



BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

A Guide to Successful Classroom Management.

Preventative, Supportive and Corrective Discipline.

This handbook has been designed especially for per-service teachers. The aim is to provide useful theories and strategies which can be easily implemented in the classroom. The key focus is on the creation of a positive and engaging learning environment which will fulfil students' needs.

Rudolf Dreikurs Goal
Centred Theory

Kounin's Preventative
Measures

The Levin and Nolan
Method

Gordon's 'Discipline as
Self-Control' Approach

Nelson, Lott and
Glenn's 'Positive
Discipline in the
Classroom' Approach

Contents

Introduction	1
Preventative Discipline	2
Rudolf Dreikurs Goal Centred Theory	2
Kounin's Preventative Measures	3
Other Strategies	4
Strategies in Practice	5
Supportive Discipline	6
Levin and Nolan Method	6
The Table on the Hierarchy of Management Strategies	7
Strategies in Practice	9
Corrective Discipline	11
Gordon's 'Discipline as Self-Control' Approach	11
Nelson, Lott and Glenn's 'Positive Discipline' Approach	12
Other Strategies	12
Conclusion	13
Appendix One	14
Appendix Two	15
Bibliography	16

Introduction

For pre-service teachers one of the most daunting aspects of becoming a teacher is whether or not they'll be able to successfully manage their class. Vaupel defines classroom management as 'the ability to organise a learning activity and establish a learning atmosphere without undue disturbance or disorder'.¹ Naturally, teachers want to foster a positive learning environment in their classrooms; in an environment like this all students are encouraged and supported to achieve to the best of their ability. This guide is divided into three main sections: preventative discipline, supportive discipline and corrective discipline. Each section provides teachers with helpful strategies and behavioural theories to prevent or address misbehaviour in the classroom. Key theories include: Dreikurs Goal Centred Theory, Kounin's Preventative Measures Theory, and The Levin and Nolan Method. These theories were chosen to reflect a democratic style of classroom management, which I intend to use with my students. Therefore, little emphasis is placed on a 'rewards vs punishments' authoritarian style of classroom management. A strong engaging classroom culture is formed around positive solutions to discipline based on praise and encouragement. The aim is to foster teamwork and a sense of community using these methods.

¹ C. Vaupel, 'Practical Preventative Techniques in Classroom Management,' *American Secondary Education* 12 (1982): 5.

Preventative Discipline

Maintaining Motivation and Attention

“Prevention of misbehaviour is always preferred to intervention.”²

Preventative discipline hinges on the idea that most misbehaviour can be prevented if teachers take the right steps to provide an engaging learning environment where the students’ needs are considered and treated sensitively.³ Below we will discuss Rudolf Dreikurs Goal Centred Theory and Kounin’s Preventative Measures Theory.

Rudolf Dreikurs Goal Centred Theory.

Dreikurs Goal Centred Theory, centres on the idea that all misbehaviour is caused by children’s motivation to meet certain needs. It is recommended that teachers search for a needs-based explanation for students’ misbehaviour and then discuss alternative ways for students to meet these needs.⁴ The main principle of Dreikurs’ theory is that students have an innate desire to belong in a social group. When the social needs of the student are not met they sometimes mistakenly use negative behaviour to fulfil these needs.⁵ Common tactics include: attention seeking, exercising power, and getting revenge.⁶

Using Dreikurs’ theory teachers can employ the following strategies:⁷

- **Adopt a democratic style of teaching.**

In a democratic classroom the teacher works with their students to make decisions that impact how the class operates. This is important as students feel as though their opinions are valid and

² Gordon Lyons, Margot Ford and Michael Arthur-Kelly, *Classroom Management: Creating Positive Learning Environments*, (Cengage: Melbourne, 2003), 5, accessed 28 April, http://www.cengagebrain.com.au/content/lyons87128_0170187128_02.01_chapter01.pdf.

³ C.M Charles, *Building Classroom Discipline* (New York : Pearson, 2002), 236.

⁴ Lyons, *Classroom Management*, 7-8.

⁵ Lyons, *Classroom Management*, 7.

⁶ Lyons, *Classroom Management*, 7.

⁷ Other strategies outlined by Dreikurs include: focus on cooperative-learning strategies, be a role model for behaviour, foster trust, be respectful, be a leader not a boss (aim to facilitate learning), and provide choice (in terms of classwork, rules and consequences). Lyons, *Classroom Management*, 7-8.

considered. It also helps to create a harmonious classroom culture where students are encouraged to be involved.

- **Discuss needs satisfaction and behavioural expectations with the whole class.**

This could be achieved by establishing some class rules. In compiling this list the teacher might ask students 'what makes you feel happy and safe at school?' or 'what types of behaviours or actions have a negative effect on our classroom?' From here the class can establish which types of behaviour are acceptable.

- **Create a learning environment where students' basic needs are met.**

When students' basic needs are met they are free to focus on fulfilling other needs, such as self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, and respect by others.⁸

- **Give clear instructions, expectations and boundaries.**

- **Focus on effort rather than achievement.**

It is important that all students have the chance to feel successful in their studies. By focusing on effort the teacher is constantly encouraging students to keep trying regardless of the academic outcome. Too much focus on achievement means that the less academic students in your class may never actually experience success.⁹

Kounin's Preventative Measures

Kounin's approach requires teachers to be continually monitoring their class. This particular approach describes what is referred to as 'with-it-ness'.¹⁰ For example, while working with a student one-on-one the teacher also needs to be keeping an eye on the rest of the class. The teacher is constantly aware of what is going on in the classroom at all times, this way they can

⁸ Abraham Maslow, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, accessed 4 May, http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/60/Maslow%27s_Hierarchy_of_Needs.svg.

⁹ Roy Killen, *Effective Teaching Strategies: Lessons from Research and Practice* (South Melbourne: Social Sciences Press, 2007), 23-25.

¹⁰ Dennis M. McInerney and Valentina McInerney, *Educational Psychology: Constructing Learning Environments*, Prentice Hall, 2002.

quickly attend to any potential misbehaviour.¹¹ The key to Kounin's approach is that intervention causes the least disruption to lesson momentum as possible. Kounin's strategies include:¹²

- **Maintain activity flow and momentum during lessons.**

Keep the lesson moving at a reasonable pace and make smooth transitions between class activities. If you minimise lull-time you also minimise the chance that students will become bored or off-task and fall into inappropriate behaviour.

- **Using Proximity and non-verbal indicators.**

Using proximity, eye-contact or perhaps a discreet shake of the head lets students know that they need to stop what they're doing and return to the task at hand. Indicators like these help keep lesson momentum since these tactics often go un-noticed by other students.

- **Quick intervention when off-task behaviour presents itself.**

Defusing potential misbehaviour quickly prevents students from becoming more disruptive with their actions.¹³

Other Strategies

The theories outlined above provide the foundation for effective class management, there are of course many other strategies for successful preventative discipline. Vaupel outlines the following tactics for successful class management:¹⁴

- **Praise in public and chastise in private.**

Praise is possibly the most important preventative strategy. This is your key tool for creating a warm and encouraging class environment. By using praise students not only feel valued but it also gives them attention for the right kinds of behaviour.

- **Be organised.**

Organisation is important because it is an important factor of lesson flow. A teacher who is prepared and has a plan provides fewer opportunities for students to become restless.

- **Create a positive class environment.**

¹¹ McInerney and McInerney, *Educational Psychology*, 259.

¹² McInerney and McInerney, *Educational Psychology*, 259-260.

¹³ Note that the last two tactics in Kounin's model could also be considered as supportive discipline methods.

¹⁴ Vaupel, 'Practical Preventative Techniques in Classroom Management,' 5-6.

- **Learn students' names.**

While this is a simple, almost obvious, strategy it is significant. Knowing the names of students helps them feel respected and that you know who they are.

- **Explain the relevance of topic material to the class.**

Students need to understand the value in what it is they're studying. Students are more likely attempt and hopefully finish their work if they can see how it will be useful to them.¹⁵

Strategies in Practice

Teaching With Bayley – Praise & Preparation.¹⁶



In this clip Amy illustrates the importance of **praise**, and **organisation**.¹⁷ At the start of every lesson Amy writes **clear aims and activities** on the board. By doing this Amy is free to engage with the class. Amy employs many of the strategies outlined above. Specifically, as outlined in Dreikurs theory, Amy gives students **clear instructions** as soon as they enter the

classroom.¹⁸ She **establishes a mutually respectful class environment** by welcoming students at the door.¹⁹ Amy also uses a lot of praise to **encourage student involvement** in classroom activities. It is Amy's use of **praise** that stands out from the video.²⁰ In Amy's classroom students are encouraged to engage in lessons, this creates a positive learning environment which meets the needs of her students; this is an important aspect of Dreikurs theory.

¹⁵ L. Bradley and A. Scully, *Engagement: Inclusive Classroom Management* (Frenchs Forest: Pearson Education Australia, 2005), 57.

¹⁶ SchoolsWorld.tv, Praise and Preparation, accessed 28 April, 2015, <http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/273>.

¹⁷ In Amy's opinion organisation is the key to combatting constant low level misbehaviour.

¹⁸ For example, Amy reminds students to collect textbooks at the beginning of every lesson.

¹⁹ She also uses students' names often.

²⁰ For example, she responds to a student by saying, 'very well read, thank you very much that was fantastic'. This example can be found at 2.8 Minutes.

Supportive Discipline

Minimising management problems through pre-emptive and effective classroom management.

Generally speaking, it is inevitable that you will experience some misbehaviour, even when all of the necessary preventative measures have been put in place. When students begin to misbehave there are a number of strategies designed to help get students back on task and engaged in lessons.²¹

Levin and Nolan Method: Use proactive methods for supportive discipline.

The Levin and Nolan Intervention Model is designed to discourage misbehaviour and provide students with the opportunity to correct their behaviour.²²

They suggest that you:

- **Change the pace of class activities once you notice students becoming restless.**

Students often become restless when they are bored or tired. Remember that students' attention spans are limited. A good rule of thumb is 15 to 20 minutes for activities where they are required to sit and concentrate.

- **Remove 'seductive objects'** (return them at the end of the lesson).

Go with the age old 'out of sight out of mind' way of thinking.

- **Take an interest in students who are becoming off-task.**

Ask about their work or check to see if they've finished the exercise.

- **Non-punitive time out.**

This can be as simple as asking the student to run an errand or go have a drink of water. Sometimes all students need is a short break away from the class to revitalise them.

²¹ McInerney and McInerney, *Educational Psychology*, 250.

²² James Levin and James F. Nolan, *Every Teacher: Classroom Management* (Melbourne: Pearson Education Inc., 2005), 26-27.

- **Be consistent with directions, expectations, and consequences: have a pre-determined intervention plan which outlines types of misbehaviour and matches them with an appropriate method of discipline.** This will help you deliver consistent types of discipline regardless of how tired you have become with the student. Students who feel as though the teacher is inconsistent or unfair are more likely to become confrontational.²³

The table on the [Hierarchy of Management Strategies](#) below illustrates how to progressively implement varying types of discipline. From minor intervention (often non-verbal and student centred) to more intrusive and teacher-centred strategies.²⁴

This model makes the following assumptions:²⁵

- **“Intervention provides a student with opportunities for the self-control of the disruptive behaviours.”²⁶**
- **Intervention does not cause more disruption to the rest of the class.**
For example, teachers can effectively use the whisper technique to let your students know that they need to correct their behaviour. This is effective as it does not name and shame the student or cause further disruption to the lesson.²⁷ This technique can also be used for positive reinforcement.
- **Intervention reduces the probability that students will become confrontational.**
- **The teacher chooses the type of intervention that leaves a number of other options available.** This is why Levin and Nolan suggest that teachers begin with the least confrontational methods first, and then opt for more intrusive methods when student-focused strategies have failed to bring the student back on task.

²³ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 26.

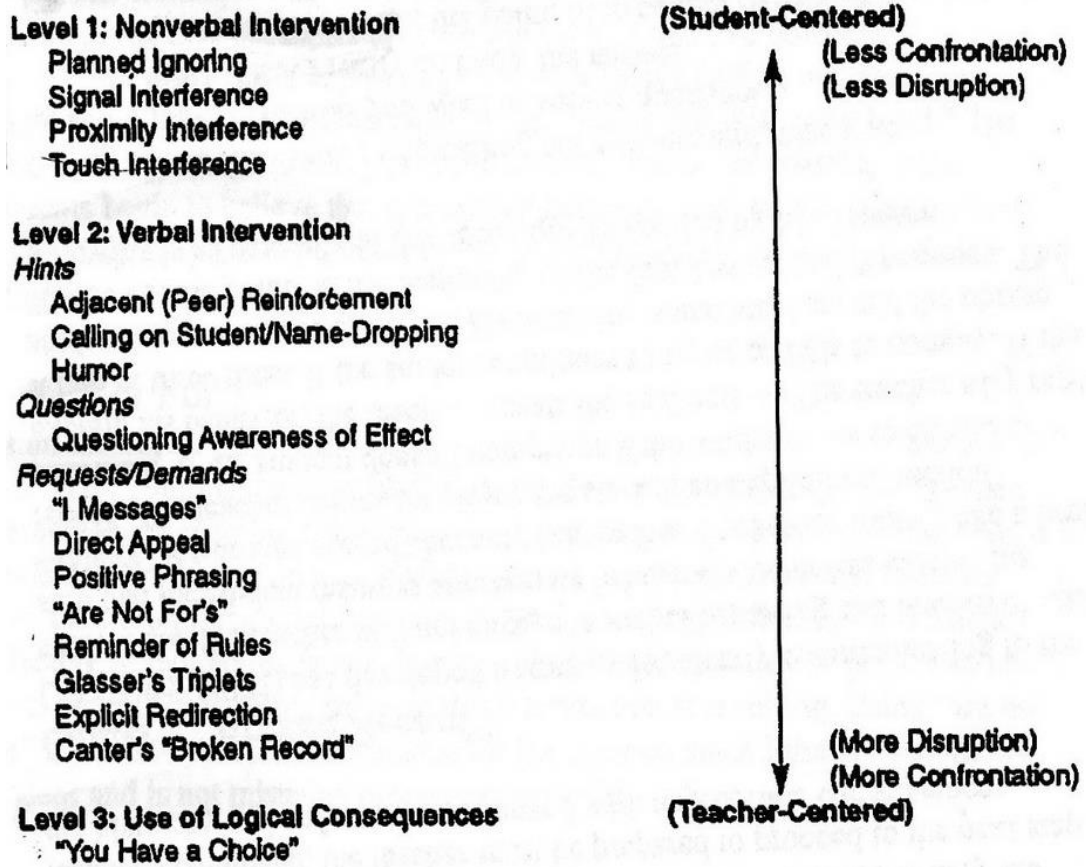
²⁴ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 26-27.

²⁵ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 26-28.

²⁶ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 27.

²⁷ Teaching Channel, ‘New Teacher Survival Guide: Classroom Management,’ accessed 5 May, 2015, <https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/new-teacher-classroom-management>.

The Table on Hierarchy of Management Strategies²⁸



SEE APPENDIX ONE

See appendix one for more detail on planned ignoring, signal interference and Glasser's triplets.

²⁸ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 43.

Strategies in Practice

Manage That Class²⁹



In this video the class teacher Jenny uses wait time to separate behaviour management from lesson content. This highlights how disruptive this teaching style can be to the flow of the lesson.³⁰

During this class Jenny encounters a particularly disruptive student called Vulcan. Although she continues to ask students to put away their models and plasticine he continues to ignore her instructions. In this case Jenny could have removed

the plasticine rather than wait the two minutes it takes to carry out this directive.³¹ This is one of the simple strategies mentioned above, '**remove subjective objects**'.

Although I would not recommend Jenny's technique she still implements a few good supportive strategies. For example, she **reminds students of the rules** saying 'that's a good answer, but hands up'. And makes use of **name dropping**.

Teaching with Bayley

Girl Talk³²



When faced with two persistently chatty girls Nicola successfully implements **planned ignoring**. She takes care to only reward the students' good, on-task behaviour with a lot of **positive attention**.³³

²⁹ SchoolsWorld.tv, 'Manage That Class,' accessed 28 April, 2015, <http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/1752>.

³⁰ Although it is suggested, by deputy head John Wootton, that this is the correct mode of discipline to use Jenny would benefit from implementing more of Levin and Nolan's **non-verbal techniques** to control the low level disruption in her class.

³¹ See 6-8 minutes.

³² SchoolsWorld.tv, 'Girl Talk,' accessed 28 April, 2015, <http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/126>.

³³ At 10:10 minutes there is a very good example of **planned ignoring** in action. A student calls out over the rest of the class and Nicola fails to respond and continues working with students who are on task. This method, as outlined by Levin and Nolan, really pays off and by the end of the lesson the girls are displaying signs that they are on task and completing their work.

Teaching with Bayley Need for Structure³⁴



This video is the perfect example of why Levin and Nolan suggest that you **change the pace of your lessons** when you notice students becoming disengaged. Michelle, chose to read a passage of text to her class (without visual aids). After 15 minutes working on the exercise most of the class were day dreaming, having a

nap on their desk or starting to misbehave.³⁵

New Teacher Survival Guide: Classroom Management.



In this video Ms. V uses the **whisper technique** to support her students and keep them on task.³⁶

³⁴ SchoolsWorld.tv, 'Need for Structure,' accessed 28 April, 2015, <http://www.schoolsworld.tv/node/272>.

³⁵ At 7 minutes Bayley suggests to Michelle that she should consider changing class activities to encourage participation.

³⁶ See 3.45 Minutes for the **whisper technique**. Teaching Channel, 'New Teacher Survival Guide.'

Corrective Discipline

Responding to common and chronic misbehaviour problems when they arise.

Corrective discipline is a last resort for teachers; generally most misbehaviour can be avoided thanks to the steps taken in the preventative and supportive stages of behaviour management.³⁷

“If you approach misbehaving students in a sensitive manner, you can help them return to proper behaviour with no ill feelings.”³⁸

Gordon’s ‘Discipline as Self-Control’ Approach

In this approach the teacher uses minimal control and works to understand the student and the root of the misbehaviour.³⁹ To ascertain the problem the teacher should:

- **Reserve judgement.**
- **Clarify the root of the problem by asking themselves if the problem owned by the student or the teacher? (Use non-verbal encouragement e.g. nodding.)**
- **Actively listen.**
- **Summarise and repeat what the student has told you.**

If the problem is owned by the teacher, for example the behaviour is having a direct impact on the teacher, the teacher should employ ‘**I-messages**’ (which are also a feature of the Levin and Nolan Method mentioned previously). An ‘I-message’ describes the student’s behaviour without judging, explains the negative impact the behaviour is having on the teacher and expresses how this behaviour makes the teacher feel.⁴⁰

Gordon also outlines the **no-lose approach** where the teacher and student cooperate to find a solution to the off-task behaviour. There are 6 steps to this approach:⁴¹

³⁷ Charles, *Building Classroom Discipline*, 237.

³⁸ Charles, *Building Classroom Discipline*, 237.

³⁹ Charles, *Building Classroom Discipline*, 263.

⁴⁰ The bonus of using the directive ‘I-message’ is that it allows the teacher to guide appropriate behaviour without making the student feel as though the teacher is judging them. Charles, *Building Classroom Discipline*, 263.

⁴¹ Thomas L. Good and Jere E. Brophy, *Looking in Classrooms* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Inc., 2000), 169.

- 1) Outline the problem.
- 2) Work together to create a list of possible solutions.
- 3) Review the solutions.
- 4) Choose one solution on which both parties can agree.
- 5) Come up with an action plan to successfully implement the solution.
- 6) Assess whether the solution has been successful.

Nelson, Lott and Glenn's 'Positive discipline in the classroom' Approach.

This is based on the idea that students have the capacity to control and monitor their own behaviour and that they have the ability to be responsible and cooperative. Students are encouraged to reflect on classroom problems and identify possible solutions. The focus is placed on finding solutions, as a class, to prevent the behaviour from occurring in the first place. This is generally done through class meetings.⁴²

Other strategies

- **Positive rather than negative consequences.**

- **Logical consequences.**

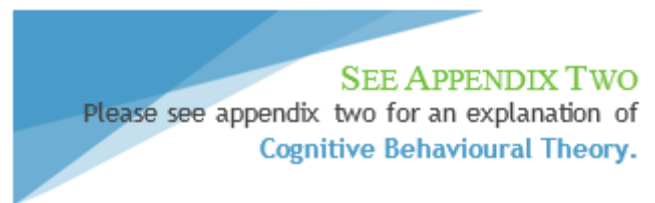
Always be mindful when it comes to consequences. Student's need to see a link between their behaviour and the consequence. Unrelated arbitrary punishment only causes confusion.

- **The 'freeze' technique.**

Stopping the disruptive student in their tracks.

- **'You have a choice'** also featured in the Levin and Nolan approach. This gives students the opportunity

to discontinue their behaviour or face the logical consequence.⁴³ For example, 'Robert you have a choice. You can stop yelling in class or you will be separated from the group.'



SEE APPENDIX TWO
Please see appendix two for an explanation of
Cognitive Behavioural Theory.

⁴² Charles, *Building Classroom Discipline*, 270.

⁴³ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 42.

Conclusion

As you can see behaviour management can sometimes be complicated, especially for pre-service teachers who are trying to find which solutions work best for them. However, if you pay close attention to the preventative strategies suggested by Dreikurs and Kounin you will be able to avoid a lot of low level behavioural issues. Remember that the key is to foster a caring and positive learning environment where students want to be involved in your lessons. This is the ultimate goal for classroom management. Students who want to be a part of your classroom will be much less likely to act in ways that will have them excluded from the group.

Appendix one

Levin and Nolan's Strategies Explained.

Planned Ignoring is based on the belief that ignoring certain types of behaviour will in fact cause the behaviour to become less persistent and eventually die out. Levin and Nolan highlight that it is difficult to ignore behaviour. This is why they stress the 'planned' aspect of the action. They explain that this is a successful tactic since student behaviour is often reinforced and validated when the teacher stops to give them the attention that they have been seeking.⁴⁴

Signal interference is any type of non-verbal tactic which indicates to students that their behaviour is inappropriate. Ensure that these strategies are clearly directed at the student. Some non-verbal tactics include: head shaking, making eye-contact, holding up a hand and pointing or gesturing. Remember to keep a professional business-like manner when using these non-verbal intervention strategies.⁴⁵

Glasser's Triplets

In this strategy teachers redirect student behaviour by asking these three questions:

- 1) What are you doing?
- 2) Is it against the rules?
- 3) What should you be doing?

Note that this strategy only works if the class already agreed on a set of rules. The only drawback to this method is that students need to respond honestly. If you think a student is likely to answer in a sarcastic nature, Levin and Nolan advise that you use three statements rather than questions. You could say, for example, 'Robert you are swinging on your chair; that is against the rules. You should sit with your chair firmly on the ground'.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 29.

⁴⁵ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 29.

⁴⁶ Levin and Nolan, *Every Teacher*, 40.

Appendix two

Cognitive Behavioural Theory

Give challenging students the skills to improve and control their behaviour.

Cognitive Behavioural Theory aims to develop behavioural independence by teaching students the skills to self-manage their behaviour. Once students have gained behavioural independence their motivation to follow instructions increases. Cognitive Behavioural Theory works best for students who have been displaying challenging behaviours stemming from low self-esteem, and lack of achievement.⁴⁷ The key principles for this theory state that individuals have the ability to make both good and bad choices regarding their behaviour. Furthermore, behavioural choices are swayed not only by consequences but also values, motivation, context and problem-solving skills.⁴⁸ If students are supported to control their thinking and feelings they will be better equipped to make decisions about what it is they want and how to achieve that goal.⁴⁹

Using the Cognitive Behavioural Theory approach teachers can effectively apply these practices during the corrective discipline phase. Teachers can assist more challenging students by:⁵⁰

- **Identifying students who may need more focused intervention.** This might be students who display poor social skills or have anger management problems.
- **Ascertain which skills individual students need to develop.** Then work with students to develop these skills.
- **Teach skills through skill demonstration and rehearsal.**

⁴⁷ Lyons, *Classroom Management*, 10-12

⁴⁸ Lyons, *Classroom Management*, 10.

⁴⁹ Lyons, *Classroom Management*, 10.

⁵⁰ Lyons, *Classroom Management*, 10-11.

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