

Introduction

A classroom with students who do not follow directions, who do not pay attention, and who do not remain on task is a classroom in which the students are spending much of the time not learning. It is a classroom in which students do not follow specific routines, do not experience the safety of a controlled classroom structure, and do not spend most of their time focused on instructional tasks. The goal, then, of applying classroom management techniques to help students follow directions, pay attention, and stay on task is necessary to increase student learning and achievement.

The skills of following directions, paying attention, and staying on task are important during instructional and noninstructional activities. Teachers who manage their students' time and behavior well are more likely to provide a wide range of learning opportunities (e.g., cooperative group work, independent projects, peer tutoring) because they have taught their students effective work behaviors that can be generalized to different situations.

When students follow teacher directions, the classroom runs more smoothly and students move efficiently through an increased variety of classroom learning activities. When students pay attention and stay on task, less time is spent on redirection and more time is transferred to active student learning.

This book will focus on applying proven classroom management strategies and effective instructional techniques to help students follow directions and increase attention to teacher and tasks.

Following Directions

Students in classrooms do not follow teacher directions for a variety of reasons. The teacher may be presenting unclear directions, the students may not have learned the skills needed to listen and follow directions,