SOURCE 2
Classroom Management
2.1 Setting the Tone to Establish Classroom Management

- Review all lesson plans and materials provided in the regular teacher’s substitute packet.
- Print your title (Mr., Mrs., and Ms.) and last name only on the board and introduce yourself to the class.
- Adhere to the lesson plan schedule and follow the directions provided by the regular classroom teacher.
- Adhere to the school’s opening exercises and procedures (e.g., Pledge of Allegiance, taking attendance).
- Communicate effectively by providing clear and specific directions at all times.
- Once you have provided directions for the first lesson plan assignment, circulate throughout the classroom to maintain control and respond to individual student’s questions.

NOTE

Never use or allow students to address you by your first name.

REMINDER

In order to establish classroom control, you must maintain your role as the teacher and not the friend or peer of a student.

2.2 Basic Classroom Management Components

THE WHAT AND WHY

Students are often resistant to learning anything when they don’t understand. “What’s the point?” is always rattling around in their heads. Explaining what the topic is and why it’s important cuts through their resistance to learn.

MODELING AND DEMONSTRATING

As the teacher, it’s always a good strategy to model the behavior you expect from students (e.g., entering the classroom quietly, raising hands, responding to questions).

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

Provide students with opportunities to practice and model the appropriate behaviors.

RE-TEACH AND REPETITION

When students don’t demonstrate the correct behaviors, stop and re-teach the strategy until they are able to respond appropriately.
### 2.3 Setting Expectations and Procedures for the Class

Substitute teachers must immediately establish a set of classroom procedures for the students in order to conduct an orderly and effective classroom environment. Below is a partial list of several procedures that may assist you in performing this task:

Students should:

- Listen to one another speak
- Raise hands to respond to questions
- Not call out responses
- Demonstrate mutual respect for other students and the teacher
- Follow directions
- Ask questions when unsure of directions
- Listen to ideas of other students
- Be open-minded with different opinions; try to be non-judgmental
- Speak one at a time
- Be positive
- Make eye contact when someone is speaking
- Keep their hands to themselves
- Think before acting

### 2.4 Establishing Basic Procedures and Routines

Substitute teachers need to implement basic procedures and routines to help students stay on task, minimize student behavioral issues, and maximize instructional teaching time. A list of some effective routines and procedures is provided below:

- Using signals such as clapping, thumbs up, eyes on me, time out, etc. to gain focus and student attention during the lesson
- Praising and complimenting students; validating their responses
- Using “wait time” to gain student attention
- Listing the amount of time left for a specific activity (e.g., non-verbal countdown)
- Using a firm, but respectful teaching voice that shows enthusiasm for the subject
- Establishing rationale for classroom procedures
- Modeling consistent behavior
- Delivering clear and specific directions
- Monitoring behavior in a quick, calm manner
Substitute teachers face a very challenging position each day they enter a classroom. Regardless of the grade level, students are very observant and immediately react to changes in their normal school day. One method to effectively deal with their reaction to you as a substitute teacher is for you to "act as if" you are the regular classroom teacher. Sometimes making believe or pretending can get you through a challenging day. As the regular classroom teacher, you would maintain and manage a controlled classroom environment while providing the necessary daily instruction outlined in the lesson plans. Teaching with confidence and enthusiasm demonstrates to the students that you are the professional in control of the classroom and you truly enjoy teaching. When substitute teachers display these qualities, students are more likely to follow directions, perform tasks, and enjoy learning.

“Act as if” also helps you to avoid bringing your own personal problems into the classroom. Pretending that it is going to be a terrific day helps to manage and motivate the students.

In addition, no matter how good your previous lesson may have been, you should "ACT AS IF" it could always be better.
2.6 Using Tentative Words & Phrases To Minimize and Defuse Teacher/Student Verbal Confrontations

There may be times when students become unruly, disruptive, and attempt to verbally confront the substitute teacher. A successful way to address these issues is to remain calm, speak in a firm but caring tone of voice, and always stay in control. The suggested phrases/words listed below are good ways to respond to these students:

- I understand...
- Perhaps...
- I think...
- Maybe it’s a good idea...
- Could it be...
- I’m not sure...
- Is it possible...
- However...
- It may be possible...
- I suggest that we...
- Nevertheless...

NOTE
You can demonstrate that you are in control both verbally and through your non-verbal body language.

2.7 How to Get and Maintain Students’ Attention

EXPLAIN
Give a simple example of your signal/procedure (e.g., “Eyes on me” means to stop what the students are doing and focus on the teacher).

MODEL
Demonstrate the signal/procedure to the student (e.g., “Hands on your lap” means to stop writing and focus on the teacher).

PRACTICE
Allow the students to have a brief discussion on a topic or begin writing something and then use the above signal/procedure to focus students.

NOTE
Keep in mind that many effective classroom teachers have already developed specific signals, procedures, and routines to focus students and gain their attention. Don’t feel that you need to create new or more innovative signals for the students to master. Ask the students for the signals/procedures used by the regular classroom teacher for best results.
Connecting and communicating with students gives you the chance to teach. The following techniques may help you connect with your students.

**USE “I MESSAGES”**

“I messages” help to get your point across without making students feel defensive and confrontational. Here’s an example: “…I feel…when you…because…”

- I feel (X) – a feeling, not an opinion
- When you (Y) – observable behavior
- Because (Z) – an observable consequence

This structure describes, labels, and avoids teacher talk. The student knows the consequences of his/her behavior.

For example: “Robert, I feel angry when you pull your jacket over your head and sleep in my third period class. Because you are missing the lesson, you may not pass Thursday’s test.”

**USE SMALL TALK**

Small talk or casual conversation helps you connect with students in a positive way. It creates emotional involvement, shows students you care about them, and helps establish and maintain the teacher/student relationship.

**INVITE STUDENTS TO TALK ABOUT FEELINGS**

First respond to feelings, then to facts. When a student is angry, frightened, or frustrated, saying, “Calm down, calm down!” doesn’t work.

Instead, you may want to say:

- “You seem quite upset.”
- “Someone must have done something awful to get you this excited.”
- “Do you want to talk about what’s bothering you?”
TRY THE ONE MINUTE PRAISE AND ONE MINUTE REPRIMAND
When you need to criticize a student, give three positives before the negative. Express three sincere compliments before your first negative comment. The compliments get the student’s attention and make him/her more willing to listen to what you have to say.

For example: “Mary, I really enjoy your high energy level, enthusiasm, and willingness to share. However, yesterday, your constant talking disrupted our lesson. Is there any way you might behave differently?”

ALWAYS PROVIDE FACE-SAVING COMMENTS
Adults as well as children need a way to save face. You may want to use phrases such as:

“It’s easy to get confused.”

“I understand why you’re so upset.”

“The details make this difficult.”

USE SILENCE
Pausing or using “wait time” before you respond to a student’s behavior gives you time to reflect. Everyone dislikes a void so we rush to fill in the silent spaces. A quiet, calm silence can work to your advantage.

MATCH YOUR WORDS TO YOUR BODY LANGUAGE/NON-VERBAL SIGNALS
Smiling when discussing a difficult class assignment gives the wrong message. Match your facial expression and other body language/non-verbal signals to your words.

INVITE AN ANGRY STUDENT TO SIT
We have the most resistance while we are standing. Isolate the student by directing him/her to sit in a designated area.

HANDLE A STUDENT’S INSULT
Don’t confront or make threats; use conversation. Discretion and diplomacy are powerful tools while expressing anger may be the worst thing you can do. Resist impulsive behavior and remain calm at all times.

Tell the student that anger or insults won’t have the desired effect. Say something like, “Jeff, yelling and exploding won’t work with me.” Use body language/non-verbal signals to end the insult.
2.9 Effective Responses on How to Handle an Angry, Verbally Aggressive Student

- Never become physically involved.
- Always remain calm and in control of your emotions and behaviors.
- Isolate the angry student from the other students in the classroom. Your first priority is to keep students safe, calm, and uninvolved.
- Stand firmly where you can observe the student’s behavior while showing the class you are in control.
- Do or say nothing.
- Allow the student to calm down.
- Calm the student. Use phrases such as:
  
  “Take it easy.”
  “Try to relax.”
  “I understand you’re frustrated.”
  “We can talk later.”

- Demanding, lecturing, arguing, using sarcasm, and raising your voice can cause students to resent you and cause behavioral problems.
- Never use inappropriate language when dealing with students or in general while in the classroom or school building.
- Use effective listening skills, including positive non-verbal body language when responding to students.
- Paraphrasing questions and responses can further engage the student in listening to you. Eye contact and a nod of the head can influence a student in a positive direction.
- Personal and sincere acts of praise can have a profound impact on students.
2.10 Strategies to Avoid Sending Students to the Office

**LEARN THE STUDENTS’ FIRST NAMES**

- Minimize using “pronouns” (referring to students as you, him, her, she, he, etc.)
  - Learn and use the students’ first names.
- Use the direct command approach with the student’s name.
- Confront the student privately, not in front of the entire class.

**TRY ISOLATION**

Separate the student from the rest of the class. Put the student near the front of the classroom. Speak to him/her privately. Always keep students within your sights.

**TRY TO GET THE STUDENTS INTERESTED IN CLASSWORK**

Show your genuine concern for student learning. Respond to students individually and in small groups.

**SENDING STUDENTS TO THE OFFICE SHOULD BE A LAST RESORT**

Effective discipline should happen immediately, and it needs to be handled by you, the teacher.

2.11 Changing the Environment

**MOVEMENT**

The best way to handle discipline problems is to be proactive and stop them before they begin. Your mobility is vital. Walking throughout the classroom and responding to individual student’s questions helps you to maintain control.

**SEPARATION**

If you have two students who insist on talking instead of working, try these solutions:

Stand near the pair. Say in a firm but supportive way, “I need you to complete your work,” or “There’s no talking and you should focus on your assignments.”

If these words fail, separate the students. Stand near them and say to one student, “Please take your books and move here.” You’ll probably get the response, “But I didn’t do anything.” Answer with, “Yes, I know. You’re not in trouble. I need you to move here.”

Then don’t say another word. This is usually the most difficult part. After the move is made, say, “Thank you, Mary, for cooperating, I appreciate your assistance.” This technique works effectively because it’s a positive method to correct a minor behavioral issue. Ignoring it may cause it to escalate.
2.12 Classroom Management Techniques that May Backfire

- Raising your voice
- Yelling
- Saying: “I’m the boss here!”
- Insisting on having the last word
- Using tense body language, such as rigid posture or clenched hands
- Using degrading, insulting, humiliating, or embarrassing put-downs
- Using sarcasm
- Attacking the student’s character/self-esteem
- Acting superior
- Using physical force – never touch a student
- Drawing unrelated persons into the conflict
- Having a double standard – making students: “Do what I say, not what I do”
- Preaching
- Making assumptions
- Backing the student into a corner
- Generalizing about students by making remarks such as: “All you kids are the same”
- Making an unsubstantiated accusation
- Acting like a student by throwing a temper tantrum
- Mimicking the student
- Making comparisons with siblings or other students
- Using humor

REMINDER
Never touch a student.
Let’s set the scene. You have given the assignment. You walk around the room. This keeps the students on task. You’re in control of the situation, answering questions, and making sure everyone is on task. You then notice talkative John. He’s turned around at his desk and is trying to get a conversation started with Joe. You cannot ignore this minor problem.

**Step 1:**
As a first approach, stare at John. Your non-verbal body language may be enough incentive to get John back on task. If his challenge continues and he ignores you, then try...

**Step 2:**
Walk over to him and place your hands on his desk. The idea is to be physically close. You can’t successfully discipline students unless you have their attention and you are physically close. This rule applies to the first grader as well as the high school student. Remember, never touch the student!

**Step 3:**
Use the student’s name. Give this simple command in a soft tone of voice. Remember that John is the only person who needs to hear the request. Say, “John, do your vocabulary.” Remember to use the student’s name and to keep your commands as simple and direct as possible. This lets John know exactly what he needs to do. You haven’t embarrassed him or insulted his integrity.

**Step 4:**
Say nothing. To ensure that you say nothing, start counting silently. How long? You should wait approximately one minute. You’re waiting for John to respond to the command. You are not begging or pleading. You’re in control of your behavior. Continue to stand near John. Your physical presence alone is a big factor in getting him back on task. At this point, John should now be working.

**Step 5:**
Say, “Thank you, John.” Always say “thank you” and use the student’s name. You haven’t responded with anger. You have rewarded the good behavior by thanking him. This small discipline technique gets the student back on task. But more importantly, it also establishes a positive feeling between you and the student.

This technique can be very effective. It works with high school seniors as well as third graders. Why? Part of the answer is that the teacher has changed his/her behavior. The only behavior you can honestly control is your own. You can’t possibly predict every reaction you may receive from a student, but you can control your own responses. That’s the secret of good classroom management.

But what if you decide to ignore John? His behavior really isn’t so bad, is it? If you ignore John, it won’t take long for the entire class to be out of control. Young people are great observers. If you ignore one student who doesn’t work, very soon you’ll have a classroom that doesn’t work. The students think, “If I can get away with misbehavior, then this teacher doesn’t care about me.”
If you show that you care, then you have the courage to guide young people into doing what you know is right. Basically, students want to please adults.

Summary

1. Good discipline means teacher self-control
2. Anger doesn't pay
3. Gain the rewards
4. Use the following strategies:
   - Stare
   - Get close, but don’t touch the student
   - Use the student’s name
   - Give the command and be direct
   - Pause and say nothing