
Book Review

Practical Classroom Management for Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Teachers

by Dr. Cathy Stockton and Dr. David E. Gullatt, Strategic Book Publishing

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By

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This book is a presentation with suggested activities on practical classroom management. It has 13 chapters and is concise with 94 pages. The authors are from the U.S.A. The reason I chose it is because it is a good presentation on classroom management with suggestions.

Chapter One: Theorists/Scholars

This lists Canter's Assertive Discipline, William Glasser, Lawrence Kohlberg with Kohlberg's Stages, Jacob Kounin, Abraham Maslow, and Harry Wong.

The chapter helps to identify positive consequences (rewards) that do not cost money that can be given to students who behave appropriately.

Chapter Two: Designing a Classroom Conductive to Learning.

It includes practical activities to assist in setting up an effective learning environment. It suggests to begin with being aware of the physical setting of your classroom. It is important to make a nameplate with your name on it and to send a letter to all students and their families with your expectations, testing policies, and how to contact you. Determine classroom rules and consequences when students break the rules. It is important that rewards be identified for students who keep the rules. It is also important to include an activity if the regular teacher is not present.

Chapter Three: Diverse Learners

Students have various learning styles. Howard Gardner suggests eight ways students can be smart: Verbal-Linguistic, Mathematical-Logic, Spatial, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal and Naturalist. It is important that teachers consider how students are unique when developing lessons.

Chapter Four: Planning Effective Lessons

There are many ways of developing lessons, but they should include:

*Specific activities (aligned to appropriate content standards).

*Introduction

- *Whole group directed teaching
- *Individual or cooperative activities
- *Formative/remediation/enrichment
- *Summary evaluation

Five kinds of graphic organizers were discussed:

- *Venn Diagram
- *Concept Maps
- *Jigsaw
- *Carousel Brainstorming
- *KWL Chart

Using technology effectively is important in teaching. Be sure to use technology effectively in ways that are helpful to students.

Chapter Five: Managing Student Crises and Student Safety

It is always best to follow school rules regarding accidents and medication. Most schools do not allow teachers to give medication to students. It is important for schools to have an accident form. Bullying is a serious form of harassment that students face. Cell phones make this even more complex. It is important to keep good records regarding bullying.

Child abuse is another serious thing and teachers need to report it. It is sometimes necessary to refer students to principal, discipline coordinator, or other school official. Always teachers must try to keep their emotions under control.

Chapter Six: Barriers to Becoming an Effective Teacher

There are many aspects of an effective teacher including being firm, fair and friendly. An effective teacher should plan lessons at least one week in advance. The teacher's lounge should not be a place to disrespect students, parents, or colleagues. Be sure to be friendly with all employees. Students will observe your behavior. It is important to stay healthy. If you are not healthy it is difficult to teach.

Chapter Seven: Conflict Mediation: Does It Work?

A definition of a conflict is a disagreement. Emotions such as anger can hurt. It is important for teachers, students, parents, teachers, and administrators to be involved in conflict resolution. A school in Louisiana trained students, parents, and teachers in conflict resolution and conflict was significantly reduced. Some important steps in conflict resolution are:

- *To identify what the conflict (problem) is about
- *To brainstorm at least three solutions

*Disputants choose a solution that is fair

*School violence is a serious problem and must not be ignored

Chapter Eight: Laws of the Land

Although this chapter is about American laws and all may not relate to Thailand, they are important to know. Four amendments affect education directly in the U.S.A.

The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech. However, the state can control speech or expression (a) if there is a clear and present danger and (b) material and substantial disruption.

Pledge of Allegiance

This indicates the state cannot make a student recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Prayer

Since there is a doctrine of separation of church and state, religious exercises in public schools are considered unconstitutional.

Fourth Amendment

This amendment relates to search and seizure. A search can be done only if there is reasonable cause to believe that a person stole something.

Eighth Amendment

This relates to cruel and unusual punishment. Any punishment of students should be reasonable.

Fourteenth Amendment

There are three basic factors in due process according to the fourteenth amendment: A person must have proper notice that he or she is about to be deprived of life, liberty, or property; the person must have the opportunity to be heard and the hearing must be conducted fairly.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents and students over eighteen years old certain rights regarding the student's educational records:

*The right of restrict release of directory information for the student.

* The right to restrict the release of a student's name, address and telephone information to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning.

*A right to inspect and review the student's educational records upon request.

*A right to request the amendment of the student's educational record that the parents or eligible students believe are inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate.

Chapter Nine: Involvement of Parents and Families in Schools

It has been found that the more parents are involved, the higher students achieve. A decrease in student alcohol use, violence, and inappropriate behaviors happens.

There are several steps in establishing a good program.

- *Define parent/family involvement
- *Identify dream levels of involvement
- *Identify obstacles to an effective program
- *Establish a committee
- *Create an action plan
- *Evaluate the plan after 2–3 weeks
- *Make changes as needed
- *Evaluate plan annually

Chapter Ten: Teacher Responsibilities

There are things a teacher should consider:

Dress and grooming—although the teacher has rights, they must also follow school policies.

Lifestyle choices—this also needs to be balanced with the school policies.

The responsibilities of teachers:

- *Plan lessons well
- *Follow classroom management policies
- *Write an official office form for sending students out of class
- *It is important to inform parents of students who are violating school policies.
- *Always speak to students and parents in a professional manner
- *Maintain a grade book/grading record
- *Be available for parent/guardian conferences
- *Complete activities as required

Chapter Eleven: Stress

Some sources of stress are:

- *Job
- *Personal life
- *Environment
- *Information overload

Some signs of stress are:

*Nervousness

*Cold hands/feet

Confusion

*Fatigue

*Mood changes

*Changes in eating habits

Some ways of managing stress better

*Do something you enjoy

*Set aside time for yourself

*Laugh

*Work out

*Take a break

*Learn to moderate your physical reaction to stress

*Identify what you can change

Chapter Twelve: Accountability in the Classroom

This chapter is mainly about unethical testing practices. A common source of cheating is on responses to multiple choice questions to make changes.

A way to protect yourself is to read testing administrator guidelines carefully.

Chapter Thirteen: Helping Organizations

There are several organizations and groups that may be helpful to you as a teacher:

*Business Contributions

*Civic organizations

*Faith Based Groups

*Federal Homeless Programs

*Fraternal and Sorority Organizations

*Garage Sales

*Grants

*Parent-Teacher Organizations

*Red Cross

Critique

This book is very helpful for teaches and those going into the teaching profession. It is short (94 pages) and easy to read. Although the focus of this book is the United States, it is helpful for Thailand and other countries.

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