

For many teachers, classroom management can be challenging. Students misbehaving, kids not listening, and talking amongst themselves all while trying to teach an important lesson can be frustrating and discouraging. Many teachers struggle to implement rules and yet also keep the students engaged and attentive. These helpful suggestions are ones I have found beneficial.

Throughout teaching, I have come to adapt a system which maintains control of the classroom and allows myself to overcome challenges and problems due to behavioral issues. My goal is always the same: to have students feel appreciated and accepted, attentive, wanting to learn, and knowing the difference of what is right and wrong.

What does effective classroom management look like and why is it necessary? This question may seem obvious to many, but why is it so hard to implement and be successful at? Students should know what is expected of them and behave accordingly. Positive reinforcement is also implemented to diminish the possibility of misbehavior. In the end, the class will run smoothly and create less stress for the teacher and pupils.

One area which I stress importance is daily routines. These routines should be taught at the beginning of the year. Also, a review after long periods of time off will also be beneficial. These routines can reduce and eliminate problems, disorganization, and student anxiety. More importantly, routines do not mean procedures are boring. Examples of routines can be in the morning before class begins. Do students use the restroom first? How do students use time before other classmates arrive? Are their supplies ready for use? What do students do during transitioning periods?

My own challenges vary from student to student. It is important for educators to be aware of what is controllable and uncontrollable as teachers. Controllable variables can be walking around, not sitting still, shouting, and distracting others. Uncontrollable variables can be sleepiness, feeling ill, family issues, jealousy, and learning disabilities.

Teachers should begin each day by creating a vision for the class. What does the ideal class look like, sound like, and what does it feel like to be a visitor in your room? Are you students meeting their daily goals, both academically and behaviorally? If not, what changes can be implemented to meet such goals?

It is important to remember human behavior is learned and can also be unlearned. Effective educators can shape behavior into more desirable forms. When students misbehave, it's likely they haven't experienced the benefits for what responsible behavior is in class. Teachers should create individualized benchmarks for pupils with realistic goals. When these goals are met, students become more motivated.

Creating a relaxed and comfortable learning space is also crucial. The physical space in which learning happens should have reduced distractions. The space should be easy to access for teachers and structured in a way which reduce unwanted behavior before it happens.

Another simple way to have a class engaged is through attention signals. These should be easy to use and follow. These signals tell students what is expected for them in different, funner way. An example is a simple arm raise. This is easy for students to see and know it is time to stop talking.

As important as rules are for any class, it is equally important to not over do it. Keep rules to a minimum. Keep them simple, positive, and specific. These rules should be posted in a prominent place, easy to read for all.

In my own classes, I like to encourage students to work as a team. We have a Fluff Jar which works for group motivation. It is a simple glass container. When students work together, cotton fluff is added. When the jar is completely filled, the students decide as a class what the reward should be since they filled it together.

Another challenge I find is small bickering and arguing. To combat this we have a Compliment Chain. This is simple paper chain link. Each link represents a compliment a student received. When the length goal is met, a reward is administered.

Lastly, our class has a Goal of the Day. It is poster with a variety of goals. Each day a goal is chosen for students to meet. When the students reach this goal, a reward is provided. It is also wise to create a goal which some may currently struggle with.

The challenge of classroom management is never ending. It takes patience, practice, and dedication for a classroom to run smoothly. This is not to say there are never hiccups throughout the day. These are some helpful suggestions to meet daily goals and diminish classroom disruptions before they happen. Remember these four goals to meet daily expectations:

- Establish rules and keep them posted in an accessible place
- Create routines for students to follow
- Understand your students' needs
- Implement motivations tools to further boost active learning

These are what I believe make for a successful class.