



SHELL
EDUCATION

Effective Teaching in
Today's *Classroom*



Classroom Management

for **Successful
Instruction**

J Roth

Foreword by Jim Fay

Effective Teaching in
Today's *Classroom*



Classroom Management for Successful Instruction

Author

J Roth, Ed.S.

Foreword

Jim Fay, M.A.



SHELL EDUCATION



Image Credits

p. 51, 52, 65, J Roth

Shell Education

5301 Oceanus Drive
Huntington Beach, CA 92649-1030
<http://www.shelleducation.com>

ISBN 978-1-4258-1195-2

© 2015 Shell Educational Publishing, Inc.

The classroom teacher may reproduce copies of materials in this book for classroom use only. The reproduction of any part for an entire school or school system is strictly prohibited. No part of this publication may be transmitted, stored, or recorded in any form without written permission from the publisher.

Classroom Management for Successful Instruction

Table of Contents

Foreword	5
Acknowledgments	7
Introduction	9
Chapter 1: Examining Your Classroom Management Practices	13
Chapter 2: Providing a Positive Learning Environment	35
Chapter 3: Examining the Physical Environment of Your Classroom ..	49
Chapter 4: Examining the Social Environment of Your Classroom ..	61
Chapter 5: Lesson Planning for Student Engagement	73
Chapter 6: Handling Classroom Disruptions	89
Chapter 7: Communicating and Working with Families	107
Chapter 8: Collaborating with Peers	127
Chapter 9: Creating Your Management Action Plan	135
Appendix A: References Cited	143
Appendix B: Resources	151



Foreword

Classroom management is not solely about discipline. And it's not solely about superior knowledge of the curriculum and instructional techniques.


Great classroom management is an art form where the artist (teacher) blends relationships, routines, procedures, and instructional techniques into a masterpiece that translates into a happy, functioning classroom where students have a clear picture of expectations, routines, and a strong desire to please their teacher.

There will never be enough rewards, scratch and sniff stickers, tokens, colored cards, warnings, threats, consequences, disciplinary plans, contracts, in-school suspensions, and gimmicks to manage student behavior if teachers don't first develop positive relationships with their students.

Is it true that students work harder for, and behave better for the teachers they like? You bet it is. It's been proven over and over again. It doesn't take a Ph.D. in psychology or another government funded research study to verify this.

This bit of common knowledge was around before psychology was ever invented. What parent prays that this year his or her child will get a teacher he doesn't like? In 60 years of working with children and families I haven't met that parent.

For a student, what does it take for me to like my teacher? First of all I need to know that he/she knows and likes me as a person, and will do everything possible to ensure that I'm not embarrassed in front of my friends. Next I need to know that the teacher can handle the classroom so that I'm safe. Then I need to know his/her expectations. And last, I need to know what I'm learning and why I'm learning it.



The purpose of this book is to help you and all the other teachers find a roadmap to becoming the teacher who creates the masterpiece classroom where all kids have to do to prepare for the state tests is to sharpen their pencils.

—Jim Fay, M.A., Author of *Teaching With Love and Logic*
Co-founder, Love and Logic Institute, Inc.

Acknowledgments

I have learned a great deal through the journey of writing this book. Most of all I learned that when you surround yourself with good people, good things happen. I have been extremely fortunate that GREAT people have surrounded me throughout my life and career.

Professionally, I have had so many role models that it would be impossible to list them all here individually. I continuously gain educational knowledge from every teacher and administrator that I have had the honor of working with. Every day is a new challenge that requires a dedication and insistence that all educators do what is best for the students in our care. I have learned the power of patience, preparation, and collaboration from all of you. We all need to be proud of the great work we do for students every day.

This book could never have been completed without the hard work and dedication of the editing team of Sara Johnson, Lori Nash, and Nicole Downer from Teacher Created Materials. Thank you for always demanding excellence from me, and from you, as that is what educators reading this book and their students deserve.

Personally, I am so grateful for my children, Spencer, Sadie, and Maddi. You provide me with the drive and determination to be a positive role model. I could not be any prouder of you. My greatest wish is for each of you to understand that the most important thing in life is to be happy with the person you are.

Most of all I would like to thank my wife, LaVonna. Without your constant encouragement, positive attitude, and belief in me as an educator and a writer, this book would never have been completed. You serve as my inspiration every day to be the best father, husband, and educator that I can possibly be.



Introduction

In education, as in life, what gets the most focus will produce the most results. Education is the focus of many debates, from what kinds of tests we will use to assess student knowledge to implementing new standards. These topics definitely deserve attention. But in our zealous endeavors, sometimes we put the cart before the horse. In this case, the cart is the assessment and curriculum. The horse that is being left behind is classroom management. All of the best research-based instruction simply will not matter or make a difference if the teacher is unable to manage the behavior of the students in the classroom.

Many teachers have outstanding content knowledge but lack the management skills necessary to conduct a highly engaged and academically successful classroom. That is why I decided to focus this book on assisting teachers in developing their own classroom management style and practices.

Unfortunately, many university and school district teacher preparation programs have failed to coach teachers to effectively handle classroom management and discipline. However, when teachers do get the right kind of training, real changes can be made in the strategies they use for classroom curriculum instruction and in the organization of basic management approaches. This means more students will be engaged in their learning activities, which will translate to more teaching and learning occurring. In fact, I believe classroom management is so important that it should be viewed as an extension of the learning process.

As I began to put research and my experiences into the pages of this book, I initially had new teachers in mind. But the more I wrote, the more I realized that there were many seasoned teachers who also struggle with classroom management. This book contains multiple levels of application and reflection. The goal for this reflection is to identify the need for the most effective strategies that will result in reaching high student achievement.

The end of each chapter, as well as application activities throughout the chapters, will allow you to reflect on your current practices in specific topical areas. The final chapter will offer the opportunity to plan for a successful school year involving classroom management.

No one specific style of management is better than another because every teacher and every class of students is unique. What works for one may not always work for another. To get the most out of this book, I encourage you to be a reflective and honest responder when answering the questions posed. Don't be afraid to challenge your beliefs about classroom management. Try something new that piques your interest. Be a risk taker!

How you prepare and how you implement your classroom management will have a direct correlation to how well your students perform both socially and academically. At the end of this book is where you can use your knowledge to develop your own classroom management plan.

Besides parents, teachers have the greatest day-to-day impact on children. In order to teach them well, you need to first structure an environment that is conducive to learning. This book will assist in that endeavor.

How This Book Is Organized

The chapters in this book build on one another and present current research findings. The end of each chapter provides an opportunity to review and reflect on what you have learned and what it might mean in your own practice. **Chapter 1** asks the pertinent questions, "What is the difference between classroom management and classroom discipline?" and "Is there evidence of either one in my classroom?" The importance of establishing a positive learning environment is shared in **Chapter 2**. **Chapters 3** and **4** discuss how the physical and social environments of your classroom can enhance student behavior and academic performance to provide you with opportunities to design your classroom. **Chapter 5** examines tips for engaging students in their learning and keeping them on task. **Chapter 6** investigates everyday challenges with student behavior that can easily get you off track and how to properly handle these classroom disruptions. **Chapter 7** helps you understand what families may be experiencing with

their children in the home and how to communicate and work with them effectively. The benefits of collaboration with colleagues are explored in **Chapter 8**. Finally, **Chapter 9** helps you outline an effective overall classroom management strategy.




Chapter 1

Examining Your Classroom Management Practices

Whenever I am interviewing prospective teachers for job positions, one of the first statements I ask them to respond to is: “Describe what a typical day in your classroom would look like.” What I usually hear is a grand description of a well-organized and superbly managed classroom—a room where students are actively engaged and the teacher is leading as if they were the director of an orchestra, blending various learning experiences together, producing a symphony of teamwork and knowledge. Unfortunately, what I frequently end up seeing during observations and classroom walkthroughs in reality, are pieces of greatness and behaviors or instruction the teacher wishes we could both forget. Why does this happen? It is not because the teacher is not trying or does not know what he or she should be doing. There are many variables involved in every classroom, namely the students. Things happen unexpectedly, experiments go wrong, or a student wakes up on the wrong side of the bed. This is life in the classroom. However, I believe that if we, as teachers, take the time and truly work through the process of identifying our philosophies and beliefs about effective classroom management, our classes will run more like that symphony of teamwork and knowledge.

Another reality is that even though teachers most likely have had coursework in college that dealt with classroom management, the opportunities to *practice* the various styles will not come until the first time college students become professional educators. Yes, during their internship or student teaching the intern has opportunities to head a class or classes; however, he or she is running someone else’s class (the cooperating teacher). The truth is that as a student teacher, one is never really in charge. The



students in the classroom always know that they are playing by their teacher's rules and that the student teacher is there practicing and developing his or her craft to gain experience. Students will tend to behave because they are aware that if they do not, their teacher will be in the room to enact the discipline plan. Essentially, the student teacher is learning if he or she is comfortable with the cooperating teacher's classroom management plan and is taking mental notes about how he or she would choose to manage her very first classroom.

For many educators, classroom management is one of the biggest challenges that they face each year. Perhaps the greatest fear of new teachers is losing control of a classroom of students. Even *returning* teachers have nightmares about being unable to control the behavior of their students the first week of school. This can be the most difficult aspect of the job. The importance of a well-managed classroom should not be overlooked. Harry and Rosemary Wong, whose book *How to Be an Effective Teacher: The First Days of School* (1998) is often recommended for new teachers, write "Student achievement at the end of the year is directly related to the degree to which the teacher establishes good control of the classroom procedures in the very first week of the school year" (4). Poor classroom management affects school climate and academic performance (McDaniel, Yarbrough, and Ruma 2014). Armed with the information that shows the correlation between management and student success, we can be motivated to examine our practices from the very beginning of the school year and take the necessary steps to have a successful year.


What can hold many teachers back is the frustration with their lack of preparation to effectively manage their classrooms (Latham and Vogt 2007). When teachers have trouble establishing management and order, their morale unfortunately diminishes and they feel that they are not up to the task, resulting in stress and burnout. Research in the 1990s showed that over 40 percent of new teachers do not teach longer than four years, and that half of those are actually gone before teaching a full three years (Bernshausen and Cunningham 2001). Research from the National Education Association (NEA 2006) shows that this is still true today; they report that 20 percent of all new hires leave within three years. Close to 50 percent of new hires that are placed in urban districts leave the profession before teaching five years.

These statistics show us more than ever that we need to help these teachers be successful in their classrooms. We know that one of the more significant factors that affect teachers' ability to motivate students is stress (Tomal 2007). If this describes you, then take comfort in knowing that you are not alone in respect to your own frustration with class control. One of the primary preventions of teacher burnout is to take care of one's own health (Mendler 2012). There is mounting evidence that teachers who promote their own personal and professional well-being perform better in the classroom and affect better student outcomes (Duckworth, Quinn, and Seligman 2009). This book will explore the vital concerns surrounding classroom management and discipline, and provide proven solutions to having a successful classroom experience for both teachers and their students.

Classroom Management vs. Classroom Discipline

Before continuing, it is important to draw attention to the difference between the terms *classroom management* and *classroom discipline*. Although they are often used interchangeably, they are actually two different topics. Many of us are not fans of discipline. However, we understand that when management is not effective, discipline must be implemented. Classroom management refers to how things are generally carried out in the classroom, whereas classroom discipline is the specific management of student behavior when the strategies are not working. Dr. Marvin Marshall (2003) explains "Classroom management deals with how things are done; discipline deals with how people behave. Classroom management has to do with procedures, routines, and structure; discipline is about impulse management and self-control. Classroom management is the teacher's responsibility; discipline is the student's responsibility" (para. 7).

The reason these terms are often used synonymously is that the teacher first has to set up how the classroom functions in order to expect the students to behave. Simply put, effective teachers *manage* their classrooms with procedures and routines. This process often takes care of many of the concerns surrounding classroom discipline. Without effective rules and procedures, teaching and learning are inhibited (Marzano 2007). It



is no wonder that a concern of many new teachers is that of controlling the behavior of their students. Inexperienced teachers often do not receive much guidance, or have mentors assigned to them to assist in developing successful classroom management strategies. It remains a challenge for veteran teachers as well, as each year brings a fresh group of students for whom to establish management practices.

Of all the things teachers are expected to do during their professional day, classroom management is considered one of the most significant, and clearly has one of the greatest effects on student achievement (Hattie 2012). When considering classroom discipline, it is first important to consider that without the order provided by effective classroom management, there is little hope for teachers to instruct in any consistent and effective manner. When teachers resort to discipline, it is usually because they are inconsistent in following through when the students do not adhere to rules or procedures, or they did not spend enough time at the beginning of the school year practicing their rules and procedures. Classroom learning requires classroom order and, while it may be very difficult, it is central to what educators need to do.

Additionally, classroom management is absolutely necessary for instilling a sense of responsibility and maturity in students. Each time a teacher works with students in an effort to modify their behavior, both parties should be able to observe and better understand what is being expected of them.

The very first question teachers must ask themselves is, “What is the goal of my classroom management plan?” The answer should go beyond a peaceful, respectful classroom environment. The bottom line is that the main purpose of a classroom management plan must be student learning. Everything the teacher does needs to be focused on this as the ultimate goal. Student learning can only be accomplished if the teacher has an effective plan that both the teacher and student can buy into.