

Case Study Activity

Decision	Appropriate' 1	Guideline	Alternative	Justification
1. Not making an issue of Michael's late arrival in class	Inappropriate	All rules should be applied in a manner that is fair and consistent, and which is along predetermined and well-defined guidelines. They should be applied privately and quietly, and with a constructive approach.	Meet Michael upon arrival and quietly inform him of his infraction of the rules, and encourage him to quickly get down to work. A non-verbal intervention upon arrival could also be applied.	Avoidance of confrontation with a problematic student is no justification for the avoidance of the application of rules that govern the behaviour of the whole class. In order to gain the respect and trust of the students and for developing a constructive and productive learning environment, all rules must be applied equitably in all situations of infraction. This should be done privately so as not to embarrass or humiliate the student.
2. Knowingly teaching a difficult class	Inappropriate	The work should be differentiated so as to match the abilities of all students. Allowances for special attention, questions and practice must be made.	The more difficult elements of the material to be taught can be more evenly distributed throughout the curriculum. Allowances for Michael and other students to receive special attention, time for questions and practice must be made.	What and how we teach has a tremendous impact upon a student's behaviour. Clearly Michael is having difficulty with this part of the curriculum. The "curriculum [can be] one of the greatest influences on the behaviour of the pupils in the classroom. If what is on offer is matched to the level of the pupils and is presented in an exciting and easy to follow formula, the chances of disruption are likely to be diminished tremendously" (MLEA Ch.6). Students can get disillusioned and 'act out'.
3. Getting the class underway quickly	Inappropriate	Time should be taken to settle the class upon commencement of the lesson, through the use of a good anticipatory set.	The teacher could contextualise the subject matter to be delivered through relating it to uses in the 'real world'. This could be delivered in a fun and interesting way.	Material should be "purposeful, relevant and as enjoyable as possible" and be delivered in a "secure and supportive" environment (MLEA Ch.6). It should be suitable for a number of different learning styles (multiple intelligences).
4. Going around the room to collect homework	Appropriate	The teacher should not spend the whole class at the desk. They should move around the classroom to check progress, keep students on track, and to ensure there is no disruptive behaviour.	~	The teacher can both scan the classroom for any behaviour management issues and also collect homework without chance of embarrassing or humiliating the students that have not completed it. They are also well positioned to apply the Jones' model of classroom management and 'camp-out' at the source of any disruption

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5. Reminding Michael why the teacher sets homework and why it is important	Appropriate	The teacher is applying Glasser's 'choice theory' in that they are helping the student to "identify their inappropriate behaviour [and] the consequences of that behaviour. A clear set of rules should be created for the class.	~	This reduces the risk of further rebellious behaviour through allowing the student to identify their own short-comings in relation to their behaviour. A clear set of class rules, allows for the judicious (Gathercoal) and equitable apportionment of punishments and other sanctions when those rules have not been followed. The teacher can also better remain in the adult ego-state (Berne and Harris), thus prompting a more adult and reasoned response from the student. It will hopefully prove the old adage "the more responsibility the children, the more likely they are to act responsibly" true (MLEA Ch.2).
6. Introduction of several new terms	Inappropriate	[As for decision 2] The work should be differentiated so as to match the abilities of all students. Allowances for special attention, questions and practice must be made.	The more difficult elements of the material to be taught can be more evenly distributed throughout the curriculum. Allowances for Michael and other students to receive special attention, time for questions and practice must be made.	What and how we teach has a tremendous impact upon a student's behaviour. Clearly Michael is having difficulty with this part of the curriculum. The "curriculum [can be] one of the greatest influences on the behaviour of the pupils in the classroom. If what is on offer is matched to the level of the pupils and is presented in an exciting and easy to follow formula, the chances of disruption are likely to be diminished tremendously" (MLEA Ch.6). Students can get disillusioned and 'act out'.
7. Trying to see the humour in Michael's 'word-play'	In/ Appropriate	Three competing guidelines are at play. On the one hand, the teacher must ensure inappropriate behaviour is handled calmly and quickly, and that interruptions are not allowed during instructional phases of the lesson. On the other, inappropriate behaviour should be dealt with quickly and calmly, whilst keeping a sense of humour (MLEA Ch.3).	The teacher should 'see the funny side' of Michael's comment but should also quietly reprimand him for his interruption. This should include a reminder of the class rules and why it is important to be quiet when required to be so. Some degree of 'proximity interference' or other non-verbal 'brake' on Michael's behaviour should be implemented.	Michael's comment is witty and clever but is also disruptive. The opportunity for a humorous response should not be missed but also included should be some response to his disruptive behaviour. This reduces the risk of further rebellious behaviour through allowing the student to identify their own short-comings in relation to their behaviour. A clear set of class rules, allows for the judicious (Gathercoal) and equitable apportionment of punishments and other sanctions when those rules have not been followed. The teacher can also better remain in the adult ego-state (Berne and Harris), thus prompting a more adult and reasoned response from the student.
8. Being visibly irritated	Inappropriate	Teachers should be implementing steps to maintain control, but must ALSO appear to their students to be in control. The teacher's behaviour influences that of the students.	The teacher should hide feelings of frustration, but should also implement the appropriate classroom management techniques that will gain proper control.	The teacher must try to remain in the adult ego-state (Berne and Harris), thus prompting a more adult and reasoned response from the student. By slipping into a visible state of irritation, the relationship between the student changes, as the balance of power moves towards the disruptive student's side. The teacher will be less able to deal with the situation in a confident manner.

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9. Moving on in the lesson after behaviour issue arose	Inappropriate	Discipline should “take precedence over other class activities and must be dealt with immediately.	The teacher should quietly reprimand Michael for his interruption. This should include a reminder of the class rules and why it is important to be quiet when required to be so. Some degree of ‘proximity interference’ or other non-verbal ‘brake’ on Michaels behaviour should be implemented.	Jones sees any failure to immediately address a behaviour problem, as reinforcing that behaviour. It is not enough to address the issue with the student in a natural break in proceedings or at the end of the class. The alternative approach has been discussed at decision 7 above.
10. Telling Michael to stop talking	Inappropriate	The teacher should terminate instruction and communicate to the student their dissatisfaction with them by stating their name and making ‘strong’ eye contact or through other gesture. The teacher can subsequently move to the desk of the offending student (Jones).	The teacher should terminate instruction and communicate to Michael her dissatisfaction with him by stating his name and making ‘strong’ eye contact or through other gesture. The teacher can subsequently move towards Michael’s desk	The immediate cessation of activity accompanied by an unequivocal identification of the culprit focuses the student’s attention on the fact of their non-compliant behaviour. As one stage in the limit setting process of the Jones Model, it leaves much room to up the stakes, until the student ‘folds’, or backs down. As has already been discussed, explicit and open discussion of the behaviour in front of the class can embarrass or humiliate the student, and hence, exacerbate the problem.
11. Telling Michael to concentrate on the lesson	In/ appropriate ²	[As for decision 10] The teacher should terminate instruction and communicate to the student their dissatisfaction with them by stating their name and making ‘strong’ eye contact or through other gesture. The teacher can subsequently move to the desk of the offending student (Jones).	The teacher should terminate instruction and communicate to Michael her dissatisfaction with him by stating his name and making ‘strong’ eye contact or through other gesture. The teacher can subsequently move towards Michael’s desk	The immediate cessation of activity accompanied by an unequivocal identification of the culprit focuses the student’s attention on the fact of their non-compliant behaviour. As one stage in the limit setting process of the Jones Model, it leaves much room to up the stakes, until the student ‘folds’, or backs down. As has already been discussed, explicit and open discussion of the behaviour in front of the class can embarrass or humiliate the student, and hence, exacerbate the problem.
12. Losing her cool	Inappropriate	[As for decision 8] Teachers should be implementing steps to maintain control, but must ALSO appear to their students to be in control.	The teacher should hide feelings of frustration, but should also implement the appropriate classroom management techniques that will gain proper control.	The teacher must try to remain in the adult ego-state (Berne and Harris), thus prompting a more adult and reasoned response from the student. By visibly losing her cool, the relationship between the student changes, as the balance of power moves towards the disruptive student’s side. The teacher will be less able to deal with the situation in a confident manner.

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<p>13. Shouting at Michael to stop talking and to concentrate</p>	<p>Inappropriate</p>	<p>The teacher should deal with misbehaviour in a “firm, fair and friendly manner” (MLEA Ch.1), and in a calm, effective, respectful and non-abusive way.</p>	<p>In the case at hand, the teacher should follow the alternative given at decision 11 (with the corresponding justification). Assuming this has been followed, the teacher can move in on the desk and camp out there while the student continues to ‘play-up’. Where the desire to speak out is irresistible, the teacher can try speaking her mind very quietly.</p>	<p>Effectively the teacher is trying to intimidate the student into backing down, by their sheer proximity to them, and imposing stance, leaning over the desk. It is a stance however, that the student will find difficult to counter. Mere shouting, on the other hand, allows for a verbal comeback, and more opportunity for grandstanding.</p>
<p>14. ‘Snapping back’ at Michael that she does not care for his comments</p>	<p>Inappropriate</p>	<p>Where the teacher is confronted with a ‘game playing child’ they must not be drawn in to responding to their behaviour as if a parent. The teacher should stay calm and not lose their temper</p>	<p>Now that verbal lines of communication have been entered into, the teacher must counter the feelings of not OK that they are feeling, by providing adequate ‘stroking’.</p>	<p>To draw the transaction back into the normal student-adult relationship, the teacher must interact in a constructive way. She should not try to reprimand Michael in the way she does, rather she should try to explain the role of the student in the class and the benefits that will result from continued positive involvement in the class. She should point out the options he has to adjust his behaviour himself. (Difficult given the path she has already gone down)</p>
<p>15. Threatening Michael with detention</p>	<p>Inappropriate</p>	<p>[As for decision 14] Where the teacher is confronted with a ‘game playing child’ they must not be drawn in to responding to their behaviour as if a parent. The teacher should stay calm and not lose their temper</p>	<p>Now that verbal lines of communication have been entered into, the teacher must counter the feelings of not OK that they are feeling, by providing adequate ‘stroking’. Detention should still be discussed as an option.</p>	<p>To draw the transaction back into the normal student-adult relationship, the teacher must interact in a constructive way. She should not try to reprimand Michael in the way she does, rather she should try to explain the role of the student in the class and the benefits that will result from continued positive involvement in the class. She should point out the options he has to adjust his behaviour himself. The possibility of detention should still be discussed, as it is an inevitable end-point of the transaction.</p>

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16. Teaching with her back to the class	Inappropriate	The teacher needs to “be aware of and simultaneously monitor the behaviour of all students in the classroom” (Jones) – to have eyes in the back of their head	Alternative methods of presentation should be employed so as not to necessitate the teacher turning her back to the class to write on the blackboard. A number of ICTs are available to replace the blackboard. The classroom could be reorientated to minimise duration and angle of turning required.	As is becoming evident, eye contact and the physical interaction with the students is not only important, within the Jones model it is the ‘primary line of attack’. Being able to make eye contact and move to where the hot spots of trouble are is essential. Michael is clearly taking the opportunity provided by the teacher’s diverted attention, to act in a way that is non-compliant with the rules of the class.
17. Giving Michael a fifteen minute detention	In/ appropriate	A threat of future punishment can be ineffective in achieving the immediacy required in the case at hand. However a teacher must follow through with a promise to apply negative consequences.	In the case at hand, the teacher should follow the alternative given at decision 11 (with the corresponding justification). Assuming this has been followed, the teacher should follow the alternative given at decision 13 (with the corresponding justification). The use of a ‘time-out’ or sending the student to another class may be more appropriate.	According to the assertive discipline model, any punishment should be applied in accordance with the agreed upon rules of the classroom. The legitimacy of the teacher’s ‘power’ will be called in to question if she does not follow through with her threat. The attention seeking behaviour of Michael especially warrants isolation strategies to be employed, as it is the interrelations with other students and the teacher that appear to be driving his behaviour. A time-out achieves that isolation whereas being sent to another class requires some premeditation on the teachers part to make the necessary arrangements. It would be a last resort if this behaviour was frequent.
18. Arguing with Michael	Inappropriate	[As for decision 14] Where the teacher is confronted with a ‘game playing child’ they must not be drawn in to responding to their behaviour as if a parent. The teacher should stay calm and not lose their temper	Now that verbal lines of communication have been entered into, the teacher must counter the feelings of not OK that they are feeling, by providing adequate ‘stroking’.	To draw the transaction back into the normal student-adult relationship, the teacher must interact in a constructive way. She should not try to argue with Michael in the way she does, rather she should try to explain the role of the student in the class and the benefits that will result from continued positive involvement in the class. She should point out the options he has to adjust his behaviour himself. (Difficult given the path she has already gone down)

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19. Continuing the argument	Inappropriate	[As for decision 14] Where the teacher is confronted with a 'game playing child' they must not be drawn in to responding to their behaviour as if a parent. The teacher should stay calm and not lose their temper	Now that verbal lines of communication have been entered into, the teacher must counter the feelings of not OK that they are feeling, by providing adequate 'stroking'.	To draw the transaction back into the normal student-adult relationship, the teacher must interact in a constructive way. She should not continue to argue with Michael in the way she does, rather she should try to explain the role of the student in the class and the benefits that will result from continued positive involvement in the class. She should point out the options he has to adjust his behaviour himself. (Difficult given the path she has already gone down)
20. Giving Michael a thirty minute detention	Inappropriate	[As for decision 17] A threat of future punishment can be ineffective in achieving the immediacy required in the case at hand. However a teacher must follow through with a promise to apply negative consequences.	In the case at hand, the teacher should follow the alternative given at decision 11 (with the corresponding justification). Assuming this has been followed, the teacher should follow the alternative given at decision 13 (with the corresponding justification). The use of a 'time-out' or sending the student to another class may be more appropriate.	According to the assertive discipline model, any punishment should be applied in accordance with the agreed upon rules of the classroom. The legitimacy of the teacher's 'power' will be called in to question if she does not follow through with her threat. The attention seeking behaviour of Michael especially warrants isolation strategies to be employed, as it is the interrelations with other students and the teacher that appear to be driving his behaviour. A time-out achieves that isolation whereas being sent to another class requires some premeditation on the teachers part to make the necessary arrangements. It would be a last resort if this behaviour was frequent.
21. Sending Michael out of the class	Appropriate	Punishment should be applied proximate to the 'offence' and consistently in all cases. Where the misbehaviour is obvious and extreme, a correspondingly extreme punishment is warranted.	~	Given the sequence of events that have occurred (ideally the teacher should have followed a different path – the Jones model), anything less than sending Michael out of the classroom would appear as a victory on the student's part and would signal an opening of the floodgates for such behaviour in the future, either by Michael or other students. This solution is more for immediate regaining of control and minimising current disruption, rather than solving the 'Michael problem'.
22. Providing a summary statement of Michael's rudeness and lack of consideration	Appropriate	An occasion of misbehaviour is also an opportunity for the teacher to reiterate the classroom rules and behaviour expectations for the students.	~	A punishment alone can be ineffective in achieving behaviour modification outcomes. A student should be made aware of what rules have been broken, how they have broken them, and what the 'ideal' of behaviour should be.

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23. Telling Michael not to return until prepared to change behaviour	Inappropriate	Setting an impossible, or likely to be breached ultimatum, will erode the authority of the teacher and provide an example to other students that they can get away with it too.	The teacher should still communicate to Michael her desire for him not to behave in the manner he just has, and to remind him of the rules, but this should be done in private. This could be phrased in positive terms, in the form of a description of the type of behaviour expected	Any subsequent breaches of behaviour will not then appear as a victory for Michael, and there will be no risk of embarrassing or humiliating him in front of his classmates. Positive phrasing breaks down the competitive dichotomy between the teacher and student, whereby the student will not 'win' by continuing to misbehave.
24. Not confirming that Michael had understood her comments	Inappropriate	The teacher must state very clearly the expected behaviour from pupils. Pupils need to know what is expected of them. Comprehension of the guidelines should be confirmed by the teacher.	The teacher should have solicited a response from Michael to confirm that he had understood her directions and the justification for them.	Ambiguous and unassertive directions are likely to lead to unruly and disruptive behaviour.
25. Sending a note home to Michael's parents	Inappropriate	A good dialogue should be maintained between the school and parents of all students.	Ideally a more personal approach, through telephone call or meeting should be used to discuss Michael's behaviour.	Parents play a vital role in maintaining a good learning environment in the classroom that is free from discipline issues. They should not only be included when things go wrong, but at all stages.

	Explicit Behaviour Management Decision
	Decision with Behaviour Management Implications

References:

Edwards, C. 2000, *Classroom Discipline and Management*, Third Edition, John Wiley and Sons, New York.

MLEA 2003 *Behaviour Management* (online) available: [http://www.schoolweb.middlesbrough.gov.uk/staffroom/ianmawson/im_class_man_\[01-13\].html](http://www.schoolweb.middlesbrough.gov.uk/staffroom/ianmawson/im_class_man_[01-13].html) (accessed 31 October 2003).

Bibliography (unreferenced):

Backes, C. & Ellis, I. (2003) 'The secret of classroom management', *Techniques*; May 2003; Vol. 78, No. 5, pp. 22-5.

Feldman, S. 2003, 'Classroom Management All Year Long', *Teaching Pre K – 8*, Vol. 34, Iss. 1, p. 8.

Groundwater-Smith, S., Brennan, M., McFadden, M. & Mitchell, J. (1999), *Secondary Schooling in a Changing World*, Harcourt, Sydney.

Lecture notes and Handouts

¹ 'Appropriateness' cannot realistically be determined generically for any situation. A true measure of whether a decision is appropriate must be done so in the context of the particular setting, taking into consideration various factors (teacher, students, classroom setting, shared experiences, ethnic and other background information etc). Hence, the measure of appropriateness here is based on my experiences as a teacher and what appears to be accepted normal expectations within a Queensland classroom. No degree of appropriateness will be discussed (either it is or it is not appropriate). This issue is covered under the alternative and justification columns.

² This could be considered appropriate once the sequence of events that the teacher has 'set-off' are occurring (non-Jones Model proponents)

NB The word count appears excessive for 2 reasons: First, I believe I have identified many more decisions than anticipated (explicit and implicit), and where those decisions are very similar I have repeated the entirety of the entry with minor alterations (rather than simply referring the reader to the relevant prior entry) – when these are taken into account the word limit has mostly been complied with.