

Classroom Behavior Management Plan

This review must be prefaced with the admittance that my behavior management plan has experienced multiple alterations over the course of my continued education. At first, my beliefs about classroom management were based on theories and techniques I learned through my university education courses. My expectations were founded upon hypothetical situations and classrooms at that point and didn't develop into the review below until after completing my student teaching. My experiences during student teaching involved a living, breathing classroom encapsulating a dynamic of several personalities and needs. This dynamic made a strong impact on my beliefs concerning classroom management, which has developed into a management plan I will try to implement in my own classroom.

Rules for the Classroom

Harry Wong and Fred Jones have been a consistent influence on the behavior management beliefs I have retained from my university education. Consistent with Harry Wongs beliefs about classroom rules, I believe that the classroom should contain between three to five general rules that apply to fairly general classroom behavior expectations. The rules I would like to implement in my classroom are the following:

- 1. Be Respectful*
- 2. Be Responsible*
- 3. Be Ready to learn*
- 4. Be Honest*

Be respectful: This rule can apply to a multitude of facets related to building a positive learning environment in the classroom. Students and the instructor are expected to respect the classroom as well as the people and activities in the classroom. The students are expected to show respect to their instructor and fellow students. My cooperating teacher had little tolerance when it came to disrespect and reprimanded any student showing disrespect. For example, she would pose consequences for any student that told another student to "shut up." Students are also expected to respect the rules of classroom activities. During video watching, students are expected to be respectful of the learning environment and of each other. This means that there shouldn't be any talking during the video and students should not bother others who are trying to view the video. The rule also applies for lab equipment. There are several rules and lab safety procedures that students are required to follow but all of the rules can be summed into the "be respectful" rule since students are expected to respect the lab equipment and classroom procedures. Being

respectful also applies to the students' peers and the guests that are in the classroom. When students or guests are presenting or speaking, it is respectful to give them your attention. Also, the class is expected to respect each others' opinions during share-activities like think-pair-share and four corners. Finally, be respectful is a rule to live by in the real world and students will know and understand the advantages of being respectful.

Be responsible: I really liked this rule when it was a part of my English class in high school. I like it because like "be respectful" it accounts for many different aspects of the classroom. Be responsible for materials: the student is expected to have all materials ready for class when the activity begins. This means all pencils are sharpened, lab notebooks are brought to class and each student is accountable for their lab equipment and should clean and keep up with set equipment. Be responsible for attendance: students are required to be accountable for all class material they are present for. If absent, students are expected to be held responsible and go to the "weekly assignments folder" to complete missed assignments. Be responsible for your behavior: If a student is caught misbehaving, they are held accountable for their actions and should accept the consequences for set behavior.

The remaining rules, "be ready to learn" and "be honest" are fairly self explanatory. I expect students to be ready and attentive during guided practice and respectful of those giving instruction and trying to learn. Also, students and the instructor should model and practice honesty in all situations. This can be promoted by keeping a healthy relationship with the student and encouraging open, non-judgmental communication.

Consequences

Rules that are broken are expected to be met with consequences to ensure order and consistency within the classroom. Fred Jones emphasizes consistency when it comes to enforcing rules. These consequences should be known to the entire class on the first day of school along with the rules. The consequences for breaking the rules in my classroom will be as follows:

- 1. Verbal/written warning*
- 2. One on one talk*
- 3. Call home, notify guardians*
- 4. Referral*
- 5. Principal's office and call home*

Prior to student teaching, I believed that taking away free time would be an effective consequence for breaking rules. However, after being in the classroom during student teaching, I realized free time is hard to come by. Also, those students who already fail to

stay on task and complete work will spend most of their free time socializing or procrastinating. Therefore, it would not be a sensible consequence to remove free time from those students who are breaking the rules. A verbal or written warning is usually given the moment a rule is primarily broken. This reminds the student that they have broken a rule and that the behavior is unacceptable. During my student teaching, I also noticed that private one-on-one conversations with the student (typically out in the hallway) was an effective technique to handle misbehaving students. It was important to remove students from their peers in case their neighbors were fueling any negative energy or influence. For that reason, conferences were usually handled as soon as the event occurred and took place outside of the classroom in the hallway. Luckily, I was able to witness a master teacher handle dozens of different situations involving a wide range of rule breaking in an effective manner by using this method. While I still have not mastered the personal conference, I am working towards perfecting techniques I learned from a great cooperating teacher. If the student continues to break rules, their parents or guardians will be notified of the consistent misbehavior. This may include a parent/teacher conference. Finally, more serious consequences follow for a student who consistently breaks rules and does not respond to previous interventions. Many schools have some form of referral system or written record of accelerated student misbehavior. This would be the next step to reprimanding bad behavior. If the referral did not cease the behavior, then administrator interventions would need to take place. These would most likely include a parent teacher conference.

Rewards

1. Extra free time

2. Student appreciation cards/tokens

3. Extrinsic motivators – candy, stickers etc.

At first, I believed that students who consistently follow the rules and show progress in their work will be rewarded with extra free time, extra credit opportunities, calls home regarding their success and possibly some external motivators if allowed by the school/district. However, after student teaching, I now understand that some of these rewards are not appropriate for this demographic of students. Student who are already doing well do not need extra credit opportunities. Usually these students are bored and

simply want a more challenging assignment (even though they would never admit this). Instead of offering an extra credit assignment, I would give them a challenging assignment associated with the current material and replace their lowest daily grade with the grade they received from this extra assignment. I suppose it is still technically extra credit, but it gives the students an obstacle to receive the grade.

At first, I believed that seating arrangements were pretty basic, uncomplicated management methods. After student teaching, I realized a specific seating arrangement can affect the entire dynamic of the classroom. They should be carefully analyzed and changed on a regular, consistent basis. At first, I intended to seat the students by last name for the first six weeks to help me learn names and faces. I thought I could inform each class that if they behaved collectively on a regular basis, they would be allowed to choose their seats for the second six weeks. This however, is not how I would handle seating arrangements in my classroom. On the first day, students will choose their own seats. I will then carefully see which students work well together and which students simply distract each other. From there, I will seat students based on their interactions on the first day. With freshman, my cooperating teacher sat each student next to a student from a different middle school. I really liked this approach. Students were able to meet new faces and get to know students from a different background. If I teach freshman, I will take a similar approach. Before student teaching, I wanted the seating arrangement to reflect an interior loop method like the one shown in Jones page 43. This interior loop allowed students to sit in pairs and face the board. It also allowed walking space for me to move around and monitor progress during work time. After student teaching, I was able to observe many classrooms with different layouts. Single desks in rows allowed for independent work and kept students on

task for most assignments. However, it was hard for students to work collaboratively and caused problems in the dynamic when they chose to do so. Students would turn in their chairs with their knees hanging in the hallways of the rows. This made it difficult to walk around and monitor progress. See figure 1:

Another arrangement I observed consisted of two rows of long tables extending through the width of the classroom. This arrangement allowed for some collaborative learning but was difficult to maneuver around

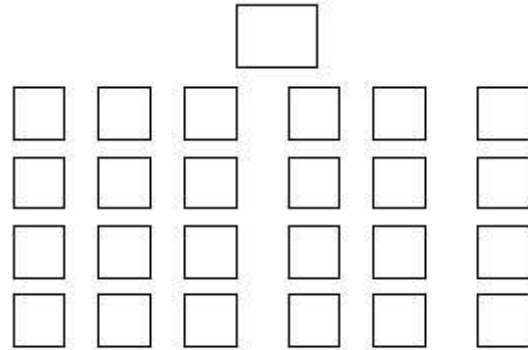
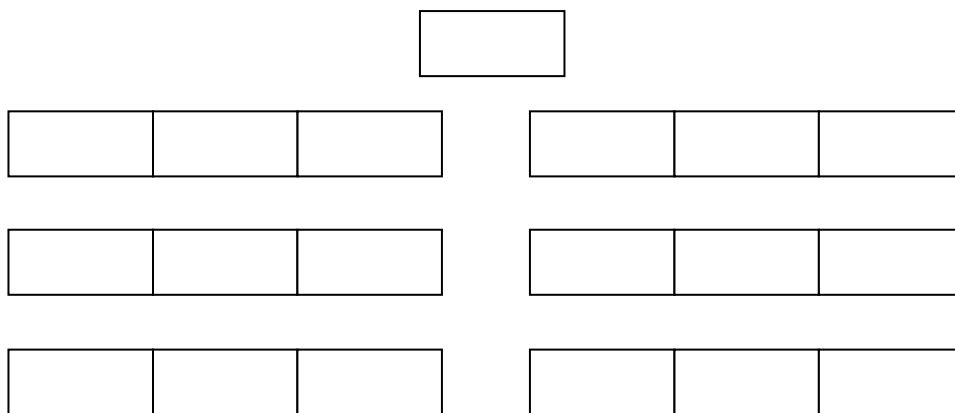


Figure 1: Single seats in rows

for monitoring purposes. Students also had to talk over other students in the row to reach some of their group members. While the students stayed on task throughout the observation, they were required to move around the classroom and then return to their seats. The condensed nature of the arrangement allowed for lots of movement outside of



the seating area.

Figure 2: Two rows of long desk arrangement

However, once students needed to return to their seats, it became troublesome to walk behind the chairs of other students if someone was seated in the middle of the row. Overall, it was a difficult setting for moving around the classroom for both the students and the instructor. See figure 2:

Another seating layout that I encountered on a daily basis consisted of two tables facing each other. There were several groups of four students in a grid format. This arrangement allowed students to work collaboratively on a consistent basis. The grid format gives the teacher access to all students in their seats. However, the students will typically work collaboratively whether the objective allows for it or not. In this case, behavior management will need to accommodate consistent side conversations throughout instruction. Also, since students are facing each other, it is sometimes difficult for them to see the board from their original position. This requires students to turn and face the board when they need instruction and then turn to face their peers when completing a collaborative assignment. This can affect the flow of transitions and noise levels in the classroom. See Figure 3:

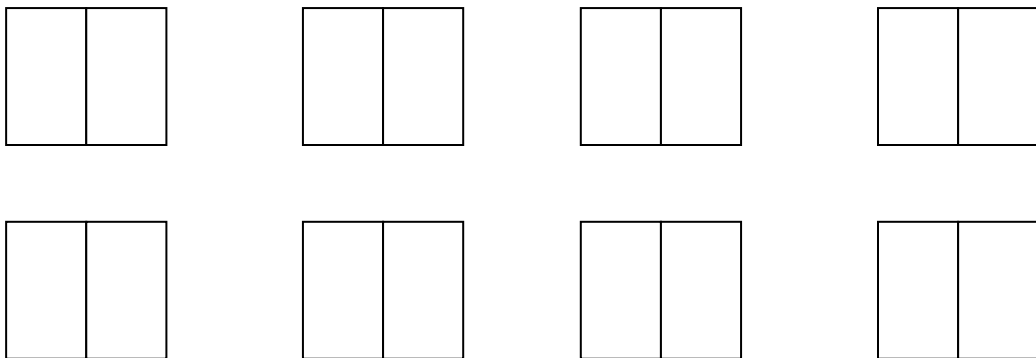


Figure 3: Groups of four, two tables facing each other



However, it has been a joy working under a master teacher with this classroom layout and the students really enjoy the social aspect of working together to complete challenging tasks. It's also great for lab work since students can easily be assigned roles based on where they sit, a fair and quick way to assign roles. Students also seem to benefit from the constant interaction with their peers for the reevaluation of information. It was

comforting to know that I may have explained something ten different ways, but if the student still does not understand, they are willing to ask their neighbors. Finally, the thing I liked most about this arrangement was that it allowed sufficient access to every student in the classroom. The tables were spread out far enough so that one could move between and around tables with ease. This was extremely useful when having to pass out papers, address students one-on-one and quickly handle any behavior problems.

Being in control of a classroom and lab setting is going to be a challenge. To meet this challenge, I will rely on room arrangement as set in my arrangement plan to easily move through the space. A classroom arrangement will need to reflect focus and attentiveness to notes and instructions. The lab set up will reflect inquiry and cooperative learning. The success of managing these combinations will rely on an organized space with easy access to space and materials. I only hope the classroom and lab space I'm given allows me some flexibility in terms of arrangement.

I'm completely in favor of cheap, preventative methods of enforcing rules and maintaining an orderly classroom. I believe that giving students clear and explicit expectations can help prevent reoccurring problems in the classroom. A method I found useful to convey explicit instructions, centered around the CHAMPS initiative. CHAMPS breaks expectations of student behavior down into simple steps that are linked to an individual activity. It consists of the following:

C – Conversation – this explains the expectations for talking or conversations during the activity. Example: “C – Converse with your neighbor for the think-pair-share activity”

H- Help – this sections lets the students know who they can receive help from during the activity. Example: “H – Raise your hand and I will come to your seat to help you”

A – Activity – This section simply states the name of the activity that the expectations apply to. Example: “A - Think Pair share about human adaptations”

M – Movement – This section sets expectations and boundaries for when and how the student can move about the room during the lesson. Example: “M - Stay in your seat and converse with your shoulder partner.”

P – Participation – This section conveys the expectations for student participation and usually encourages active engagement during the entirety of the lesson. Example: “P - Actively participate by sharing your thoughts while also patiently listening to the thoughts of your partner.”

S – Success – I use this section to remind kids what they are turning in to receive credit for this activity. Example: S - “be prepared to share your neighbor’s thoughts with the whole class.”

The acronym along the vertical axis spells CHAMPS and is the focus of the expectations which preface each and every lesson. While it appears to be time consuming, it had proven to be most effective at conveying clear expectations that dictate the class behavior so I don’t have to. Behavior management will always be a part of the classroom dynamic, but I appreciate CHAMPS as a preventative, proactive approach to communicating my expectations.