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When I think of my classroom, I think of a middle school resource room setting. For the most part, students will be coming from and then returning to their general education classrooms. I know since students will be moving around at different times that my room may seem to some as unorganized and maybe even chaotic. By having and using a discipline plan I know this will not be the case. Armed with my rules, procedures, and my philosophy for working with children, I believe my classroom will be a welcoming and learning environment for all my students.

Having rules in a classroom is not a negative thing. According to Lee and Marlene Canter's Assertive Discipline Plan, "rules [should] state exactly how students are to behave" (Charles 43). The Canter's plan also states that the rules should be observable, refer only to behavior and should be limited to just three to five rules for your classroom. Of the Canter's plan these are the characteristics of "rules" I agree with the most. It should not be a mystery to students what is expected of them.

I also want to include in my rules the ideas of Budd Churchward's Honor Level System of Discipline Plan. Churchward says that the rules should be stated, "In a positive fashion, and [to] discuss them with the students" (Charles 173). I believe it is important for students to understand why a given rule is important. He also suggests displaying the classroom rules in at least two different places in the classroom. This will allow the teacher to refer to the posted rules when students need reminders.

One of my biggest goals as a teacher is to have a classroom that is welcoming to all students and for it to be a place where students will feel safe to be themselves. I would hope

then that that same spirit would be carried out into the general population. In a middle school, where status is everything, it may be a lot to wish for. Yet, I think it is so important I am sure it will be one of my main focuses every year. For this goal to materialize it has to begin in my own classroom and will be in the form of *rules*. The rules I plan to use in my classroom are:

- Choose a positive attitude for the day.
- Accept yourself and others around you.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Give help when you see it is needed.
- Pay it forward.

*Choose a positive attitude for the day.* Everyone has days that just start off lousy. It happens for adults and it happens for children as well. My hope is that once we have walked through the door of my classroom, we can set aside those things and start our day afresh. Our problems will not go away, but for a while we can learn and enjoy our time together.

*Accept yourself and others around you.* Everyone deserves to be accepted for who and what they are: including ourselves. I want my students to think positively about themselves and what they have to offer our community of learners. I also want them to recognize the value every individual offers to our classroom. We should be in awe of each other and the different gifts we present to the world.

*Ask for help when you need it.* There is no shame in asking for help. It is a sign that we recognize our limitations and we desire to learn and grow as individuals. Needing help is not a sign of weakness but a signal to the world of the potential greatness we hold within ourselves.

*Give help when you see it is needed.* I believe helping others is more of a benefit to ourselves than it is to those we help. Reaching out to others and offering what you have is a remarkable self-esteem builder. We are reminded why we were placed on this earth.

*Pay it forward.* Think about what a wonderful place this world would be if we were to help or make three people feel special everyday. Kindnesses should not be kept to ourselves, but rather should be shared with others.

Another important element of my discipline plan is the procedures I will have in place. Harry K. Wong and Rosemary T Wong, authors of the book, The First Days of School, define procedures as, “a method or process for how things are to be done in a classroom” (Wong 169). They believe the number one problem for teachers is not discipline; but the lack of procedures and routines for students to follow. Having specific procedures in the classroom will allow the class to operate smoothly and efficiently.

Because students will be entering and leaving my classroom at different times, the procedures I will put into effect may be somewhat different than that of a general education classroom teacher. The procedures I want to stress are: entering the classroom, getting to work immediately, getting needed supplies, working cooperatively, asking questions, walking in the hallways during class time, and when the teacher is out of the classroom. These procedures will be posted around my classroom and distributed to each student and their parent or guardian.

Harry and Rosemary Wong have three steps to teaching students the procedures you would like to establish in your classroom. The first step is to explain classroom procedures clearly. To do this they say you must, “define the procedure in concrete terms, demonstrate the procedure; don’t just tell, and demonstrate a complex procedure step by step” (Wong 174). Students must be explicitly told what is expected of them.

The second step is to rehearse classroom procedures until they become routines. It is important to, “have the students repeat the procedure until it becomes a routine. The students should be able to perform the procedure automatically without teacher supervision” (Wong 175). This is extremely important in a middle school resource room. There may be students from several different classes working on different assignments and projects. To obtain the optimum amount of learning, students must know what to do so that they can begin their work immediately and how not to disturb others.

The final step is to reinforce a correct procedure and reteach an incorrect one. Procedures not completed properly should be corrected immediately. It should be determined if the students understand the procedure and if they need further explanation, demonstration, or practice. Along with this, the students should be praised when they have followed a procedure acceptably. Harry and Rosemary Wong say, “An effective way to praise is to praise what the person did, rather than the person, and then encourage the person to do the achievement or deed again” (Wong 183). This is called “praise the deed, encourage the student.” It says to the student that you are paying attention to them and you have reinforced exactly the behavior you desire.

*Entering the classroom.*

- Enter the classroom quietly.
- Sign in.
- Sit at a desk (individual work) or at a table (group work).
- Begin your work.

*Getting to work immediately.*

- Know and understand the assignment you have been given.
- Bring your book, paper, pencil, and worksheets with you.
- Sit down and get organized.
- Now GO!

*Getting needed supplies.*

- Determine the supplies you need.
- Quietly get everything you will need for yourself or group.
- Return to your desk and get organized.
- Now GO!

*Working cooperatively with others.*

- Determine what is expected.
- Value everyone's opinion.
- Everyone must individually complete the required work.
- There are no passive learners, everyone must contribute.

*Asking question.*

- Ask yourself, "Is my question appropriate?"
- Ask yourself, "Do I really not know the answer to what I am about to ask?"
- Raise your hand for assistance.
- When appropriate, a classmate may be used to answer your question.

*Walking in the hallways during class time.*

- Go directly to and from the classrooms.
- Go QUIETLY at all times. Learning is taking place in other classrooms.
- Respect those you are walking with.
- Walk.

*When the teacher is out of the classroom.*

- Follow all of the expected rules and procedures.
- Demonstrate your maturity.
- Focus on yourself and your learning.
- Shine!

Having raised three children of my own I am fully aware that my dream of a caring, cooperative, and a classroom that is always orderly is not going to happen. Because misbehavior will happen and students will occasionally wander off task I will need to have consequences for those actions. Students will be removed from the social aspect of my classroom when misbehavior occurs. This does not mean they will leave the classroom! How can they learn if they are sitting in the hallway away from where the learning is taking place? Rather, they will be moved to parts of the room where their contact with other students is prohibited.

I hope to lessen misbehavior by increasing the behaviors I desire with positive reinforcement. Candace S. Bos and Sharon Vaughn describe positive reinforcement as presenting a stimulus to increase the behaviors you desire. They continue by stating, “Positive reinforcement increases responding by following the target behavior with activities, objects, food, and social rewards that are associated with increasing the target behavior” (Bos 32). Praise, along with tangible rewards such as extra free time, treats, and group rewards will be a part of the reinforcement in my classroom.

I know classroom management will be the biggest challenge my first few years of teaching. My hope is that having rules in place, teaching and reinforcing procedures, and having both positive and negative consequences will help me gain the kind of classroom atmosphere I desire. Learning more each year by my experiences in the classroom will help me to eventually achieve the classroom I desire.

## Works Cited

Bos, Candace S., and Sharon Vaughn. Strategies for Teaching Students with Learning and Behavior Problems. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002.

Charles, C. M. Building Classroom Discipline. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Pearson, 2005.

Wong, Harry K., and Rosemary T. Wong. The First Days of School. Mountainview, CA: Harry K. Wong Publications, Inc., 2001.

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is an honor and privilege to be given the opportunity to work with you and your student. I am looking forward to a great year and a classroom where great things will happen. To maximize the learning for each and every student, rules and procedures have been established to guide us on our journey. It is of utmost importance that your child knows and understands each of these and their importance to our community of learners. We have discussed these rules and procedures and continue to practice them daily in our classroom. Please take the time to read and discuss them at home. Your help and support at home is crucial for a successful year. A copy of the explanations has been attached to this letter.

Rules:

- Choose a positive attitude for the day.
- Accept yourself and others around you.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Give help when you see it is needed.
- Pay it forward.

The procedures we have set up for our classroom are for the following activities:

- Entering the classroom
- Getting to work immediately.
- Getting needed supplies.
- Working cooperatively with others.
- Asking questions.
- Walking in the hallways during class time.
- When the teacher is out of the classroom.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at anytime. You may telephone me at school and leave a message at 555-5555 or at home at 344-1020. You may also email me at [capreston@manchester.edu](mailto:capreston@manchester.edu). I will respond as quickly as possible. Please sign this form indicating you have received and understand our classroom management plan and return it to school with your student.

Thank you,

Mrs. Preston

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Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## Classroom Management for Mrs. Preston's Resource Room

Rules:

**Choose a positive attitude for the day.** Everyone has days that just start off lousy. It happens for adults and it happens for children as well. My hope is that once we have walked through the door of our classroom, we can set aside those things and start our day afresh. Our problems will not go away, but for a while we can learn and enjoy our time together.

**Accept yourself and others around you.** Everyone deserves to be accepted for who and what they are: including ourselves. Think positively about yourself and what you have to offer our community of learners. Recognize the value every individual offers to our classroom. We should be in awe of each other and the different gifts we present to the world.

**Ask for help when you need it.** There is no shame in asking for help. It is a sign that we recognize our limitations and we desire to learn and grow as individuals. Needing help is not a sign of weakness but a signal to the world of the potential greatness we hold within ourselves. Ask!

**Give help when you see it is needed.** I believe helping others is more of a benefit to ourselves than it is to those we help. Reaching out to others and offering what you have is a remarkable self-esteem builder. We are reminded why we were placed on this earth.

**Pay it forward.** Think about what a wonderful place this world would be if we were to help or make three people feel special everyday. Kindnesses should not be kept to ourselves, but rather should be shared with others.

Procedures:

### **Entering the classroom.**

- Enter the classroom quietly.
- Sign in.
- Sit at a desk (individual work) or at a table (group work).
- Begin your work.

### **Getting to work immediately.**

- Know and understand the assignment you have been given.
- Bring your book, paper, pencil, and worksheets with you.
- Sit down and get organized.
- Now GO!

### **Getting needed supplies.**

- Determine the supplies you need.
- Quietly get everything you will need for yourself or group.
- Return to your desk and get organized.
- Now GO!

### **Working cooperatively with others.**

- Determine what is expected.
- Value everyone's opinion.
- Everyone must individually complete the required work.
- There are no passive learners, everyone must contribute.

### **Asking question.**

- Ask yourself, "Is my question appropriate?"
- Ask yourself, "Do I really not know the answer to what I am about to ask?"
- Raise your hand for assistance.
- When appropriate, a classmate may be used to answer your question.

### **Walking in the hallways during class time.**

- Go directly to and from the classrooms.
- Go QUIETLY at all times. Learning is taking place in other classrooms.
- Respect those you are walking with.
- Walk.

### **When the teacher is out of the classroom.**

- Follow all of the expected rules and procedures.
- Demonstrate your maturity.
- Focus on yourself and your learning.
- Shine!