior consultant, child development specialist, and so on. The other could be a classroom teacher, administrator, playground assistant, and so on.
  2. Identify a small group of students who could benefit from involvement in developmental recess.
  3. Inform parents of the purpose and nature of developmental recess and obtain written authorization from parents to include the selected children in the group.
  4. Assess the selected students to determine skill deficits and gather appropriate instructional materials needed for teaching prosocial skills. Assessment strategies could include the use of behavior rating scales, student self-report instruments, direct observation, and the like.
  5. Schedule developmental recess in consultation with the classroom teachers of the selected students. It is recommended that students participate in developmental recess at least three or four times per week for four to six weeks. Many schools have developmental recess occur during recess.
  6. As children demonstrate appropriate behavior during developmental recess (usually for three to five consecutive days), they return to the regular recess.
  7. For several days following their return, students check with the developmental recess facilitator prior to recess to discuss their goals and after recess to evaluate their behavior. As students experience success, they can report less frequently.
- 

**FIGURE 2-6**  
Developmental  
Recess

### **Case Study: Teaching Students Hallway Behavior in a Middle School**

One of the authors recently worked with a staff who was concerned about student behavior in the hallways. Some teachers were concerned that students were not punished enough when caught being unsafe in the halls, and other teachers pointed to the lack of staff consistency in responding to inappropriate student hallway behavior. The author asked the staff to discuss where the problems occurred. It soon became obvious that students were having problems in two specific areas of the building. Someone suggested that the staff involve the students in examining the problem and determining a solution. The staff and students developed a series of traffic signs (such as “yield right,” “merge left,” etc.) that were placed in the necessary areas. Students were then given instruction in how to move in the congested areas. Results indicated that referrals for student misconduct in hallways decreased dramatically once the procedures were collaboratively developed and effectively taught.

### **Changing Teachers’ Procedures**

Although most attention is focused on teaching students to follow selected school and classroom procedures, student behavior can often be more quickly and dramatically improved by altering the procedures adults follow. For example, one of the authors recently worked with an elementary school staff that expressed concern about student behavior both at the end of recess and in the hallways. After considerable discussion about how to teach students to behave more responsibly in these settings, one of the teachers noted that if teachers would develop the procedure of meeting their students outside at the end of recess and walking their students to physical education, music, and lunch, there would be much less chaos and many happier students. The teachers discovered that although it took approximately four minutes more each day to follow this procedure, they were saving at least five times that much instructional time because of the decrease in disruptive student behavior during and following transition times.

In a similar vein, one of the authors worked with a school staff that was concerned about how rudely students responded to adults. Again, the staff was engaged in very positive discussions about how to teach students improved communication skills. After implementing this social skills training, however, the staff remained frustrated by the level of rude responses. With some outside assistance, the staff began to realize that a significant amount of this rudeness, or failure to respond positively to adult statements, occurred when adults were correcting students. The staff discovered that when instead of criticizing or correcting students, they validated the students’ feelings and asked students how else they could respond, the amount of negative student behavior was dramatically reduced.

A final example comes from a high school program with a student experiencing serious behavioral and emotional problems. The student had received numerous office referrals and several suspensions for his aggressive responses to adults. As part of his treatment plan, the special education teacher worked with the boy and his teachers to determine ways the teachers could provide correction in a manner the boy perceived as more respectful and less confrontational. When the teachers began utilizing this new procedure, the student’s aggressive responses to adults were almost eliminated. As in the previous example, although it was important to teach new procedures to the student, it was equally important to alter the teachers’ procedures for responding to inappropriate student behavior.

## Teaching Rules and Procedures to New Students

When new students enter the classroom, it is imperative they understand how the classroom operates. There are a variety of methods for accomplishing this. Most teachers simply assign a student to discuss classroom behavioral standards and key procedures with a new student. In an elementary school this may be a class job. The new student may spend a recess and lunch period with the mentor learning about key classroom expectations. In a secondary school several students may volunteer for a two-week or monthly role of teaching new students about the classroom. In both cases, this is facilitated by having the materials in writing or having the teacher or class develop a videotape describing these materials. The teacher may also design a quiz about classroom operation and ask all new students to earn 100 percent on this quiz.

When the new student has limited English proficiency, if at all possible, someone who speaks the student's language should work with the student to help the student understand how the classroom operates. In some cases schools and classroom teachers have developed videotapes in several languages to explain these procedures. Additionally, some schools have volunteers who work with new families and students to provide an orientation to the school in the family's first language.

## AN OUTLINE FOR BEGINNING THE SCHOOL YEAR

The most effective way to create a safe, positive setting in which students are motivated to learn will vary with grade level, subject matter, and teacher style. However, there are some key ingredients to creating a positive learning environment. This section offers suggestions for beginning the school year in elementary, middle school, and high school classrooms.

### Elementary Classrooms

Figure 2-7 presents the outline of training workshops developed by Carolyn Evertson and her colleagues to assist teachers in improving their skills in effectively beginning the school year. Our work supports this pioneering work in beginning the school year. We have also found several additional activities that help create a positive learning community. Figure 2-8 is an outline taken from a fifth-grade classroom co-taught by one of the authors and her teaching partner, Karen Freiberg.

### Secondary Classrooms

Figure 2-9 presents the outline of training workshops developed by Carolyn Evertson to assist teachers in improving their skills in effectively beginning the school year. Although our work supports her pioneering efforts, we have found that the following provides a solid outline for creating a positive, cohesive community of learners in which students feel motivated to learn and experience a sense of safety and personal investment in the learning process.

*Provide a cognitive map (outline) for the year:* Describe to students the general outline of the course, content they will be working with, instructional and assessment methods you will use, and so on.

*Define learning:* Have students work collaboratively to develop a list of characteristics they agree are found in a successful learner and create a definition of an effective learner.

*Ask students what they want to learn and what types of instructional activities best facilitate their learning:* Have students individually write about what they want to learn in the class. Are there special interests or knowledge they have related to the class? Ask students to

**FIGURE 2-7**  
Major  
Components  
Presenting in  
Beginning-of-Year  
Treatment

Source: C. Evertson,  
E. Emmer, J.  
Sanford, and  
B. Clements.  
"Improving  
Management: An  
Experiment in  
Elementary School  
Classrooms,"  
*Elementary School  
Journal*, 84 (1983):  
173–180. Copyright  
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University of  
Chicago.

1. *Readying the classroom.* Be certain your classroom space and materials are ready for the beginning of the year.
2. *Planning rules and procedures.* Think about what procedures students must follow to function effectively in your classroom and in the school environment: decide what behaviors are acceptable or unacceptable; develop a list of procedures and rules.
3. *Consequences.* Decide ahead of time consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behavior in your classroom, and communicate them to your students; follow through consistently.
4. *Teaching rules and procedures.* Teach students rules and procedures systematically; include in your lesson plans for the beginning of school sequences for teaching rules and procedures, when and how they will be taught, and when practice and review will occur.
5. *Beginning-of-school activities.* Develop activities for the first few days of school that will involve students readily and maintain a whole-group focus.
6. *Strategies for potential problems.* Plan strategies to deal with potential problems that could upset your classroom organization and management.
7. *Monitoring.* Monitor student behavior closely.
8. *Stopping inappropriate behavior.* Handle inappropriate and disruptive behavior promptly and consistently.
9. *Organizing instruction.* Organize instruction to provide learning activities at suitable levels for all students in your class.
10. *Student accountability.* Develop procedures that keep the children responsible for their work.
11. *Instructional clarity.* Be clear when you present information and give directions to your students.

**FIGURE 2-8**  
Beginning the  
School Year in  
an Elementary  
Classroom

*First Day Schedule*

Place on the students' desk: nametags,  
class name word search, sacks, letter  
from the teacher to the student  
Teacher introduces self  
Take attendance using name chain  
Learn the school pledge  
Practice assembly procedures  
Attend all-school assembly  
Overview of the year's curriculum  
Snack from the bags placed on the  
student's desk (also in bag is a book-  
mark, pencil, sticker, and piece of candy)  
Students write letters to the teacher  
telling about themselves, their family,  
summer highlights, and something they  
want to learn this year  
Packets go home  
Practice closure procedure  
Practice bus procedure

*Second Day Schedule*

Mystery student warm-up  
Practice morning procedures  
Bingo acquaintance activity  
Introduce key classroom procedures  
Snack and stretch break  
Music class  
Paint portraits on shoe box  
Practice lunch procedures  
Lunch and recess  
Read aloud  
Successful learner activity  
Group contributions activity  
Recess  
Organize notebooks  
Closure  
Bus dismissal

- I. *Planning* (before school starts)
  - A. Use of space (readying the classroom)
  - B. Rules for general behavior
  - C. Rules and procedures for specific areas
    1. Student use of classroom space and facilities
    2. Student uses of out-of-class areas
    3. Student participation during whole class activities/seatwork
    4. Student participation in daily routines
    5. Student participation during small-group activities
  - D. Consequence/incentives for appropriate/inappropriate behavior
  - E. Activities for the first day of school
- II. *Presenting Rules, Procedures, and Expectation* (beginning of school)
  - A. Teaching rules and procedures
    1. Explanation
    2. Rehearsal
    3. Feedback
    4. Reteaching
  - B. Teaching academic content
  - C. Communicating concepts and directions clearly
- III. *Maintaining the System* (throughout the year)
  - A. Monitoring for behavioral and academic compliance
  - B. Acknowledging appropriate behavior
  - C. Stopping inappropriate behavior
  - D. Consistent use of consequences/incentives
  - E. Adjusting instruction for individual students/groups
  - F. Keeping students accountable for work
  - G. Coping with special problems

**FIGURE 2-9**  
Outline of  
Workshop Content  
for Secondary  
Teachers in the  
Experimental Group

*Source:* Carolyn M. Evertson, "Training Teachers in Classroom Management: An Experimental Study in Secondary School Classrooms," *Journal of Educational Research*, 79 (1): 54, 1985. Reprinted with permission of the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation. Published by Heldref Publications, 1319 Eighteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-1802. Copyright © 1985.

describe the instructional and assessment methods that seem to work best for them and perhaps give examples of these from previous classes they have taken.

*Be inviting and help students know you:* Be positive and excited about your teaching. Learn students' names and something about each student. Make a positive contact with each student during the first two weeks of school. Keep your ratio of positive to negative statements at least four to one.

*Allow students to interview you:* Let students learn about you as a person as well as your beliefs as an educator.

*Help students to become better acquainted:* Involve students in at least three activities designed to help students know each other's names and learn something about each other.

*Teach judicious discipline concepts and establish behavioral norms:* Inform students that one role you have is to ensure that the constitutional rights of all students will be protected in the classroom and that no class member (including the teacher) can behave in a manner that violates the rights of others. With this background, either have students develop a list of behavioral norms that ensure that all four compelling state interests are met or provide students with a list and have a discussion that may lead to modifications of this list. Have all students sign this list, indicating their understanding of it and their commitment to respect the rights of all members of the class.

*Teach key behavioral procedures:* Determine the key procedures you wish to teach. Teach these as they are needed in the classroom. Whenever a problem occurs, ask yourself what procedure you and your students could develop that would eliminate this problem.

*Develop an approach for how you and students will respond when someone's rights are violated:* Present your approach to responding to violations of classroom behavioral expectations. Allow

students input into this process. Once agreement has been reached, print this, have all students sign it, and provide a copy of this to your administrator.

*Carefully monitor students' work and homework and provide reteaching opportunities early:* Early in the first marking period provide opportunities for students to present their learning in several ways—tests, projects, writing, and so on. Meet with students who have difficulty presenting a mastery of the material and discuss ways to modify the presentation of materials as well as the assessment of learning.

*Involve students in assessing their own effort and learning:* Have students describe their own efforts in mastering the content. Have them list what is working for them, any assistance they might need, and methods they might use to improve their work. A success contract might be helpful.

*Involve students in assessing your teaching and their feeling about the class:* Have students provide you with feedback regarding the class. Share this feedback with students and work with them to make some modifications in the class.

## CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SKILLS THAT HELP MAXIMIZE ON-TASK BEHAVIOR

The importance of teachers using the skills described in this section was emphasized by Kounin's (1970) research on classroom discipline. Kounin began his study by collecting several thousand hours of videotapes, both from classrooms of teachers who were acknowledged to be extremely effective in managing their classes and from classrooms of teachers who had serious, continuing management problems. Kounin expected to find significant differences in how teachers from these two groups handled discipline problems that occurred in their classrooms. Surprisingly, the results indicated that the successful teachers responded to control problems in much the same manner as did the teachers whose classrooms were often disorderly.

Based on these findings, Kounin and his colleagues reexamined the tapes, seeking any real differences between the teaching methods of teachers who were successful and those who experienced major management problems. They discovered that the differences lay in the successful teachers' ability to prevent discipline problems. These teachers used many types of management skills to ensure that students were more consistently and actively engaged in instructional activities. Successful teachers were better prepared and organized and moved smoothly from one activity to another. These teachers also maintained students' involvement in instructional activities by initially stimulating the students' interest and effectively holding their attention throughout the lesson. Similarly, successful teachers used seatwork that was individualized and interesting. Kounin also discovered that the more effective teachers had greater classroom awareness, constantly scanning the classroom so that they were aware of potential problems and could deal with these before any real difficulties arose. These teachers anticipated students' needs, organized their classrooms to minimize restlessness and boredom, and effectively coped with the multiple and often overlapping demands associated with teaching.

Research on teachers' effectiveness in producing gains in students' learning (Brophy & Evertson, 1976) indicates that the same teacher behaviors that reduce classroom disruption are also associated with increased student learning. In describing the findings of the two-year Teacher Effectiveness Project, which examined the relationship between various teacher behaviors and gains in students' learning, Brophy and Evertson (1976) stated, "Our data strongly support the findings of Kounin (1970). . . . That is, the key to successful classroom management is prevention of problems before they start, not knowing how to deal with problems after they have begun" (p. 127). Brophy and Evertson also wrote, "Of the process behav-

iors measured through classroom observation in our study, the group that had the strongest and most consistent relationships with student learning gains dealt with the classroom management skills of the teachers. By ‘classroom management,’ we mean planning and conducting activities in an orderly fashion; keeping students actively engaged in lessons and seatwork activities; and minimizing disruptions and discipline problems” (p. 51).

In their study of twelve inner-London secondary schools reported in *Fifteen Thousand Hours*, Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, and Smith (1979) found teachers’ classroom-management skills to be a key factor influencing students’ achievement and behavior. They wrote, “The measures we used touched on only a few aspects of classroom management and there are innumerable ways in which good management may be achieved. What is important is that teachers learn the skills involved” (p. 186).

The research on academic learning time (ALT) supports the idea that teachers should incorporate teaching methods that increase on-task student behavior. “If 50 minutes of reading instruction per day is allocated to a student who pays attention about one-third of the time, and only one-fourth of the student’s reading time is a high level of success, the student will experience only about four minutes of ALT-engaged reading time at a high success level” (Berliner, 1984, p. 62). Classes vary dramatically in the percentage of time students are engaged in instructional tasks, with rates ranging from consistently less than 50 percent to 90 percent (Fisher et al., 1978). Rosenshine (1983) summarized specific teacher behaviors found to be associated with students’ achievement gains and included many of the skills presented in this section.

The section is organized around the eight general instructional management skills listed in Figure 2-10. It is critical to understand how to use the methods in this section. They are not offered as gimmicks for increasing students’ time on-task or your control. Instead, they are methods that can assist you in helping students better understand their schoolwork and enhance the quality of learning time. Neither are these methods offered as a cookbook of behaviors to be routinely followed. Like the neophyte cook, the beginning teacher may choose to implement many of these methods. Much as a cook alters and discards recipes depending on the outcome, the skilled teacher seasons standard methods with their own experiences and action research. Teachers constantly need to monitor their own behavior and its relationship to students’ learning in order to develop teaching methods that are maximally effective in the classrooms. In addition to the ideas and activities presented in this text, you will find Good and Brophy’s (1996) *Looking in Classrooms* particularly useful in helping monitor and adjust classroom organization and management behavior.

## Giving Clear Instructions

A key step in presenting a lesson is to provide clear instructions for the activities in which students will be engaged. A significant amount of disruptive student behavior stems from students’

1. Giving clear instructions
2. Beginning a lesson
3. Maintaining attention
4. Pacing
5. Using seatwork effectively
6. Summarizing
7. Providing useful feedback and evaluation
8. Making smooth transitions
9. Dealing with common frustrations
10. Planning for early childhood settings

**FIGURE 2-10**  
Instructional Management Skills That Facilitate On-Task Behavior and Academic Achievement

not knowing how they are to proceed or what they are to do when they require assistance or complete their work. Students are often poorly prepared for seatwork assignments.

### Methods

1. *Give precise directions.* Instructions should include statements about (a) what students will be doing, (b) why they are doing it, (c) how they can obtain assistance, (d) what to do with completed work, and (e) what to do when they finish. It is also helpful to indicate how much time they will be spending on the task. This direction may include a statement about when the work can be completed if it cannot be finished within the designated time limits.
2. *Describe the desired quality of the work.* This can increase students' sense of accountability and decrease their anxiety.
3. *After giving instructions, have students paraphrase the directions, state any problems that might occur to them, and make a commitment.*
4. *Positively accept students' questions about directions.*
5. *Place directions where they can be seen and referred to by students.*
6. *Have students write out instructions before beginning an activity.*
7. *When students seem to be having difficulty following directions, consider breaking tasks down into smaller segments.*
8. *Give directions immediately prior to the activity they describe.*
9. *Model the correct behavior.* If students have been asked to raise their hands before answering, you can raise your hand while asking the question.
10. *Hand out worksheets or outlines before taking a field trip.*
11. *Create a space for placing all assignments so students who are absent or forget to write down an assignment can independently access this information.* This can be supported by having several students designated each week to provide additional information for students who are unclear about the materials found in the assignments folder.

### Beginning a Lesson

Teachers frequently have difficulty in attracting students' attention and getting a lesson started. The reason is at least partly that students often attempt to postpone the beginning of a lesson by socializing or moving about the room. Students quite accurately realize that the best time for buying time is before the lesson begins.

### Methods

1. *Select and teach a cue for getting students' attention.* Students benefit from having a consistent cue indicating that it is time to focus their attention. They hear standard phrases such as "Okay, we are ready to begin" so often that these statements are often ineffective for eliciting attention. One of the authors has her class select a new cue each month. Students enjoy being involved and choose catchy phrases. During a recent year, students chose "Boo" for October, "Gobble Gobble" for November, and "Ho Ho Ho" for December. While teaching a summer institute on classroom management, the value of using a catchy phrase was demonstrated by recording the time it took forty teachers to pay attention quietly following the phrase "May I please have your attention?" The average time for five such requests was nearly two minutes (in each instance, students were involved in group work). The class was presented with this figure and asked to develop a less common phrase. They chose "Rain Rain Go Away." This phrase was practiced until the class could attend within ten seconds. Follow-up data

gathered during the next two weeks showed that the group never took more than ten seconds to become completely quiet.

2. *Do not begin until everyone is paying attention.*
3. *Begin the lesson by removing distractions.*
4. *Clearly describe the goals, activities, and evaluation procedures associated with the lesson being presented.*
5. *Stimulate interest by relating the lesson to the students' lives or a previous lesson.*
6. *Start with a highly motivating activity in order to make the students' initial contact with the subject matter as positive as possible.* One of the authors begins a unit on the Lewis and Clark expedition by dressing up as Meriwether Lewis and collaborating with a colleague to present a skit summarizing the lives of these two noteworthy explorers.
7. *Hand out an outline, definitions, or study guide to help students organize their thoughts and focus their attention.*
8. *Challenge students to minimize their transition time.* Children enjoy games and are impressed by data. Draw on this knowledge by presenting students with data indicating the amount of time it requires them to settle down and asking them to try to reduce this time. There are six basic steps to implementing this approach. First, collect baseline data and record them on a large and easy-to-read chart. Second, the data should be discussed with the students and their assistance requested. Third, help the students choose an appropriate and reasonable goal. Fourth, define exactly what you mean by being ready for class. Fifth, the class must develop a system for collecting and recording data. Finally, it may be necessary to determine a reward for reaching the stated goal.

## Maintaining Attention

The amount of time students spend involved in instruction is significantly related to their achievement. Many teachers state that one of the most frustrating tasks associated with teaching is maintaining students' attention during group instruction. Although children and young adolescents do in fact have a somewhat shorter attention span than do adults, their ability to attend quietly to an interesting television program or video game suggests that the skilled teacher can stimulate more consistent attention to task than is seen in most classrooms.

### Methods

1. *Arrange the classroom to facilitate the instructional activity you have selected.* When a lesson involves the teacher as the center of attention, students should be seated so that everyone is facing the teacher. This arrangement can be accomplished using rows, a circle, or a U-shape. When students are seated in small groups, request that all students face you before beginning a lesson. Similarly, if you wish students to talk to each other, desks must be arranged in a circle, square, or U-shape so that students can comfortably see and hear each speaker. Teachers who use a variety of instructional activities should consider teaching students a procedure for quickly and quietly moving desks. With a small amount of instruction, students in all grades can learn to rearrange desks in approximately one minute.
2. *Employ a seating arrangement that does not discriminate against some students.* Teachers tend to place higher-achieving students nearer the teacher and provide them with more contact (Rist, 1970). Fortunately, research also indicates that teachers can encourage more evenly distributed student responding. Daum (1972) demonstrated that when low-ability students were moved to the front of the room, their achievement improved more than that of low-ability students who remained at the back of the room. Interestingly, the high-achieving students' achievement did not suffer when they were moved far-

ther from the teacher. Similarly, Adams and Biddle (1970) discovered that students' involvement is more evenly distributed when high- and low-achieving students are interspersed throughout the room. These studies suggest that teachers can increase on-task student responses by adjusting seating arrangements and moving around the room so that all students become actively involved in meaningful classroom interaction.

3. *Use random selection in calling on students.* This can be accomplished by placing students' names on popsicle sticks, in a hat, and so on, and simply drawing names to determine who will be called on.

One danger in involving students randomly is that you are less likely to receive an immediate correct answer to every question. Studies indicate that, especially in the primary grades, students' achievement is enhanced when teachers provide information, ask focused questions, and receive correct answers from students. Therefore, you should carefully consider when to involve lower-achieving students. For example, these students might be called on when they raise their hands during skill-acquisition lessons and might be encouraged to become actively involved during lessons that involve personal issues or opinions.

4. *Ask the question before calling on a student.* When teachers select the student before asking the question, other students may become less interested in the question. By asking the question, looking around the room, and providing students with an opportunity to consider the question, you create greater interest and anticipation and thereby increase attending behavior. Also take this opportunity to reinforce the procedure of students' raising their hands to answer questions (e.g., "Raise your hand if you can answer this question," or "John, you have your hand raised. What is the answer?").
5. *Wait at least five seconds before answering a question or calling on another student.* Most teachers are surprised to learn that research indicates that, on the average, teachers wait only one second for a student to respond before answering a question themselves or calling on another student. Consider, however, the process students must go through when asked a question. First, they must hear the question and decide whether they understand it. Second, they must search for the information. Third, they must consider whether their response will be accepted. Fourth, they must decide whether they will receive reinforcement or rebuke for their response (in some situations a correct response will be reinforced by the teacher but punished by peers). This process may occur very rapidly for bright students, but most students require considerably longer than one second to complete it.

Rowe (1978) reported that when teachers increase their waiting time, a variety of positive things occur. Figure 2-11 summarizes her findings. In a review of studies involving wait time, Tobin (1987) found that when average teacher wait time was greater than three seconds, teacher and student discourse changed and higher cognitive level achievement occurred at all grade levels.

6. *Ask students to respond to their classmates' answers.*

**FIGURE 2-11**  
Advantages  
of Increasing  
Teachers' Wait  
Time

1. Length of students' responses increases
2. Number of unsolicited but appropriate answers increases
3. Failure to obtain a response decreases
4. Children's confidence increases
5. Teacher-centered teaching decreases
6. Students' questions increase
7. Lower-achieving students contribute more
8. Students' proposals increase
9. Students give more evidence to support their answers
10. The variety of students' responses increases

7. *Do not consistently repeat students' answers.* Many teachers parrot nearly every answer provided by a student. This practice is intended to ensure that all students hear the correct answer. But it also teaches students that (a) they do not need to speak loudly because the teacher is the only one who needs to hear their answer, (b) they do not need to listen to their peers because the teacher will repeat the answer, and (c) the teacher is the source of all learning in the classroom. All these negative side effects reduce students' motivation, involvement, and attention.
8. *Model listening skills by paying close attention when students speak.*
9. *Be animated.* In his classic work on classroom discipline, Kounin (1970) wrote, "Teachers who maintain a group focus by engaging in behaviors that keep children alert and on their toes are more successful in inducing work involvement and preventing deviancy than are teachers who do not" (p. 123). Studies indicate that not only do students like enthusiastic teachers but that teachers' enthusiasm facilitates students' achievement. Demonstrate enthusiasm and animation by moving around the room, varying your voice level, using interested facial expressions, and maintaining a high energy level.
10. *Reinforce students' efforts and maintain a high ratio of positive to negative verbal statements.*
11. *Vary instructional media and methods.*
12. *Create anticipation.* Create a sense of interest by making statements such as, "This is a tough one" or "I'm not sure we've talked about this but maybe someone can answer it."
13. *Ask questions that relate to students' own lives.*
14. *Provide work of appropriate difficulty.* Students' misbehavior is often a response to work that is either too easy or too difficult. Students prefer work that is moderately difficult over tasks that are too easy. When work is too difficult, though, students become discouraged. Failure also causes students to lower their expectations of their own performance.  
 Research (Brophy & Evertson, 1976) suggests that when the teacher is available to provide assistance (as during monitored seatwork or recitation), students should be able to answer 70 to 80 percent of questions correctly. When students must work independently (as on independent seatwork or homework), students should be able to answer 95 percent correctly (Brophy, 1982; Fisher et al., 1980). Seatwork must not only allow for these high success rates but must also be different enough from previous work to challenge students.  
 Similarly, teacher questions to students should also elicit a relatively high rate of correct responses. Brophy (1986a) states that approximately three-fourths of teachers' questions should elicit correct responses and the remainder should elicit some form of incorrect or incomplete answer rather than failure to respond. Success rates can be expected to be lower when new material is being introduced but higher during reviews. Brophy noted, "Consistently low success rates (below about 65 percent), however, suggest that the teacher is 'teaching over the students' heads' or has not prepared them effectively for the questions" (p. 9).
15. *Provide variability and interest in seatwork.* Seatwork can be made more interesting by developing units that relate to current events, such as sports or students' other interests (animals, entertainment figures, etc.), or by creating seatwork that is based on some form of board game. Students can also be involved in working cooperatively with peers or presented with a competitive situation.
16. *When presenting difficult material, clearly acknowledge this fact, set a time limit for the presentation, and describe the type of follow-up activities that will clarify the lesson.*

## Pacing

### Methods

1. *Develop awareness of your own teaching tempo.* Students' behavior and performance are affected by their teacher's tempo. We can learn to generate interest and enthusiasm effectively or to create a calming effect by adjusting our own personal pace in the classroom. The best method for examining your own pace is to videotape yourself during large-group instruction. As you watch the replay, ask yourself questions such as Did I talk too fast? Was I animated? Did I repeat myself too often? and Would I enjoy listening to my own presentations?
2. *Watch for nonverbal cues indicating that students are becoming confused, bored, or restless.*
3. *Break activities up into short segments.* The use of films as instructional aids helps demonstrate this strategy. Teachers almost always allow a film to run all the way to the end before discussing its content. There are, however, several advantages to stopping the film at important points and discussing the ideas being presented. First, major points of information can be highlighted. Second, this procedure allows students to assimilate smaller amounts of information at a time. Many students simply cannot process the material offered in a half-hour film. Third, this method differentiates viewing a film at school from watching a movie or viewing television. Students can begin to learn that movies shown in school are meant to convey specific information and ideas rather than simply to entertain.
4. *Provide structured short breaks during lessons that last longer than thirty minutes.*
5. *Vary the style as well as the content of instruction.* Students often become restless when faced with extended instructional periods using only one type of instruction. If students have completed a large-group discussion in social studies, it is best not to move directly to a large-group science presentation. Teachers with good classroom management skills learn to move smoothly among a variety of instructional approaches.
6. *Do not bury students in paperwork.*

## Using Seatwork Effectively

Research in hundreds of elementary school classrooms shows that students spend more than half their time working privately at seatwork. Data from some of the classes of the Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (Fisher et al., 1978) also show that in some classes students make nearly 100 percent errors during 14 percent of the time they are involved in seatwork.

### Methods

1. *Make seatwork diagnostic and prescriptive.* Seatwork should be designed to provide students with meaningful practice while enabling teacher and student to assess the student's progress. Therefore, seatwork should be checked by the teacher or student, recorded and filed by the student, monitored by the teacher, and discussed in periodic teacher-student conferences.
2. *Develop a specific procedure for obtaining assistance.*
3. *Establish clear procedures about what to do when seatwork is completed.*
4. *Add interest to seatwork. Include cartoons, puzzles, or personalized questions on worksheets.*
5. *Work through the first several seatwork problems with the students.* All students will then understand the procedure to be followed and will be able to ask questions if they do not understand the work.
6. *Monitor students' seatwork and make needed adjustments.* While observing a student-teacher in a fifth-grade class, one of the authors noted that students in the class completed seat-

work at varying rates, and the teacher's failure to adjust seatwork or provide optional learning activities meant that many students were free to wander and disrupt the class. To bring out this point for the teacher, the author coded at five-minute intervals the number of students who had completed one-quarter, half, three-quarters, or all their work. The results (Figure 2-12) clearly indicate the inappropriateness of giving all students the same seatwork task. In addition to monitoring the time required to complete seatwork, monitor the percentage of students who complete their work with at least 75 percent accuracy (a higher percentage should be selected if you are not available to monitor the seatwork). This information, as well as a group average score, should be recorded as a basis for determining future seatwork assignments for individual students or the class as a whole.

7. *Monitor seatwork by moving around the room systematically.*
8. *Spend considerable time in presentation and discussion before assigning seatwork.*
9. *Keep contacts with individual students relatively short.* Longer contacts minimize your ability to scan the room or to provide assistance to all students.
10. *Have students work together during seatwork.* Students can jointly develop solutions or cooperatively prepare for group competition.

## Summarizing

Many children view the schoolday as a series of tasks to be completed and do not understand what they have learned or how the learning relates to specific learning goals or their own lives. When combined with clearly stated goals and useful feedback, the methods presented in this section provide students with a sense of accomplishment and meaning in their school experience.

### Methods

1. *At the end of a lesson or a schoolday, ask students to state or write in a journal one thing they have learned.*
2. *Have students play the role of a reporter and summarize what has been learned.*
3. *Have students create a skit to act out what they have learned.*
4. *Ask students to create learning displays.* Students can develop a collage, outline, newspaper article, and so on, to display their learning. They might write an article reporting on how plants grow. Students could also draw a chart that demonstrates this process.
5. *Encourage students to present their learning to others.*
6. *Display students' work.*
7. *Provide frequent review sessions.*
8. *Use tests as tools for summarizing learning.*

	Percentage of Work Complete			
	0–25%	26–50%	51–75%	76–100%
5 minutes	11	12	8	2
10 minutes	6	10	10	7
15 minutes	4	6	13	10
20 minutes	3	4	7	9

**FIGURE 2-12**  
Number of Students Who Had Completed Various Amounts of Seatwork at Five-Minute Intervals

## Providing Useful Feedback and Evaluation

Many years ago, Regan (1966) wrote in *Modern Elementary Curriculum* that the six basic purposes of evaluation are:

1. To reveal to teachers what is happening to each child
2. To motivate learning through furnishing pupils with information concerning success in various areas of the curriculum
3. To furnish teachers with a means of appraising teaching methods, textbook, and other instrumentalities of the educative process
4. To provide a basis for continuous improvement of the curriculum
5. To give pupils experience in evaluating their own progress
6. To reveal the progress the school program is making toward the achievement of the accepted objectives (p. 452)

The methods presented next reinforce these purposes and offer practical ideas for effectively using evaluation in the classroom.

### Methods

1. *Help students view evaluation as part of the learning process.*
2. *Tell students the criteria by which they will be evaluated.* When working with specific skills, students should know what they are to learn and what level of performance is acceptable. Similarly, when they are assigned projects they should be informed about the specific goals for the lesson, and, if their work will be evaluated, what specific criteria will be used. The importance of sharing information with children was powerfully stated by Herbert Kohl (1967):

The easiest way to bring this up in class was to tell the children exactly where they stood. I braced myself, and defying all precedent as well as my own misgivings, I performed the unforgivable act of showing the children what their reading and IQ scores were according to the record cards. I also taught a lesson on the definition of IQ and of achievement scores. The children were angry and shocked; no one had ever come right out and told them they were failing. It was always put so nicely and evasively that the children never knew where they stood. (p. 176)

3. *Relate feedback directly to individual or teacher goals.*
4. *Record data so that students can monitor their progress.*
5. *Provide immediate and specific feedback.* Page (1958) found that students' learning was enhanced when they were provided with specific positive and negative information about their performance. Generalized feedback such as a grade or comments like "Good" or "Nice work" do not tend to improve students' performance on subsequent tests.
6. *Provide honest feedback.* It is important to focus on students' success, but students' performance is not aided by feedback that is inaccurately positive. Students resent feedback they perceive as fake. Furthermore, providing students with too much praise for work that does not meet acceptable standards only confuses them and reduces their motivation and performance.
7. *Ask students to list factors that contributed to their success.*
8. *Deemphasize comparisons between students and their peers.*
9. *Deemphasize grades as feedback on students' work.* Instead, provide information on specific skills the student has demonstrated as well as skills the student may want to improve.

While helping the student to set goals for improvement, emphasize the good decisions and important learning and improvement the student has made.

10. *Provide students with clear information regarding their progress.* This is especially helpful in high school where grades impact students' futures. This feedback should provide students with accurate, ongoing data concerning their grades.

## Making Smooth Transitions

A surprisingly large amount of classroom time is spent in transition from one activity to another. The approximately thirty major transitions each day in elementary classrooms account for nearly 15 percent of classroom time (Gump, 1967; Rosenshine, 1980).

### Methods

1. *Arrange the classroom for efficient movement.*
2. *Create and post a daily schedule and discuss any changes in schedule each morning prior to beginning the class.*
3. *Have material ready for the next lesson.*
4. *Do not relinquish students' attention until you have given clear instructions for the following activity.*
5. *Do not do tasks that can be done by students.*
6. *Move around the room and attend to individual needs.*
7. *Provide students with simple, step-by-step directions.*
8. *Remind students of key procedures associated with the upcoming lesson.*
9. *Use group competition to stimulate more orderly transitions.* We can involve the class in attempting to reduce the amount of time required to make a transition.
10. *Develop transition activities.* Students often find it difficult to make the transition from home to school or from lunch or physical education back to a quieter setting. Smooth transitions can be facilitated by implementing structured activities that help students make these transitions. Ask them to begin the schoolday by writing in their journals or by discussing the daily schedule. Transitions from active periods such as lunch into quieter learning activities can be facilitated by transition activities such as reading to the students or leading students in deep muscle relaxation. When these activities are used consistently, students not only find safety and comfort in this structure but also learn how to monitor transitions for themselves. Materials in the Recommended Readings at the end of this section provide a wide range of fun, brainteaser activities that can be added to academic content warm-ups to assist you in transitions into the beginning of class.
11. *Use teacher-directed instruction as a transition at the end of the class session.* Especially in grades 6–9, students have difficulty handling lack of structure at the end of a class period. This can be minimized by bringing students back together for teacher-directed summary time prior to releasing students to their next class. You may want to help students highlight main points from the work they have been doing, remind students of homework or test dates, have students write in their journal or log books their assignments and plans for completing them, and so on.

## Dealing with Common Frustrations

Use a procedure for responding to student tardies that allows you to (1) keep accurate records, (2) limit classroom disruptions, and (3) provide educational consequences when students continue their behavior. We have found it most effective to have students sign in when they are tardy. Each day simply have a sheet for students to sign in, indicate whether their tardiness

is excused or unexcused, and if excused, to attach (have a paper clip attached to the sheet) their excused slip. While it may be necessary to check this for accuracy, this places the responsibility on students and limits classroom disruptions. Should a student have more tardies than you or your school policy allow, the consequence will be most effective (and deemed more fair and respectful by the student and his advocates) if it involves the student meeting with you or writing a statement regarding the problem and the solution. Should this tardiness continue after he has committed to an approach for being on time, having him write this statement to his parent or guardian or in your presence calling his parent or guardian may increase the accountability.

Use a procedure for students who must return to their locker that follows the same requirements as that used for a tardy. You may have hall passes prepared for students to complete and inform students that should they arrive back after the class starts, it will count as an unexcused tardy to be recorded in the text. Many trips to the locker can be prevented by having students borrow or share needed materials from their colleagues.

Develop a homework procedure that enhances student learning, helps students learn responsibility, yet shows respect for personal situations. Our combined sixty years of teaching experience has taught us that, if given the opportunity, some students will turn in a vast majority of their work late. This is not fair to you since it inevitably means marking large amounts of work near the end of the grading period. Additionally, failure to provide students with immediate feedback on their work—especially on work that is used as the foundation for future learning, is an educationally unsound practice that reduces student learning. Therefore, it is important to develop a procedure that assists students in turning in work on time. We have found the following methods helpful.

- Provide students with a clear statement about your late paper/homework policy. This might include taking a designated percentage off for each day homework is late, accepting only a certain number of late assignments during a grading period, and accepting no work that is more than one week late.
- Allow students to have one or two assignments they do not have to turn in during a marking period. For example, you might give each student two coupons for daily homework that does not have to be turned in. This makes sense given the number of events in a student's life that might make it nearly impossible for homework to be completed on a given day.
- Use your base groups and other methods such as having students write down assignments and strategies for completing them.
- Ensure that work is within the ability of all students.
- Ensure that all students have someone they can call or e-mail if they become confused by their homework.

### **Early Childhood Settings**

Early childhood settings provide a somewhat unique set of challenges for maximizing on-task behaviors. Wolery, Bailey, and Sugai (1998) described four environmental categories a teacher can assess when considering factors that may be influencing children's behaviors in a preschool:

1. Instructional dimension (e.g., are materials and activities too easy or difficult, or have they been used too repetitively so children have tired of them?)
2. Physical dimension (e.g., are sound, light, and movement factors influencing student behavior?)

3. Social dimension (e.g., are there too many students in one area? Is student behavior being influenced by the manner in which adults are responding to students?)
4. Environmental changes (e.g., are transitions or interruptions to the environment influencing student behavior?)

In their book, *Early Violence Prevention: Tools for Teachers of Young Children*, Slaby et al. (1995) present seven points for arranging a classroom to increase positive student behavior:

1. Create classrooms with sufficient space in those activity centers that are likely to encourage social interaction.
2. Design classrooms with distinct walkways and play spaces to eliminate accidental physical contact with people and objects.
3. Design an environment where children can help themselves and others with material preparation and activities, freeing teachers for positive guidance roles.
4. Provide extra guidance during unstructured times and when children are playing in activity areas where aggression is likely.
5. Plan activities in which children can practice cooperating, sharing, and helping, including assigning classroom helper roles.
6. Support a positive classroom atmosphere through pleasant interactions, neat storage, and attractive decorations.
7. Eliminate the frustration of abrupt transitions, excessive waiting, or sitting for long periods of time. (p. 31)

Classroom design and the type of activities presented to students can significantly affect the amount and type of negative peer interactions in a classroom. Young children are more likely to engage in negative peer interactions in play areas involving blocks, dramatic play, and woodworking centers, which are by their nature characterized by interactive play. It is important to balance the amount of structure needed to ensure positive, safe student behavior while providing enough opportunity for independent play that fosters social skill development and an internal locus of control. Our own work with early childhood and primary-grade classrooms suggests a number of additional classroom organization and management issues teachers may wish to consider.

1. When setting up learning centers, try to keep quiet area activities together and have active areas in close proximity to each other but as removed from quiet activity areas as possible.
2. Use dividers, tables, or something else to separate different classroom areas. Eliminate large, open areas, which may give children too little sense of structure and encourage more outdoor-type behaviors.
3. Limit the number of children using one area by strategies such as having tickets for each area, carpet squares to indicate the number of students that may use an area, having a number and a corresponding picture of this number of children playing in the area, or placing a limited number of chairs in an area.
4. Arrange materials so students have access to them in a manner the teacher deems desirable. For example, in a preschool setting the teacher may want to arrange some materials so students will need to use language to request the materials. Other materials that can be used for cooperative play may be placed near each other to encourage this type of play.
5. Consider the order in which you introduce materials to students. For example, reading to children after recess has been shown to reduce behavior problems. Similarly, having students listen to stories, having quiet music playing, or having children do calm art activities such as finger painting can be a good transition into circle time or some other more interactive and group-oriented activity.

6. Structure transition times. Have a set signal for transitions. Singing a particular song, playing a musical instrument, or using a rainstick are examples of effective, calm transition signals. It is also important to provide students with cues prior to transition. For example, the teacher can indicate when five minutes and one minute remain prior to terminating the activity. Transitions can also be smoothed by engaging students in games and songs as they make their transition. The teacher might read a story, play finger puppets, or have a story on tape as students line up and wait for their peers. A thoughtful approach to assessing your preschool environment can be found in the Preschool Assessment of the Classroom Environment Scale (PACE) (Dunst, McWilliams, & Holbert, 1986).

## ACTIVITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND ASSESSING NEW METHODS

A major problem associated with reading a long list of methods is the tendency to acknowledge their value but not slow down long enough to implement any one method systematically. You may feel stimulated or overwhelmed by the many methods presented in the previous section. Unfortunately, neither of these feelings has a direct, positive effect on students' behav-

### ACTIVITY 2-1

Selecting Your Classroom Rules

List five classroom rules you would choose for your class. When you are satisfied with the rules, discuss them with a colleague who teaches or has recently taught at your grade level.

### ACTIVITY 2-2

Deciding on Your Key Classroom Procedures

For this activity, refer to Figures 2-2 and 2-4 if you are an elementary teacher and Figures 2-3 and 2-4 if you are a middle school or high school teacher. For each area in which effective teachers teach classroom procedures, list a procedure you would feel comfortable using in your classroom. The material below provides an example of this activity.

<i>General Area</i>	<i>Needed Procedures</i>	<i>Specific Procedure</i>
Beginning the class	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Getting students' attention</li> <li>2. Entering the class</li> <li>3. Obtaining materials</li> <li>4. What to do if tardy</li> <li>5. Where to put slips that need signing</li> <li>6.</li> <li>7.</li> </ol>	Students determine a signal.
Whole-class activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How to leave the room</li> <li>2. What to do when work is completed</li> <li>3. Voice level</li> <li>4. How to get help on an assignment</li> <li>5. Using the pencil sharpener</li> <li>6. When students can leave their seats</li> <li>7.</li> <li>8.</li> <li>9.</li> </ol>	Sign your name and the time you leave and return.

Student assignments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How to find work missed the while absent</li> <li>2. How late work will be handled</li> <li>3. Heading papers</li> <li>4. Where to hand in work</li> <li>5. Credit for late work</li> <li>6.</li> <li>7.</li> </ol>	Refer to the notebook on back table.
Other activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dismissing</li> <li>2. Public address system and announcements</li> <li>3. Fire drill</li> <li>4. Guest entering the class</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> <li>7.</li> </ol>	Everyone must be seated and quiet.

Evaluate your use of various methods of developing classroom rules and procedures by completing the following form. If you are not currently teaching, respond by recalling a classroom in which you previously taught or observed.

*Yes    Somewhat    No*

1. Do clear classroom rules apply in your class?
2. Are the rules listed in the form of positive statements?
3. Are there five or fewer rules?
4. Can every student list these rules from memory?
5. Are the rules clearly displayed in your room?
6. Are students involved in developing the rules?
7. Does each student make a clear commitment to follow these rules?
8. Do you discuss these rules frequently when they are first developed?
9. Do you review the rules every three weeks?
10. Do students clearly understand your approach to handling rule violations?
11. Do you teach students the important procedures related to classroom activities?
12. Do you teach students the major procedures related to behaviors outside the classroom?
13. When students fail to follow a procedure do you immediately reteach the procedure?
14. Does every parent know the classroom rules that apply in your class?
15. Does every parent know your methods of handling discipline problems?

*(Continued)*

#### ACTIVITY 2-3

Examining Your Methods of Establishing Rules and Procedures

**ACTIVITY 2-3**

Continued

Carefully examine your responses to the above questions and then complete the following statements:

I learned that. . . .

I am pleased that I. . . .

Three approaches I will implement in order to develop more productive classroom rules and procedures are:

1.

2.

3.

I will also consider the possibility that next year I could. . . .

**ACTIVITY 2-4**

Sharing and  
Expanding Your  
Repertoire of  
Methods

This activity will be most effective if it can be completed with three or four colleagues.

First, select four of the ten areas (e.g., giving clear instruction, beginning a lesson, and so on) in which you are particularly interested in improving your skills.

Second, for each of these four areas do the following:

1. Circle the number of each of the strategies you currently use in your classroom or which you believe you are prepared to use.
2. Place a box around the number of all the strategies you would be interested in using but which you would need some assistance or practice in developing.
3. Place an X through the number preceding each of the strategies you believe do not fit your teaching style or which, given the age of your students or your teaching methods, would be inappropriate in your classroom.

Third, as a group, select three of the ten major areas to discuss. This can be developed by finding out how many people in your group chose that area and selecting topics several of you chose.

Fourth, for each of the three topics on which your group chose to focus, go down the numbers, and any time a person has a box around the number in front of a strategy, have other members of the group (perhaps someone with the strategy circled) share with you how they implement this strategy in their classroom or how they have seen it implemented.

ior. To improve students' learning and behavior, you must take time to use several of these methods thoughtfully in the classroom.

The activities in this section give you an opportunity to work with several of the major skills presented in this section. The value of these activities can be enhanced if you discuss them with a colleague. These activities may suggest changes you wish to incorporate in your classroom. If you make changes, keep a record of them. One week after implementing the change(s), take time to write about and share with a colleague the results of these changes.

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**SUMMARY**

Teachers whose students have higher rates of on-task behavior spend time early in the school year developing and teaching classroom rules and procedures. This provides students with a much needed sense of structure and security. More effective classroom managers also view their role less as disciplining students and more as reteaching appropriate behaviors when

students have difficulty demonstrating these behaviors. Simply stated, the teaching of appropriate behavior has become an additional curriculum in schools.

Even prior to the research on beginning the school year, the research on classroom management had focused on the noninstructional aspects of teacher behavior that prevented disruptive student behavior. Jacob Kounin discovered that what differentiated effective from less effective classroom managers was what these teachers did before, not after, students became involved in unproductive behavior. Even though we now know that this is only one aspect of effective classroom management, you will find that by using a variety of the methods presented here, you can create a more smoothly run, efficient classroom in which student behavior is significantly more goal directed.

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## RECOMMENDED READING

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