

# Study Guide

Annette Breaux and Todd Whitaker

**50** Ways  
to

**IMPROVE  
STUDENT  
BEHAVIOR**

*Simple Solutions to  
Complex Challenges*

An **Eye On Education** Book

**Study Guide**

**50 Ways to Improve  
Student Behavior**

**Simple Solutions to  
Complex Challenges**

**Annette Breaux and Todd Whitaker**

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# Introduction

This *Study Guide* has been developed to accompany the book *50 Ways to Improve Student Behavior: Simple Solutions to Complex Challenges* by Annette Breaux and Dr. Todd Whitaker. It offers questions and prompts to enable readers to interact with the book's content. Each of the 50 solutions and strategies in the *Study Guide* are organized into three sections: What Is, What Could Be, and Make it Real. The exercises and questions in the Study Guide provide opportunities for readers to master the concepts in the book and to apply them in their own classrooms.

The authors would like to thank Dr. Lolli Haws, Principal of Oakridge Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia, for the contributions she made in the preparation of this Study Guide.

—Annette Breaux and Todd Whitaker

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# **Meet and Greet: Classroom Solution/Strategy #1**

***Students who feel welcome and are greeted warmly are more likely to want to be in your class!***

## ***What is:***

Consider your current classroom environment. What three things are you already doing to make your students feel welcome and wanted?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Rate yourself for creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere in your classroom:

*Seriously Lacking*      *Room for Improvement*      *Good*      *Excellent*

What thoughts do you have about the rating you gave yourself?

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## ***What could be:***

Greeting each student personally each day is **important!** Practice this skill by writing 10 personalized greetings you could use with your students tomorrow. Make sure they are individualized and personal. Hint: Share your 10 with 3 colleagues and you'll have a list with as many as 30 possible greetings!

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_

What changes might you see in your students if you greeted them each day?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name three of your most challenging, unmotivated, or unruly students. Create two personalized greetings for each of those students.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting 2: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make it real:**

Greet your students warmly and personally every day for a week. Note any differences in behavior, tone, and attitude in your students and in yourself.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# ***Letter of Introduction: Classroom Solution/Strategy #2***

**Writing a welcome letter helps you establish a positive relationship with your students and their parents.**

***What is:***

What strategies do you already use to establish a positive relationship with your new students and their parents at the start of every year or semester? (Open House Night activities? Written communication? Welcome messages in the classroom?)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

***What could be:***

The authors suggested the content for a letter (or postcard) to students or parents. Write your own student letter or message below:

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Write your own parent letter or message below:

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Consider all the possibilities. What alternative means could you use to welcome students and get to know them?

Describe your own "welcome" or "get to know you" activity below:

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Share your ideas with a group of colleagues. Then you will all have several new ways to welcome your students and get to know them from day one!

Name one strategy you currently use to foster positive relationships with parents.

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Share the strategy you just listed with several colleagues and have them share theirs with you.

***Make it real:***

Are lots of ideas flowing now? Outline a plan for how you will start the new school year or semester with a strong relationship-building introductory activity.

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How can you build on the new introductory strategies you employed in August/September throughout the year? Remember to keep the relationships strong all year long.

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# ***Tools for Rules and Procedures: Classroom Solution/Strategy #3***

***Know the difference between rules and procedures. Practice procedures and establish consequences for broken rules.***

## ***What is:***

List five of your current classroom rules as they are stated now:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

List up to five procedures you currently use to keep your classroom organized and running smoothly.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## ***What could be:***

*Procedures:* How do they differ from rules?

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Look at your list of five rules and procedures above. Do they need to be stated more clearly? Have you mistakenly listed procedures as rules? Make any necessary corrections.

From the list below, circle three procedures which you currently don't use but feel you should.

- ◆ Turning in homework
- ◆ Use of classroom library
- ◆ Coming into the classroom
- ◆ Organizing desks or materials in desks
- ◆ Talking during group time
- ◆ Getting the teacher's attention
- ◆ Pencil sharpening
- ◆ How to obtain a restroom pass
- ◆ What to do when not feeling well
- ◆ During independent time, how to get help from the teacher (go to teacher, raise hand, etc.)
- ◆ Using computer time
- ◆ How to move to work stations
- ◆ What to do when the dismissal bell rings
- ◆ Getting permission to go to the library
- ◆ What to do if there is a substitute teacher

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Rules:* How do they differ from procedures?

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Share your thoughts with two colleagues.

**Make it real:**

Write the details for five key procedures you will establish and discuss the steps you will follow to implement each.

1. Procedure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Steps: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Procedure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Steps: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Procedure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Steps: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Procedure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Steps: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Procedure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Steps: \_\_\_\_\_

Develop five basic classroom rules that you feel will adequately address potentially serious infractions. Share with two other colleagues. Ask them to recall several tough behaviors they have encountered and see if one of your rules applies!

- Rule #1: \_\_\_\_\_
- Rule #2: \_\_\_\_\_
- Rule #3: \_\_\_\_\_
- Rule #4: \_\_\_\_\_
- Rule #5: \_\_\_\_\_

Consequences:

List your planned consequences for breaking classroom rules below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

# ***Are You All Right? Classroom Solution/Strategy #4***

***Students behave best when they believe you care. Before you punish, ask a student if s/he is all right.***

***What is:***

You have some challenging students in your class. List three of them here by first name or initials:

\_\_\_\_\_

What have you done to try to improve their behaviors so far?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a line through those things you have tried that only address the visible behavior, not the cause behind it.

Circle the things you have done that show you care about these students.

How many caring things have you tried? \_\_\_\_ Are you pleased with your number? Why or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What could be:**

Imagine you are a teacher who is widely known by students as the most kind and supportive teacher in the school. Students trust you and know that you care. How would it feel to have that reputation?

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Imagine that your most challenging student is acting out in his/her most typically challenging way. Picture yourself going to that child, squatting down beside him/her, and saying, "Are you all right?" Wait for a response. What happens? What does the child say?

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What might change in the child's behavior as a result of showing you care?

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**Make it real:**

Hint: When you want to ask a student if he or she is all right, be sure to ask in a private, quiet conversation with a sincere tone. Never ask with sarcasm, in front of peers, or without offering time for the child to find the courage or trust to share his/her truth.

Try this "Are you all right?" strategy as many times as possible in the next week with unhappy, disengaged, distracted, misbehaving, or bored students. Make a note of the child and his/her response. Notice if the behaviors improve. Keep this type of log:

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Upsetting Behavior: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's response to "Are you all right?": \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in behavior after expressing concern: \_\_\_\_\_

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Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Upsetting Behavior: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's response to "Are you all right?": \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in behavior after expressing concern: \_\_\_\_\_

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Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Upsetting Behavior: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's response to "Are you all right?": \_\_\_\_\_

Changes in behavior after expressing concern: \_\_\_\_\_

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