

Managing Student Behavior

In *Poor Richard's Almanac*, Benjamin Franklin wrote, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The same goes for student behavior. Here are some proven techniques for preventing behavior problems:

Be clear. Be clear about your standards and expectations. Set up a system of rewards and punishments and make sure students understand it. Enforce the system fairly, which may not mean treating every student the same. See page 11 for pointers about rules and consequences.

Establish a routine. Establish a procedure for routine tasks, including attendance, pre-class work, distributing and collecting materials, dismissal and class transitions. Post the procedures to remind students what they are.

Offer choices. Give students the opportunity to help design their own curriculum and choose among several options for learning and showing what they have learned.

Help students see the uses of what they learn. Make the curriculum meaningful to the student's current needs. Include community service and work opportunities.

Be flexible. Recognize when students have not grasped material and change your approach. Learning is not easy to segment into predetermined time blocks, especially since students learn at different rates.

Give written instructions. Be explicit. Remember that students may misunderstand or forget oral directions.

To Strengthen Your Classroom Management Skills ...

