

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

K-8 Art Classroom Management Plan

Jeni Crone

Columbia College Chicago

Classroom Management Plan

Classroom management is not about controlling students or demanding perfect behavior. Instead, effective management is about supporting students to manage themselves throughout daily learning and activities. (Jones, p. 19)

When we are comfortable and inspired to learn, we fall into our best behaviors. While the teacher can function as a disciplinarian, if the teacher models the behavior of an engaged learner within a culture built around respect, the students may follow in suit. A seven-year-old I once knew made me a card to say thanks for some drawings. She wanted to be an artist when she grows up. On the inside she wrote, "You are an artist just like me." I am an adult with a BFA and soon an Art Ed MAT, but at the root of it all—at my best, I am an artist just like her: curious, excited, and always learning. As an art educator, continuing to be an active learner is at the root of my practice. My art room will follow the philosophy that art is not just a practice of making, but an avenue for learning and exploring the world, cultures, history—all subject matters, as they can be seen, interpreted, and commented on through the lens of the arts. The art room is a studio and a laboratory, but beyond that, a safe space where ideas and boundaries are respected, and where personal and community safety is maintained. Through clear communication in a collaborative effort between myself, students, administrators, parents and all members of the school community a positive environment for personal and artistic growth will be fostered under established academic and behavioral goals.

As an educator I accept that my ideas on the methods and practice of teaching must be dynamic—adaptable to meet the needs of the community in which I work, and reflective of the

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

time and culture in which we live. That said, in outlining my beliefs as related to education I accept that there is no universal set of rules to be applied to the learning itself other than to learn as much as one can, about everything—all other ideas should be interpreted and expanded upon specifically to meet the needs of the learning community, and for each student as an individual, as to craft a symbiotic relationship between academic and personal growth. Education is a collaborative effort between school administration, teachers, students and their families, and the resources of a community. The discourse on education must be made accessible, inviting all voices to be involved in its design. Education has come to be viewed as a product—the focus must shift to viewing education as a process, allowing value to be placed on the gradual steps taken to refine knowledge into greater meaning through application, interpretation and reflection.

School is a central part of a community, and the community should work towards establishing the school as a safe and positive place for all. The public school alone often does not have the resources to provide students with the same educational experience as private schools or districts with substantial funding. A more equal education should be established through building relationships between schools and community partners. As an art educator I hope to develop partnerships with local organizations to help outfit the art room with the best resources, and with local colleges to develop opportunities for their students to earn service learning and observation hours through volunteering in our school's art program. The more a school thrives, so will the surrounding community. It has been my experience as a long-time volunteer with 826CHI, a nonprofit creative writing and tutoring center serving thousands of Chicago's students ages six to eighteen, that students are motivated by knowing that there are people invested in creating the

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

best education possible for them. Creating the best education possible for children should be a uniting force within a community.

Learning is a social process. The value of the school over a home-learning environment is exposure to other voices. The child must construct knowledge from interaction with a diverse group of both adults and other children. Recognizing differences in ideas is necessary in developing one's own ideas. A student must have the freedom to develop his or her own ideology within the realm of not dismissing the beliefs of others. The school should function as both a resource and a stage where students can develop ideas and practice the application of them. The school should provide the student with materials, guidance, and opportunities for obtaining knowledge, and then encourage the sharing of that knowledge. Students are coming into the education with varying energies and personalities and the teacher must consider how to best help a student direct emotions in a healthy and productive manner. Frank D. Susi (1995) writes, "teachers must learn to recognize that power-seeking youngsters are ambitious and must try to redirect them to useful channels" (p. 3). Student behaviors have an input and an output, and the teacher has the opportunity to help the student develop strategies for outputting positive and productive behaviors.

The school is an environment for celebrating growth and as often as possible the student should be able to deliver his or her work in a format of choice to an audience, showcasing the student's learning to the community. A stronger self-efficacy will develop when sharing and demonstrating knowledge is made a natural habit in the learning environment. What happens in the classroom sets a standard for learning outside of the classroom. When the school is a comfortable and safe environment for the student to develop and express his or her own ideas,

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

the student will be more inclined to explore those ideas outside of class time. While the school should model itself as a place of more structured learning, homework assignments should be designed to continue school lessons in a more creative and interpretive way in the student's own time. The student's home and school lives constantly push and pull on each other—the school should aim to not overwhelm or complicate the student's home life. I believe that the school has a responsibility in making sure that the components of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are being met in each student's life. Teachers and administrators must be alert to signs of neglect of the child's physiological needs. The school should be one of the safest places a child can be; an environment for developing friendships and mentorships; a place for developing confidence, demonstrating and receiving respect, and measuring achievement. The school should promote self-actualization. The balanced wellbeing of the student, as it is essential to development, must be a concern of the school.

In planning to address the beliefs stated above, my elementary art curriculum will focus on Lois Hetland's Eight Studio Habits of the Mind (2013) both in art practice and classroom management. Students will *Reflect* not only on artwork and process, but also on behavior in the art room. Students will develop strategies of *Engaging and Persisting* in seeing a project through. They will be thoughtful *Observers* not just in the art room, but through continued practice with homework assignments inspired by a flipped classroom model where outside of school students are consistently studying material of their choice to bring into artistic practice as they *Develop Craft*. In return to adhering to classroom rules and procedures and practicing respect, the art room will be offered as a space to *Stretch and Explore, Envision and Express*. Positive behaviors and practices in the art room will promote the development of classroom

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

community that will expand into an *Understanding of the broader Community*. Hetland's Studio Habits will be further complemented under Responsive classroom management, which is "thoughtful, concrete, consistent, and implemented in a calm and supportive way" (Jones, p. 19). It is my goal that my students leave the art room understanding the clear purposes behind the choices I have made in directing their experience there.

Physical Environment

The spatial needs of a kindergartener and an eighth grader are vastly different. The K-8 elementary art room must comfortably meet the needs of the whole range, functioning as a space that students grow into. My art room is a large art lab, adaptable to accommodate students grades K-8. There are four large tables with lockable wheels, so that they may be easily rearranged for specific lessons. In the attached plan the tables are arranged in two long rectangles that create a larger community atmosphere for working, with every student having a clear view of the white board and projection screen. The tables may be split into quadrants for group-work, or combined into one giant table-space for an all-class activity. The diagram shows seating for up to thirty-eight students, though hopefully there will only be a need for thirty or less seats, in which case stools can be moved into storage or to other places in the room to make more space at the tables. In addition to the tables there are two small workstations in the room and a carpeted area, where students may choose to work if they need some isolation or if the project allows for students to work wherever in the room they are comfortable.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

Last year I had the opportunity to spend some time in both the grades 4-6 classroom and the art room at Drummond Montessori, which follows a choice-based curriculum. I hope to adapt elements of the choice-based or TAB philosophy into my teaching by designing projects that allow students to have choice in materials, visit different stations to explore processes, and find a space in the art room where they are most comfortable working so long as the project doesn't pose certain restrictions. In alignment with a Montessori philosophy, all non-hazardous materials will be made accessible to students. There will be sets of plastic drawers at each table holding the most basic art supplies such as crayons, colored pencils, markers and scrap papers. The drawers may be pulled out and placed on the table for easy access as needed for a project. Other materials are stored in clearly labeled cabinets and bins on low shelves along the window wall. Students will come to learn where everything in the room is, and where to put it back. They should become self sufficient in the process of finding and returning materials.

There is a separate kiln room for best safety practices. There is a large double utility sink for clean-up with a rubber mat in front of it to prevent slippery floors. There are two large trash cans on wheels to be made accessible at any point in the room. There are clear open pathways across the room and around all areas, allowing traffic to flow into the room, splitting as the students go to their individual seats. There is a white board in the front of the room for noting important information. All project procedures will be written on the board. There is also a pull-down projection screen, with a projector and Elmo setup. There is a table in the front of the room to be used for demos, with the Elmo if needed. To facilitate demos with different needs, there is a separate demo station in another part of the room, which can also be used for laying out materials or as another student workstation. There are two drying racks, where students will

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

know to store wet work. The class features a small library and reading carpet where I can gather younger students for a project-integrated story time, and it can be used as a lounging workspace. Students have access to iPads kept locked in a cart behind the teacher's desk and there are also two desktop computers for student use. The teacher has a desk space and document storage center and separate computer for use by only the teacher. The room is kept bright and airy, with little clutter as not to over-stimulate students. There is overhead track lighting in the classroom, but the abundance of natural light from the large windows will be taken advantage of as much as possible.

Routines

“Implementing the plans in the first weeks of school through systematic communication of expectations and the establishment of rules, procedures and routines” is key to effective classroom management (*Susi, p. 24*). Routine for the K-8 art student is not just about the weekly class time, but potentially years of instruction under the same teacher. The ways of the art room must be practiced from day one. The first day of the school year is devoted to reviewing the system of rules and routines. On the first day of school, students are given a number and will sit on the stool with the corresponding number for the year. The seating chart will be documented and enforced. All changes to the seating chart are made by the teacher in order to create the best learning environment. Students will only be moved throughout the year to accommodate special instances in projects, learning needs, and behavioral issues.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

When entering the art room, students are expected to quietly make their way to their assigned seat. Each day a thought prompt will be written on the board and they are to sit quietly and contemplate their answers until the teacher begins instruction. On some days students will have the opportunity to share their ideas from the thought prompt in class discussion, on other days they will write down their response as a bellringer to be turned in. This activity is meant to calm the classes so that they may focus when instruction formally begins. Thought prompts may include questions such as *What is your favorite art material to work with?; Who is your favorite artist we have studied?; What do you find challenging about the project we are working on?; Etc.* “Effective teachers constantly monitor the classroom, spotting problems before these situations can escalate into disruption” (Susi, p. 20). Planning is prevention. Routine, and filling all time during the class period leaves less room for misbehavior.

The seat number system will also be used to distribute art room jobs. Each student will hold the same art room responsibility all year. Responsibilities include passing out portfolios and sketchbooks, putting away portfolios and sketchbooks, getting rags to wipe down tables, and other needs that arise as related to projects. All students are expected to cooperate and carry out their roles. Students may not line-up until spaces are ready for the next class.

In looking at routine in terms of the year, returning students will know that their first day in the art room during that year is their chance to help in establishing the rules and best practices for the art room. To develop a sense of ownership “teacher and students can jointly participate in formulating classroom rules” (Susi, p. 20). All classes will brainstorm and decide on the most important expectations for the art room, which will then be typed up and formatted into a

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

contract they must sign. All rules are meant to ensure safety and wellbeing in the art room.

Students will design posters about the most important art room expectations, which will be kept in a binder to refer back to, and some will be chosen for display in the room. For the eighth grader who has been part of the school community since kindergarten, these rules should become routine.

Expectations

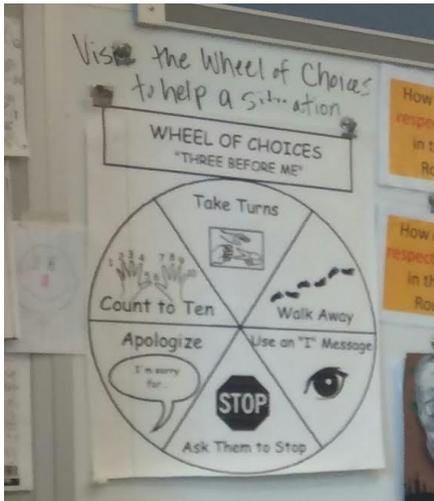
“If an adult has not earned a child's respect, he says, nothing else is possible. If the adult has established respect, anything is” (Rogers, p. 12).

Students must feel a sense of ownership in the art room that encourages them to be part of a working system of respect for the teacher, other students, and the art room space. They must feel a motivation to contribute to the classroom community as established by feeling like they play a necessary role in maintaining a positive environment. So long as the school has a low mobility rate, many of my students will spend nine years in my art room. Expectations must be made clear from the very beginning, and as students reach upper grades, they should adhere to art room rules and expectations out of habit. All rules of the larger school community must also be adhered to in the art room. All students are expected to model proper behavior for each other, and in return, I as the teacher will maintain a position as an active listener. As mentioned in the Routine section of this plan, each year students will sign a behavior contract, which “places major responsibility for behavior on the student” (Susi, p. 23). Students must learn to be accountable and I will always listen to what they have to say to help determine the best course of

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

action for resolving issues. “The responsibility perspective emphasizes approaches that encourage self control and the development of a sense of personal accountability” (Susi, p. 5). All students are responsible for contributing to a safe and positive environment in the art room.

Students will develop autonomy in navigating conflict by using strategies before immediately coming to the instructor for intervention, unless it is an emergency. Inspired by the practices of my elementary cooperating teacher at A.G. Bell School, students should refer to the Wheel of Choices poster below for conflict resolution strategies. Students should practice three choices before calling in the instructor.



In the practice of making art in the art room, students are expected to respect the space and the materials by actively participating in clean up and following all instructions for using materials. Safety is a priority and students must be cautious and careful when advised. Students are encouraged to maintain a positive attitude when creating art, and only give positive and constructive feedback to peers. In line with the Eight Studio Habits, students will develop individual strategies for Engaging and Persisting on days when they are struggling to focus, or when challenged by a project. At times “slowing down is sometimes a form of persisting,”

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

within reasonable limits, no one should be in a race to finish their work (Hetland, p. 53).

Students will not be allowed to start a project over, but must rather resolve it. We will learn to focus on process over product and “take advantage of accidents and let things just happen” (Hetland, p. 95). Older students will learn to manage time by developing project plan outlines. Homework assignments only account for a minimal amount of graded points, but allow any student needing extra practice, or interested in art to further explore the topics being covered in class.

The majority of class time will be devoted to the making of art. However the Art Class website will list supplemental materials to be read or viewed for homework. Students without computer/internet access will be given print materials to take home. Homework will always be about observation. I want students to develop visual thinking skills that can be carried beyond the art room. “Students in the art studio are taught to look more closely than people ordinarily do and ‘learn to see with new eyes’” (Hetland, p. 73). Simple prompts and sketchbook assignments will guide them to be “Really seeing, Not Just Looking” (Hetland, p.73).

Consequences

If my students are misbehaving in the art room, something is motivating them to do so, and they have chosen to neglect the rules in the space. The source of the problem must always be identified, and more often than the student meeting consequences, we will work together on a solution. “When a discipline problem occurs, teachers must first look at their own personal behaviors, instructional practices, and management systems for clues leading to the sources of

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

that problem” (Susi, p. 6). I will always take ownership in my classroom management, and students must take ownership in their behavior. When violating an expectation, students will first receive a warning. Continued behavioral issues will result in a goal setting session, “ placing an emphasis on self-control, self-management, and self instruction” (Susi, p. 23). Continued behavior violations and any violations of school policies will follow the discipline plan outlined by the school. Any safety violation will result in corresponding art room privileges being taken away. Priviledges will only be returned on a trial basis when the student shows a clear understanding of expected behavior.

Students failing to meet the art room expectations will be asked to reflect on their behavior: Which expectations am I not meeting? How does my behavior affect others? What can I do to improve this issue? What help do I need to improve this issue? The student response will then be a basis for goal setting. Parents, administrators, counselors, and classroom teachers will be notified as necessary. They will be also be notified of the student’s improvements.

Community And Family Building

Teaching art to thirty students in the lower-elementary grade levels is a challenge without some extra helping hands. At the beginning of each quarter I will send out a call for volunteers to parents. Ms. Pearlmutter, my cooperating teacher at A.G. Bell has had great success with bringing in parent and grandparent volunteers to work with the younger students. Volunteers help with simple organization and lesson prep tasks, freeing Ms. Pearlmutter to focus on the students and seamlessly transition between class periods. Meanwhile, both the volunteers and their student relation benefit from getting to spend time together in the art room. For major

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

projects I may also send out a call to art education and service learning programs at local colleges. I would also be interested in looking into corporate sponsorships from local companies that can make a donation to fund a project and allow employees paid time for community service hours. All art room volunteers will follow school and district protocol in being fingerprinted and having a background check before entering the art room.

In order to promote the value of the art program, the community must be aware of the work that is being done in it. "Exhibition can also be a potent form of advocacy" (Hetland, p. 30). Beyond just displaying work, students in the seventh and eighth grade will play a role in curating shows and displays. In curating displays, students will have the choice to contribute through different roles, allowing them to discover new skills. Art shows will correspond with major school events, report card pickup, and the end of each semester. Art will also be displayed online on the Art Class website and Artsonia, where patrons may also purchase items printed with student work in order to fund the art program. Additional fundraising will take place through annual supply drives and DonorsChoose projects. Arts advocacy must be a community effort.

I hope to build partnerships with other faculty in the school through designing interdisciplinary units, and contributing to the art needs of school plays and musicals. With my background in arts integration having worked with the Center for Community Arts Partnerships, my after-school art club will focus on projects that take on that interdisciplinary component. I hope to invite teachers from other subject areas to collaborate in these endeavors. As much as I want art to be a standard practice around the school, I value information from all other subject areas and will always be open to sharing with my colleagues and learning from them.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

Family Art Night will be held twice each year, and all members of the school community will be invited to collaborate on works of art on a zero cost budget. We will always use recycled materials, starting a collection at the beginning of each semester. Family art night is a valuable opportunity to let parents into the art program and allow students to guide them in demonstrating some of the processes and techniques they are using. Families will go home with resources for continuing to learn about art at home.

Conclusion

My classroom management plan exists now as a flexible document, which I hope to be able to revise as I move into student teaching and beyond. It is modeled from my experiences thus far as an MAT candidate, my experiences as a life-long art student, and my time spent thus far as a teacher in smaller capacities. I believe that with safety, respect, and positive character development at the center of the culture in my art room, student learning will be optimized.

References

Hetland, L., Winner, E., Veenema, S., & Sheridan, K. (2013). *Studio thinking 2: The real benefits of visual arts education* (Second ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Jones, S., Bailey, R., Jacob, R. Social-emotional learning is essential to classroom management. *Phi Delta Kappan* [serial online]. October 2014;96(2):19. Available from: MasterFILE Premier, Ipswich, MA. Accessed December 3, 2014

Lockhorst, D., Wubbels, T., & van Oers, B. (2010). Educational dialogues and the fostering of pupils' independence: the practices of two teachers. *Journal Of Curriculum Studies*, 42(1), 99-121. doi:10.1080/00220270903079237

Rogers, J. (2014). Classroom Management Lessons from Frank Kulle. *Independent School*, 74(1), 12-14.

Susi, F. (1995). *Student behavior in art classrooms: the dynamics of discipline*. Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.