

- **Speak Effectively.** Learn how to talk effectively with students. (The suggestions presented here have to do with teaching information and proper behavior. If you were counseling students or commiserating with them, you would speak in a different manner.) Look at the following exchange as an example of what *not* to do:

Teacher: Stop talking, Johnny.

Johnny: I wasn't talking.

Teacher: You were talking—I just saw you talking to Henry.

Johnny: Well, Jason was talking. He was doing it first.
(and so forth, on and on)

Seganti comments, "What's your strategy here? Are you going to stand there arguing with Johnny about whether or not he was talking? That only perpetuates the problem." The following shows how Seganti would interact with Johnny:

Teacher: There is no talking in my class, Johnny—stay after school 15 minutes today for detention.

Johnny: But I wasn't talking!

Teacher: Show up for detention. If you don't want another 15 minutes, stop disrupting now.

RULES: HOW DO THEY PROMOTE STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY?

Seganti insists on holding students accountable for their behavior. There should be no getting around it. Class rules of behavior provide the specifics of accountability. You, the teacher, must establish effective rules and make sure students understand them clearly. Compose the rules yourself, before you see your students, and make copies to hand out. Every possible behavior that concerns your class, positive or negative, should be addressed somewhere in the rules. You are the professional and you know how students should behave. Don't waste time asking students to help you decide what the rules should be.

Right away when students arrive at your door for the first day of class, teach them the rules for your class and exactly what those rules mean. This is to be done so no misunderstanding is possible. The students' first assignment in class is to copy the rules neatly, sign their copy, and hand it in. From that point onward, students are held accountable for their actions in class. They can no longer claim they didn't know the rules. If they try that ploy, have them once again copy the rules, sign the copy, and give it to you.

Clearly, some of Seganti's methods are more easily used with older students. Students in the very early grades could not do this; what could an elementary teacher who uses Seganti's model do to accomplish the same purpose?

The following are rule topics Seganti advocates. The first two are given in Seganti's words. After that, additional topics for rules are presented with brief suggestions. In Seganti's book *Classroom Discipline 101* (Seganti, 2008a), you can find his exact wording for his 11 rules and the procedures he uses for teaching them to students.

Seganti's Rule 1 and Rule 2

Rule 1

You are to enter the classroom calmly and quietly and go immediately to your assigned seat. You are to sit at a 90-degree angle to your desk with your feet on the floor, showing good posture and a straight spine.

How to Teach Rule 1 to Students Stand in the doorway on the first day and teach this rule to each student in turn. This procedure is immediately established as a rule, not an option. A student who enters the room improperly has defied a rule and is subject to the consequence you have established for violating rules (Seganti's 15-minute detention consequence will be explained later). Once all students are seated, explain this rule again to the class as a whole.

Rule 2

Students are to show respect at all times and in all manners toward staff, others, and themselves. This includes all verbal and nonverbal forms of communication, including body language, facial expression, and tone of voice.

How to Teach Rule 2 to Students When all students are in the room, read this rule once. Even in the wildest schools there is usually a window of time the first day when students are curious and will listen. Now, read it again, piece by piece.

This can become a good lesson on nonverbal communication. Tell the students that most communication is nonverbal. Take your time here. Be a teacher—give examples and demonstrate. Tell the students, "If I give you a direction and you roll your eyes, it is just as disrespectful as if you insult me verbally, and you will get detention." Act it out—"Suppose I say: Jack, open your book to page 134." Pretend to be Jack and roll your eyes. Explain again that eye rolling and other disrespectful actions are just as unacceptable as saying something rude and will be met with the same consequences.

Additional Topics Seganti Suggests for Rules

Working on Task

This topic centers on clarifying when students should be on task, how they should be working, what they should do when they have completed their assigned work, and when and how they may talk.

Begin by clarifying exactly what *being on task* and *paying full attention* mean. Act out for students what these requirements look like and *do not* look like. Then, have selected students demonstrate behavior that complies with and violates the rule.

Seganti insists that you absolutely must train your students to get their materials out immediately and be quietly at work by the time the bell rings. You must insist on this, or else students will begin to dawdle more and more when entering the room. In addition, you must help students identify productive and respectful activities they can do when they have completed their work. This heads off the future manipulation technique in which students say, "I'm done with my work."

Eliminating Distractions

This topic centers on potential distractions, such as food, playthings, electronic media, and the like, that students might intentionally or inadvertently bring to class. Seganti provides a list of potential distractions and carefully explains exactly what he will do if any of those distractions appear in noncompliance with the class rule. He explains again to students that class time is devoted entirely to learning and strongly reiterates that nothing will be permitted to interfere with that time.

One of the distractions Seganti highlights is chewing gum. He says he is famous for his "no-chewing" rule, which helps make him manipulation-proof. Students sometimes appear to be chewing, but claim they are not, sticking their tongues out to prove it. Seganti says this act can earn two detentions—one for chewing gum and one for lying. As Seganti explains it, here is how this situation usually plays out:

Teacher: Spit out the gum, Jane, and come after school for 15 minutes.

Jane: I'm not chewing gum.

Teacher: Well, there's no chewing in my class, even if you aren't chewing anything, so come to detention.

Jane: But I'm not chewing anything!

Teacher: I don't argue with students. You can either spit out the gum or get suspended for defiance.

(Jane then either spits out the gum or the teacher suspends her from the class.)

Seganti says you won't have to do this often. Once or twice and everyone gets the idea you are manipulation-proof. Caregivers or administrators may complain if you suspend a student from class for merely chewing gum. If that happens, point out that the student has violated two rules—one for chewing gum and another for noncompliance with teacher directions. This point will be addressed again when we explore the roles of administrators, counselors, and caregivers.