

Elementary Classroom Management Part 2

Hi, thanks again for being a Junior Achievement volunteer and welcome to Part 2 of Elementary Classroom Management. We know you probably have several questions about your upcoming experience so we hope to answer those questions in this short video. We'll talk about the various behaviors you may encounter in the classroom during your JA experience and then explore techniques and tips you can use with students in your JA classroom. We know that every class is different, but remember the teacher will be there to assist you. Let's get started!

Classroom Management Tips

Each classroom is different and may require you to adjust your classroom management style accordingly. There are many things that you can do to help keep the class on task and focused on the learning outcomes. Here are a few tips.

Discuss ways to transition students from activity to activity with the teacher prior to starting. You can employ these techniques while you teach. Examples include singing a song, clapping, "give me five," flicking the lights, ringing a bell, and more. These techniques might prove invaluable to your experience. Remember that the teacher is your partner in the classroom and that they are there to support the volunteer.

As you're presenting, walk around. Keep moving throughout the room. Your proximity alone is a powerful motivator that can get students engaged.

Get to know students by learning each of their names. You can utilize the table tents in your JA kit or refer to desk name tags they already have. Addressing students by their name builds rapport and lets them know you value their participation.

Another tip is to recognize and acknowledge productive behavior. This is a key strategy for every parent, teacher or employee. Positive reinforcement builds self-esteem by encouraging people to make wise choices. With students, positive reinforcement promotes positive learning behavior.

For example, you notice that during an activity, some students seem distracted. You look around the room and identify one table that seems to be cooperating and on-task. You say, "Oh, I like the way that group three is working together. It looks like they're going to be ready for the next activity."

If more than one group seems to be off-task, ask a polling question of the entire class (or just the distracted groups). Give everyone a chance to respond and ask additional questions of the distracted students.

So, for example, let's say you're teaching a JA program where you're sharing information on how new products change our way of life. Some students become disengaged so you poll the students. You say, "Give me a thumb's up if you feel the iPod has changed how we get and listen to music." You can also ask an open ended question to further get students engaged in interesting

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conversation. You might try, “Give me another example of how entrepreneurs have changed the way you and your family live in your community?”

If students are “tattling” on one another, redirect the student’s attention and remind the student to focus on their own actions. If the issue requires attention, work with the teacher to address it accordingly.

In this example, Sara blurts out, “Jacob’s working on his worksheet already.” You say, “Sara, thanks for sharing, but try to focus on your work.”

If a group appears distracted or off-task, move closer to them and just stand by to see what they do next. Support the group to ensure that they understand the instructions.

In this example, there’s one particular group that doesn’t seem to be engaged in the activity. The students seem to get off topic quite a bit and they’ve fallen behind. First, you walk close to their table, making eye contact with the students in the group. This seems to have no effect on their behavior.

You ask them, “How’s everyone doing over here? Do you have any questions? We have a lot of fun activities to get through, so let’s work together to complete this activity.” The group re-focuses and finishes the activity on time.

Another tip might be to prepare age appropriate examples ahead of time. Look through your guide for volunteers and teachers and write down your examples. You may also check out the Volunteer page on www.ja.org and the JA Student Center for more ideas. Make sure to bring your examples with you to utilize during your JA lesson.

In this example, you’re covering an activity in a JA program on how a supply chain is often dependent on many suppliers to make or build a product. You’ve discussed how a business is affected when it can’t get the parts it needs. To drive home your point, you say, “I recently read online, how a flood in California washed out a highway and important computer parts could not get shipped to their destination. What other weather events can cause problems with shipments?”

Sometimes there are situations in which you should defer to your classroom teacher. For example, if a student asks for permission to go to the restroom, check with the classroom teacher. If a student becomes upset during your JA session, first check to make sure the student is OK, and then ask your classroom teacher for assistance.

Press Reset

Sometimes you may feel like you’re losing the attention of the class. For example, students may work ahead or get distracted and lose interest in the activity.

This is an opportunity for you to pause your teaching, address the situation to the group or class, and revisit your learning goals and expectations. Take a few seconds of silence to settle the class before resuming your JA lesson.

If you’re not having much luck with these techniques, this might be a good time to engage the classroom teacher and ask for assistance with the situation.

Student and Volunteer Interaction

When volunteering in younger elementary classrooms, students often run to greet volunteers with hugs and high-fives.

If a student runs up and hugs you, gently pat the student on his or her back and step away. Acknowledge your appreciation for the student's support.

You might also try diverting students with a hand-shake. Demonstrate the significance and importance of shaking hands in the work place. Practice shaking hands with the students. If time allows, try re-entering the classroom, this time using the handshake greeting.

In this example, as you enter the room, your classroom full of excited kindergartners sees you and comes running to greet you. You say, "Oh, I'm so happy to see you. It's great to be back." As they attempt to hug you, you say, "Let me show you another way of greeting people. Do you know how to shake someone's hand?" You proceed to demonstrate how to shake their hands and say, "This is how adults often greet each other." All of the students are asking to shake your hand, but it's taking too much time. You say, "Let's practice shaking hands at the end of class, if we have time. On my next visit, we can greet each other with a handshake."

If you want more guidance on this topic, please review the Volunteer Conduct Standards document you signed with your JA Area representative.

Conclusion

Thanks for watching Elementary Classroom Management. If you have additional questions, you can always reach out to your local JA Area representative.

As a Junior Achievement volunteer, you're part of a network of hundreds of thousands of volunteers and you play an integral part in empowering 10.6 million students globally to own their economic success -including more than 4 million in the United States. You are truly making a difference in the lives of young people and we hope to have you in the classroom again and again.

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