

Why Classroom Management is Important

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Classroom management is the answer to running a successful classroom. Properly managing a class brings on a smooth running day filled with routines and learning. Once children know what is expected of them, and there is an understanding of mutual respect between the students and the teacher, it opens the door for endless possibilities. A well-managed classroom looks easy, and learning comes naturally, because the majority of the time is not spent on redirecting or dealing with unwanted behaviors. It is spent exploring, experimenting, making mistakes, and learning from them. There is a sense of love and kindness between the students and their teacher. Children feel safe to go outside their box, test their boundaries, learn from each other, and express themselves. Classroom management matters, without it learning will not thrive.

A thriving classroom comes with well-behaved students. I hope to be working in a preschool classroom someday soon, and even though they are very young, I will have high expectations for them. I think the bar needs to be set on the first day; students need to come in knowing what is acceptable and what is not. I want my students to learn and play as children but to have manners and treat themselves and the people around them as adults. Marzano says the attitudes we present to our students in the morning will set the mood for the rest of the day (Marzano, 2003). I think this is very important, first impressions are everything. If I start every day off on an angry foot, my students will sense that mood and feed from it. I want to start every day on a positive note, in hopes that my students will have a positive attitude about that day. If the feeling in the classroom is positive everything will go smoother, even during difficult situations it is easier to bounce back into a positive attitude to complete the day as it started.

Behavior is a major learning experience, especially in the preschool age range. At this age we will be learning not only how I feel and what these feelings mean but, how do I deal with them. This part of development is a very exciting and interesting process that takes time. This is why I think it is so important to create a general understanding of what is expected when it comes to behavior.

Behavior in my classroom will not only be about learning how to deal with different emotions, but also learning what it means to be a student. I want my students to know routines, be able to function when the routines change, be good listeners, take turns and share, show respect during conversations, and learn proper language to tell people how they feel and what they are thinking. The majority of preschool deals with behavior. According to Marzano in *Classroom management that Works* effective classroom management comes with having rules and procedures. I think having guidelines and procedures that children know will happen each day will create the effect of familiarity. This type of management gives students a sense of responsibility. If they know what to do, when to do it, without much direction, if done properly, they can feel as though they are running the show. Children, especially young children, thrive off of having a routine. People like having direction and a purpose, routines give students this and make transitions much easier (Marzano, 2003). Without classroom management, rules and procedures would not work and the structure of the classroom would feel inconsistent.

I want to teach my students to be independent learners and problem solvers. In *The Highly Engaged Classroom*, Marzano talks about teaching self-efficacy. For me this means reflect reflect reflect, I want to teach my students to constantly be asking themselves questions such as; how did I do on that? What could have I done differently? How can I make this better? Teaching my students to ask themselves these questions before they ask for help will make them

more independent; in that they will be able to help themselves (Marzano, 2011). With independence comes problem solving. I want to try and answer their questions with prompting questions to help them arrive on the answer. I think the best way to learn, is by figuring out it out.

I expect my students to come into my classroom at all different levels and from different home lives. I want them to leave knowing not only all the standards they need to be successful for kindergarten, but also what appropriate behavior is. All of this cannot be done without good classroom management. Appropriate behavior is not an easy thing to manage. Every student is only used to their parents behavior management techniques, until they come to preschool. I want to eliminate any kind of unwanted behaviors that children know they can “get away with” at home. At a certain age children become knowledgeable of what their actions can get them. “Acting your age” will be a big part of my preschool class; just because something works a certain way at home, does not mean that is how it works in a school setting. If students are old enough for school they are old enough to “act their age”. I want my students to take responsibility for their actions and learn from them. Saying all of this sounds so plain and simple, but I know it will be a struggle at times and will require patience.

Talking about behavior is often focused on the negative; I want my students to show positive behavior and get rewarded for it. Realizing that acting appropriate and being polite comes with benefits in making friends and in their learning. Receiving credit for being responsible and displaying proper behavior will give my students a sense of pride to motivate them. Marzano talks about many ways to provide positive reinforcement. Letting parents know that their child is doing well and treating others with respect is a great way to make the child feel important and proud of their actions. This type of reinforcement gives the student praise not only

from their teacher and peers but also from parents outside of the school setting. A great way to practice positive reinforcement is through simply pointing out good work or actions in front of the working class. A comment such as: “OH! I like how well you are organizing those blocks, that will help you and your friends find them all next time”, will spread motivation like wildfire. When children hear their friend getting praised they automatically step up their game, and the whole class starts displaying positive behavior in hopes of impressing their teacher (Marzano, 2003).

To promote positive behavior I want to use positive reinforcement more than negative reinforcement. I realize that all people have bad days and would prefer to be left alone. Sometimes adults do not realize that children can function this way as well, that is why I would like to have a section of my room for students to use when they need time away from all the stimulation. A cool down is always a good way to deal with unwanted behavior. I also like the subtle reminders Marzano tells about in *Classroom Management that works*. Something as simple as a wave of the hand or a gesture of some sort to end a behavior before it starts is a good technique to use in situations to not disrupt the rest of the class. Teaching students different cues and how to read body language can make a big difference in managing a preschool class (Marzano, 2003).

Classroom management also deals a lot with the type of environment that surrounds my students. I want to provide an environment that is organized, displays my student's interests, hard work, and feels safe. At first my students have to be able to want to come into my class; therefore it has to appear inviting and fun. Environmental factors can have a large impact on classroom and behavior management. According to Program-wide Positive Behavior Support (PWPBS), which “is a promising model for addressing the behavioral needs of children in early

education environments(Carter, 2011).” The program is described as an early childhood service with the philosophy that accommodates diversity, ability levels, what students are interested in, and has a setting where each student is respected as an individual learning at their own pace. PWPBS works closely with their student’s families to help the see the student as a whole. They work in small and large groups according how students learn best. A lot of this program focuses on training educators and staff how to set a proper learning environment to best teach their students (Carter, 2011).

A proper learning environment helps students be able to focus on what is being presented to them without being distracted by what is around them. Environmental set up is a part of managing a class, and without it students’ learning can be distracted. I want to manage my environment by using interest areas. I want my students to have a choice and take charge of their time and learning. Having an open environment with different areas comes with teaching students how to properly use and act in each interest area.

Being a teacher is a constant learning experience and classroom management can always be improved. I picture my self being able to know my students so well that I can predict what will happen and when it will happen. I want to be able to run my classroom in a way that provides my students with inspiration and excitement about learning. I want to be able to find the needs of students and give them options to choose what would best benefit them. I want to create independent thriving little learners, ready to take on the world around them and be successful in their next step into kindergarten. I believe all of this can be done by being aware and starting with good classroom management.

References

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