



Tips and Techniques

101 Techniques in Student Discipline

Scripture Verse: *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."* 2 Timothy 1:7, NLT)

Over the course of my 49 years tenure in education as a teacher, administrator, education professor and school psychologist, I have had to deal with countless classroom discipline situations. I would like to share a collection of techniques that can be used in the management of classroom behavior. Each suggestion, when implemented correctly, can have a major effect upon an individual or a particular class. As you read over each item, allow the Holy Spirit to quicken you as to which ones would be best for your particular situation.

Discipline is defined as "moving students to predetermined goals." The final objective is to install self-discipline. Punishment is considered as anything that results in a reduction of behavior. Reinforcers are those events and/or actions that strengthen behavior.

1. Have a few rational rules. Be certain they are clear to students.
2. Be consistent in enforcing rules.
3. Do not punish a group for the actions of one student, or of a few students.
4. Be alert to the possibilities for disruptive conduct. If a youngster seems to be behaving differently from normal, try to act before a real problem develops.
5. Reward positive behavior.
6. Never issue an ultimatum unless you are prepared to carry it out.
7. Never be afraid to apologize to a student if you punish him or her unjustly.
8. Make sure that directions for homework, activities, and classroom events are clear to students. Often management problems arise when instructions regarding classroom routine are unclear.
9. Give as much individual attention as possible.
10. Change seating arrangement.
11. Separate troublemakers from companions.
12. Keep the room tidy, neat and clean, discard unused materials and supplies.
13. Provide for physical comfort of the students.
14. Keep voice subdued and controlled; do not yell; speak in lower tones.
15. Minister rather than administering correction.
16. Be prepared with lessons well in advance of the class.

17. Keep your presentation interesting.
18. Define boundaries before they are enforced, when defiantly challenged, respond with confident decisiveness.
19. Distinguish between willful defiance and childish irresponsibility.
20. Reassure and teach after the confrontation is over.
21. Let love be your guide.
22. Memorize the names of students quickly.
23. Move around, don't remain stationary.
24. Begin class promptly and enthusiastically.
25. Be businesslike in your classroom.
26. Maintain a good sense of humor and keep a smile as much as is possible.
27. Stop the little things before they become major challenges.
28. Never use sarcasm, scorn, or ridicule.
29. Allow students to express their view of the problem so that behavior can be evaluated based on scriptural principles.
30. Try to deal with your own classroom challenges before asking for assistance.
31. Relate the child's performance to the rules. Be specific about the behaviors children show which mean "paying attention", or "working hard."
32. Relax the rules between work periods. Don't be afraid to have fun with students` when the work period is over.
33. Catch the children being good. Reinforce behavior incompatible with what you wish to eliminate. Select incompatible behaviors to reinforce which will be most beneficial to the child's development.
34. Focus your attention on the children who are working well to prompt the correct behaviors in the students who are misbehaving. Reinforce improvement when it does occur.
35. Vary the types of praise given to children for good performance.
36. When punishment is given, also provide reinforcement for behaviors that are acceptable.
37. Avoid planting seeds of rebellion by being models of rebellion. e.g., arguing in front of children - be imitators of God (I Cor. 11:1).
38. Attend activities your students are involved in. Show interest in their private lives.
39. Avoid negative comparisons e.g., "John, you have never kept up with Susan."
40. Replace anger with rearrangement of consequences.
41. Speak the uncompromised Word of God over your students.
42. Verbalize conflicts and re-establish boundaries.
43. Link behavior with desirable and undesirable consequences, e.g., not completing your homework will result in receiving a zero as your grade.
44. Be willing to grant independence and responsibility and then don't punish when honest mistakes are made.
45. Set realistic standards so that there is a high probability that these standards can be reached so that the standards will not cause inner frustration or outward rebellion.

46. To teach a child to act in a manner in which he has seldom or never before behaved, reward successive steps to the final behavior (successive approximations).
47. To stop a child from acting in a particular way, you may allow him to continue (or insist that he continue) performing the undesired act until he tires of it (Satiation), e.g., throwing paper on the floor, pick it up, place it in the wastepaper basket, get it out of the basket, throw it on the floor, pick it up, place it in the wastepaper basket, etc.
48. To teach a child to remember to act at a specific time, arrange for him to receive a cue for the correct performance just before the action is expected rather than after he has performed incorrectly (cueing).
49. Maintain good eye contact with your students. Talk while facing the students and not the chalkboard.
50. Treat student situations with complete fairness taking into consideration the intent of the heart. When there is true repentance, minister forgiveness, grace, and mercy.
51. Don't be tied to your textbook and read everything to your class.
52. Do not accept tattling. Encourage Matthew 18 principles.
53. Do not call on a particular student before stating the question.
54. Watch for the development of little idiosyncrasies and mannerisms in yourself. These will detract from your effectiveness.
55. Hold every member of the class responsible for all that is required.
56. Avoid excerpts from college experiences.
57. Have students raise hands and to be recognized before speaking.
58. Do not accept students speaking in a disrespectful manner.
59. Remove the scorner from class (one who displays contempt, won't listen to rebuke, leads others into trouble, causes contention, strife, and reproach.)
60. Counsel with students on a one-to-one basis, expressing concern about what is evident as unacceptable behavior, attitude, etc.
61. Involve the parents and keep them informed of areas needing change.
62. Do not ask questions that will solicit a disorderly class response such as "Have all the girls gone to the restroom?"
63. Do not say "S-h-h-h-h," "Shut-up", or "Shut your mouth."
64. Do not snap your fingers.
65. Connect rules with reasons and reminders. Tell the child what he did that earned a reward or punishment. After the child has been given many examples of reasons for reinforcement or reasons for punishment, ask him to state the reasons. When the child answers your question correctly, say the whole thing back to him. When the child is able to tell you the reasons for specific behavior, begin to work on general rules for behavior.
66. Sell every assignment.
67. Don't just dish out knowledge.
68. Ask yourself the question when planning, "What are we going to do today?" rather than "What am I going to tell them today?"
69. Look for projects related to what you are teaching.

70. Avoid boredom by changing the nature of your assignments.
71. Use visual aides of all kinds.
72. Plan tests carefully.
73. Use student help for class routines.
74. Use good bulletin boards and inspirational posters.
75. Make each student something special in your mind and let him know that he is.
76. Make yourself available after school at least one day a week, and available before school.
77. Be a good listener.
78. Do not shame a student before all other members of a class.
79. Over prepare lessons for the first week.
80. Develop a good command presence, by speaking in short sentences with emphasis on action verbs; stand up tall; look students in the eye; move eyes from face to face when looking at the class; don't turn your back on a situation too soon.
81. Don't humiliate a student who cheats in front of the whole class. Nothing is to be gained, and you open the door to bitterness.
82. Use logical consequences, so that students know what will happen to them beforehand.
83. Recognize improvements and be generous with praise.
84. Instead of belittling a pupil, describe what you see, what you feel, what needs to be done, and do not attack the person.
85. Let students know it was their behavior that results in a consequence, e.g., "Dennis, you have annoyed Carol. You have chosen to sit by yourself in the back of the room."
86. Attach praise to specific behavior, e.g., "Thank you for washing the chalkboard. It looks great," rather than, "You are a marvelous helper."
87. Pause after attention signals, e.g., "Class (Pause as you wait for attention)..I want you to turn to page 67."
88. In using extrinsic rewards for improvement, such as star charts or a point system, relate it to the student's self-concept, e.g., "You should feel good about yourself for this good work. Go ahead and pat yourself on the back."
89. Make checking homework a regular part of the school day, so that they feel that the work is important. Write comments on homework. Never use homework as punishment!
90. Teach students to know who they are in Christ. When they know who they are in Christ, they will be able to face any assignment that may be given to them, knowing that God has given the ability to accomplish the task.
91. Understand and believe that every behavior situation is subject to change. Don't look at the circumstances for this will bring doubt like, "This student will never get over this challenge." Or, "I can't get him to change." Or, "He is a difficult student." When you make statements like these, doubt enters your mind and you fail to realize your potential and you begin to lose your ability to be a successful disciplinarian. 1st John 5:5 says that since you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, you will overcome.

92. Your belief, coupled with God's promises, gives you God's ability and power to overcome any discipline challenge. With Jesus in you, you have the wisdom of God within you. You have the understanding of God within you.
93. Be sensitive to your inner spirit (heart) for, "*The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth and addeth learning to his lips*" (Prov. 16:23).
94. Believe in your heart (spirit) that all things are possible (Matt. 19:26; Mark 9:23).
95. Keep in mind that the devil is a liar. What you see as strongholds of rebellion or disrespect in the lives of students, as nothing more than the work of the enemy to keep your students from achieving to their greatest potential. Exercise your God commanded authority over the works of the devil (Col. 2:14-15; Matt. 28:18).
96. Put your spiritual weapons to work on the works of deception, cheating, etc. These are the Name of Jesus, Word of God, and Blood of Jesus (2 Cor. 10:4).
97. Walk in your anointing. Speak the good news to those who are poor in self-image, self-control, poor behavior, and attitude; Heal the broken-hearted, preach deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind (blinded to the things of God, fruit of the Spirit, peace, joy, etc.); set at liberty those that are bruised (Luke 4:18).
98. Expect God to reveal to your spirit through the Holy Spirit the things that are on the hearts and minds of your students in order that you might minister to them (I Cor. 2:10). Be led by the Spirit of God (Romans 8:16). Expect the Spirit of God to show you things that will happen in your classroom (John 16:13).
99. Encourage students to let the Christlikeness that is inside of them change their outward behavior (Phil 2:13).
100. Establish a classroom environment that is charged with the love of God, so that no matter what students have done they are loved, accepted and forgiven, although their unacceptable behavior is not condoned.
101. Allow the gifts of the Spirit to operate in your classroom. Let the Holy Spirit out of the lunchbox.

Make this declaration of purpose (say it out loud):

I believe in my heart that I can establish a well-managed classroom and have students who are self-disciplined for I know that the holy spirit is working in their lives, as well as in this school, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

I have no confusion in discipline for I have the mind of Christ,

I have understanding, for God will reveal to my spirit his plan for my classroom (school or individual).

There is no challenge that I cannot resolve because Jesus has been made unto me all wisdom and knowledge, and I have his mind. Everything I put my hand to

do will be successful. I believe in God's word. I believe that these things are true of me, and I speak them forth.

I receive them now in the name of Jesus.