Routines, Procedures, and Transitions

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At the beginning of the year it is imperative for a teacher to have set guidelines for the routines, procedures, and transitions of their classroom. This allows the students to have an understanding of the expectations needed to be successful. Having a well-run classroom is essential for a healthy, working learning environment.

**Part 1: Routines and Procedures**

On the first day of school, a teacher has many responsibilities that lay the groundwork for a successful school year. Before introducing instructional materials it is important for the students to learn how to be a well-behaved, fruitful member of your classroom. Scripture says “then you will know how to behave properly, and your words will show that you have knowledge” (Proverbs 5:2, New International Version). Knowing the difference between right and wrong provides the students the knowledge to be better students. This is how a typical first day would go according to the writer:

Introduction:

Good morning class! My name is Mrs. Braxton and I have been a teacher at this school for five years. I am married and have one child who is three. I am so excited to begin a new school year with you here at City Elementary School. Last year you came into the school as Kindergarteners who had never been to school before. Now you are big 1st graders and that means you have a responsibility in this school now. You need to show those new Kindergarteners what it means to be a student here at City Elementary School and show them how we are suppose to act. Let’s try and remember the school-wide rules like: no running in the building. We must always walk when we are inside the school building. No running, skipping, jumping, unless you are in PE, your teacher tells you to, or you are outside. Also, no talking in the hallways, to respect your friends and teachers, and to always follow the classroom rules.

Icebreaker:

Ok, boys and girls, now we are going to play and really run game. I am going to pass out an M&M to each one of you. Everyone will get one, but please do not eat them. (Teacher passes out one piece of candy for each child.) Now, when I call on you depending on the color of your M&M you are going to tell us something special about yourself. Everyone look up at this chart so we can go over what each color will stand for. If you have: red – share something with us that you did this summer, orange – tell us your three favorite foods, yellow – tell us your favorite book, green – tell us your favorite toy or game, blue – tell us our favorite movie, brown – tell us what makes you a really good friend. I will start. I have a blue M&M so I am going to tell you that my favorite movie is The Sound of Music. (Now each student has a chance to share facts about themself.)

Classroom Rules:

Since we are in this classroom together for most of our school day we need to have some classroom rules. If you will look up here next to the white board you will find a list of Mrs. Braxton’s rules for classroom. The first rule is to listen and be respectful of whoever is talking. If everyone talked at the same time no one would ever learning anything. No matter if it is Mrs. Braxton, another teacher or a student we must always be respectful of what they are saying. The second rule is to raise your hand if you have something to say. This goes along with our first rule. Mrs. Braxton’s eyes are always open and looking around the classroom so I can see if you have your hand in the air with something to share. The third and final rule is to always do your best work. The work you get in class is not to see how fast you do it but it is to see how well you do it. It is so important to your learning that you do your best.

Behavior Incentive and Consequences:

If you look around the room you will notice that Mrs. Braxton has lots of fish all over the place. If you look over at this wall you will see that there are 20 little orange fish with each one of your names on them. You know that fish like to be in the deep part of the water where everyone is right now. If you follow all the rules for the day and stay deep in the water then you will get a star on your fish. If you make a mistake and Mrs. Braxton has to talk to you, you will move your fish to the shallow water and you will not get a star that day. If a mistake happens again that same day then you move out of water and on the hook which means no star and a phone call home to Mom and Dad. When you earn 20 stars you get to take a trip to Mrs. Braxton’s treasure box! The good thing is that every morning you will be able to start in the deep water again. Everyone starts over every day.

Arrival Procedures:

Everyone arrives to school at different times in the morning. Some people walk to school, some people ride the bus, and some people ride in their parent’s cars. When you get to school in the morning please come into the classroom quietly, unpack your bag and hang it up, place your folder in your cubby and have a seat at your desk. Every morning you will have a morning work assignment to complete. Remember our third class rule – you must always do your best work. Once you have completed it your morning work, please turn it in to the assignment basket and read a book until the school news starts.

Dismissal Procedures:

At the end of the day, Mrs. Braxton will call rows to pack up for dismissal. When I call your row make sure you get your folder, anything else in your cubby, your book bag, and anything else you brought to school. Bring all of your items back to your desk and pack up. Once you are all packed go and sit on your number assigned to you for classroom line. When the office calls your bus number, car riders, or after school program you make walk to the designated area.

Assignments and Collection:

All assignments must be completed and turned by the given time. Remember you must always do your best work. When you are finished put your assignment in the basket unless you have been given alternate instructions. If you do not finish the assignment during the assigned time you can put your work in your cubby to finish at a later time during the day.

Students Seeking Help and Movement Around the Classroom:

Unless you have asked permission you cannot get out of your seat during our work time. If you have a question or need something you need to raise your hand and wait for Mrs. Braxton to call on you. If there is an emergency, like you feel like you might be sick to your stomach or you are hurt you may get up. If it is just for a tiny scratch that will not be acceptable. Remember Mrs. Braxton is watching you and will know if you need help. If you have a concern that you need Mrs. Braxton to address and you feel like you need to do so privately, please raise your hand and then come up to my desk.

Redirecting Off Task Behavior:

Sometimes we make mistakes, and that is ok. The important thing is that you learn from your mistakes. If you break a rule in Mrs. Braxton’s class you will get a warning the first time. If you break the rule again your fish will be moved and the consequences will be according to where your fish is at the end of the day.

Communication:

Please remember our first classroom rule: always listen and be respectful of who is talking. No matter who it is, if someone is talking you should be listening. If you have something to share with the class raise your hand quietly so everyone has a chance to share their ideas.

**Part 2: Transitions**

Transitions in the classroom can be a tricky time during the school day. Changing from one subject to another, taking bathroom breaks, going to lunch or specials, and packing up to leave for the day all leave room for disruptions and open windows for off task behavior. Teachers need to be preemptive and have a plan for such times to help the transitions much smoother. Scripture says, “Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise (Proverbs 16:21, New International Version), meaning that each day we learn more and more growing in our faith and intellect. If students learn day by day the impact of their actions on their education and how to use them correctly, they will in the end profit from their learning.

Assignment Transition:

Grade Level: First Grade

Goal: The goal is to transition from one subject to another with minimal distractions in the classroom.

Behavioral Procedures: When you are finished put your assignment in the basket unless you have been given alternate instructions. Once you have finished and placed your work in the assignment basket you may finish any work you have left to finish or you may read your library book quietly. You may not disrupt your peers. If you do not finish the assignment during the assigned time you can put your work in your cubby to finish at a later time during the day.

Lunchroom Transition:

Grade Level: First Grade

Goal: The goal is to transition from the classroom to lunch and then back to the classroom ready to work with minimal distraction.

Behavioral Procedures: When the teacher instructs you to line up for lunch you must line up in your number line. If you brought your lunch this is the time to get it. Once everyone is on his or her assigned number we will walk to the lunchroom mindful of our hallway behavior. Once lunch is over we will return to the classroom the same way. Students should put away any belongings they brought back from lunch and the class will fins their spots on the carpet. There should be no talking and students should be prompt so the next lesson can begin.

Restroom Transition:

Grade Level: First Grade

Goal: The goal is to transition from the classroom to the restroom and back to the classroom with minimal distractions.

Behavioral Procedures: The class will take three scheduled bathroom breaks together during the day - one before specials, one before lunch, and one after recess. Students should use the facilities quickly and quietly. The class will return from the bathrooms together. If an emergency arises during instruction, a student may raise their hand to ask permission to leave the room to use the restroom. It is at the teacher’s discretion whether the student may go or not. A student must take the bathroom pass and go straight to the bathroom and straight back while quietly entering the room.

Dismissal Transition:

Grade Level: First Grade

Goal: The goal is to have a process on student packing up personal belongings in an orderly and timely fashion, which ends in the class’s dismissal line.

Behavioral Procedures: At the end of the day, the teacher will call rows to pack up for dismissal. When your row is called make sure you get your folder, anything else in your cubby, your book bag, and anything else you brought to school. The students will bring all of their items back to your desk and pack up. Once the students are all packed they must go and sit on their number assigned to them for the classroom line. When the office calls the students’ bus number, car riders, or after school programs you make walk to the designated area.