Discipline Plan

After going to school for the last seventeen years of my life, I have been a part of a lot of different classrooms. Every teacher has their own way of how they want their classroom to be set up, how they want their students to act, and their own set of rules for their classroom. I hope to use some of their ideas and implement them into my own classroom someday.

Haim Ginott’s, Discipline Through Congruent Communication, is one of the discipline plans that would be the most effective in today’s classroom. His plan “illuminates the critical role of communication in discipline, especially concerning how teachers talk to and with their students.” (Charles 27) It is hard for some teachers to implement a discipline plan without being biased. Teachers should not hold grudges, belittle, disrespect, use sarcasm, use any form of punishment, or reprimand a student for not knowing how to do something. Children go to school to learn, and sometimes they have to start from scratch because certain rules or manners might not be implemented at home. Children go to school to learn more than just information out of textbooks, they also learn how to interact with others. Therefore a teacher needs to have patience, the students are not going to be able to do certain activities or act a certain way right when the teacher asks them to. Ginott says that, “Classroom discipline is attained gradually, as a series of little victories.” (Charles 29) From the moment the students walk into the classroom the rules should be set and known to the whole class. The teacher cannot expect the students to follow every rule and act how they are supposed to right away, it takes time.
A general rule that most teachers have and I will have when I start teaching, is to respect others. Students need to treat others how they would want to be treated. Some other rules will be that students should show positive attitudes, and no put downs.

There are conditions that can be maintained in the classroom when the students follow the rules. There will be a good environment for learning, a sense of community, trust, communication, and a positive atmosphere. Hopefully the students will internalize the rules and apply them outside of class.

For rules to become effective, they need to be set at the beginning of the year, “Students quickly assess the situation in each class and realize what they will be allowed to get away with” (About). The teacher needs to let his/her students know that there are rules and that they need to be followed in order for learning to take place or else it will be very hard to have good classroom management. Wong refers to classroom management as “all things that a teacher does to organize students, space, time, and materials so that instruction in content and student learning can take place” (84).

To help maintain good classroom management, I will introduce my students to the magnet method. Each student will have a magnet with their student number on it. On the bulletin board there will be a green, yellow, red, white, and blue paper. Green is where all of their magnets will be to start. When a student misbehaves, they will be told to move their magnet and they will place their magnet on the yellow sheet, and that means they have been warned. If that student misbehaves again then they will move their magnet to the red sheet. When this happens the student will sit at the time out desk for fifteen minutes and reflect on the misbehavior. If a student moves their magnet to the white sheet, they will then have to go sit at the time out desk and write a letter to their
parents explaining what they did that was wrong, and what they are going to do to fix the problem. If a students’ magnet gets to the blue sheet, they will be sent to the Principals office.

When a student has done something inappropriate, they will be told to move their magnet. After they have moved their magnet I will pull them aside and talk to them privately about it. Students get really embarrassed if the teacher calls them out about the situation in front of the whole class. No student should have to go through that. Reminding them to follow the rules, or to give them a warning is something that could be said aloud. Just reminding them, the teacher can say their name and give them a look that lets them know. The teacher can also do things such as, walking over to where they are working, make eye contact, or announcing to the whole class about a rule that is being broken, that way it does not single a student out.

Depending on what type of students I have in my classroom, will determine what my discipline plan will be. From past experiences, inner city schools tend to be more strict and they have a very distinct discipline plan, and every student is a part of it. I have noticed that in smaller schools, they do not have a discipline plan that is as visible. The smaller schools tend to have discipline plans for specific students instead of the whole class. So, depending on the students in my class will determine what method I decide to use. Other discipline plans that I may use might be, pulling sticks, flipping cards, moving desks, and whatever else that might need to be done to make my classroom a good learning environment.

I do not want to be an ineffective teacher. Wong says that “ineffective teachers have classrooms that are not ready. Confusion leads to problems; problems lead to
misbehavior; and misbehavior leads to constant tangling between teacher and students” (91). This would be total chaos, and it will be very hard to reverse what has happened already. By creating a discipline plan ahead of time and being prepared for anything that might happen during the first couple of days of school, is a good start to being an effective teacher and getting the year off to a good start.

One of my goals as a teacher is to be very positive, and to have a lot of positive consequences. When a student is behaving well, giving them a pat on their back, a smile, a supportive nod, or a wink is something that can easily be done. It’s a small gesture, but to some students it means a lot. Praising a student verbally is also something that will be done. If the whole class is behaving really well, then they will get a marble in the marble jar. Whenever the marble jar gets full, then there will be a class party. The party can be anything from playing a math game or some other educational game, to watching a movie, having a popcorn party, or the teacher providing a snack while they are doing their work, or an extra recess. If they keep filling up the marble jar, and they fill it up ten times within the school year, then the class will take a fun field trip to the zoo, or a museum.

This discipline plan is intended for the younger elementary grades. Parents will get a letter explaining the classroom rules and the consequences. This letter will also explain the magnet system and the marble jar. Parents will also be informed through parent-teacher conferences and open houses. Other colleagues will know my discipline plan. They may have their own, but if one of my students does something inappropriate outside of the classroom, they should know what needs to be done or let me know. This is also true with administrators, unless they want to handle the situation differently.
As a teacher, there are certain procedures that can be followed to prevent most misbehaviors from happening. Some of these are: showing each student that they are very important, give each student as much individual attention as possible, developing bonds of trust, use mistakes as opportunities for learning, speak respect fully, using I-messages rather than you-messages, and involving students in making class agreements. I hope to demonstrate these procedures in my classroom, and make the classroom environment as healthy and educational as possible.
Sources

