



What's your classroom MANAGEMENT STYLE?

BY NANETTE LORENZO-SANTOS

When students throw us a challenge or a problem, we all respond differently. How do YOU handle everyday classroom demands? Take this quiz to find out.



1. On the first day of school, you

- A) Assign seats where students should remain throughout the period
- B) Arrange students in groups to allow movement and discussion
- C) Ask students how they want to be arranged
- D) Tell your students to sit wherever they please

2. When you catch a student sleeping, you

- A) Send him to the Principal's office to let him know that this behavior is not tolerated
- B) Sit down with him and let him come up with a solution to show better behavior
- C) Allow him to catch up on his sleep
- D) Remind him of the no-sleeping rule in class—whether he follows or not doesn't matter

3. When you lecture, you

- A) Demand silence
- B) Allow students to raise their hand if they have a relevant question
- C) Allow students to speak whenever they want
- D) Discuss your lesson whether or not students listen

4. When a student's project is late and she asks for an extension, you

- A) Say no, give her a lecture about submitting on time
- B) Listen to the explanation and if reasonable, give an extension
- C) Give in to her plea for an extension
- D) Simply don't accept late submissions, no exceptions

5. Which statement best describes your discipline style?

- A) I prefer vigorous discipline

- and expect swift obedience
- B) I always try to explain the reasons behind my rules and decisions
- C) I am hesitant to reprimand students because it might hurt their feelings
- D) As long as my students don't bother me, I don't mind what they do

6. The main goal of classroom management and discipline is to

- A) Get students to listen to you no matter what
- B) Teach students why rules are important and help them learn to make good choices on their own
- C) Make sure students are happy doing what they want
- D) Refrain from enforcing any

- rules because students should be responsible enough

ABOUT THE WRITER:
 Nanette Lorenzo-Santos, a Poveda alumna, is now the Level Coordinator of Poveda Learning Centre, Grade School. She handles Grade 6 and 7 students and teachers.

WHAT'S YOUR STYLE?

If you selected...

Mostly A's: Chances are, you are an authoritarian teacher. Strict and no-nonsense, you tighten the screws of discipline and make all classroom decisions. This style works because you achieve unquestioned obedience and respect, and you definitely get things done. However, this isn't good for nurturing a strong self-concept and original thinking among your students. They need to experiment and make mistakes in order to learn. Give them a little room to creatively solve their problems. Allow them to discuss and reason with you. Expect obedience and cooperation, but inject lots of love in your disciplining.

Mostly B's: You have a democratic style. You set rules but explain why they're important and must be followed, and you value discussions with your students. You give them freedom to grow and learn and make choices of their own. When they misbehave, you discipline by being firm yet gentle. This style allows your students to experience their strengths, understand their limits, and celebrate their achievements.

Mostly C's: It's likely that you're an easygoing teacher. You accept your students' impulses and actions and place a high value on their feelings. To be sure, your students must appreciate your patience, and you must be a popular teacher. This "I'm-your-

friend" approach is good because students are able to express their individuality. However, when you are too permissive, students "become the boss" and things may get out of control. Remember to provide them with the guidance, structure and accountability they still so desperately need.

Mostly D's: You have an indifferent style. You treat students as adults by letting them make their own decisions instead of telling them what to do. This hands-off approach teaches the value of self-discovery and independence. However, when you don't say much about their behavior, young people get confused, feel insecure about what's right and what's wrong, and may make poor choices. Seize every opportunity to enter into conversations with your students. Give them a chance to discuss, reason, and express

their thoughts with you as their guide and mentor.

You may discover that your style changes as your teaching experience increases. A beginning teacher is probably easygoing, while a tenured one may lean towards being more authoritarian. It's important to remember that there is no single correct classroom management style. Certain methods are more effective for certain types of students and situations. The successful teacher is one who can evaluate the situation and then apply the appropriate style. It's also good to be aware of how you normally react, so that you can check yourself and see whether you're responding in the most appropriate way.



DEAR TITA LITA

Angelita L. Sta. Ana, Ed.D. is the English Schools Division Supervisor of the City of Marikina. She has been an educator for the past 30 years and also does editorial consulting. Through the years, she has inspired and helped many young teachers to grow professionally and personally.

Tired of TEACHING

Dear Tita Lita,

I've been teaching for many years. I used to enjoy it, but for some years now I've been feeling half-hearted about my job. The last school year tired me out, and now I have no energy or enthusiasm, to face the coming one.

Something new! Something different! These can break the dread you feel.

Something new: A new grade, classroom, set of pupils, a new school year: see if you can regard any of these as a fresh beginning and a different challenge—two things that people need for growth. And personal growth may dispel the monotony you're experiencing at the moment.

Hopefully, your summer activities such as enrichment workshops and social activities have also rekindled your passion to teach, to live life more fully. Did you meet any new colleagues with whom you can get together to exchange ideas, to add variety to your daily life? Get in touch with them again. Leave no space for boredom in your mind.

Something different: Think, plan, and implement something extraordinary for yourself. Don't limit your ideas to teaching or school. Look for interesting locations to visit and see if you can single out a place that makes you go "Aha! I really like this!" Make plans to go to this favorite spot when you need to refresh your mind and body.

Another simple, economical, yet productive thing you can do is to read books or listen to good music. These allow us to rediscover ourselves and tap creativity within.

Finally, accept that we all go through periods of stagnation and boredom, but continue to think positive. Believe that teaching is a special opportunity that the Master Teacher has given you. Even though you're not in top condition, don't say no to challenges and breaks that come your way. Continue to improve your work environment, feed your interests outside school. Blend all these ingredients together and add commitment and dedication, despite your current emotions. Slowly but surely, you will conquer your boredom.

DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM?

Write to Tita Lita! Send your letter to:
Star Teacher c/o Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation, 35/F Petron
Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. Makati City • Fax 889-8135 •
Cell 0927-6459110 • Email: teachers@readerstransform.com



JUST TOO TIRED!

Dear Tita Lita,

To make more money, I tutor and sell cosmetics apart from my school load and duties at the teacher's co-op. When I get home, I take care of my husband and three kids. Everywhere I go, someone needs my attention and my care. Where and how can I find some peace?

True greatness is attained by serving. I commend you for the service you are rendering in school and at home.

Before anything else, I advise you to first count your blessings. It seems that with every stress point you mentioned, there's a corresponding blessing: you have a stable job, a family, and extra sources of income.

Nevertheless, we can't deny the fact that teachers are tremendously loaded with work and responsibilities.

One way to ease your problem is to budget your time the way you would budget your money. Create a weekly schedule, taking into account your teaching, preparation of materials, time with family and duties at the co-op. Be realistic, but don't disregard any of your priorities, because they all serve a purpose in your life. Write down your schedule and take it everywhere. This allows you to say no to something that may come up that isn't so important.

Provide yourself a weekend break. Stroll around the mall, go to a nice park where you can unwind, or talk to a close friend. Chatting can release a little of your tension. And of course, spend time with your kids. Make it a relaxing, joke-filled time together.

To lighten your spirit, smile! It's contagious. It'll make you and others feel instantly better. Also, start and end the day with a prayer. Offer your day and ask for guidance.

Life is what you make it. If you think of something as an exciting challenge instead of a problem, then it will be. You can find peace in your own mind and heart.