

## P-5: Establish behavior management plans

## A plan to teach and invest students in rules and consequences

**What should I make sure to do in my plan?**

In order to establish your classroom management system, you need to first devise a plan that clearly explains what your rules and consequences are and why you have them. In creating a solid introduction to your behavior management system that will influence student decisions, plan to:

[Discuss the purpose of rules](#)[Explain, model, and practice what each rule and consequence means](#)[Require students to demonstrate understanding of the rules and consequences](#)**Discuss the purpose of rules**

- **Plan to discuss the need for rules** with your students, both at the beginning of the year and periodically throughout the year. If students recognize the rationale and value of rules, they are more likely to become invested in them.

**Examples:**

- Educational researcher Robert Marzano recommends beginning this process by exploring real-life situations that require rules: For example, most students have a sense that there are certain expectations for behavior during dinner when guests are at the house that are different from the rules and procedures that apply when only family members are having dinner together. Similarly, most students are aware of the fact that there are rules and procedures governing behavior in church that do not apply to the behavior in one's own living room. A discussion regarding the importance of rules and procedures in situations outside of school provides a nice set-up for the discussion of classroom rules and procedures.<sup>1</sup>
  - Cecily Feltham (Los Angeles '99) wants her third graders to develop self-discipline and begins to discuss the concept of "cause and effect" with her students on the first day of school. She asks the students, "What happens when you drop a bowling ball on your foot? Talk in pairs for ten seconds, and then I may ask you to explain your partner's answer." Students are quick to point out that dropping a bowling ball on your foot has the negative effects of inflicting pain and perhaps breaking toes. In the ensuing discussion, Cecily leads her young students to understand that not paying attention, not thinking actively, and not putting energy into their work has negative effects as well – namely that one doesn't get smarter, people don't respect you more, and you don't gain more social and economic capital. On the other hand, if students do meet behavioral expectations and work hard by exercising self-discipline, those benefits (i.e. "effects") probably will be realized.
- **Plan to explain the benefits of following rules**, including how each specific rule connects to your learning goals. For example, plan to explain to students that the rule for "listening when someone else is talking" is designed to let all students learn as much as possible from one another so that together the class can reach its goals.

**Explain, model, and practice what each rule and consequence means**

When developing an explanation of your management system, plan to:

- **Have students brainstorm what each rule means and provide examples of what following each rule looks like (and doesn't look like) in action.**

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<sup>1</sup> Marzano, Robert. *Classroom Instruction that Works*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2001.

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This is especially important for rules that encompass several behaviors, such as “Respect your classmates” or “Class time is for class activities” and for younger children who may not understand what different concepts like “respect” and “listening” mean.

### **Example for Respect:**

<b><i>What this looks like</i></b>	<b><i>What this doesn't look like</i></b>
Using kind words when expressing opinions or talking about other students; keeping your hands to yourself; helping out others when they are in need	talking back, eye rolling, teeth sucking, gossiping, teasing, insulting other students, touching other people's property

- **Model what it looks like** to be following each rule and have students role play to help demonstrate

For example, to model listening plan to show what it looks like to sit up, have eyes on the speaker, remain silent when others are talking, ask questions when confused, etc.

- **Review the progression and meaning of the consequences.**
- **Role play what it looks like to receive consequences** using student volunteers
- **Consider using a “class contract”** that lists each rule and their explicit related behaviors. Give students their own copies and ask them to read through them and sign them. Keep these for future reference or have students keep them in a binder that remains in class.

### **Require all students to show comprehension**

Don't assume that students know what the rules and consequences mean simply by watching a demonstration. You must also require students to show they understand your management system. Plan to:

- **Probe student understanding** through questions to determine if students have internalized the rules and consequences – plan alternative explanations to help address anticipated misconceptions
- **Test students** on the rules of the classroom with a cause-effect quiz.
  - Some teachers have students draw cartoons of appropriate and inappropriate student behavior, akin to the “Goofus and Gallant” duo
  - Consider having students view hypothetical classroom situations and evaluate what rules are or are not being broken, and what consequences should be administered