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Introduction

This *Study Guide* has been developed to accompany the book *50 Ways to Improve Student Behavior: Simple Solutions to Complex Challenges* by Annette Breaux and Dr. Todd Whitaker. It offers questions and prompts to enable readers to interact with the book's content. Each of the 50 solutions and strategies in the *Study Guide* are organized into three sections: What Is, What Could Be, and Make it Real. The exercises and questions in the Study Guide provide opportunities for readers to master the concepts in the book and to apply them in their own classrooms.

The authors would like to thank Dr. Lolli Haws, Principal of Oakridge Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia, for the contributions she made in the preparation of this Study Guide.

—Annette Breaux and Todd Whitaker

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Make it real:

Write the details for five key procedures you will establish and discuss the steps you will follow to implement each.

1. Procedure: _____
Steps: _____
2. Procedure: _____
Steps: _____
3. Procedure: _____
Steps: _____
4. Procedure: _____
Steps: _____
5. Procedure: _____
Steps: _____

Develop five basic classroom rules that you feel will adequately address potentially serious infractions. Share with two other colleagues. Ask them to recall several tough behaviors they have encountered and see if one of your rules applies!

- Rule #1: _____
- Rule #2: _____
- Rule #3: _____
- Rule #4: _____
- Rule #5: _____

Consequences:

List your planned consequences for breaking classroom rules below:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Are You All Right?

Classroom Solution/Strategy #4

Students behave best when they believe you care. Before you punish, ask a student if s/he is all right.

What is:

You have some challenging students in your class. List three of them here by first name or initials:

What have you done to try to improve their behaviors so far?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Draw a line through those things you have tried that only address the visible behavior, not the cause behind it.

Circle the things you have done that show you care about these students.

How many caring things have you tried? ____ Are you pleased with your number? Why or why not?

Stress Success, Not Duress: Classroom Solution/Strategy #11

Success truly does breed success. Notice student successes, stressing the positive things that they do. You will begin to see even more success!

What is:

If someone made a recording of your teaching during a 50-minute lesson, what number of positive remarks do you believe would be recorded? _____ How many negative, sarcastic, or critical remarks would be recorded? _____ Is your estimate for these two questions something you are pleased with? Why or why not?

The authors share the success of a teacher who was observed never making a critical or negative remark to her students. What comments do you often make to students that are positive?

What comments might you make that students could construe as critical, sarcastic, or negative?

Pry for Why: Classroom Solution/Strategy #13

Teachers who take time to find out the reason behind a child's behavior can better help that child improve the behavior.

What is:

How do you usually react when a child misbehaves? Do you:

- a. Punish or scold the child, and forget about it?
- b. Punish or scold the child, and then find out why he misbehaved?
- c. Talk to the child before you decide on a punishment?
- d. Talk to the child first, but always have a consistent punishment, regardless of the reason for the misbehavior?

Whether you chose a, b, c, or d, do you handle the situation privately or publicly?

What could be:

What do you feel you could improve on when dealing with student misbehavior? (Dealing with situations more privately, expressing more concern when dealing with misbehavior, delving deeper into why the misbehavior occurred, etc.)

What belief or aspect of your discipline approach needs to change in order for you to reach that goal?

Work That Body Language: Classroom Solution/Strategy #45

Great teachers are always careful with their body language because they know it says much more than their words.

What is:

Match these body positions with their likely meaning:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Arms crossed over chest | a. ___ Not interested in learning |
| 2. Sitting back in chair, arms open | b. ___ Comfortable and open, welcoming |
| 3. Leaning forward in chair, head tilted | c. ___ Listening carefully, open to what is being said and comfortable |
| 4. Nervously standing fully erect and straight | d. ___ Intimidating and exerting power |
| 5. Standing with knees slightly bent, arm leaning on the door | e. ___ Listening carefully, thinking about what's being said |
| 6. Sitting with legs crossed away from person you're in conversation with | f. ___ Defensive and unwilling to engage honestly with the person |
| 7. Listening to someone, chin propped in hand, eyes closed, big sigh | g. ___ Uncomfortable and bracing for the worst |
| 8. Standing over someone, leaning forward talking to them | h. ___ Pretending to listen, upset, and frustrated |

(Best Answers: a = 6, b = 2, c = 3, d = 8, e = 3, f = 1, g = 4, h = 7)

Make it real :

Rank the behaviors below, 1 indicating the area you most need to improve and 7 indicating an area you least need to improve in order to be a true professional.

- _____ Putting a smile on my face every day, all day.
- _____ Greeting everyone I meet kindly and warmly.
- _____ Modeling appropriate behavior in the presence of my students.
- _____ Approaching everything in my teaching —yes, everything—with enthusiasm.
- _____ Never speaking negatively of anyone.
- _____ Never complaining about my workload, colleagues, or students.
- _____ Focusing my energy and attention on solutions, not problems.

Write assertive “I will” statements for the top three behaviors you need to change in order to become the best professional educator you can be.

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____