



Tennessee Behavior Supports Project

at the University of Memphis Lambuth

Strategies for Effective Classroom Management



This guide was produced by the Tennessee Behavior Supports Project at the University of Memphis Lambuth—one of three projects across the state funded by the Tennessee Department of Education to provide training and technical assistance to schools as they address the behavioral needs of students. This brief was authored by Carolyn Stark and Shelby Cook.



Effectively managing behavior in the classroom setting can present as a challenge for many teachers. However, there are a variety of strategies that teachers can easily implement that can have a significant effect on student behavior. Some of these responses can be quickly utilized without much thought or effort, such as making eye contact with a student, while others require a bit more consideration. It is important to note that the intensity of the teacher's response should always match that of the student's behavior. For an example, if a student engages in a single disruptive behavior, such as calling out in class, an appropriate response may be to make eye contact with the student and provide a visual reminder to raise your hand. On the other hand, if a student continuously calls out, a

verbal correction or ignoring may become necessary.

To the right, we have illustrated a continuum of corrective responses that teachers can use to respond to inappropriate student behavior. The responses are listed in order of the level of intensity. Therefore, if you have a student with a new, mild misbehavior, try one of the first few responses. Likewise, try a later response to respond to a more challenging and recurrent undesired behavior. For more details on certain responses, see the back of this sheet.

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Continuum of Classroom Responses

- Eye Contact
- Pause in teaching
- The teacher "look"
- Physical proximity
- Praise appropriate behavior observed
- Touch or gesture
- Visual Prompt
- Use humor (but never sarcasm)
- Reminder of expected behavior
- Ask the class for a response that ends the inappropriate behavior
- Gentle verbal correction (quiet, quick, calm)
- Ignoring
- Seat Change
- Reteach, positive practice
- Reflection Sheet or Think Time Strategy
- Loss of privileges
- Mini-conference with student
- Contract with student
- Modify assignment



Reflection Sheet Questions

- 1) What did I do that was not safe, respectful, or responsible? What was I thinking at this time?
- 2) Who was affected or impacted?
- 3) Faced with a similar situation in the future, what would I do differently?
- 4) How can I fix this? What needs to be done to make it right?

Think Time Strategy

The Think Time Strategy is a more indepth practice that is similar to the Reflection Sheet strategy. It requires teamwork between two or more teachers and the establishment of a Think Time area in each classroom. Teachers teach all students the strategy, using these steps:

1. Teacher catches the disruptive behavior early. In a calm manner, the teacher requests or prompts the youngster to adjust the behavior. If the student does not comply, the teacher directs the student to the Think Time area in the cooperating teacher's classroom. The student moves to the designated Think Time area. Routines are put into place to support students in moving appropriately to the area in the other classroom.
2. The teacher in charge of the Think Time area debriefs with the student. After the student has thought about the behavior and gained self-control, the teacher asks the student to describe the behavior. If the student complies, then the he or she is given a debriefing form to complete (e.g., identify the inappropriate behavior; identify appropriate behavior). If the student does not comply, then the teacher calmly responds with, "I'll be back to you." The teacher returns later and resumes the process.
3. The teacher in charge of the Think Time area checks student's debriefing responses. If correct, the student goes back to the classroom; if incorrect, the teacher responds with, "I'll be back to you." The teacher returns later and resumes the process.
4. Student rejoins the class. The teacher reviews the behavioral debriefing form. If it is correct, the student joins the classroom. If it is incorrect, the student returns to the Think Time area.

Think Time Debriefing Form	
Name _____	Date _____
Sending Teacher _____	Grade _____
Arrival Time _____	Departure Time _____
What was your behavior? _____	
What behavior do you need to display when you go back to your classroom? _____	
Will you be able to do it? ___ Yes ___ No ___ I need to see the teacher.	

References

- Mooiman, L. (2010). Continuum of Corrective Responses [Word document]. Retrieved from <https://www.nvusd.k12.ca.us/behavioralerrors>
- Nelson, R., & Carr, B.A. (1999). Think time strategy for schools: Bringing order to the classroom (2nd ed.). Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

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