A problem that many teachers deal with in their classroom is discipline. There are many models and theorists to choose a discipline plan from, which causes many teachers to struggle to find one that fits into their classroom. The focus of all discipline plans is to deal with misbehavior and promote good behavior. There are two ways to aid in solving the problem of misbehavior. The first way is to identify the problem that causes the misbehavior and the second is to introduce classroom conditions to keep order in the classroom. There is not just “one” perfect discipline plan for every classroom, therefore, one must gather information that best suits the classroom that they are in. My discipline plan would include many different parts but the main focus would be on the students, positive behavior, and actions. The goal of my plan would be to reach the needs of all the students in the class so that they have a successful school year. I have taken the ideals of Fred Jones, Jane Nelson, Lynn Lott, and H. Stephen Glenn intertwined with my own ideas to complete a well balanced discipline plan to apply to my classroom.

Fred Jones is the first theorist whose ideas struck me. Jones says, “That the purpose of discipline is to help the students engage in learning, with the discipline as positive and unobtrusive as possible” (Charles, 58). I strongly agree with this statement and believe that discipline should be a regular part of the daily routine and established early in the school year. I also believe that engaging the students is essential for a positive environment. Disciplining a student is not meant to embarrass them or call them out in the middle of class. If a student in my second grade class were to misbehave, they would get spoken to by me at their desk in a low tone voice. I would have the student
write what they are getting in trouble for and the date on a note card and have them put it in the card box that is on my desk. At the end of the week, I will go through the box and send home all the cards to the parents so they are updated with their child’s behavior in class. Another idea of Fred Jones that I would like to implement in my classroom is skill clusters. Skill Clusters are “teacher skills that keep students productively at work, thus preventing misbehavior or allowing teachers to deal with it efficiently” (Charles, 59).

The first skill cluster is classroom structure to discourage misbehavior. Within this cluster there are four subgroups which are room arrangement, classroom rules, classroom chores, and opening routines. When dealing with classroom arrangement, you should “minimize the physical distance between teacher and students to prevent goofing off” (Charles 59). When the student’s desk and the teacher’s desk are closer together the students feel as though the teacher is always watching them, therefore they do not want to disrupt for fear of getting caught. Also, having the desks closer together allows the teacher to walk around the classroom and keep an eye on all the students at one time. In my classroom I would have the students in small groupings of desks with pathways that I can walk through easily to be able to reach all my students. I would also put the desks close to my desk for convenience and so the students know I am right there with them.

The second part of the cluster is classroom rules. Fred Jones believes that “classroom rules should be general and specific” (Charles 59). There should be few general rules and they should be broad and used for work. Some of the general rules in my classroom would be: use your best handwriting on tests; listen quietly when others are speaking; when in line, eyes forward, mouths shut; raise your hand before talking out; and always do your personal best. These rules would be posted around the room and
reviewed daily for the beginning of the year. As the year goes on the rules would only be reviewed when there is a problem. The specific rules define classroom procedures, specifically stating what the children need to do. When specific rules in my classroom would be followed correctly the students would get a marble in their jar, for earned activity time at the end of the week. This area ties into Fred Jones’s other to parts of the cluster which are classroom chores and opening routines. Many specific rules go a long with these last parts of the cluster.

Everyday students have chores and jobs that they will perform. The students learn what each job does so that they can perform it to the best of their ability. Assigning jobs to students gives them a sense of responsibility and self worth. The student feels important because they get to be something within the classroom that no other student gets to be for that day. In my classroom there will be a wall that has student jobs in sections with Popsicle sticks with student names on it, to assign jobs. The jobs of my classroom would be teacher helper, calendar helper, messenger, paper passer, line leader and door holder. Each job has its own set of rules that must be followed to carry out the job efficiently.

Opening routines is the final part of the cluster and the most important. If students begin the day on a good foot, then the rest of their day will go smoothly. To avoid the wasted time and misbehavior during announcements at the beginning of the day Jones suggests, “Beginning the class with bell work, which does not require active instruction from the teacher” (Charles, 59-60). At the beginning of everyday of class I will have already put some sort of work on the students’ desks which would be either a math paper, or language arts paper that the students can be working on from the minute
they walk into the classroom. The students have a morning routine established of coming into the classroom, unpacking their backpack, checking off if they have home or school lunch and turning in their folders to the homework bin. Once all their morning chores are done they can begin the worksheet on their desk. Having the students come into class and immediately getting their little brains to work helps them steer clear of wanting to sit around, waste time and talk to one another. The students learn this routine of doing their morning work very early in the school year so that it is an established rule in the classroom day in and day out. Fred Jones’s overall approach to disciple is positive and it keeps the children responsible for their actions and it keeps them busy so they do not have time to misbehave.

Jane Nelsen, Lynn Lott, and H. Stephen Glenn focus on positive discipline in the classroom. Their theory is for “students at all levels to become more, successful, not only in the classroom but also in all walks of life” (Charles, 113). I strongly agree with this statement by these theorists. In my classroom I would have lifeskills and life long guidelines posted all around the classroom so that the students can constantly be aware of them. These life skills can be used not only in school but can carry on to the students’ personal life outside of the school atmosphere. Nelson, Lott, and Glenn believe that positive discipline can “diminish behavior problems as students acquire the skills of respecting others, communicating effectively, and focusing on solutions to problem” (Charles, 113). When students are constantly getting praised, it raises their confidence and allows them to know what they are doing well and how it feels to be patted on the back for a job well done. If students are taught in a positive manner they will be more susceptible the positive parts of life and in return have respect for others and themselves.
Just as I will have my students write on a card what they did when they misbehaved, I will have them write positives on a card that will be sent home, so their parents know all the great things that their child is doing in my class throughout the week. At the end of the week I will go through all the positive things that each student did and post one from each student on the board. As a class we will read through them so the students know that I care when they do great things in my classroom. This shows that I as the teacher care about them.

Another topic Nelson, Lott, and Glenn mention is the importance of caring and relationship between the student and teacher. The three theorists state “students know teachers care when they feel teachers are listening to them and taking their thoughts and feeling seriously” (Charles, 115). I think that establishing a relationship with every child in your classroom is very important. Respect can be gained so easily by a child when they know that you care and have a bond with them. A child is less likely to act out in class if they value your relationship with them. The child will want to earn your respect and listen to you so that in return to respect them.

I feel that the ideals of the theorists above can be meshed together with my style of teaching to create a discipline plan that will work for my classroom. There are many different qualities and discipline strategies that can play off of one another to build a positive work environment with little distraction for the students. Every discipline plan would need work to get the rules established, but it must be done to have a successful classroom.
Having fun in the 2nd Grade!!!

Dear Parents,

This is going to be an exciting year in the second grade! We are going to be learning so many great things this year and taking several field trips so we can get out and explore. For this school year to run smoothly I will need the help of you at home to continue many of the procedures that students have in the classroom. I have a list of the lifeskills and life long guidelines that we follow at school that I would like for you to post on the refrigerator at home so that your child can be constantly aware of them. Life long guidelines and lifeskills are not only carried out in the classroom on a daily basis but can also be carried out outside of school.

I want to inform you of a new discipline plan that I have just started this year. In class if your child breaks one of the rules, they will write the rule they broke on a note card and put it in the card box. At the end of the everyday I will look through the cards and at some point throughout the week I will privately discuss the card with the student. At the end of the week if the behavior has not improved I will send the cards home so you can see the misbehavior of your child. On the positive side, for everything GREAT your child does I will have them write that down on another card and they put that in the positive card box. At the end of the week we share one positive thing each child did in class! I will send home all the positive wonderful things your child did to show you how awesome each child really is. Please sign the bottom of this paper along with your child and return, so I know that you read over the lifeskills and life long guidelines with your child and that you understand the discipline plan. THANKS!!!

Ms. Sajda (Any questions call 555-5555)

______________________________________         _______________
Parent Name        Date

______________________________________         _______________
Student Name        Date
Life Long Guidelines

BE TRUTHFUL

BE TRUSTWORTHY

ACTIVE LISTENING

NO PUT DOWNS

PERSONAL BEST

Lifeskills

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Resources


