

The Problem Is Not Discipline

A smooth-running class is based on the teacher's ability to teach procedures.

The number one problem in the classroom is not discipline; it is the lack of procedures and routines.

You have now arrived at the most important chapter in this book. What you are about to read will determine whether you will succeed or fail, have a classroom that is chaotic or a well-oiled learning environment, whether you will leave school at the end of the day frazzled and angry or happy and successful. Why?

Most teachers do not teach.

They "cover" or "do" activities.

Then when things go wrong, they discipline.

In short, most classrooms are nonmanaged.

A vast majority of the behavior problems in the classroom are caused by the failure of students to follow procedures and routines. These are the main reasons why students do not follow procedures:

1. The teacher has not thought out what happens in the classroom.
2. The students have not been trained to follow the procedures.
3. The teacher spends no time managing the classroom.

Thus the students do not know the procedures.

The Person Who Works Learns

Do not blame the students if a classroom is chaotic when there are no operating procedures to govern how the class is to function. **Students readily accept the idea of having a uniform set of classroom procedures because it simplifies their task of succeeding in school.** Procedures allow a wide variety of activities to take place during the school day, often simultaneously, with a minimum of confusion and wasted time. If there are no procedures, much time is wasted organizing and explaining each activity, even for recurring activities. The lack of procedures also leads to students' acquiring undesirable work habits and behaviors that are subsequently hard to correct.

No learning takes place when you discipline. Learning takes place only when a student is at work. All discipline does is stop misbehavior. The reason parents have their children practice the piano is that the more they practice, the better they play. The reason coaches have their teams run the plays over and over again is that the more they run the plays, the better they will be able to execute the plays during the game. Effective teachers know that the more time on task, also called academic learning time, spent by the student, the more the student learns. Who is working and learning in your classroom?



Comparison of an Effective and an Ineffective Classroom

Effective Classroom:

The students are actively involved in meaningful work. The procedures govern what they do and they understand how the class functions. The teacher is moving around the room, also at work, helping, correcting, answering, disciplining, smiling, and caring.

Ineffective Classroom:

The students are in their seats doing busywork or nothing. The only person who is observed working is the teacher. The teacher is in control of the class.

Learning occurs only when a person is actively involved.
Are the students working in your classroom?

The Difference Between Discipline and Procedures

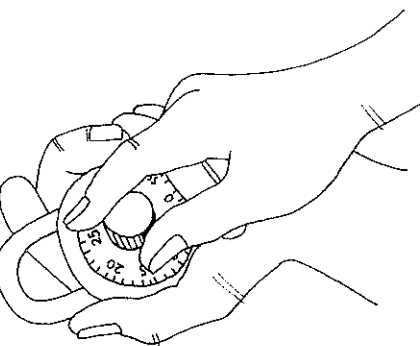
Classroom management should not be equated with discipline. Discipline is but a very small part of classroom management. Procedures are not found in a discipline plan; nor should a procedure be a threat, a rule, or an order. **A procedure is simply a method or process for how things are to be done in a classroom.**

Procedures and routines are different from a discipline plan. Do not confuse procedures with discipline. There are two major differences.

◆ A rule is a **DARE** to be broken, whereas a procedure is not.
◆ A procedure is a **DO**, a step to be learned.

- ✓ **DISCIPLINE:** Concerns how students **BEHAVE**.
- ✓ **PROCEDURES:** Concern how things are **DONE**.
- ✓ **DISCIPLINE:** **HAS** penalties and rewards.
- ✓ **PROCEDURES:** Have **NO** penalties or rewards.

A student is generally not penalized for not following a procedure nor rewarded if a procedure is followed.



Example of a Procedure

There is a procedure for opening a lock on a locker. It's usually two turns to the right, one turn to the left, and a final turn to the right.

There is no penalty if the procedure is not followed. The lock just does not open. Likewise, there is no reward if the procedure is followed. The lock simply opens. **To do anything in life successfully, you simply follow the procedures.**

Student success or achievement at the end of the school 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. **It is the procedures that set the class up for achievement to take place.**

Why Procedures Are Important

Students must know from the very beginning how they are expected to behave and work in a classroom work environment. Discipline dictates how they are to behave, and procedures and routines dictate how they are to work. Procedures and routines, especially, offer security. Students cannot get down to the serious business of learning unless they feel secure in the classroom. They want instruction and guidance on all the how-to's in class—how to head a paper, how to ask for help, how to sharpen a pencil, how to get to work, how to turn on the computer, how to ...

Since a **PROCEDURE** is how you want something done, it is the responsibility of the teacher to have procedures clearly stated. A **ROUTINE** is what the student does automatically without prompting or supervision. Thus a routine becomes a habit, practice, or custom for the student.

Procedures are necessary for an effective classroom for several reasons.

- ✓ Classroom procedures are statements of student expectations necessary to participate successfully in classroom activities, to learn, and to function effectively in the school environment.
- ✓ Classroom procedures allow many different activities to take place efficiently during the school day, often several at the same time, with a minimum of wasted time and confusion.
- ✓ Classroom procedures increase on-task time and greatly reduce classroom disruptions.
- ✓ Classroom procedures tell a student how things operate in a classroom, thus reducing discipline problems.

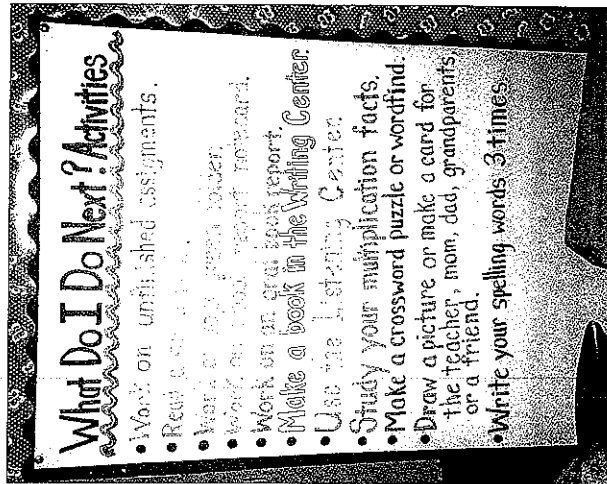
Students are less likely to act up in frustration, trying to figure out what the teacher wants, if the classroom procedures are clearly stated.

PROCEDURE:

What the teacher wants done.

ROUTINE:

What the students do automatically.



Students will cooperate if they know what it is that you want them to do.

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Students Accept and Want Procedures

Effective teachers manage with procedures. Every time the teacher wants something done, there must be a procedure or a set of procedures. For instance, have procedures for taking roll, exchanging papers, registering the students on the first day, collecting lunch money, and moving from task to task. If you don't, time that should be spent on learning will be wasted getting these tasks done.

Classroom procedures answer such questions as these:

- What to do when the bell rings
- What to do when the pencil breaks
- What to do when you hear an emergency alert signal
- What to do when you finish your work early
- What to do when you have a question
- What to do when you need to go to the rest room

A smooth-running class is the responsibility of the teacher, and it is the result of the teacher's ability to teach procedures.

Tell your students that classroom procedures are for their benefit. Following procedures will help them do their work with less confusion and thus help them succeed. Knowledge of classroom procedures tells your students such things as these:

- How to enter the classroom
- What to do when they enter the classroom
- Where to find the assignment
- What to do when you want their attention
- How a paper is to be done
- Where you want the paper placed
- What to do if they want to sharpen a pencil
- Where to find assignments if they have been absent
- What to do at dismissal of class

Every class needs to have a set of procedures. Procedures allow the class to operate smoothly. A smooth-running, effective class is free of confusion and is a pleasure to teach and learn in.

My daughter hated school until this year. She loves school now. Why? Because of the way her teacher has organized the class.

—A parent

Procedures Are a Part of Life

Procedures are important in society so that people can function in an acceptable and organized manner. Real life is full of procedures—for instance:

Telephone Book. At the front of a telephone book are procedures on how to make a long-distance call, make a foreign call, contact directory assistance, get emergency help, and contact the business office.

Airplane. After the “discipline plan” is stated at the beginning of the flight, the flight attendants explain the procedures. These procedures include how to use the seat belt, how to use the oxygen mask, where to find the life vest, and how to find the aisle in case the cabin is filled with smoke.

Traffic Light. There are procedures at an intersection with a traffic light. The light governs who will turn, who will stop, and who will go. A procedure also determines when and how to make a right turn if the light is red.

Wedding. At the conclusion of a wedding ceremony, a procedure is followed. The bride, groom, and wedding party leave. They are followed by the parents in the first row, followed by each row from the front of the seating area.

Procedures demonstrate how people are to function in an acceptable and organized manner. When we say that someone is ill-mannered, it is because that person doesn’t know or doesn’t care what the local customs or procedures are. To function successfully with other people, the best guideline is “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.”



Judie Gustafson of Manor, Texas, is a high school math teacher. On the first days of school she gives her class an eight-page paper, “Procedures.” It begins:

Procedures are a part of life. We follow procedures for using a telephone book, boarding an airplane, approaching a traffic light, and attending a wedding. The reason we have procedures in life is so that people can function in society knowing the acceptable and efficient ways other people do things.

There are also procedures in this classroom. These procedures establish our classroom culture.

This is followed by procedures for use in the following situations:

Entering the classroom	Responding to my request for attention
When you are tardy	When you are absent
Leaving the classroom	When someone knocks
End-of-period class dismissal	If the phone should ring
Asking a question	Working cooperatively
Listening to and responding to questions	Changing groups
When you need a pencil or paper	An emergency alert
Sharpening your pencil	Keeping your notebook
Turning in papers	When you need help or a conference
Indicating whether you understand	Progress reports

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Procedures Are a Part of School Life

As in real life, procedures must be followed in the classroom. Here are some that nearly every teacher must teach.

The first few days of school, teach only procedures necessary for the smooth opening of class.

Delay the other procedures until the appropriate activity arises.

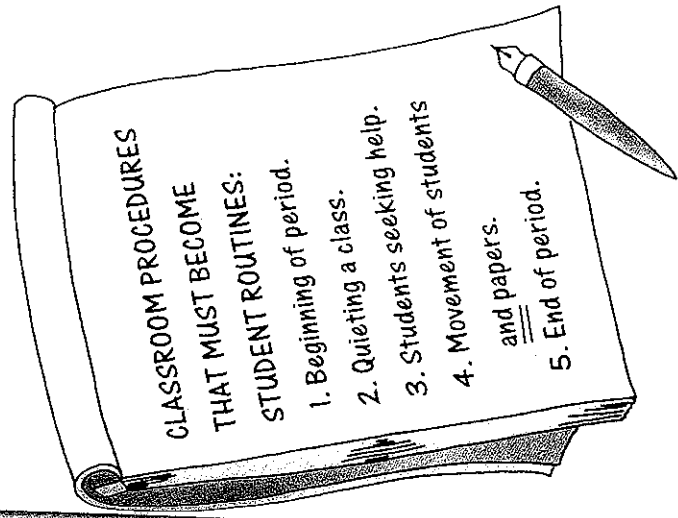
Procedure for Dismissal at the End of the Period or Day. When the dismissal bell rings, are the students already standing at the door waiting to leave, or do they just get up and leave, even if you are in the middle of a sentence? You can always tell who is running the class, the students or the teacher, by how the students behave at the end of the period or day. (See page 177.)

Procedure for Quietening a Class. Do you know how to quiet a class in 15 seconds or less? It can be done easily! Do you yell, scream, and flick the lights—all to no avail? Or if you do succeed, does it take a long time to get the students' attention, not to mention years on your life span from stress? (See page 181.)

Procedure for the Start of the Period or Day. When the students enter, do they know what to do, where to sit, and what materials to have ready? Or do they sit and wait for the teacher to tell them what to do? (See page 185.)

Procedure for Students Seeking Help. Do your students raise their hands when they want your help, wigwagging their hands to attract your attention, calling your name at the same time, stopping work in the process accompanied by muttering and complaining to their classmates because you do not respond instantly? (See page 186.)

Procedure for the Movement of Students and Papers. Do your students take forever to pass their papers in and even longer to change from group to group or task to task? And when they turn their papers in, do they throw them in a pile on your desk or punch each other in the back as the papers are passed forward? (See page 189.)



There are also procedures to follow on the school bus and in the cafeteria, library, and attendance office. And if these locales are run effectively, you can be sure that the bus driver, food server, librarian, and secretary have taught the students the correct procedures in their area of authority.

The Three-Step Approach to Teaching Classroom Procedures

Most behavior problems in the classroom are caused by the teacher's failure to teach students how to follow procedures.



The Three Steps to Teaching Procedures

1. **Explain.** State, explain, model, and demonstrate the procedure.
2. **Rehearse.** Rehearse and practice the procedure under your supervision.
3. **Reinforce.** Reteach, rehearse, practice, and reinforce the classroom procedure until it becomes a student habit or routine.

Step 1. Explain Classroom Procedures Clearly

Effective teachers know what activities need to be done and have worked out the procedures for each of them. These procedures are posted or distributed to the students early in the school year or when the activity surfaces in class. Unless the students read well, primary grade teachers should teach the procedures verbally rather than post them.



Explain

- ✓ Define the procedure in concrete terms.
- ✓ Demonstrate the procedure; don't just tell.
- ✓ Demonstrate a complex procedure step by step.

It is essential that you have the procedures for each opening-of-school activity ready on the first day of school. Revise and hone these procedures year after year until they become models of efficiency.

Step 2. Rehearse Classroom Procedures Until They Become Routines

All procedures must be rehearsed!

Run the Play, Sing the Song

The reason that many teachers cannot get students to do things, is that they just tell the students what to do.

You must do what all coaches do, what all music teachers do, and what all effective second-grade teachers do: Have your students run the plays, sing the songs, and spell the words over and over again **until the procedures become routines.**

Effective teachers spend a good deal of time during the first weeks of school introducing, teaching, modeling, and rehearsing procedures. Do not expect the students to learn all the procedures in one day, especially at the elementary school level. Behaviors must be taught, modeled, practiced, monitored, and retaught.

Watch a good music, drama, athletic, or foreign-language coach. Such people are masters at the rehearsal technique. They tell and show you a technique, even have you watch a video of the technique. Then they have you do it repeatedly while they watch you. Some people call this technique "guided practice."

Rehearse

- ✓ Have students practice the procedure, step by step, under your supervision. After each step, make sure that the students have performed the step correctly.
- ✓ Have the students repeat the procedure until it becomes a routine. The students should be able to perform the procedure automatically without teacher supervision.

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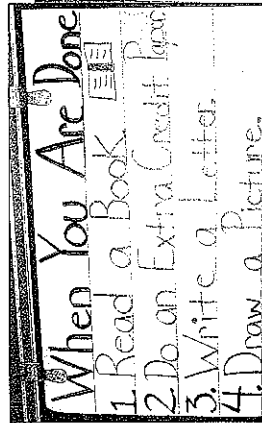
Step 3. Reinforce a Correct Procedure and Reteach an Incorrect One

Again, watch a coach because good coaches are the best teachers. As the coach guides a team, class, or student through practice, corrections are made instantly. The coach tells, shows, demonstrates, cajoles, and even loudly calls out commands until the task is done right.

And when it is done right, the coach responds with words of praise, hugs, pats, and smiles. But good coaches don't stop there. They reinforce the correct technique by having the student do the acquired technique over and over again, each time exhorting the student to do it better.

Reinforce

- ✓ Determine whether students have learned the procedure or whether they need further explanation, demonstration, or practice.
- ✓ Reteach the correct procedure if rehearsal is unacceptable, and give corrective feedback.
- ✓ Praise the students when the rehearsal is acceptable.

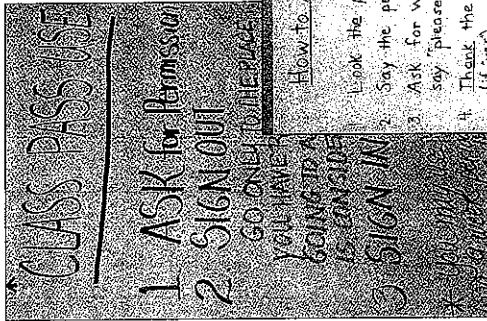


Post the classroom procedures if you want the students to follow them.

Classroom Assignment Heading

Full Name: Jennifer Jones
Complete date: August 21, 1997
Subject - Period: Science - Period 1
Page Number or Assignment: Group 1 Report

- #### CLASSROOM PROCEDURES MR.
- Students will perform Bell Work immediately after the classroom.
 - Students will request permission from the teacher in an emergency to use the restroom and will sign the restroom pass.
 - Students will remain at their desks (table) at the end of the period until the teacher dismisses the class.
 - Students will remain seated at their desks (table) in class unless given permission to do otherwise.
 - Students will raise their hands and wait for permission during the class period.



Line up
Be a self manager!
Arms folded.
Voices silent.
Facing forward.
Standing in front.
Stand in front.

- #### How to Ask for Things
- Look the person in the eye.
 - Say the person's name.
 - Ask for what you want and say "please."
 - Thank the person for sharing. (if yes)
- If person says "no..." ask why.
Say something to solve the problem.
Wait... "I'll give it right back."
"We could share."
"Can't I use it later when you're done?"
Look around... could you play with the book?

- #### LIBRARY PROCEDURE
- TO CHECK OUT A BOOK:
- Locate pocket inside either front or back cover of book.
 - Sign name and date on the card.
 - Place the card in the file box alphabetically by your last name.
 - The book is due in two weeks. You may renew it once after that with teacher approval.
- TO RETURN A BOOK:
- Remove card from the file box.
 - Record date returned.
 - Place card in pocket inside front or back cover of book.
 - Return book to shelf.

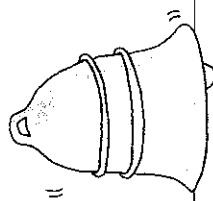


The ineffective wait

Using the Three-Step Approach to Teach Procedures

The following are examples of how some procedures are taught. You may not need or want them, but note how each procedure is taught. Then substitute your own procedure, using the **explain, rehearse, reinforce** technique just described.

- ✓ How to dismiss a class
- ✓ How to quiet a class and have the students' attention
- ✓ How to have a class working when the bell rings
- ✓ How students are to ask you for help
- ✓ How students are to pass in papers



For Whom Does the Bell Toll?

The bell, buzzer, or chime at the end of the period or day is a signal for teachers notifying them that instructional time has come to an end. The bell is of no concern to the students. The bell does not dismiss the class. You dismiss the class with a pleasant greeting of farewell.

Procedure for Dismissal at the End of the Period or Day

Explain

Students, there is a procedure at the end of the period. You are to remain in your seat (or at your desks with the chairs pushed in) until I dismiss the class. The bell does not dismiss the class. You do not dismiss the class. The teacher dismisses the class. Thank you.

You will want to explain the criteria for dismissal, such as how clean you want the desk or work area and where and how you want the chairs and equipment to be positioned.

Show and demonstrate this procedure. Have several students (never one, as it makes a show-off example of one) demonstrate the procedure. Praise each so that the students know that you are validating the correct procedure.



The ineffective teacher has students standing at the door waiting to leave before the bell rings.

Ask for Things

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Rehearse

Be alert a few seconds before the bell rings on the first day of school. Anticipate that you will need to make an immediate correction if the procedure is not followed. If the class starts to file out, it is too late to correct the procedure. The failure to correct a procedure will only escalate the problem until it is the students who dismiss themselves and are really the ones in control of the class.

On the first day of school, remind the class of the dismissal procedure a few seconds before the bell rings at the end of the period or day. This will reduce the hassle of correcting the class; however, if any students begin to leave at the bell, you simply say,

No, no, no. Tom, Joel, Anne, please return to your desks.

Do not scold, yell, or demean. And do not use meaningless phrases or questions like "Listen to me" or "What did I say the dismissal procedure was?" You do not want a discussion, an argument, or a response. You want all students at their desks. Calmly, but in a voice of authority, tell the students who began to leave to return to their desks.

Reinforce

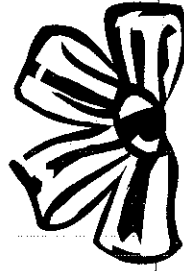
Every time a procedure needs to be corrected:

1. **REMIND** the class of the procedure.
2. Have the class **EXPERIENCE** the procedure.

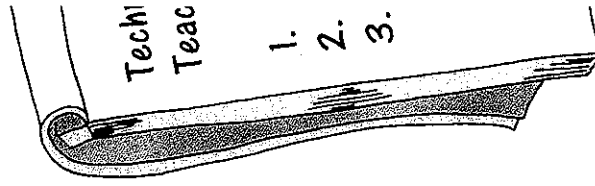
Remind: *Class, I would like to remind you of the procedure at the end of the period. You are to remain at your desks until I dismiss the class.*

Experience: *Look around the room. You are all at your desks (and your chairs are pushed in). This is the correct procedure, and I thank you for doing it correctly.*

Well done. Please do it again tomorrow. Have a nice day!



One of the greatest gifts a caring teacher can contribute to children is to help them learn to sit when they feel like running, to raise their hand when they feel like talking, to be polite to their neighbor, to stand in line without pushing, and to do their homework when they feel like playing. By introducing procedures in the classroom, you are also introducing procedures as a way of living a happy and successful life.



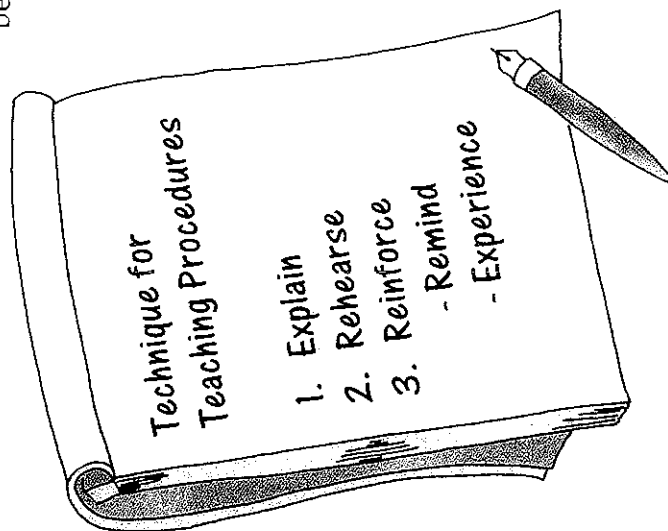
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Effective teachers have the students see, feel, and experience the procedure. The students see one another in their seats and experience the procedure correctly. Ineffective teachers only tell students what to do. The students do not experience what should be done. That is why many teachers fail when they want students to follow procedures.

Repeat the procedure every day until the procedure becomes a routine. By the end of the third or fourth day, the procedure will have become automatic.

Thereafter, all you need to do a few seconds after the bell rings is smile and say, "It's been nice seeing all of you. See you tomorrow. Have a nice day." This is much better than "You're dismissed."



Why Children Never Tell Mom They Are Going Out

So many parents shake their heads in frustration when their children leave the house and never say, "I'm going out, Mom." They just leave, showing no respect or manners.

If, every day, for 180 days, when the class is seated and ready for dismissal at the end of the period or the day, the teacher says, "Have a nice day" to dismiss the class, **the teacher is modeling respect and manners.**

The students may not realize it, but they are getting a lesson in the appropriate behavior of well-mannered people. People acknowledge people as they leave a setting. Perhaps students too will learn to tell parents that they will be gone for awhile.

An adult should repeatedly model appropriate behavior so that a student may experience how to behave in society.

is a caring to children sit when raise their talking, to or, to stand and to do hey feel like procedures a also as a way of isful life.

How to Teach a New Student All the Class Procedures

You have invested a few weeks of practice and rehearsal of the classroom procedures. Your class is now a smooth-running, humming learning environment.

Suddenly, a new student joins the class. What do you do? No problem! First, understand that you cannot tell a new student the classroom procedures if you haven't first told your existing class. If your class is never sure what to do, there is no way you can ever orient and teach a new student. Second, if you have a class where the students have learned the routines, you have developed a classroom culture. A culture is the prevailing way a group functions—for instance:

- When people stand before an elevator, they know to let people off before they get on.
- On an airplane, people lower the window shades when the movie begins.
- At a wedding, people stand when the bride walks down the aisle.
- At a Chinese family dinner table, the prevailing culture is never to help yourself first. That would be considered selfish and uncouth. You always say, "You first, please."

You create a culture when students perform in a manner understood to be appropriate in your classroom.

- When a new student joins the class, give the student a copy of the classroom procedures.
- Explain to the student what the procedures are and why you have them.
- Tell the student that you will help with the procedures but that the student will probably be able to learn them by observing how the rest of the class functions.

For example, the bell rings at the end of the period and the new student begins to leave. Suddenly the student notices that everyone is in their seats. The student says mentally, "Oh, oh, I'd better stay seated, too, like the rest of the class." The student has just learned the class procedure.



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Procedure for Quietening a Class

Explain

Students, I have a procedure when I want your undivided attention. You will see me stand here with my hand up. Or I may tap a bell because some of you will not be able to see my hand while you are working in a group. When you see my hand or hear a bell, the procedure is as follows:

1. Freeze.
2. Turn and face me; pay attention and keep your eyes on me.
3. Be ready for instruction. I will have something to say.

Let me repeat and demonstrate what I said.

Repeat and look for class understanding.

Byron, please tell me the procedure when you see my hand or hear a bell.

Byron does so.

Yes, yes, yes. Thank you, Byron.

Repeat this with several more students.

Is there anyone who does not understand or know what to do if you see my hand or hear a bell?

Rehearse

Good, let's rehearse the procedure. We will be working together this year, so let's get to know one another. Please look at the person to the right of you. You may have two minutes to introduce yourself and get acquainted.



Calmly and without saying anything, raise your hand when you want the class quiet.

At two minutes, hold up your hand or ring the bell, perhaps doing both this first time. Do not say a word when you raise your hand. Do the demonstration exactly as you will be doing it for the rest of the year. Be patient and wait until the class does the three steps and pays attention.

Do not give up as you wait for the students to give you their undivided attention. Compliment them when you have their attention.

Thank you. You practiced the procedure correctly.

Now please look at the person to the left of you. You may have two minutes to introduce yourself and get acquainted.

At two minutes hold up your hand or ring the bell. Compliment them.

Thank you. You followed the procedure correctly.

We are not finished with the rehearsal. You will often find yourself out of your seat—working in groups or alone somewhere in the room away from your seat. So let's try a different scenario.

I would like two of you to stand by the pencil sharpener, two of you at the sink, two of you at the bookcase, and one of you at the computer.

You then hold up your hand and watch for the seven students to pay attention.

Reinforce

Thank you. That was the correct procedure when you see my hand or hear a bell. Please do the same thing each time you see my hand or hear a bell.

You keep using the same language because you must use the same procedure if you want the students to exhibit the same routine. You can also use a technique called "Praise the Deed, Encourage the Student," described on the next page.



No matter what grade level you teach, **all procedures must be rehearsed.**

Praise the Deed, Encourage the Student

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. The technique is called specific praise, or "praise the deed, encourage the student." Praise is nice, but it is not tangible or meaningful—for instance:

Amber, you are a bright child.

For a more effective kind of praise, point to something the student did well. Then encourage the student to do it again—for instance:

Amber, please get your last spelling test out. What did you get? Right, 19 out of 20 correct. Great! Pat yourself on the back. Shake your own hand. Congratulate yourself. DO IT AGAIN ON THE NEXT TEST.

Here are some other examples:

Thank you, class. That was the correct procedure when you see my hand or hear a bell. Please do the same thing each time you see my hand or hear a bell.

Heidi, thank you for the excellent report at the faculty meeting. The next time I need assistance, I would truly appreciate your help again.

Wayne, thanks for helping with the dishes tonight. Mom had a meeting to go to, and you helped out. The next time Mom needs assistance, I would be glad to have you help out again.

The reason people are more likely to do well again is that they know that you saw them do something specific. They believe, "You were paying attention to me. You noticed me! And you thanked me for doing something I did personally."

Pep talks are invigorating but hollow. They become meaningless quickly because no one is sure to whom the message is directed. When you praise the deed and encourage the student, you help the student do two things:

1. Accept responsibility for having done the task
2. Develop a sense of accomplishment

The key words are *responsibility* and *accomplishment*, two things that all people must develop to be successful in life.

We are grateful to Barbara Colorosa, author of *Kids Are Worth It*, for suggesting this technique.

She Quieted 100 People in Five Seconds

We were invited to our daughter-in-law's class to attend the annual International Day celebration. Students from three sixth-grade classes were gathered in a large room for the culmination of their study of the country of their ancestry or choice. The students were dressed in native attire and had information and food samples typical of their selected countries.

The three classes and an assortment of guests—parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, and friends—numbered about 100 people. As we were walking from display to display, talking with the students and tasting food, we suddenly heard the students call out, "... 3, 4, 5."

Then there was silence in the room. Everyone faced the teacher, Cindy Wong, and she spoke. Then everyone went back to what they were doing.

Later I asked Cindy what she did to quiet the room so quickly. She said, "Dad, it's a variation on your three-step technique. I have a five-step procedure because I teach younger students than you do, so I wanted to be more specific as to what I wanted."

"My five steps are these:

1. Eyes on speaker
2. Quiet
3. Be still
4. Hands free (put things down)
5. Listen

"The way it works is, I say, 'Give me five.' They go through each of the five steps in their mind.

"I have rehearsed them in this procedure, so when I say, 'Give me five,' it takes them no more than five seconds before I have their attention."

I asked, "Do all three sixth-grade classes know this routine?"

"Yes," she said.

I replied, "Wow. This has now become the culture for all the sixth graders."



Cindy Wong and the Give Me Five plan as posted in her classroom.

3 Min
Time to
Write
Sharpen
Put in
Keep

Procedure for the Start of the Period or Day

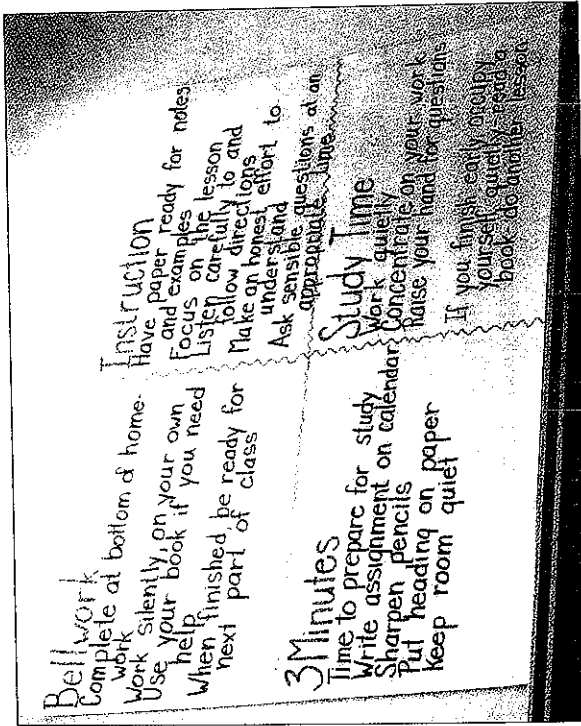
An effective teacher always has the procedure or schedule posted or ready for distribution when the students arrive. For previous examples of how efficiently this is done, see pages 121, 122, and 124.

Here is another example of a procedure for the beginning of the school day.



Morning Routine

- Remove jacket.
- Empty backpack or bag.
- Get core folder.
- Sharpen pencil.
- Check for the following:
 - Books for core
 - Assignment
 - Binder
 - Pencils and pens
 - Paper
- Begin start of class sponge activities:
 - Grammar and punctuation
 - Word of the day
 - Morning message
 - Overhead



Routines are the hallmark of an effective classroom.

Please turn to page 203 for an example of a teacher with no opening morning routine and the subsequent disaster in the classroom.

Procedure for Students Seeking Help

Hand raising is not effective when students want your attention. There are better methods for students to use to get your attention.

The class is at work and you are walking around the room helping.

You see a hand up and say, "Pam." The whole class stops to look at you and Pam.

Pam says, "May I sharpen my pencil?"—a reasonable request.

You say yes or no, and the class goes back to work.

A few seconds later, you see another hand up. You say, "Carlos," and the whole class stops to look at you and Carlos.

Carlos says, "I need your help"—an appropriate request.

You say, "Wait a minute," and the class goes back to work.

Every time you speak, you interrupt the class. These interruptions occur frequently, often two or three times a minute.

You would be distracted if the principal came over the loudspeaker two or three times a day, no less two or three times a minute. Before you complain that the principal makes a few announcements during the day over the intercom system, consider how many times a teacher interrupts a class when the students are concentrating on their work.



Student Methods for Getting the Teacher's Attention

Without Interrupting the Class

Hand signal: The student signals with different number of fingers.

Toilet tissue tube: The student signals with a colored tube.

Styrofoam cup: The student signals with the position of a cup.

Index card: The student signals with a message on an index card.

Textbook: The student signals with an upright textbook.

Hand Signal

In this system, the students signal the teacher with a predetermined number of fingers. The number of fingers raised corresponds to a predetermined request established by the teacher.

Post a sign on the wall with your hand signal chart. Then train your students to use the system.

- ✓ If they wish to speak, they are to raise the index finger.
- ✓ If they wish to leave their seat, they are to raise two fingers.
- ✓ If they need your help, they are to raise three fingers.
- ✓ When you see a signal, silently respond to the signal with a nod of the head or a gesture of the hand.

The important thing is that the class is not disturbed.

A Difference in the Noise Level Alone

Dear Rosemary,

We really enjoyed seeing you again at our symposia. The wonderfully creative and practical ideas you gave us will be put to good use. My husband is already using your hand signals in his grade 5/6 classroom, and he can't believe the difference it has made in the noise level alone.

Thanks again for all of the above, and so much more.

Debbie Fraser
Kirkham, Ontario

To Obtain the Teacher's Attention, Raise—

One Finger:
"I wish to speak."

Two Fingers:
"I wish to leave my seat."

Three Fingers:
"I need your help."

Toilet Tissue Tube

Take an empty toilet tissue tube and wrap one end with red construction paper and the other end with green construction paper. The tube is placed with the green end up on the student's desk.

The procedure when the student wants the teacher's attention is to turn the tube so that the red end is up and to **continue to work**. When the teacher comes to help the student, the green end is turned back up.

Styrofoam Cup

Tape a short length of string to the bottom of a Styrofoam cup. (Styrofoam cups are suggested because they are noiseless.) Tape the other end of the string near the edge of the desktop, and leave the cup dangling off the table.

The procedure when the student wants the teacher's attention is to place the cup on the desk and to **continue to work**.

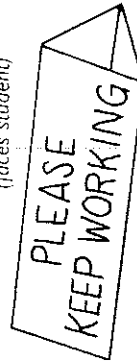
Index Card

(faces teacher)



Fold and tape an index card into a three-sided pyramid. On one side write, "Please help me." On another side write, "Please keep working." Leave the third side blank. Place the card on the table so that the blank side is facing the student.

(faces student)



The procedure when the student wants the teacher's attention is to turn the card so that "Please help me" is facing forward. The student sees "Please keep working" and is reminded to **continue to work**.

Textbook

High school teachers may appreciate this simple system. The procedure when the student wants the teacher's attention is to take a textbook and place it in an upright position and to **continue to work**.

Procedure for the Movement of Paper

If your students are sitting in columns and rows, it is more effective to have them pass their papers across the rows to the side of the room rather than up the row to the front of the room.



Students should pass their papers across the rows, not up the rows.

Why? Here are the problems with passing papers up to the front of the room.

1. If papers are passed up the row, you cannot see what is happening behind each student's back as you stand at the front of the room waiting for the papers.
2. Some students tap, poke, shove, and hit the back of the student in front to announce that the papers are coming up the row. Others wave the papers in the face of the student in front. No matter what is done, the student in front is irritated, words are spoken, and the disturbance in the class increases.
3. When papers are passed from hand to hand, some papers may fall to the floor.
4. There are frequently more students up a row than across rows.
5. Thus passing papers up a row takes longer to accomplish and is frequently accompanied by student agitation.

There are advantages to passing papers across the rows to the side of the room. The procedure is as follows:

- Step 1.** Have the students place their papers on the desk next to theirs, starting with the student at one end of the row.

Step 2. The next student is to add his or her paper to the stack and place the papers on the next desk. Do not have the students pass the papers from hand to hand. This will eliminate flicking of papers as papers are passed.

Step 3. As the students pass the papers from desk to desk, monitor the procedure, making adjustments and corrections when necessary and praising when appropriate.

Step 4. Walk to the side of the room and look across all the rows to monitor the procedure. This tactic allows you to see across the rows, whereas you cannot see behind the backs of students when you stand in front of the room and they are passing papers forward.

Step 5. Pick up the papers, or ask a student to pick up all the papers. If the students are sitting at tables instead of chairs in a row:

- ✓ Have the students place their paper at the head of the table (point to the designated spot).
- ✓ Have students or an aide pick up the papers, or do so yourself.

It is not a good procedure to have the students place their papers in a basket on the teacher's desk. This procedure involves too much movement and too much of a mess left behind.

Whatever procedure you choose to use for collecting papers, rehearse the procedure the first time you collect papers.

Your Class Could Learn on Its Own

When students know how the class is run, they will be more willing to do whatever you want them to do. You can then have an exciting and challenging classroom with much learning for mastery because procedures and routines manage the classroom.



The ineffective teacher begins the first day of school attempting to teach a subject and spends the rest of the year running after the students.

The effective teacher spends most of the first week teaching the students how to follow classroom procedures.

- ✓ Students risk failure because of the lack of STRUCTURE.
- ✓ Procedures and routines create STRUCTURE.

At-risk students are a topic of concern in the schools. Being at risk has nothing to do with a student's intelligence, gender, skin color, socioeconomic background, or administrative support. The reason students—and teachers—are at risk is that they lack STRUCTURE in their lives. Procedures give both students and teachers structure. Many students come from dysfunctional (unstructured) homes. The effective teacher provides structure so that students have something familiar and secure that they can rely on.

Having special rituals is reassuring to a student—it gives the student something familiar to fall back on. Rituals don't have to be elaborate, but they need to have a certain regularity. They can be as simple as knowing where to line up for an elementary student and knowing where to go quickly in the face of danger for a secondary student. It's ironic that teachers have a lounge that they can retreat to, but students do not have a safe haven that they can retreat to.

Once you have procedures in place, you can have responsible students. **The only way to have responsible students is to have procedures and routines for which the students can feel responsible.**

And once you establish structure and responsibility, you can have the most exciting classroom in school, doing all the challenging and fascinating things students love to do, and you will be able to leave school knowing that if you were not in class tomorrow, the class could responsibly run itself.

If You Were Not in Your Classroom, Could Your Class Run Itself?

Elementary Teacher

I am a single parent and it is sometimes difficult to leave for work on schedule, but I was on time. Alas, my good fortune was not to continue because traffic came to a halt on the freeway due to an accident. As I sat in my car waiting to resume my commute, I tried to imagine the scene in my classroom. I could not call to let anyone know I would be late. What would 25 unsupervised fifth graders do? What would I find upon my arrival? Would the gym teacher be annoyed because we were all going to be late for gym?

What I found in my classroom was a beautiful reward for 20 years of loving students and striving to making them responsible and self-sufficient. To my amazement, I found an empty classroom and the following note left on my desk.

Dear Ms. Gould,

We took the attendance, did the lunch count, completed our morning math warm-ups, and went to gym.

Love,
Your Class

I cannot agree with you more on the importance of clearly defined procedures and routines. My students are proof of this.

—Sue Gould Flynn
Williamsville,
New York



High School Teacher

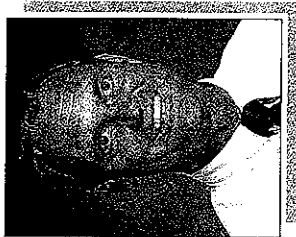
I arranged for a substitute teacher and left lesson plans in my grade book (world history and P.E.). Unfortunately, the substitute teacher went to the wrong room and arrived with 10 minutes remaining in first period. He found the students on task, working on their assignment. They had opened the classroom through another classroom, recognized the lack of a teacher, taken the roll book from my desk, taken the roll, found the lesson plan in the book, and proceeded with the lesson for the day.

There's more! On the day that I was absent we were on an assembly schedule. The substitute teacher did not know of the schedule change. During my prep period, he left the campus to run an errand, planning to return by regular fifth period.

Unfortunately, while he was gone fifth period happened. As I arrived the next day, this is what I was told. "When you didn't arrive, Mr. Wall, we took the roll for you. When you still weren't here, we did our calisthenics. Then we went outside to do our activities. When it started to rain, we came back in and played our game in the gym."

It wasn't planned, but my daily procedures had taken hold of my classes and the students never missed a beat. Procedures and routines work!

—Bob Wall
Susanville, California



College Professor

My students range in age from twenty to late fifties, studying to be teachers or school administrators. My classes are "working" classes, highly structured for production and learning. All grading is performance-based. Schedules are set; the classes run themselves. Students know what is expected, and they know how to accomplish the tasks. They work on the team concept. There is no stress, and the results have been overwhelming. I walk into class and everyone is working; many continue working after class is over. Everyone is on time, and no one wastes time.

I can leave my classes "in charge of themselves." By providing structure, I am able to leave ... to deliver papers. Where are my students? In class, accomplishing their goals! Once, I returned and found the following note.

Dear Dr. Walko,

Everything went very well. You would have been proud of us. In my group all were present and participated in the activity. I'll give you an update next week.

Myra Brown (and all signatures)

There are waiting lists for many of my courses. Why? Because you are expected to work!

—Ann Walko
Kean College of New Jersey



Procedures to Rehearse with Students

Entering the classroom
 Getting to work immediately
 When you are tardy
 End-of-period class dismissal
 Listening to and responding to questions
 Participating in class discussions
 When you need pencil or paper
 Keeping your desk orderly
 Checking out classroom materials
 Indicating whether you understand
 Coming to attention
 When you are absent
 Working cooperatively
 Changing groups
 Keeping your notebook
 Going to the office
 When you need help or conferencing
 Knowing the schedule for the day or class
 Keeping a progress report
 Finding directions for each assignment

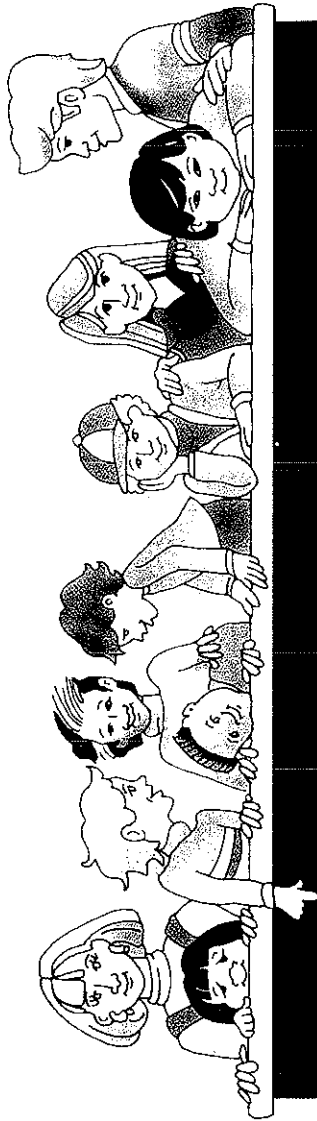
Passing in papers
 Exchanging papers
 Returning student work
 Getting materials without disturbing others
 Handing out playground materials
 Moving about the room
 Going to the library or career center
 Headings on papers
 When you finish early
 Returning to a task after an interruption
 Asking a question
 When a schoolwide announcement is made
 Walking in the hall during class time
 Responding to a fire drill
 Responding to an earthquake
 Responding to a severe weather alert
 When visitors are in the classroom
 If the teacher is out of the classroom
 If you are suddenly ill
 Saying "thank you"

*You seemingly waste a little
 time at the beginning to
 gain time at the end.*

—Lynn Chape Fin

Procedures and routines established early in the school year free up the rest of the year to be devoted to teaching and learning in the content areas.

Remember, it is the procedures that set the class up for success to take place.



The Effective Teacher

1. Has well-thought-out and structured procedures for every activity.
2. Teaches the procedures for each activity early in the year.
3. Rehearses the class so that procedures become class routines.
4. Reteaches a procedure when necessary and praises to reinforce when appropriate.