

My theory of discipline is related to Positive Discipline. I believe that teachers can be both firm and kind at the same time. Showing care and concern for students, and interest in their lives is important for creating a positive, caring environment in the classroom. Respect will be part of my classroom rules. I will explain that I expect them to give respect, and they should expect me to respect them. My goal is for students to feel that they can be open, and that I can be someone that they can talk to if they need it. While kindness is a big factor in this, so are discipline and firmness. Students will never feel safe in a place where other students are infringing on their ability to learn, and hurting their self-esteem. This is why enforcing rules is so important in creating a safe environment for students.

Rules would have to be taught on the first day of school, and would be ongoing in the first few weeks of school. They must be taught explicitly. Students should also see examples and non-examples demonstrated in the classroom. It would also be necessary to define certain words, like respect.

My discipline plan would be based on stars. Everyone would start the day with 4 stars. If someone breaks a rule, I would give them one verbal warning. After that, they would lose a star. For each lost star, there would be a consequence and/or lost privilege. Along with dealing with negative behavior, I would use my own rewards system, called Star Points. Star Points would be given out for good behavior and/or good academic performance during the day. Students can collect their Star Points until the end of the month. At that time, there would be an auction, where students can buy toys and other fun trinkets with their Star Points.

4 stars	Good job! (5 Star Points)
3 stars	Warning! (3 Star Points)
2 stars	Stop and think! 5 minutes off recess
1 star	10 minutes off recess (student writes a note to parent)
0 stars	Referral

My basic rules would be to follow directions and to respect others. At the beginning of the year, the students would have input on the other three class rules.

When dealing with minor misbehaviors that may not require the removal of a star, I would use eye contact first. Especially in my class, the students know when they are doing something wrong. If it is extremely minor (and the student is not breaking an explicit classroom rule), eye contact is a quick and non-disruptive way to regain a student's attention and/or get the student back on task. I also like to include the student's name in a sentence. It is also a quick way to regain the student's attention, and I would think that the student would stay on task longer. Moving closer to the student is also a good option in this situation. If the behavior were persistent, I would have the student pull their tab (class discipline plan).

Serious misbehavior would probably fall under breaking the classroom rules. The student would have to remove a star. Consequences are built into removing stars, and can also be seen on the table above. When a student reaches 2 stars, he/she loses 5 minutes of recess. At 1 star, 10 minutes of recess is lost. The student must also write a note to his/her parent explaining what they did. This note must be signed and returned to me. If a student reaches the red card, he/she is referred to the office. Other consequences are also built in. For example, students also lose out on Star Points when they lose stars, which affects their ability to buy fun items at the monthly auction.

I think that if I were dealing with chronic behavior with one student, I would probably start with a self-monitoring system, with some type of small reward. I might build it into the Star Points system by giving the student a few more Star Points (2-3) a day for staying on task. Then I would gradually try to wean the student. If it were an extremely disruptive behavior, I would probably start with a behavior contract, with a reward that was different from the one used for the rest of the class. If it were a class problem, I might start with some problem solving, and include a class reward. Then I would gradually increase the stakes. A very serious class-wide behavior issue would probably require me to use self-instruction.

Tattling is actually a problem that I have been seeing in one student in my class. I think that I will do what my teacher did at the beginning of the year. She told the students that they are all responsible for their own actions, and that if someone next to them was breaking a rule, that they should just make sure that they are following the rules. This really seemed to work for the rest of the class, but one student has been tattling a lot lately. Both my teacher and myself have been trying to respond by asking questions like, “Who are you responsible for?” and “What should you be doing instead of concentrating on other people?” to try to get her back on task. This, in my opinion has not really been working. As far as I can see, the student tattles on another student at least once a day for extremely minor offenses that are so insignificant that we would probably ignore it. The next step would be to clarify that I should be notified of student misbehavior only if someone is being hurt or being made to feel uncomfortable.

Cheating is something that should be dealt with early and often. I would remind students at the beginning of each test that eyes should stay on their own papers, and that we should be quiet during the test. I would do it more from the perspective of being respectful of everyone during testing. At the beginning of the year, we would probably have a class discussion about what constitutes cheating, and what times are appropriate to help each other with work. If it were to happen, I would want to make sure that I spoke with the student privately about it, and get their side of the story. I would have to make a decision about consequences from there. If a light consequence were necessary, I would probably have the student lose some free time. If a harsher consequence were required,

the student would probably lose a privilege, and I would write a note to the parent. A privilege would be having a classroom job, or being student of the week.

Stealing would also warrant a note home to the parents. Before doing that, I would still have to speak to the student to get their side of the story. That would decide the content of the note. If the act were not malicious, I would ask the parents to explain the difference between taking and sharing. I would also have to have this conversation with the student, and explain that things may be a little different in school. If the student did know what they were doing, the student would definitely lose privileges.

If a student were to use profanity in the classroom, I would have to remember to calm down before dealing with the situation. I would probably be upset, and give out a harsher consequence than necessary, especially if a student was just repeating something that they heard. I would always want to make sure that I made it clear that such language is inappropriate. If it were said in anger, the student would lose a privilege.

Defiance is something that I might want to be a little more proactive about. If I saw such behavior developing, I would want to make sure that I deal with it right away. I would want to give the student strategies to deal with anger and/or express themselves, and I would also make sure to stop problems as early as possible. Some strategies would be asking for a minute to calm down, teaching conflict resolution, or providing the student with words to use to express their feelings.

Even in elementary school, we must address the topic of inappropriate physical contact. Touching other students in an inappropriate way would be disrespectful, and would therefore fall under the discipline plan. At the beginning of the year, I would want to ensure that I explicitly state that inappropriate touching would be a non-example of respect. Of course, I would want to have a conversation with the student to prevent it from happening again. If I thought that a behavior was strange for a child's age, I would make a note of it, and speak to the student to make sure that everything was okay.

One of the most important things that I can do to prevent violence is being aware of what is going on in my classroom and the school. If I see that an argument is beginning to escalate, or that one student is truly making another student angry, I would be able to help both students calm down, or separate them if necessary. This would greatly reduce violence in the classroom. However, if a physical altercation does happen, the first thing I

would make sure to do is to move the other students away from the situation, so that they don't become injured. After that, I would try to get the students' attention by speaking very loudly and/or making a startling noise. If that does not work, I would ask one of the students to go get an administrator. After the fight ends, I would want to separate the students, and talk to each student to calm them down. I would want to do some conflict resolution over time to attempt to establish a positive relationship between the students. If it were a verbal altercation, I would approach the situation calmly and quietly, and separate the students the students so that they could calm down.

Overall, in any classroom, it is necessary to reward good behavior just as much, if not more, than giving out consequences for negative behavior. This is especially important when dealing with students that misbehave on a regular basis. Whenever these students display favorable behavior, I will make sure that I compliment them. It may sometimes be better to thank people for good behavior instead of reprimanding people for bad behavior. Part of a management plan can also include some type of reward for good behavior. In my classroom, I would use a system where students receive tickets (Star Points), and could trade in those tickets for fun items or free time.