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Learning**
Conference

the teacher's conference

GLEN PEARSALL

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Session 3

**Creating Positive Classrooms –
Practical Classroom Management**

MELBOURNE

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Cooperative & Engaged Classrooms

“Sitting down was the issue—I was determined everyone was going to do it first, then I'd talk. Piston remained standing. I reordered. He paid no attention. I pointed out that I was talking to him. He indicated he heard me. I inquired then why in hell didn't he sit down. He said he didn't want to. I said I did want him to. He said that didn't matter to him. I said do it anyway. He said why? I said because I said so. He said he wouldn't. I said Look I want you to sit down and listen to what I'm going to say. He said he was listening. 'I'll listen but I won't sit down.'”

James Herndon - Native in a Strange Land

Cooperative Classroom: Techniques Review

STRATEGY	This strategy is new to me	I have heard of this strategy	I have trialed this strategy	I regularly use this strategy
Rallying Call				
On Task Praise				
Proximity Reminders				
Cross Praise				
1,2,3, Praise				
Bill Roger's Hand				
Naming Preferred Behavior				
Micro Command				
Pivot Phrase				
Face-Saving Statement				
Directed Choice				
No Put-Down Rule				
9 Step Discussion				

PRAISE STRATEGIES

ON-TASK PRAISE

PROXIMITY REMINDERS

CROSS PRAISE / 1,2,3 PRAISE

Cross praising is an extension of on-task praise. One of things teachers note about on task praising is that it often had a collateral effect - it celebrates those who are on task *and* encourages others to do the same. Cross-praising is a strategy that involves specifically targeting students for indirect encouragement. Cross-praising works best when the teacher moves through a series of graded steps that subtly encourage a student, in an indirect way, to engage with their work.

1. Firstly identify a student who is still not on task
2. Move towards the group of students where that individual is sitting
3. Single out some students for praise in the vicinity of the student you are targeting for encouragement. Note carefully whether your comments have a collateral effect on the student you are encouraging to get underway (the effect of these comments might be as subtle as a shift in body language).
4. If praising those in the general area of the student has no effect, select someone in the immediate vicinity of this student to praise. When delivering your comments, stand so that your instruction is delivered across their personal space. For instance it might be that you are standing a metre in front of the student and praising someone immediately behind them or standing next to the student and gesturing across them to complement a near neighbour. Again, be on the lookout for even a slight shift in demeanour that indicates they will now move on task.
5. If the student is still unfocused move so that you are standing beside them with your attention on their workbook (you might even wish to point at the task). Ask them whether they need any help getting under way. Alternatively, you may wish to first remind all the students about your expectations while standing beside your target student and then address their work practice.

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Transition Scaffold/Sequence

(Bennett, B. and Smilanich, p., (1994) Classroom Management, A Thinking and Caring Approach, Bookation, Inc, Toronto)

STEP-BY-STEP TRANSITION SEQUENCE:
ONE: Demand attention using the standard ritual you have established for doing this in class. Transition must begin from an orderly starting point.
TWO: Nominate when students are going to move. Starting with what they are doing or whom they are working with can cue students to stop listening and start moving without a clear sense of what they are doing.
THREE: State what it is they are about to do as part of the next exercise. Again avoid stating who they are about to work with as students will sometimes miss the purpose/structure of the activity if they are caught up in seeing with whom they are working.
FOUR: Explain who they are about to begin working with in the next activity. Do not allow the group to move yet.
FIVE: Give the students to the move now signal .
SIX: Monitor the transition using teacher proximity –seeking out potential off-task behavior and standing in the immediate vicinity of potentially off task students- to ensure a quick transition.
SEVEN: Give specific and positively framed feedback about successful transition behavior.

Low-Level Verbal Interventions

Micro Commands

Using a verbal intervention does not mean you need to use a long wordy instruction or detailed reasoning for your request. A short, sharp command is often just as effective – especially if it is twinned with a non-verbal instruction, or a judiciously employed thank you is used to punctuate the exchange:

“Not here.”

“Wait, thank you.”

“Inappropriate time.”

“Away, thanks.”

“No put downs.”

“Not in class, thank you.”

Pivot Phrases

Using a pivot phrase, helps us avoid being caught up in long verbal exchanges or arguments. Do you have asset of reliable pivot phrases?

‘That’s not the issue right now.’

“I welcome feedback but at the end of the lesson...”

“Nevertheless...”

“I wanted to speak to you about a pattern of behaviour...”

Face Saving

Teachers need phrases that they can use to allow students to back away from their own poor choices:

“Do you want to try that again?”

“I’ll let you reconsider that choice.”

“Did you mean for that to happen?”

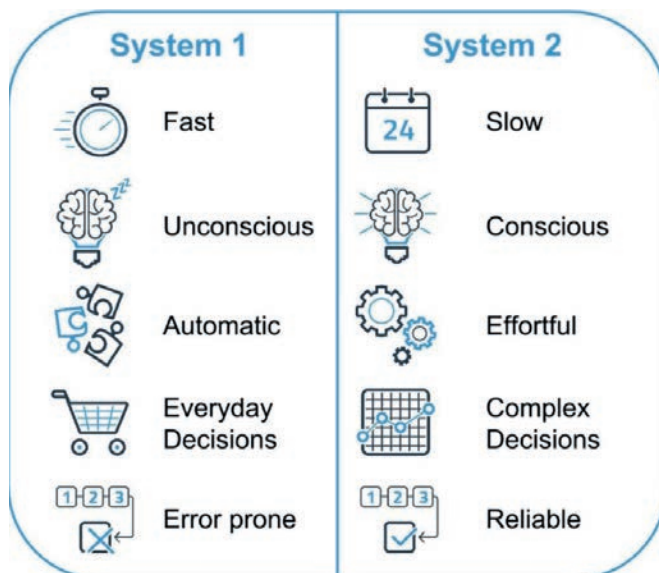
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Face Saving and 'Thinking Fast & Slow'

Daniel Kahneman's seminal book (2012) on the two modes of decision making within the brain is an important reference point when seeking to understand student the way student's approach their studies. Kahneman's has demonstrated across a wide body of work that we essentially make decision in two ways:

System One: This fast, intuitive system allows us to make instant judgments; using 'gut feel' to quickly assess situations and take decisive action. These decisions are most usually based on emotionally responses and rule of thumb approximations.

System Two: This is a reflective system that leads to more considered judgments based on carefully weighing evidence in a deliberative fashion. System Two works to review System One decisions but sometimes actually just provides logical justifications for impulsive reactions.



Source: Daniel Kahneman 2012 *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

It is worth considering this model of decision making when responding to off-task student behavior:

Are we treating the student's impulsive action as a considered response?

Would a face-saving opportunity be a more appropriate response to the student's off-task behavior rather than focusing on giving them a 'consequence?'

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Medium Level - Verbal Strategies II

If you have an example of a persistent 'won't behave' situation in your class, use the chart below to select an appropriate response or another strategy with which you can respond.

1. Directed Choice

This strategy is an effective to give students an opportunity to act in the right way when they are resisting teacher intervention. It works because it grants students the autonomy to act when they are expecting a different teacher response:

Teacher: Please put that away

Student: No. It's mine - you can't tell me what to do!

Teacher Either pop it in your bag or back in your pocket – you choose. Thank you...

2. Jenny MacKay's ECA Method

The ECA method is an excellent technique for quickly formulating an instruction that is both effective and empathetic. The acronym ECA stands for Empathy Content and Action. When using this technique, teachers issue a three-part instruction:

- The first part acknowledges the students' perspective on the situation (Empathy)
- In the second part, the teacher describes what is taking place and why it is an issue (Content)
- And in the third part, the teacher explains what can be done to address the issue (Action)

"I know this work is challenging and we have been working on it for some time. (Empathy)
However I can see that some of you are off-task and it is distracting the rest of us. (Content)
If you are finished or need a change of pace could you please start your Traffic Light summary-that way we all can be on-task. (Action)"

Source: Jenny Mackay 2006 *A Coat of Many Pockets* (ACER)

3. I.D.I.D.

This strategy is a carefully scaffolded way to challenge behaviour with an accent of peer accountability. The acronym I.D.I.D. represents the following steps:

- I - Identify the student
- D -Describe the behaviour
- I - Indicate the rights being denied
- D -Demand responsible behaviour

Teacher: Kiama, you're calling out. Others have a right to think and work without distraction. Classroom voice. Thankyou."

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Nine-Step Post-Class Discussion Protocol (R. Lewis)

1. Welcome the student to the meeting

"Thank you for staying back to talk with me."

2. Explain that this is a help seeking conversation

"I need your help clarifying an issue that occurred in class today."

"I need your assistance..."

Sometimes teachers skip these seemingly innocuous steps but they are important cues to help the student see this as an adult-to-adult style conversation.

3. State the problem and the effect it has both on you and on the student's classmates.

One of the most common mistakes people make when discussing the impact of a student's behavior with me is that they ignore the feelings of a very important stakeholder - themselves. Employing these types of post class interview techniques should not be a test of personal endurance. For a strategy to be effective, it can't rely on altruism. Students must see that their actions have an effect on all of those around them, including their teacher.

4. Listen to the student's feeling and the carefully paraphrase what they said back to them.

Demonstrate that you understand their perspective on the issue

5. Challenge the irrational parts of the student's argument:

- **Tease out the illogical premise of their argument:**

"But are you saying that you shouldn't follow the rules set up for the rest of the class?"

"So, are you saying there is nothing you can do to be on time?"

- **Use repetition to challenge assertion that are simply untrue:**

"So, are you saying you don't do that? Never? Not on any occasion? Not once?"

- **Use a hypothetical to reframe the student's perspective**

"Are you saying if someone did that to you we should both ignore it?"

6. Get the Student to acknowledge there is a 'problem'

"So, you can see that there is a problem."

Too often students leave one-on-one teacher discussions having not acknowledged that there is an issue. Without this fundamental concession it is hard to see why the student

would choose to modify their behavior. Your aim is to persist till the student recognises that their behavior is problematic. Do not let them settle for partial acknowledgment or as Ramon Lewis puts it “Do not accept a maybe.”

7. Get the student to consider possible solutions

Ask the student to consider what solution might suit their needs and those of others in the class. Be very clear when you think an option is unacceptable to you – students need to recognize that a solution that only works for them is not a solution.

8. Clearly define the selected solution

We must be precise about what is expected of all parties. Mapping out *who* does *what* and *when* is essential to ensure the student is aware of their responsibilities in addressing the issue.

9. Set a timetable to evaluate the solution’s effectiveness

“O.K. I catch you at the end of tomorrow’s double and we’ll check that both of us have kept to our roles.”

Unless we review progress in a plan, it is not a plan it is an intention. A student who is well-meaning in a one-on-one conversation might be easily distracted or led astray in the context of their peers so it is vital nudge them towards making better decisions. An established review date is a way to do this as well as providing both parties an opportunity to modify the agreement once it has been trialed.

N.B. Students take time to change their behavior but if after three substantial conversations there is still no modification of the inappropriate behavior then this approach is clearly not working and the teacher needs to move on to more school-level style solutions.

Source: Ramon Lewis, 2008. ‘The Developmental Management Approach to Classroom Behaviour’ (ACER)

CAN'T BEHAVE

Probably the most challenging part of teaching is dealing with young people who can't behave. Not only is it hard to distinguish these students from those who won't behave, it is often difficult to see disruptive behaviours as requiring support. It is this supportive approach however that is the most effective way for dealing with these students. In her seminal work, 'A Coat of Many Pockets', Jenny MacKay offers a clear framework for dealing with 'can't behave' situations. It is this highly effective framework upon which a response can be modeled.

1. Manage Yourself

It is crucial when dealing with students who can't behave that you have a sophisticated understanding of how you feel about their actions. Firstly, you must acknowledge your emotional response to what is often frustrating and antagonistic behaviour. Secondly you must delineate this emotional response from your actual thinking about how to resolve the matter. No one expects you to not feel upset or angry in the face of poor behaviour but nor should this emotional response be the basis of your actions. (The behaviour might be directed at you/you the teacher/you as a figure of authority, but it is not personal.)

2. Project Calmness

Students who can't behave often have very high levels of stress and create stress for their classmates. It is important that you project an image of calm authority to the class and signal to the 'can't behave' student that you are not going to be aggressive or confrontational. Typically, this involves being conscious of your body language when you intervene with a 'can't behave' student. For instance, using open gestures, a measured tone of voice or employing a side stance approach when talking with the student are effective low-key approaches.

Being calm helps create calm.

3. Use Acknowledgement Strategies

Dealing with 'can't behave' students is a test of empathy. Teachers need to be able to acknowledge the complex feelings and situations that have placed a student in a position where they can't manage their own behavior. This empathetic response needs to be signaled to the students clearly to stop them falling into the resistant routines that many of them have developed in the course of their schooling. There are two highly effective strategies for signaling this to students/for helping them avoid this trap.

4. Create Student Space

When dealing with students who can't behave, we must acknowledge that change comes from within them. You are simply creating the space in which this might happen. Offering students ways to save face and designing a calm learning environment learning environment to foster calm are examples of this 'space.'

Appendix One: Low-Level Interventions Micro-Data Tool

Use the chart below to record the number of verbal and non-verbal interventions you employ during Mat Time to elicit and maintain student attention.

VERBAL REMINDERS What do you say to the group and individual students to keep them on task?	NON-VERBAL REMINDERS How do you remind students to maintain their attention without having to interrupt what you are saying?
Includes verbal rallying calls ("1,2,3 Look at me" and "Waterfall.") whole class reminders and specific verbal instruction for students to stay on task.	Includes non-verbal rallying calls such as ('Hands up' and 'Hand Puzzles') purposeful pauses, 'please follow' gestures (Book tapping, eyeline hand signals) and proximity reminders.

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DOT CHART SURVEY: Affirmation vs. Commands

An ‘Affirmation versus Commands’ dot chart survey is a revealing activity for reviewing your use of on task praise in the class room. You use it to record all your interventions in a lesson under the loose categories of affirmation and commands. Praise, problem solving and using student work as a model fit under the former, coercion, correction and admonishment under the latter.

A dot chart is easy to use:

- Before you start the class read again the sample interactions listed at the bottom of the sheet. Establish clearly which types of interactions you view as affirmations and which as commands.
- Conduct your class, while a peer observes your lesson. Dot the columns to record each interaction as an affirmation or a command.
- Review your performance with a colleague: What was the ratio of commands to affirmations? Did this reflect your goal? Did you always choose the nature of each intervention? Could you use subtly alter your use of affirmations and commands?

Dot the appropriate column every time you complete on of the class room interventions listed below:

Affirmations <i>Any time you acknowledged successes or endorse behavior from your students you wished encourage.</i>	Commands <i>Any time you tell a student what to do, giving instructions and challenging off task behaviors.</i>
<p><i>“That was a fast transition guys. Excellent.”</i></p> <p><i>“Have a look at Li’s answer here – this is how this question should be approached...”</i></p> <p><i>“I can see that you ask three people before you asked me. Good use of initiative.”</i></p> <p><i>“This group alerted others to the rallying call. Well done.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Everyone get in pairs and then line up against the wall.”</i></p> <p><i>“ Could everyone please look this way?”</i></p> <p><i>“Come here. You are not to speak to me like that again. Is that understood?”</i></p> <p><i>“Stop it Michael. That is not appropriate.”</i></p>

Appendix Two: Reflection Task

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Appendix Three: Analyzing the Function of Off-Task Behavior

PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIOUR		
OBTAIN SOMETHING		AVOID SOMETHING
STIMULATION	ATTENTION	TASK/ACTIVITY
STUDENT		TEACHER

SOURCE: Ingram, K., Lewis-Palmer, T. and Sugai, G. (2005). Function-Based Intervention Planning. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 7(4), pp.224-236.

Reflection Questions:

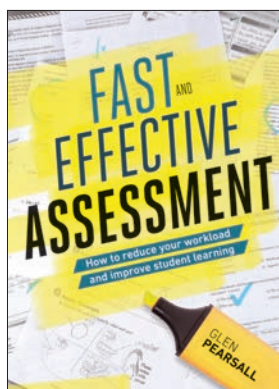
What is the difference between stimulus-seeking behavior and attention-seeking behavior?

What kinds of task-avoidance behaviors might be common in your school?

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