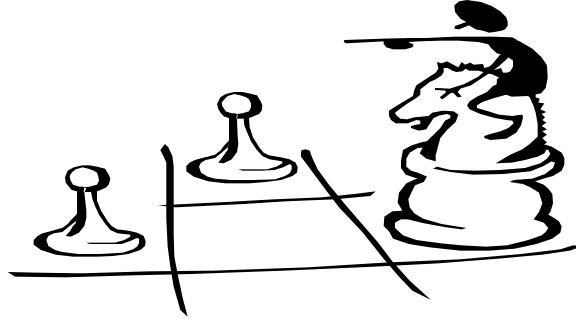


Structuring Classroom Experiences for Success

Proactive Management Strategies



Using redirection to manage undesirable behavior

Understanding the problem

Teachers often confront student misbehavior using a "frontal assault" strategy -- that is, they confront the student, point out the misdeed, and request (or demand) that the student cease the inappropriate behavior (e.g., *Johnny, you are talking inappropriately. Stop talking.*). While being very explicit in communicating your expectations is important, doing so in a confronting manner may increase behavior problems rather than eliminate them. This is especially true with preadolescent and adolescent students. These confrontations place teachers in combative position ripe for power struggles.

Many adolescents have not become behaviorally literate, although they may be quite savvy at behaving at inappropriate times, they often have little understanding of important

A key to the solution

For older students, *redirection* is used to explicitly request that students engage in alternative positive behaviors. The teacher does not specifically point out the inappropriate behavior and what not to do. Rather, the teacher focuses on the desirable behavior and requests that the student engage in it (e.g., *Johnny, I need for students to concentrate right now, so please focus on your work. You can have your conversation after class.*).

Redirection is a useful technique for signaling students, in a manner that does not cause them to resent you and thus shut down, that their present behavior is inappropriate. The approach helps students modify their behavior and increase their power as learners.

factors such as knowledge how their behavior is triggered or reinforced or how the behavior impacts themselves or others. Confrontation management techniques tend to "shut students down" rather than facilitate the development behavioral literacy.

To begin the process of becoming behaviorally literate, teachers need to help students become aware of their social strengths and shortcomings. This is an ongoing process that is dedicated to promoting students' dignity and self-esteem. Redirection is one tool that can help teachers do this effectively by consistently encouraging personal development and social responsibility.

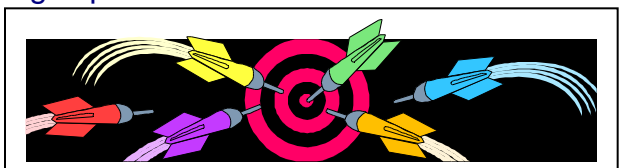
Management Tips

Step 1 Reflect on the character traits and values that you want students to demonstrate in the classroom to build a community of learners. The focus should be on the development of integrative and productive ways of interacting with others that support dynamic learning activities.



Step 2 Review your expectations, rewards, and consequences for learning and behavior. Ask yourself if your expectations pass the "RRA" test. Are they reasonable, realistic, and age-appropriate? Talking with colleagues can be helpful in creating and maintaining a balanced perspective regarding your teacher expectations. It is also important to consider whether you expectations, rewards, and consequences compliment the character traits and values that you wish to promote.

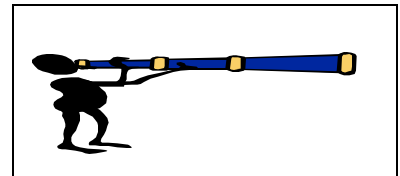
Step 3 Ensure that you have clearly and repeatedly communicated these important expectations, rewards, consequences, character traits and values. Clearly communicating expectations for cooperative behaviors helps promote students' understanding of the social world. To maximize their effectiveness, they



need to be reviewed and encouraged continually and consistently. For example, you could make the following statements during the instructional activity, *When you are engaged in cooperative learning and Think Pair Share activities today, you need to demonstrate your life skills of flexibility and organization. You also need to encourage one another to use the Ready, Aim, Fire strategy to stay on top of things.*

Also consider how students will be visually and/or auditorily reminded of the expectations, rewards, consequences and life-skills, on a regularly scheduled basis. This is an important consideration for students who experience visual and/or auditory processing difficulties. Incorporating visual and/or auditory prompts into the daily routine is an effective approach for doing this. They are used to systematically cue students that expectations and/or life skills are being recognized or that they need to be demonstrated. For example, cartoons could be used to visually prompt students to use the Ready, Aim, Fire strategy and demonstrate positive character traits and values to promote cooperative class behaviors.

Step 4 During instruction, look for students who are meeting the behavioral and academic expectations and demonstrating positive character traits and values that promote cooperation and immediately acknowledge their success, verbally or nonverbally. For older students nonverbal signals (e.g., thumbs up) may be more effective reward. With younger students, verbal praise is usually more appropriate.



Step 5 Use redirection during instructional activities when students are engaging in disruptive behaviors. These signals can be verbal or nonverbal and they can be overt or covert. An example of overt, verbal redirection is when the teacher states, *You need to actively listen, stay focused, and participate today.* A more subtle form of nonverbal redirection would be for the teacher to pass by the student's desk and gesture towards the assigned activity. Calling student's attention to an unrelated activity can also prevent or interrupt disruptive behavior.

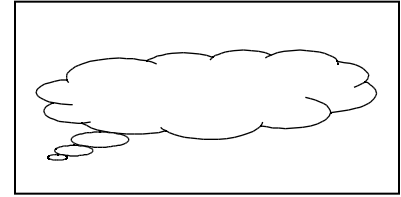
Jazzing It Up

1. Vary the types of redirection used in the classroom. Students will satiate (get bored or burn out on) quickly if one type of redirection is repeatedly



employed. To avoid satiation, you should be predictably unpredictable with redirection. For example, if you consistently use verbal redirection with students try humor.

2. Teach students how to redirect themselves by using self-talk. For example, *I am frustrated and bored with this class today. I need to get involved by using my Ready, Aim, Fire strategy. This will help me to get back on track.*



3. Promote behavioral literacy. Teach students to become aware of their behavior. Self-monitoring can be used to facilitate this process. In conjunction with self-talk, teach students how to self-monitor. Self-monitoring is a recording system for whereby students to count their desirable and undesirable behaviors. A student can be taught to count the number of times he uses the Ready, Aim, Fire strategy to get back on track and increase participation in class discussion on a daily basis. The student then uses self-talk as on-going encouragement or motivation to achieve the desired level of behavioral performance. Self-talk and self-monitoring are tools to transfer control of rewards from teacher to student and to change the motivation from extrinsic to intrinsic.

Sample self-monitoring card:

Goal Card: Use the Ready, Aim, Fire strategy to increase participation to 5x in a 50-minute class period.

9:00 AM _____
9:10 AM _____
9:20 AM _____
9:30 AM _____
9:40 AM _____

TOTAL: _____

Please record the number of times you used the strategy to increase your participation during each 10-minute period with a tally mark. Remember to praise yourself for using the strategy to get yourself back on track.

NOTE: This card can be laminated and students can use water-soluble markers such as a pens to record desired behaviors.

What's Next?

In addition to redirection, there are a number of other techniques you can use to make positive or desired student behavior(s) happen. These include...

- Maintaining an appropriate instructional pace
- Using proximity
- Restating expectations and using remembering cues
- Providing warm assistance
- Providing encouragement
- Ensuring format flexibility
- Facilitating smooth-sailing transitions