**Student Responsibility**

-The Nature of Responsibility

-Strategies for Personal Development

-Strategies for Conflict Prevention and Resolution

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**Reflect on your current beliefs and practices –**

*“In terms of classroom management, why might it be useful to teach students about personal responsibility?”*

 Personal responsibility is an important aspect of a healthy functional human being. In terms of classroom management the biggest function of teaching this attribute is that students who accept personal responsibility will approach class work from an appropriate angle. It is ultimately up to them whether they decide they want to come to class willing to learn or not. It’s fair to ask students if they’re going to have a good or bad day in the classroom. Just like teachers put on their teacher face so must students put on their student face, it is the expectation of the educational system we operate within. Students who accept the responsibility of their actions will ideally be inclined to focus on their work understanding that missing content through negligence will cost them, and if they miss ideas even if they are focusing on the teacher and class work they need to make it known clearly and appropriately that they need assistance. Students must own their education, it is their responsibility and a gift given to them.

**Section main ideas with subsections/modules (2-3 pages)-**

1. **(Module 18) The Nature of Responsibility-**

Main Idea - Responsibility should not only be viewed as what tasks a student must complete but also what power they have to intervene in life and make good decisions. Students should not take on the responsibility of others. There are two things recommended for classroom practice and those are, helping students understand what responsibility is and is not as well as helping students understand the difference between facts and interpretations.

* **Helping Students Understand What Responsibility is – and is Not –** Make sure to post your definition of responsibility and discuss it with the class in regard to current events and the literature you’re reading. In an English/Language Arts or Social Studies class this is more readily reinforced. Make the students keep this definition in their notebook or in their student handbook. Make sure to have a classroom discussion about this.
* **Helping Students Understand The Difference Between Facts and Interpretations –** Helping students understand the difference between facts and interpretations is recommended to be done in the same manner as explaining responsibility as they are interconnected. Facts are undeniable truths whereas interpretations are personal truths that may not apply to everyone. While some people might be offended by a specific ideas others may not. In situations where facts are handled they are definites like recorded actions, statements made, whether interpreted one way or another they were said. It’s good to give class definitions for this as well, post it in the room, and discuss it as a class.

There are several types of interpretations…

*“• Tragic—It is horrible that this happened. Now I’ll never get into college! •Paranoid—My stupid brother is trying to make me fail. • Guilt-ridden—It happened because I made fun of his music and I am being paid back. • Blaming—If my brother wasn’t such a jerk, this never would have happened. • Funny—If he had played hip hop music instead, I would have gotten an A. (Note: comedians do this with many different topics, be creative!) •Practical—I got a C, so I’ll have to try harder next time. No excuses! • Enlightened—Maybe this happened for a reason, and I can learn something from this.”*

1. **(Module 19) Strategies for Personal Development**

Main Idea- There are three specific facets of strategies for personal development, helping students develop self-awareness, teaching students the strategy of positive self-talk, and teaching students how to be assertive. The text has little else to mention in the introduction but notes that the degree in which you engage students with these strategies is highly dependent upon grade and maturity level. This module is about developing a strong independent and successful self.

* **Helping Students Develop Self-Awareness –** is about noticing how our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors impact ourselves and others. It’s important to keep in mind that while people experience the same possible range of emotions it doesn’t mean we all handle them the same way because we are unique individuals and may come from diverse social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds.
* **Teaching Students The Strategy of Positive Self-Talk –**

*“Great freedom and energy are available when we decide that we will control our thoughts instead of letting our thoughts control us.To this end,being aware of and controlling our self-talk is one of the most powerful things we can do.Figures 19.2 and 19.3 include exercises that you might use or adapt to help students understand the benefits of positive self-talk and learn how to develop this skill.”*

* **Teaching Students How to Be Assertive –**

*“As many successful people know, being passive, aggressive, or passive-aggressive is not productive.The only long-term workable behavior is assertive behavior. Learning to be assertive can take time, but the rewards are many: higher self-esteem, healthier relationships, and a greater sense of satisfaction and personal accomplishment.”*

 Students need to learn that being assertive is the answer. You assert yourself when you need to, being passive, aggressive, or passive-aggressive will help you little to succeed.

1. **(Module 20) Strategies for Conflict Prevention and Resolution**

Main Idea – There are three main recommended strategies for conflict prevention and resolution, developing a written statement of shared belief, using class meetings, teaching students specific strategies for conflict prevention and resolution. Students need to be able to prevent and resolve conflicts in all walks of their lives be it at home with family, out shopping at the store, making a transaction at the bank, or at work handling projects.

* **Developing A Written Statement of Shared Belief –** The function of this strategy is to create common ground. When people realize they’re not so different and can relate to one another it’s easier to find reasonable resolution as well as see from your opponents perspective. It humanizes each other and creates an opening for empathy.
* **Using Class Meetings –** This is a modeling technique of how to handle problems and organize events/discussions. This is designed to be a safe environment to voice problems or concerns in a group of peers mediated by the teacher. When there is a conflict or about to be one, this is another technique that may be used to create resolution.

*“• Constructively voicing ideas and viewpoints • Thinking creatively • Problem solving with others •Reflecting on one’s own behaviors and their effect on others •Responsibly communicating points of disagreement • Respectfully discussing how others’ behaviors affect you • Respectfully and thoughtfully questioning others’ ideas”*

* **Teaching Students Specific Strategies for Conflict Prevention and Resolution –** It’s imperative to channel emotion correctly to reach appropriate resolution.

*“Anger is a biologically wired emotion, part of nature’s fight-or-flight mechanism that ensures the survival of the human species. It is the most misunderstood and misused emotion, one that has created the most havoc in the history of the world and in individual lives. It need not remain mysterious, but rather can be understood and used well.”*

**Check for Understanding (HCMW) –**

 **“***Two students, Amy and Jacquie, are involved in an argument. Both of them independently come to see you. They are angry and blaming the other person for what happened. What should you do or say?”*

 Depending upon the situation we could have a lot to consider. This module mentions responsibility, personal development, and conflict resolution. In this case I’m unsure whether these students and I need to go over the responsibilities we as a class have established for the students, or if we’re handling a situation in which we can foster personal development. I can definitely say that we need to reach resolution in a conflict.

This conflict is not a big class issue, rather a small individual issue between students. Perhaps it’s about a class project, group assignment, or hot button issue that we were discussing in class. I am absolutely sure that I could employ the strategy of getting written statements of shared belief and scaffolding a mature discussion that will reach a resolution based upon the needs and emotions of both students.

This is a learning moment and we need to use it to its fullest. If I had more details about the circumstance I could tell you how we might foster responsibility, personal development, and conflict resolution. If it’s a group project we need to review responsibilities, express personal development goals as a group and individuals, and then find our resolution based upon the needs of both girls.

**Bibliography**

Marzano, R., Gaddy, B., Foseid, M., Foseid, M., & Marzano, J. (2005). *A Handbook for Classroom Management That Works*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.