

## **Instruction, Warning, and Correction**

### **Why Expectations Are So Important**

One of the biggest reasons why teachers experience disrespect and irresponsibility with their students is because they fail to establish clear expectations at the beginning of the school year. For some reason, educators today feel they have almost been forced to lower their expectations because of parental pressure or because they have to be sure that every student does well. Even students that do not perform up to teacher expectations are told that they are doing well. This does nothing for the student but set him up for failure later in life when he realizes that he is not as smart as everyone had told him he was. What about behavioral expectations? Teachers have been asked to reduce them as well. Teachers have been told that the students may have a handicapping condition such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD,) or they lack self-control, or that the students' circumstances or his environment have dealt them a cruel blow and they are just not capable of performing up to a teacher's expectations.

Here are some basics that must be in place in order to build respect and responsibility in their students. First, teachers must be completely aware of what they want their classroom behavioral expectations to be. This includes classroom rules and procedures. Any behavioral expectations are included in rules or procedures. Then teachers need to clearly teach their students what their rules and procedures are. Finally, teachers must determine that the students understand and are clear about what the rules and procedures are. Too often students will say, when confronted with their behavior, that they didn't know a rule or that the teacher never told him or her about certain classroom rules, procedures, or expectations.

If teachers are to develop the qualities of respect and responsibility in their students they have to communicate what is expected through direct instruction. This instruction must be understood by the entire class. They must communicate to their students the procedures for doing everything in the classroom, from coming into the room, lining up, going to the lavatory, watching a movie, submitting assignments, getting up to sharpen a pencil, getting a tissue, and leaving the room.

Let's hypothetically say that a student does not follow a rule after it has been clearly explained. The teacher should respond by checking for understanding, then giving the student a warning. It would sound something like this: "John, maybe you don't understand our classroom rule about getting up out of your seat when I'm teaching. The rule is that if I'm in the middle of teaching a lesson, all students must remain seated. Do you understand it now? If you do this again, you will be in the classroom during recess today." Thus, the teacher has re-stated his rule, procedure, or behavioral expectation and made the student aware that if he or she breaks the rule again, a consequence will be imposed either immediately or in the future.

Student disrespect often occurs when teachers have not truly made their students aware of their expectations. When students aren't clear on the expectations, they can easily do what they think they should be doing, which is not what the teacher wants them to do. Teachers then compound the problem by confronting the student and putting the student on the defensive, setting the stage for a future disrespect and future irresponsibility. Clear expectations and clearly defined procedures create a sense of security for the students. When a student completely understands the established boundaries, respect and responsibility become the norm in the classroom.

## **Expectations and Procedure Checklist**

### **Classroom Procedures—Do Students Know What Is Expected of Them for Routine Operations?**

Directions: Review the following procedures and check the ones your student will need to know and practice.

#### **A. Beginning the class**

- How should students enter the room?
- What constitutes being late (in the room, in the seat)?
- How and when will absentee slips be handled?
- What type of seating arrangements will be used (assigned seats, open seating, cooperative group seating)?
- How will the teacher get students' attention to start class (the tardy bell, a signal such as a raised hand or lights turned off and on)?
- How will students behave during Public Address (PA) announcements?

#### **B. Classroom Management**

- How and when will students leave their seats?
- What do students need in order to leave the room (individual passes, room pass, teacher's permission)?
- How will students get help from the teacher (raise hands, put name on board, ask other group members first)?
- What are acceptable noise levels for discussion, group work, seat work?
- How should students work with other students or move into cooperative groups (moving desks, changing seats, noise level, handling materials)?
- How will students get recognized to talk (raised hand, teacher calls on student, talk out)?
- How do students behave during presentations by other students?
- How do students get supplies they are missing?
- How and when do students sharpen pencils?
- How will students get materials or use special equipment?

#### **C. Paper Work**

- How will students turn in work (put in specific tray or box, pass to the front, one student collects)?
- How will students turn in makeup work if they were absent (special tray, give to teacher, put in folder, give to teacher's aide)?
- How will students distribute handouts (first person in row, a group member gets a copy for all group members, students pick up as they enter room)?
- How will late work be graded (no penalty, minus points, zero, "F," use lunch or recess to finish, turn in by end of day, drop so many homework grades)?

- How and when will students make up quizzes and tests missed (same day they return to school, within twenty-four hours, within the week, before school, during lunch or recess, after school)?
- How will late projects such as research papers, portfolios, and artwork be graded (no penalty, minus points, lowered letter grade, no late work accepted)?

#### D. Dismissal from Class or School

- How are students dismissed for lunch?
- When do students leave class for the day (when bell rings, when teacher gives the signal)?
- Can students stay after class to finish assignments, projects, tests?
- Can the teacher keep one student or the whole class after class or school?
- What do students do during fire and disaster drills?

#### E. Syllabus or Course Outline

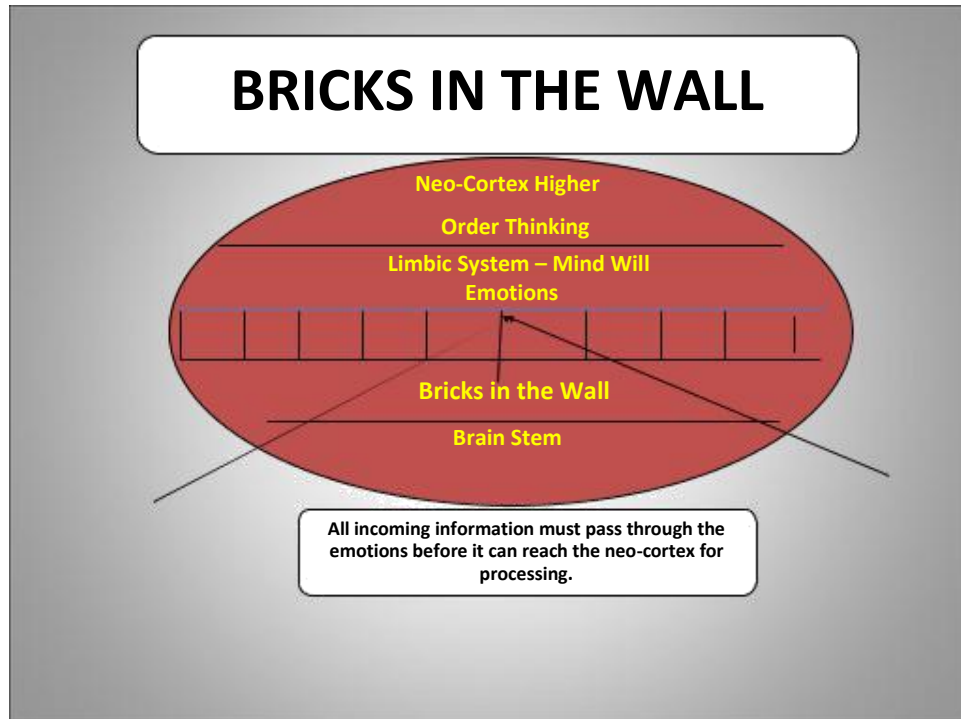
- How are students made aware of course objectives?
- How are students made aware of course requirements?
- Are students given due dates for major assignments several weeks in advance?
- Are students told how they will be evaluated and given the grading scale?

#### F. Other Procedures

You may need to introduce procedures related to recess, assemblies, guest speakers, substitute teachers, field trips, fire drills, teacher leaving the room, etc. List other procedures that are needed.

From *What To Do With the Kid Who...: Developing Cooperation, Self-Discipline, and Responsibility in the Classroom*, 2nd ed., by Kay Burke. See the [LessonLab SkyLight Bookstore](#) for information on other books for teachers or to find specific information about Kay Burke and this book.

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## Liberty and Freedom

**Most children believe the way to get more freedom is to get out from under authority, e.g.. Move out of their house, or do what they want in school. True freedom is a result of trust. Trust is built through compliance. The more compliant a child is the greater the trust, and the more freedom he will have. There is a clear difference between freedom and liberty. Liberty is a condition of the environment, Freedom is a condition of the mind and soul. As children experience non-compliance they are doing what they want in terms of the environment, but have great difficulty managing the guilt associated with their behavior. The more guilt they experience, the more angry and non-compliant they become.**