

FIVE-STEPS for TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO BEHAVE

Step 1: Get everyone's attention BEFORE starting any class activity or lesson.

Step 2: Introduce each activity and describe exactly how you expect students to behave during that activity.

- Some teachers allow talking, others do not. Some teachers want students to raise their hands, others do not. Each teacher must clarify his or her expectations.
- Tell students how you want them to interact with each other and with you.

Introduce each activity by telling students whether they may talk to each other and if so, how loudly, about what topics, and for how long. Some students will talk during the entire period if they are told that talking is allowed. It is important to clarify exactly what you mean.

Step 3: Give students Positive Feedback when they are meeting your expectations.

- It is important for you to let students know they are on target. Students need to know that you appreciate their efforts. It tells them that you recognize their mature and responsible attitudes and actions.

Step 4: Provide immediate feedback when students are not meeting your expectations.

- Use a gentle verbal reprimand when students engage in minor misbehavior. For example:

Class Rule: Raise hand if you have a question or comment during a lecture.

Scenario: A couple of students begin whispering during a lecture.

What To Do: Walk over to them and say "Remember, if you have something to say during a lecture you are to raise your hand and wait to be called on. If you do not wish to share your thoughts with the class, you should not be talking."

It is critical that the gentle verbal reprimand be delivered calmly & quietly. If you are harsh with this procedure the student may feel, "Well, I didn't know what was expected in this class!"

- Verbal reprimands should be private, brief, and as immediate as possible. The more private the reprimand, the less likely the student will feel that he needs to challenge your authority to save face in front of his peers. Verbal reprimands are most effective when the teacher immediately walks over to the student or students and quietly tells them how they need to improve their behavior.

- Verbal reprimands are only short-term interventions. If the misbehavior continues after you have used verbal reprimands several times, you must change your strategy.

Step 5: At the end of the activity, tell students how well they have met your expectations. If students have been successful in meeting your expectations, they need to know that you are aware of their cooperation and effort. If there have been problems, go over the problems without naming names. Identify class goals for the next activity of this type. Let your class know that you have higher expectations than were demonstrated, but that they will have an opportunity to work on improving their performance.