

# **Models and Expectations**

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## Models and Expectations

In an effective program of instruction, students play the role of good students and have strong, positive self-images. Both the role and the self-image can be taught. If they are taught properly, students work hard, have pride in themselves and their school, and treat what happens in school as very important.

### Background

Two different groups of studies have documented how people learn roles and how positive self-images are developed.

### Roles

The traditional notion of roles was that they develop slowly over time and that the learning of the roles occurs a detail at a time. It doesn't happen that way. Roles are learned as a whole belief system. They are learned quickly, and once learned, they influence a broad range of behaviors. A student who aspires to be a good student adopts all the behaviors of the good student. The student rehearses what is learned in school, thinks about it, becomes concerned about doing well, and takes pride in academic achievements. Students who have these roles work harder and learn more. Students can be taught these roles quickly.

### Self-image

The traditional notion of self-image is that if you tell students that they are smart or that math is fun, they will develop positive images about themselves or math. For years, the NSF has tried to convince females and minorities that math and science are good fields that they should go into. Currently, the NBA is promoting the ideas that "Reading is Fun," and that reading is "Cool," by having NBA stars model reading and discuss their love of reading.

**This approach has never worked because self-images are built on data, evidence, and facts—not slogans and empty endorsements.** Even if an at-risk student did want to be cool through reading, a lot more than being motivated would be needed before the student would succeed. Motivation without mastery will lead to evidence that the student cannot read. Likewise, a person won't think that math is fun if she is not able to work math problems. She will quickly discover that math is a horrible experience. The general rule is that a person who receives continuous data that some of the others around him are succeeding on activities that he can't do will not have a positive self-image about the activity.

The correct notion of self-image is that if students succeed in math and if they believe that what they have done is important, they will tend to like math and they will

know that they are competent in math. Students who receive evidence that they are learning to read tend to like reading and feel competent about reading.

**Establishing positive roles and positive self-images is very important because students with positive roles and self-images work harder and learn faster.** They learn faster because they spend more time practicing. As a consequence, you don't have to work as hard to teach them. You don't have to repeat and firm as often. You don't have to nag them to work, and you don't have to constantly try to keep them on-task. They want to work hard because they have accepted the challenge and because they are proud of their achievements.

The importance of positive roles is apparent by considering how two different students respond to difficulties in a new-learning situation. One student has a good self-image and one has a poor self-image. The student with a good self-image is confident of being able to work through difficulties and thinks, basically, "I can do it if I keep on trying." That student will keep on trying and will succeed. In the end, this student will be able to confirm, "I knew I could do it if I just kept on trying."

The interpretation of difficulty is quite different for the student who believes that he is not competent. This student believes, "I can't learn well." When he makes mistakes, he uses the difficulty as evidence both that he is not competent and that there is no point in continuing. So he quits. In effect, he says to himself, "I knew I couldn't do it, so I'll quit rather than continuing to fail." The irony is that if he had continued, he probably could have succeeded.

The point is that both students use the same information to support two different strategies, one for continuing and one for quitting. Both create self-fulfilling prophecies. The student who succeeds will be able to say, "I knew I would succeed," while the student who fails says, "I knew I would fail." The beliefs that students have is often accurate, based on what they have experienced. The failure student has had a history of failure. He knows that he has been unable to learn things that other students have learned. We can change that student's self-image through effective instruction and the use of techniques that will bolster the self-image, but do so realistically, so that the student is provided with evidence that supports the interpretation that he is capable and therefore should continue to try in the face of difficulty.

### **Overall Strategy for Establishing Roles and Self-Images**

Roles and self-images go together. The reason is that for a student to be effective at adopting the role of a successful student, the student must have a self-image of a successful student. The instructional job that faces us is to *sell* students on performing a particular role and make sure that they receive the kind of feedback and evidence that would give them information that they have the image of someone who plays that role successfully.

We want smart, self-confident students who look forward to instructional challenges and who want to learn new material. These goals imply what we have to do to change the typical failure attitude into the one that will serve the student far better, both while we work with the student and afterwards—for the rest of the student's life.

1. We make sure that students succeed. We do this basically by placing them appropriately in programs so that they are able to master the material. They learn to read and learn to perform various mathematical operations. Their rate of errors tends to be low. They receive lots of demonstrations that they are able to master whatever material the teacher presents.

2. We show them through our behavior that what they are learning is very important. We praise students who use what they learn. We show by our responses that we are impressed with their performance. We also remind student who don't use what they learn that we are providing them with powerful tools that will help them later in life. They must practice these tools and use them all the time. They must think about what they are learning and use it. We use procedures that require them to recall, apply, and MASTER material.

3. We provide them ongoing information that they are meeting or exceeding our expectations. We interpret their efforts and show them that we are impressed. We respond to their achievements as important, so they will respond to them being important.

4. We interpret failures or difficulties so they do not serve as signals for quitting. We not only provide them with evidence of success, but evidence that counters interpretations that they are not capable. The evidence that we use is the data on their performance—where they are, what they are learning, and where they will be at particular future times.

5. We show them that we do not tolerate competing roles. We make our expectation for their performance clear; we reinforce it frequently. We provide rules for how the students are to work as a team and respect the others on the team. We show them through our behavior that students do not have the option of not playing on the team. We also show them that their role as a team player is attractive. If they accept the role as a team player, they receive many benefits including many impressive accomplishments.

6. We use procedures that make it relatively easy for them to accept the role. We don't introduce their role slowly; we lay out the rules, responsibilities, and benefits at the beginning of the year. We know that the longer we wait, the more difficult it will be to eradicate some of the inappropriate roles that students have been reinforced for playing (the non-compliant student, the disinterested performer, the clown or limit-

pusher, the disrupter). When they come into the classroom, they learn not only the material, but their role.

7. We recognize that students learn from models they observe and that unless we carefully control the models they encounter in the classroom, we will not be able to be effective with the full range of students. Some of the children will follow models that are not conducive for academic learning or the kind of self-discipline that is implied by this learning. We recognize our importance as the primary model that shows students what's important, what's not tolerable, what's exciting, even what's funny. We recognize that our job is to act in a way that is appropriate for communicating to them how they should respond. If something is important to us, it will tend to be important to them. So we show emotion. We eliminate competing roles immediately, so the other students don't encounter models of students playing inappropriate roles and "getting away with it." If they get away with adopting other roles, the role we're trying to induce is shown to be negotiable. That role isn't negotiable so long as we have responsibility for teaching all students skills and attitudes that will maximize their chances for academic success.

To achieve the general outcomes described above, we will need to follow a program that provides specific detail about what to do and when to do it.

This program addresses four major aspects of inducing roles:

1. making expectations for student performance clear and positive;
2. showing students what evidence indicates that they are succeeding in their role;
3. eliminating all competing roles; and
4. providing reinforcement and celebrations for good performance.

#### 1. MAKE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE CLEAR AND POSITIVE.

We let students know about their roles two ways:

- 1. We tell them what we expect them to achieve.**
- 2. We respond positively to their performance.**

**Expectations for achievement are different from our expectations for comporment.** We expect students to attend, to follow our directions. Our expectations for achievement are different. We expect students to learn to mastery; to use what they have learned; to show pride in their achievements; to accept a job that requires their full attention and hard work.

**At the beginning of the year, on the first day of instruction, tell students what their goal is and how they will go about achieving that goal.**

**The goal is to learn a lot and to learn it very well.**

"We are going to work as a group, and we're going to learn so much you are not going to believe it. We'll learn so much that we're going to be one of the best teams in this whole school. That's our goal, to be the best. "

**(1) Show them some of the material they are going to be doing at the end of the year.** For instance, if they are in first grade, show them one or two of the stories they will be able to read by the end of the year. "You are going to be able to read these stories all by yourself by the end of the year."

**(2) Let students know that only very smart students are able to achieve this goal.** And help them draw the conclusion that they are very smart students if they are able to achieve this goal. "I know a lot of students in third grade who can't read these stories, but you'll be able to read them. Why do you think you'll be able to read them? . . . Yes, you'll be even smarter than you are now."

**(3) Tell students their duties and responsibilities:**

**(a) Tell students about their job.** "Here are the rules about your job. Everybody in this group is to learn well and to work hard. What's the job of everybody in this group? . . . "

"Listen: When you work hard, you get smart. Say that rule. . . . "

"When you work hard, you think about the things you are learning. Say that rule. . . . "

"You don't just go home and forget about what we do in school. You're going to use everything you learn, so you have to make sure you know it well. And when you think about what you learn, you'll be ready to learn new stuff the next day. Remember, to get smart, you think about everything you learn in school."

**(b) Tell students that they are part of a team that works together.** "Everybody in this group is on the same team, and we work as a team. So we have to

work well together. What do we do together?” . . . “Nobody can do things that keep others on the team from learning. Everybody is polite to the other members of this team. Nobody calls anybody names. If somebody is having trouble learning something, we do what we can to help them out. Remember, part of everybody’s job is to work well with the other members of the team.”

**(c) Relate all specific behavioral rules and expectations to the broad rules about reaching the end-of-year goals and working together as a team.**

You will tell students about the specific rules they are to follow during reading, language, and math lessons—where they keep their books, how they sit, how they follow along when others are reading. When you introduce a lesson, always tell students **why** they have to follow these rules. The answer is not that you want to be authoritarian or that rules are rules. The answer is that if the team is to reach its goal, everybody needs to follow the rules. For instance, starting the lesson on time becomes important if the team is to reach its goal. “Listen, you need to have all your material ready so that we can start right on time every day. If we can’t start on time, we can’t get as far, and we want to get all the way past lesson 150. If we lose three minutes a day, we won’t even get to lesson 135.”

**2. USE EVIDENCE TO SHOW THAT STUDENTS ARE SUCCEEDING IN THEIR ROLE.**

**To induce roles, you probably will need to refer to the rules at least a hundred times during the year. By referring to the rules frequently, you will show them that the rules are important, and that you attend to them. You will also ensure that the students attend to them.**

You’ll refer to the students’ performance as evidence that they are good students and that their role is important. You will use evidence of performance both to bolster students’ self-images, and to assure that they continue to work hard.

Providing students with evidence that they are competent and are able to succeed on whatever you teach them is very important. The reason is that a student with a good self-image responds to evidence of failure quite differently than a student with a poor self-image. Good students treat failure as evidence that they should try harder. Students with a poor self-image use the same evidence as proof that they are not competent.

## **General Strategies for Presenting Evidence**

**(a) The three things you want to make sure you tell your children many times during the year are: where they are now, how far they have come from where they started out, and how close they are to attaining a goal (end-of-year goal or intermediate goal).**

The basic message that you convey through these observations is that there is an evidence base that proves students are making progress. This evidence base implies that students are capable of achieving progress that is not only real but that meets or exceeds your expectations.

The basic steps that you'll take in presenting evidence are:

(a) You establish a way of displaying evidence so that students have ongoing information on their progress.

(b) You display the record in a way that shows the end-of-year goal for a particular subject, possible intermediate goals and their projected dates, where the students are now with respect to the goals, and where they started.

(c) You treat this record as if it is important. You discuss projections of where students will be; you express your expectations for their performance; you refer to the progress they have made since the beginning of the school year. You interpret the evidence to provide them with the message that they are moving closer to their goal because of the performance, and that if they keep going at their current rate, they will reach or surpass the goal.

**Thermometer charts and records of lesson progress are very good vehicles for meeting the various display requirements.**

The thermometer chart has rows for "degree." Each row has slots. The number of slots on each row equals the number of students in the instructional team. If there are 20 students in the team, each row has 20 slots. At the top of the thermometer is the goal and the date for reaching that goal.

The chart may have 50 rows. If there are 20 children in the team, they would have to produce 1000 perfect papers or perfect assignments to reach the end-of-year goal.

Progress is shown on the thermometer chart by filling in all the slots for a row, then moving to the next row. When all the slots in the bottom row are filled, the next slot that is earned is the first one in the next row.



There are different possible arrangements for students earning slots. All of them, however, have to do with demonstrated mastery. For example, once a week, you could give a series of individual turns to each student. Each student who gets nine of ten items right on their first attempt fills in one slot on the thermometer chart. Or, you could use in-program tests, or perfect papers, as a basis for students to earn slots. Possibly, passing the in-program test earns a slot. Possibly, every workbook assignment that is perfect earns a slot. Possibly, every lesson in which the students have a perfect accuracy record for a paired-reading passage earns a slot.

At least once a week, you would summarize the performance for the week and relate it to the goal. As noted above, you would model the behavior of treating this record very seriously. For example:

“Remember, when we started out I thought that we wouldn’t be able to get 200 perfect papers before December. But we’re at the beginning of October, and you’ve already got 186 perfect papers. If this team keeps going this fast, you’ll go off the top of the thermometer chart before April. That’s amazing!” And very motivating to students. They will work hard to get the 200<sup>th</sup> perfect paper very soon. And they will continue to work hard so long as you treat the record of their performance as something that is important—a symbol that they are smart and are working hard.

Although there are other ways to display data, the thermometer chart is an excellent device for meeting all the requirements for a record of performance. Each row shows that the team is a team. All contribute to the completion of each row. The chart displays the ultimate goal and possible intermediate goals. The chart is correlated with calendar dates, so that you could establish a certain number of perfect papers by a date, such as Thanksgiving. The chart is visual so that the projections of progress are easily shown as rows that are higher on the chart than the row the students are currently filling. The chart provides a graphic evidence that the individuals make up the team and that team performance relies on the performance of the individuals. Perhaps most important, the chart displays a record of mastery in learning new material. So, when you or the students refer to the chart, you’re not just referring to units of “work,” but units that show how much the team has grown in knowledge.

### **Intermediate Goals**

Establish intermediate goals as indicators of how well the students are doing and as reference points for possible celebrations of student achievement. A good plan is to set up at least four intermediate goals. Use the school calendar to figure the number of school days and then calculate the number of papers that would be required to reach the various places that you mark on the chart. Write the number of papers that they are projected to have and the date. For instance, 50 rows by Thanksgiving, or 30 rows by Halloween.

You may have a thermometer chart for each subject—reading, math, spelling, language. An efficient practice would be to establish the same intermediate goals for each chart.

#### Procedures for Interpreting Student Progress:

The manner in which you respond to the data is very important in determining how students will respond to it. If they are to assume a particular role, you must assume a particular role. **Your role is easier if you recognize that good teaching is acting.** When students do well, you act animated and excited. You act the same way you would if a friend of yours did something very important. “Wow, that was impressive.” The reinforcement should not be a flat statement, but should provide evidence that you are both pleased and impressed with what the students are doing.

When students are trying but have trouble, you let them know that they will learn and that the problem doesn’t imply they are failures. “That stuff is really tough, but you’ll get it if you just keep working at it. You’ll see.”

When children are not trying, you let them know that you don’t accept what they are doing. You let them know what your expectations are for them. “Everybody on this team works. You’re on the team. So let’s get to work.” When the student tries, you reinforce the effort. “You’re working now. Good for you.”

#### To Maximize Students’ Efforts, Follow these Guidelines:

**1. Always make your estimates conservative so that students will be able to exceed your expectations.** Exceeding your expectations is far more reinforcing to students than simply meeting your expectations. (Not being able to meet your expectations is very punishing, so you never want to state an expectation that they can’t achieve.) If you think that the students should be able to achieve 30 rows on the thermometer chart by Halloween, show them that you expect them to achieve the 30<sup>th</sup> row by the middle of November. In that way, they will be able to exceed your expectation.

**2. Tell students when they are progressing at a rate that exceeds your stated expectations.** “I really didn’t think you’d be able to get 30 rows on the chart before the middle of November, but something strange is happening here. It’s only the first week of October and this class has 23 rows on the thermometer chart. If you keep going this fast, you’ll have 30 rows by Halloween—maybe even before Halloween. Why is that happening? . . . This team may be a lot smarter than I thought it was. What do you think? . . . ”

**3. Update goals using the same conservative estimates.** If students already have completed 35 rows by Halloween and the goal for Thanksgiving is 40 rows,

change the goal for Thanksgiving, but do so in a way so that students will probably be able to exceed your expectation.

“We’re going to have to change the goal for Thanksgiving, because we almost have 40 rows completed now. I don’t know how that happened, but it did. So, let’s set the goal for Thanksgiving at 45 rows. That means that you have to get 10 more rows between now and then.”

If your act is convincing, the students will most probably argue with you and point out that they should be able to do more than 10 rows of perfect papers in that time. Resist changing it too much. “I don’t know. That’s a lot of papers. I’ll tell you what. I’ll add 3 more rows, but that’s as far as I can go. You’ll be very lucky to meet that goal.”

Don’t change original numbers for any dates other than the number for the next intermediate goal on the chart. The original projections provide you with a good basis of showing your original expectations for the students. For instance, if the next original goal had been 48 by Christmas break, and students already have 49 by Thanksgiving, you have the opportunity to show just how much more the students learned than your original projections suggest. “Look at that. You already have more now than I thought you could earn by Christmas. We really have to change that number for Christmas, don’t we?”

**4. At least once a week, provide a progress summary.** Don’t wait until students have reached an intermediate-goal marker. Give them a quick update every week. Try to summarize the progress, relate it to the performance of individuals, and relate it to the projections. For example, “Let’s see what we did this week. It looks like we completed just about four complete rows. That’s pretty darn good. Listen: Raise your hand if you got three perfect papers. . . . Good for you. You’re helping the team a lot. Raise your hand if you got four perfect papers. . . . Nice job. Raise your hand if you got more than four papers . . . .” Then you call on each of these students and ask, “How many perfect papers did you get?” Respond by saying things like, “That’s just outstanding. We have some superstars on this team. Thank you.” Note that you want to provide reinforcement for those students who contribute a reasonable amount, and you give relatively more praise to those students who performed best. But you don’t want to praise them so much that you frustrate the other students to the point that they want to give up. A good practice is to provide some individual measure that will provide reinforcement for all members of the team. “Here’s the last one. Let’s see all the students who helped the team reach its goal. Raise your hand if you got at least two perfect papers during the week. . . . Look at that! Every single member of this team is contributing. What a team. . . . Now it’s time for that team to get to work on math. Everybody, open your textbook . . . .”

Note that this entire process does not take very long—possibly two minutes—but it is probably the most important two minutes of the week in terms of reinforcing positive roles for all the students.

### **Using Counter Evidence**

From time to time when the group has a bad day or has trouble with new material, students seem to lose some of their motivation to learn. You don't want to attend to this situation too much or you'll reinforce students for quitting or not performing. If they are trying, however, the record provides you with data that you can use to reassure them. For instance, the typical corrective reader will tend to have difficulty on the second reading of the story. Early at the beginning of level B1, they'll often make more errors on the second reading than the first. This tendency will change as they learn how to remember the corrections that they received on the first reading. However, they often have a relapse when the material becomes more difficult, possibly around lesson 30.

**To give students evidence that boosts their self-image, show them how far they've progressed.**

**Show them the difference between what they are doing now compared to what they were able to do at the beginning of the year.** Often, the best source of information is not the thermometer chart, but the actual instructional material, such as the students' reader or workbook. For instance, show them one of the earlier lessons in which they had trouble. "Look at this story. Do you remember the trouble some of you had with it and the number of errors you made? That wasn't very long ago, but the words in this story are easy for you now. Just look at how much harder the stories are that you're working on now. You're reading material that's three times more difficult than you could at the beginning, and on most lessons, you have very few errors. So, don't tell me that you can't learn this stuff, and don't quit on me, because when you do that, you quit on yourself. Just keep trying, and you'll get this stuff. You'll see."

**After students have mastered the new material that gave them trouble, use their achievement as evidence that they are competent.** "Remember, a couple of days ago, I told you that you'd get it if you kept on trying. You kept on trying, and what happened?

. . . Yes, you got it. Don't forget that. You can get it if you keep trying."

### **Summary of Using Data to Motivate**

The record on the thermometer chart permits you to make two important types of comparisons. Both of these were illustrated above.

**1. To strengthen efforts to attain the goals, compare where they are now with the goal.**

**2. To give them self-image information that they are competent, compare where they are now with where they were earlier.**

The comparison of where they are now with the goal shows how much more they have to learn and the time they have for the learning. It leads to the conclusion that if students work harder or work longer, they'll reach the goal faster. An implication is that if they can achieve this goal, they are smart. Only smart students are able to learn those end-of-year skills in one year. This team is going to do it easily. So the members of this team are really smart.

When students are receiving evidence from their performance on the lessons that they are having trouble and therefore may not be that smart, compare their current performance to where they started out. Show them how much they have learned.

**Remember, if students think they are capable of learning and that what they are doing is important, they will work very hard and will learn a lot more than they would learn without these beliefs. The beliefs may be predictably induced by using tools that permit students to “map their progress” and by responses from you that tease students to keep trying harder.**

The Context of Mastery:

**All evidence about progress and what students have learned is based on a strict requirement that the students master the material.** Teachers who permit students to move on without achieving mastery or who do things like permitting students to keep taking a test until they pass it are not giving students convincing evidence. If the teacher provides praise for the performance, the students will either not completely believe the teacher because they have evidence to the contrary, or they will discover later that they had false hopes. They will certainly fail.

Possibly, the teacher who works with the students next year will provide students with a reality check, by moving them back in the program to where they will be able to achieve mastery, and by establishing realistic goals. If these goals are to provide more than false hope, they must be achieved within the strict context of mastery. Teachers who tell students that they are doing a wonderful job after these students have received evidence that they are not able to learn the material are not going to change the students' attitudes about success and failure. Students like to hear that they are doing well, but they won't believe it if they have strong contradictory evidence. The praise must be for an effort that students know they deserve.

Summary for Providing Evidence:

**1. State an expectation as something that is very difficult and something that may be achieved only by those who are smart and who work hard.**

**2. When students meet an expectation, let them know that their performance indicates that they are smart and that they worked hard.**

**3. Use the same techniques for the individual students and for the team. Keep a strong emphasis on the team's performance because the group is a source of good models for those students who may not have strong images of themselves.**

**4. Use evidence at least once a week—evidence based on thermometer charts and evidence based on lesson performance and rate of progress through the programs.**

**5. Use intermediate goals to keep students informed about where they are now, how far they have already progressed, and how far they have to go to reach their goal.**

**6. Use evidence to bolster students when students are down, by comparing where they are now with where they had been; use evidence to keep them working hard toward the goal by comparing where they are now with the goal.**

### **3. ELIMINATE COMPETING ROLES.**

**The only models you want any student to observe are good models.** You don't want them to see students who throw their worksheets on the playground and get away with it; who don't work hard in the reading team and get away with it; who don't seem to care about what the group is learning; or who are successful at being disruptive. **These models are very dangerous because they show everybody in the team that there are options about how to seek reinforcement.** A student who is exposed to these models knows that it is possible to get attention by opposing the teacher and the rules. The student also knows that following the teacher's rules is not something that goes unquestioned. If these inappropriate models are eliminated, quickly and thoroughly, students will see only positive models. Students will follow these models.

You must make sure that you stamp out competing models and show students who are attempting to adopt other roles that they will not succeed. A general outline of what to do has eleven requirements:

**1. Eliminate the behavior early in the school year.** The longer the teacher waits, the more resistant to extinction the student behaviors will be. In other words, you will need a lot less effort to eliminate the behavior early in the school year than you will later on. The reason is simply that the students don't have to abandon strategies that they have used successfully and don't have to learn new strategies.

Sometimes, teachers assume that if they do not respond to the inappropriate behavior, it will go away. This is true if you have contingencies set up so that only those students who play the role of good students receive reinforcement. In most classroom settings, ignoring inappropriate behavior will not result in the behavior diminishing. The opposite is more likely to be true because the student gets attention from the teacher and from all the students in the classroom. A typical trend when inappropriate behaviors are not addressed is that students who had been performing acceptably will begin to adopt the same inappropriate behavior.

**2. From the beginning of the year and continuing for at least a month, present a set of behavioral rules to the students every day.** The rules should cover how students are to behave and what is not permissible. The rules should cover how the students are to perform in the classroom during team-work and during independent-work times. There should also be rules that cover how students behave in the halls, lunchroom, bathrooms, and on the playground. These should be presented before students engage in activities involving these places.

Bring students to mastery on these rules. Have them recite the rules. "Everybody, what's the rule about helping other students?"

**3. Use the rules as a reference point for providing specific praise or punishment.** When students do things that are good or that are bad, the behavior is covered by one of the rules. **When you respond to the student, first name the rule that is associated with the student's behavior, then present the contingency based on what the student did.**

For instance, if the student lets another use her eraser, that behavior might be covered by the rule, "We will help other students when we can." To praise the student for her good behavior, the teacher could say, "Kim, you just did a good job of following one of our rules. Do you know which rule that is? . . . Yes, you helped another student by letting Amy use your eraser. Good for you. You get a bonus point."

Follow the same format for misbehavior. To respond to two students who are fighting in the room, first stop the fight and separate the combatants. Then say to them something like, "You broke one of our rules? Which one? . . . You know that when you break the rules you have to pay. What do you think you should have to do to pay for

what you did? . . . “ **Typically, students will specify a consequence that is far more severe than you will provide.**

Remember, use the rules as a reference point for responding to the students' behavior. **When you use this strategy, you do not have to be the “bad guy.” You simply blame the rules.** You are not meting out punishment. You are simply acting as an agent of the rules. You don't have to get unduly angry with the students. If they object to some of the things they are required to do, tell them, "Well, I'm sorry about that, but we have to follow the rules. You'll find that this happens throughout your life. Sometimes, you don't like the rules you have to follow, but you still have to follow them."

**4. Use a strict criterion for enforcing the behavioral rules.** Do not permit back-talk, foul language, or open opposition to following your directions. **Above all, follow the reliable behavioral rule: Catch students in the act of doing well and acknowledge their effort.**

**5. Either remove or transform non-compliant or disruptive models immediately.** The mind-set that is needed to respond to inappropriate models has two parts:

(a) You assume that every student in the school is your student. You are concerned with how every student performs. If you observe a student doing something well, you respond to it by praising that student. If you observe something that presents a poor model to other students, you confront the offender—immediately.

(b) You can't stand to see inappropriate models anywhere in the school because you recognize the dangerous effects they have. You recognize that an incident in which a student provides an inappropriate model does not involve a single student, but all the students who observe this behavior. Note that some students may behave “inappropriately” when they are at home. That has nothing to do with the requirements at school. These students are perfectly capable of learning a school role that is different from their home role. We may not be able to influence the student's home situation or the contingencies that control it; however, we do have the tools necessary to change the student's school role into that of a good student.

**If the inappropriate behavior occurs in the classroom, and if the student does not comply with the rules when confronted, immediately remove the student from the team or classroom.**

**If the inappropriate behavior occurs in another place on the school premises, respond to it immediately.** If a student from another classroom is misbehaving in the lunchroom, respond to him the same way you would if your student misbehaved in the classroom.



**6. Use time-out to deal with serious behavior problems.** The time-out procedures should be designed for students who are not following the rules. Not all schools need time-out provisions. They are often needed, however, by the school that is learning to teach effectively. Usually, when the school is well implemented, there are so few inappropriate behavioral models that a new student with a history of being disruptive is not disruptive in the school.

For the school that has serious behavior problems that are not being effectively addressed, a good plan has time-out provisions in the classroom and a time-out station in another part of the school. If students do not comply with time-out rules in the classroom, they go to the out-of-class time-out station. So long as they are quiet in the in-class time-out facility, they do not present a serious “model” problem. If they continue to be disruptive in the in-class facility, they should be removed from the classroom immediately.

The most important part of the time-out procedure is the criterion for returning the student to the team. The student first has to be quiet and compliant in the time-out room for a specified period of time. The student then has to earn his way back into the team. That involves doing two things: paying for the infraction of rules, and making a convincing verbal commitment that he will not break the rules if he is permitted to return to the team. The student may be required to be perfectly quiet in the time-out room for 20 minutes. This student will have to agree to repay the time that had been lost, agree to pay an additional amount for the infraction, and possibly say what he will do three times before being permitted to return to the classroom. “I will not do things that prevent other team members from learning.”

Often, when the student is returned to the classroom, the teacher requires the student to repeat the activity in which the disruption occurred. “Okay, Tyrone, here’s the assignment you were doing before you had to leave the room. Remember, you’re going to finish it quietly. Raise your hand when you’ve done that . . . .”

**7. When a student receives punishment for violating the rules, make sure that the other students in the class know why the offender was removed from the team and what the offender has to do to get back into the team.** You should be as concerned with what the other students have observed as you are with what the offender did. For example, you would explain, “Tyrone is in time-out because of the way he yelled and carried on. Before he can return to the team, he has to convince me that he’ll not interfere with your learning or with my teaching. He’ll also have to do things to pay for breaking the rules.”

**8. When the offender returns to the team, remind the others the slate is clean because the offender has paid for the infraction, and that the student is once more a member of the team in good standing.** Make sure that you treat the offender as a full member of the team, not someone who is on probation. Act as if you

assume that the offender will now play the role of a good student. "Tyrone is back and we're glad to have him back. He's going to work hard and follow the rules. And he's going to be a good, strong member of our team. Welcome back, Tyrone."

By demonstrating to the other students that you do not hold grudges, you reinforce the message that you are following the rules, just as the students follow the rules. This message of fairness is very important for the students to receive. It shows them that procedures for school are different from those in other places. **School is a sanctuary where each student is protected against unfair treatment from other students or teachers.**

**9. Use the same standards for dealing with all students.** This principle is important because it shows that you are fair, that the rules are fair, and that you have regard for all students. Although very important, this principle may be the hardest for some teachers to learn. They dislike some students and tend to "get on their case," while other students are favored and receive a different kind of treatment from the teacher. Responding to all students with the same standards requires practice and possibly a different attitude of how to interact with the students.

**10. Adopt the attitude that shows no favoritism by thinking of your role as acting.** As pointed out earlier, to do your job in a superior way, you have to act in ways that may be unnatural but that produce the results you want. Your natural responses to some situations may be anger. There may be some students you simply don't like. **When you teach those students effectively, you have to adopt a kind of detached attitude that permits you to perform the behaviors that are appropriate for the different situations. With this attitude, you can act pleased without being pleased; you can praise students you would otherwise dislike; and you can discipline a student you like in the same way you would discipline one you don't like.**

With practice, you can get good at playing this role, but it takes practice. Once you master it, however, you will find that you have great control over how your students respond. You will be able to generate eagerness, hard work, and excitement. You will be able to have fun without being afraid that the students will somehow get out of hand. And you will probably discover that some of the students you didn't care for very much are much nicer than you had originally judged.

Try to adopt this teaching orientation. It will make you a better teacher and permit you to promote excellent effort in your students. When school starts, put on your teacher role and keep it on.

**11. Work particularly hard at establishing schedules, roles, rules, and models starting with the first day of school.** Your goal should be that students are performing well by the end of that month. Often, teachers have the mistaken belief that it takes students a while to acclimate to school; therefore, these teachers don't follow a

strict schedule, don't often start academic work on the first day of school, and don't present activities that may generate behavior problems. This logic is wrong on all counts. If the teacher reinforces students for not engaging in academics or responds to their complaints with some form of negotiation, the students receive messages that are not conducive to school or learning. The longer the teacher waits to introduce rules, the more difficult it is for the students to comply with these rules, because the teacher has reinforced students for behavior that is incompatible with the rules. The easiest time to deal with behavior problems, roles, and schedules is—if not on the first day of school—certainly within the first two days, with serious work beginning on day one.

Working harder during the first part of the school year has many payoffs, the greatest one of which is that you won't have to work nearly as hard for the remainder of the school year. When all students are playing their roles and there are no serious behavior problems, teaching and managing the students is much easier than it is if the behaviors are not changed early in the year. There should be no behavior problems (except those that are occasionally created by the admission of mid-year transfers to the school). After the beginning-of-the-year adjustments, teaching should be fun. The students are on-task, have adopted academic goals, perform schoolwork with the same kind of alacrity that they engage in physical challenges and games. With proper encouragement from you and proper instruction, students should look forward to beating the timelines that you have set for achieving the various goals.

#### 4. SCHEDULE CELEBRATIONS FOR GOOD PERFORMANCE.

The final ingredient necessary to get the most effort and greatest cooperation from students is to provide payoffs for achieving important goals and sub-goals. Here are the rules for effective celebrations and recognition ceremonies:

1. These events should not occur with great frequency, possibly two per major subject area during the school year and no more than eight total.
2. The celebrations should be presented as important, highly-anticipated events.
3. The celebrations should not consume great amounts of time.
4. The more significant events should occur at the end of the school year and should present the strongest reinforcers.

**Frequency:** A good blueprint presents a mid-year and end-of-year celebration for math, language, reading, and a recognition ceremony for overall academic achievement. If there are many more celebrations, they become relatively meaningless. Fewer celebrations are possible, but there should be at least four—one mid-year

celebration for each of the major subjects and one at the end of the year for overall academic achievement.

**Creating Highly Anticipated Events:** The students should know when the events are to occur, why they are to occur, and what will happen during them. The basic rule is that if you respond to the events as if they are significant, the students will tend to respond the same way. A good procedure is to plan the events around meeting lesson-progress intermediate goals; around completing a specified number of rows on a thermometer chart; around test performance (most conveniently around in-program tests); or around events like completing a level of the program.

Good intermediate goals would be something that students could achieve either by the first week of December, or around the first week of February.

The simplest event is a short celebration, such as a popcorn party. In preparing the students for the events, use quick (less than 1-minute) reminders about the celebration and how it is related to the students' performance. For instance, "Remember, if we can get that 50th row of perfect math workbook pages before the end of this week, we'll have a celebration next week. We'll eat popcorn and give some awards to students who did very well and who showed improvement. So work hard and keep those perfect papers coming."

When students have achieved the goal, you may arrange a beginning-of-day announcement that is presented to the entire school. "Mrs. Jennings' third-grade class has more than 50 perfect workbook pages in math. They will have a celebration on Wednesday. Congratulations to all the students in that class who have been getting perfect papers."

If you are able to obtain stickers or posters, let the students know that these are part of the celebration. "There's going to be drawings for posters, and some students are going to get stickers that you would die for."

On the day before the celebration, give them a reminder. "Remember, our schedule is going to be a little different tomorrow. Does anybody remember why? . . . Popcorn and awards tomorrow. Raise your hand if you're going to be there . . . . And remember why you're having this special celebration. Why? . . . "

If students don't give good answers, set up the rules for future celebrations so that only students who are able to tell why they are having a celebration go to the celebration. This may seem like an unnecessary provision, but it is very common for students who are having a celebration not to know why they are having it.

On the day of the celebration, there could be another school-wide announcement: "Today's the day for Mrs. Jenkins' students to celebrate their perfect workbook papers in math. Have fun."

**Length of celebration:** The biggest mistake that teachers make in planning a celebration is to allocate far too much time for it. The celebration should take no more than 20-30 minutes, not the entire afternoon or even an hour. In an unstructured atmosphere, students do well for possibly 10 minutes. After that, things tend to go downhill. So keep the activity structured and efficient. The celebration can start with a reminder of why it is happening and the snack. After about five minutes of snacking, start with the awards.

The celebration should include all the students who are in the team or class, and all will receive popcorn, soft drinks, and other goodies. The students who did not achieve the goal or contribute significantly to the achievement should not be excluded from the celebration and should not be singled out in any way. They simply do not receive all the recognition that others in the team receive.

**Awards for achievement and improvement:** Present one category of awards to students who did the best (contributed the most perfect papers, or contributed at least 30 perfect papers, or read with the fewest errors).

**A general rule of thumb for individual awards is that no less than two-thirds of the students should receive an award, and all awards are earned. None are charity awards or conscience awards.**

**A good plan is to set the criteria so that about half of all the students in the team or class receive recognition or prizes for academic performance.** The prizes can range from stickers to books to posters or to special pens, pencils, etc.

"I'm going to read off the names of those students who had at least 15 perfect papers. Please stand when your name is read. . . . That's a very strong group of students. Let's hear it for them."

Present a second category of awards to students who showed good improvement.

**Ideally, at least one-fourth of the students would receive awards for improvement.** "Some students started out not being able to get any perfect papers, but they kept working and working until they started to get some perfect papers. Some of them have already done 8 or 9 perfect papers. So we are very proud of them. Because of their hard work, they are getting smarter and smarter and our teams are moving faster and faster." Note that these awards are not conscience awards, but are based on objective data of improvement.

At the end of the celebration, make a short speech about how well the class is doing. Present a challenge for the next goal. "We're off to a very good start, and I heard some of the students say that they think we can double the amount of perfect papers that we have by the end of the year. I don't know if that is possible, but what do you think? . . . We'll find out. One way or another, this is one smart class and I'm very proud of you."

### **End-of-Year-Events**

The end-of-year events should be the most important. They should involve some sort of awards or symbols that students can keep. For instance, for a combined performance in math and reading, students could earn medals at the end of each school year. The award-presentation ceremony would be an assembly, with awards presented to individual students, and to groups or classrooms. A good practice is to have at least some of the end-of-year awards based on performance of students in passing individual or team "challenges." Some of these may be in the form of team competition based on what students have learned in math, science, and general information. You may present students with a series of questions based on any of the stories, facts, or rules that they have learned in their reading program. Each student may be presented with 30 questions. If they get at least 27 questions right, they pass the challenge. You may arrange for similar challenges in math and science. You may have additional challenges for "cultural literacy facts." Students who pass a challenge receive a sticker. Students who earn 5 stickers, earn a certificate. Students who earn 5 certificates earn medals.

The awards are generally presented by grade level at two assemblies. One covers K, 1, and 2. The other covers grades 3 through 5 or 6. The format for both assemblies is the same except that the presentation for the beginning students is faster-paced, with fewer words. Students from each class walk up on the stage, individually receive an award, and stand on stage until everybody in the class has received an award. Then the students have their group picture taken, and the audience applauds their performance.

Special awards are then presented to students and groups that have achieved exceptional performance.

On the day of the award ceremony, students who have received awards in past years are permitted to wear their medals to school. The school newspaper or local newspaper carries a story about the award.

Ideally, a large percentage of the students earn awards. Again, these are not charity awards. To earn them, students have to truly master the material. When a large percentage of the students receive awards, the message about the school and about

the role of students is very clear. The school stands for and celebrates academic excellence. The large number of students who receive awards is evidence that the students in this school share the quest for excellence.

The short speech that accompanies the award should carry a very strong theme about learning and achievement. “You can do it if you try.” Everything you learn is a possession. Take care of it the way you would other prized possessions.” . . . “You can grow physically only about an inch a year, but if you work hard, you can grow enormously during a year.” . . . “Knowledge is power.” . . . “The more you learn, the greater the number of choices you’ll be able to make later in life and the more you’ll be able to help others.”

The tone of the celebration is one of pride and resolution to continue striving for learning and excellence. When this message is clearly conveyed by the fabric of the school—the teachers and students, the practices and priorities—not only will the school maximize the learning of each student, it will provide a health-care service to the community that is unmatched by any other institution. It will provide students with the kind of acceleration and attitudes that greatly increase their chances for both academic success and life success.