

Chapter Twenty One

Teaching Responsibility

Preview

- While Preferred Activity Time (PAT) lays the groundwork for Responsibility Training, it is the bonus PAT that empowers students to increase the duration of PAT.
- Hurry-up Bonuses produce hustle. The time that students save by hurrying during lesson transitions and other routines is added to PAT.
- While students can earn time by hustling, they can also lose time by dawdling. This causes students to become active in managing each other's behavior.
- Automatic Bonuses eliminate the time wasting of "settling in" by giving students extra PAT for being in their seats ready to go when the bell rings.
- Responsibility Training gives teachers an effective means of managing the class during small group instruction when they are seated.

Nuts and Bolts of Training

This chapter will focus on the nuts and bolts of implementing Responsibility Training. But, for Responsibility Training to succeed, the other elements of our classroom management system must also be in place. In this chapter, therefore, we will see how the pieces of the system fit together to produce success.

The Teacher's Role

A Giver

In training students to be responsible, the teacher is first and foremost a *giver*. We give in order to teach giving – the giving of cooperation.

We will give generously. If we err, we will err in the direction of giving. If we give a little extra, no damage is done. But if we do not give enough, we can starve the program.

The teacher will give three gifts:

- **PAT:** The *first* gift that the teacher will give is *Preferred Activity Time (PAT)*. PAT does not change behavior. Rather, it sets the stage for the use of bonus PAT. Think of PAT as a "pump primer."
- **Bonus PAT:** The *second* gift that the teacher will give is *bonus PAT*. Bonus PAT changes behavior while empowering students. Bonus PAT is the heart of Responsibility Training.

- **Structure for PAT:** The *third* gift that the teacher will give is *structure for PAT*. PAT is structured time, not free time. PAT is time that is structured for learning. Its objective is to make learning fun.

A Timekeeper

Responsibility Training teaches students to be responsible with everything they do in the classroom from bringing pencils to hustling during lesson transitions. However, all of these various forms of responsible behavior can be organized under a single heading: learning to be responsible with *time*.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, students are expert time-wasters. If students were to use their time efficiently, much of the goofing off in the classroom would immediately disappear. Responsibility Training, therefore, achieves many different management objectives simultaneously by training students to manage time wisely.

As part of time management, the teacher must keep track of time. In all cases it will be *real* time – time that any student in the class could read off of the wall clock.

The Students' Role

Making Choices

The teacher gives the students time, and the students decide how the time will be spent. Students learn to take responsibility for their actions by making choices about the use of time and then living with the consequences.

Squander or Save

While students are given the power to choose how their time will be spent, their range of choices is very limited. They can:

- **Squander and be selfish:** Students can squander time by being out of their seats when the bell rings, by

sharpening pencils during class, or by dawdling during lesson transitions. These various forms of time-wasting constitute little vacations from work that students take at will.

But, these mini-vacations are not shared by the class. Rather, they are taken by individuals while the rest of the group waits. This is very selfish.

- **Save and share:** Members of the group can always choose to forego the selfishness that squanders class time, but they must have a reason to do so.

What if the students got to *keep* the time that they usually squandered so the *whole group* could use it for something they enjoyed? This would create a vested interest in saving rather than squandering.

The time that the students save is called "bonus PAT." It is the bonus PAT that empowers the students to increase PAT by saving time.

Hurry-up Bonuses

Learning to Hustle

Hurry-up Bonuses achieve one of the most difficult objectives in all of behavior management – *training kids to hustle*. Training kids to hustle is particularly difficult when work can be avoided through dawdling.

To get a sense of how difficult it is to train kids to hustle, consider the varsity basketball team at your local high school. These kids are dedicated to basketball. They love to play.

Hurry-up Bonuses

Hurry-up Bonuses achieve one of the most difficult objectives in all of behavior management – training kids to hustle.

Yet, coaches throughout the country are routinely reduced to yelling in frustration,

"Come on, hustle! Let's go! Let's go! Let's go!
You're just going through the motions out there!"

If you think it is difficult to get the varsity to hustle during practice, try gym class. Try math class. Try social studies.

An Analogy from Family Life

Hurry-up Bonuses are familiar to most of us from everyday family life. Moms and dads have used them since time began.

The most common example of a Hurry-up Bonus around the house is *the bedtime routine*. In chapter 9, "Creating Motivation," I described the bedtime routine that my parents used when I was a little kid. My mother would say:

"All right kids, it is 8:30 – time to get ready for bed. Wash your face, brush your teeth and get your pajamas on. As soon as you are in bed, it will be story time. But lights out at nine o'clock."

My brother and I well understood that the faster we moved, the more time we would have for stories. And we also knew that dawdling reduced the length of story time.

Teaching Responsibility through Empowerment

In the bedtime routine the PAT is, of course, story time. But, during the bedtime routine, who is in control of the

amount of story time that the children receive? During training, teachers respond in unison, "The children."

Indeed, the children are in complete control. If they choose to hustle, they will maximize the duration of story time. But, if they choose to dawdle, they will reduce the duration of story time. My brother and I got into the habit of being ready *before* 8:30 so that we could have a full half-hour of stories.

Understanding the nature of a simple choice made by children at bedtime teaches us one of the most important lessons about learning to be responsible: *People will only take responsibility for things that they control.*

Making choices implies that we have some control over our destiny. If we do not control the outcome of our actions, then choice is a sham since our efforts are to no avail. Before people will learn to make wise choices, therefore, they must:

- have power
- know how to use it

Our job as teachers is *first*, to empower the students to make choices, and *then*, to teach them to make good choices. Responsibility Training, therefore, is a teaching paradigm.

Lesson Transitions

The Mechanics of a Hurry-up Bonus

One of the greatest hemorrhages of time-on-task in any classroom is the lesson transition. A lesson transition usually takes about five minutes.

During these lesson transitions students move in a most unhurried fashion as they hand in papers, sharpen pencils, get drinks, move furniture into or out of groups, and

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get out materials. There is utterly no sense of urgency. Obviously, students like nice big, unhurried breaks with brief lessons sandwiched in between. They know that, as soon as the transition is over, it will be time to get back to work.

Your average lesson transition can easily be accomplished in half-a-minute if the students choose to hustle. But, why would the students hustle if hustling only puts them back to work sooner?

In contrast, let's walk through a lesson transition that contains a Hurry-up Bonus.

"Class, before you get out of your seats, let me tell you what I want you to do during this lesson transition. First, hand in your papers by laying them on the corner of my desk. Then, if you need to sharpen your pencils, this is the time to do it. If you need a drink of water, this is the time to get it.

"I want my clean-up committee to erase my boards and straighten up the books on the shelf. I want everybody to pick up any paper you see laying around the room and get your desks back on their marks.

"I will give you two minutes to get this done. But you know from past experience that you can get it done in half-a-minute. So, let's see how much time you can save. All of the time you save will be added to your PAT.

"Let's check the clock. (Pause until the second hand passes the six or twelve.) Okay, let's begin."

Being Generous with Time

While it takes students half-a-minute for a typical lesson transition if they hustle, in the preceding example I gave them two minutes. As I mentioned earlier, be generous in the giving of time. If you err, err in the direction of generosity. My rule of thumb for determining the amount of time allotted for the completion of a routine is to:



Socializing is a bootleg incentive that competes with your incentive system.

- Estimate how long it would take if they hustled.
- Round that number up to the next minute.
- Double that number.

If it would take 2 to 3 minutes to clean up after a project, round up to three minutes and then double it to six.

Bootleg Reinforcement

As the students get up from their desks, you immediately begin to *work the crowd*. Your primary objective as you

work the crowd is to eliminate the “bootleg reinforcement” that is part of any lesson transition.

As described in chapter 12, “Teaching Routines,” bootleg reinforcement is an incentive for goofing off that is delivered by the *peer group*. Imagine, for example, three students standing around the pencil sharpener talking. The reinforcer for socializing is socializing. It is a self-reinforcing behavior.

This bootleg incentive system is competing with *your* incentive system, the Hurry-up Bonus. In this competition, the bootleg incentive usually wins.

One of the main characteristics of a reinforcer that determines its power is *immediacy of delivery*. The bootleg incentive usually wins the competition because it is being delivered *now*, whereas the PAT will not be delivered until much *later*.

One of your primary objectives in classroom management is to get a *monopoly on incentives*. This is done by suppressing the goofing off that is self-reinforcing. If you fail to do this, the students’ bootleg incentives will constantly neutralize your management program.

Teachers get a monopoly on incentives primarily through “management by walking around.” Just walk up to the students who are chatting and wait patiently. The students, well aware of what they



By working the crowd, you disrupt the disruption.

Section Seven: Producing Responsible Behavior

should be doing, typically give you a self-conscious grin accompanied by some silly talk.

"I was just going to sharpen my pencil."

As the students "get on the ball," you stroll over to the four students standing around the drinking fountain and repeat the drill. As always, by working the crowd you "disrupt the disruption." In addition, by sheer proximity, you continually prompt the students to *get on the ball*.

The nemesis of working the crowd during a lesson transition is a student who says to you, "May I ask you a question?" This student could be a future Rhodes Scholar or the biggest "clinger" in the classroom. It makes no difference. Your answer is always the same.

"As soon as we are back in our seats."

During a lesson transition, you have far more important jobs to do than instruction. If you want a quick lesson transition, you must work at it. A lesson transition is perhaps the most concentrated example of classroom management during the entire school day. Thinking of it as a "break" represents a classic rookie error.

All for One, and One for All

As the lesson transition nears completion, you head to the front of the room. Imagine, however, that, as you make a final check around the room, you see some crumpled paper on the floor over by the door. Most of the students are already seated, but one student is standing near the paper. As you point, you say:

"Class, there is a piece of paper over there on the floor."

Can you imagine the student who is standing near the paper saying,

"It's not mine."

Simply look at the student and shrug. After all, it is not your problem. What do you think several classmates seated nearby will say to the student standing near the paper?

"Pick it up! Pick it up!"

Welcome to "all for one, and one for all." You have just observed peer pressure in the form that it almost always takes with Responsibility Training – *urgent whispers*.

Wrapping Up the Transition

As the last student sits down, you say,

"Thank you class for doing such a good job of cleaning up and arranging your desks. Let's check the time. You saved one minute and seventeen seconds. Let's add that to our PAT."

You walk to the board and add a minute and seventeen seconds to the PAT. The students are all smiles.

PAT	
+	-
30:00	
1:17	

*The teacher gives a Hurry-up Bonus
for a quick lesson transition*

The role into which you are consistently placed by Responsibility Training is *benevolent parent*. You give time, you protect time, and you congratulate the group for saving time. Your benevolence, however, is tempered by the next component of Responsibility Training, *time loss*.

Time Loss

The Lord Giveth, and the Lord Taketh Away

Our first bonus in Responsibility Training, the Hurry-up Bonus, provides us with our first view of the inner workings of discipline management as a system. The system is far more complex than the simple giving of bonuses.

The first complication with Hurry-up Bonuses results from the fact that *you can't win 'em all*. Some days, in spite of your best efforts, the Hurry-up Bonus bombs as the students run overtime. This can happen for legitimate reasons which may include any combination of the following:

- A storm front is blowing through.
- It is two days until the beginning of vacation.
- It is the full moon.

As you work the crowd during the lesson transition, you feel the time slipping away. You work the crowd and prompt the students with increased urgency, but to little avail. The students seem to be moving in slow motion.

With fifteen seconds left in the allotted time, you head to the front of the classroom. You stand calmly facing the students and look at the clock as the time runs out. Then, as you point to the clock, you say,

"Class, you're on your *own* time now."

Relax and wait for the last student to be seated. Then say,

"Thank you, class, for straightening up the room and getting back in your seats."

Then, after taking a second to look at the clock, walk to the board and record the time consumed under your PAT tally. The tally has two columns, one for time *gain* and one for time *loss*.

The tally in the example below would indicate that the students have saved time during two previous lesson transitions but have lost five seconds during this one. This example is actually quite representative of the proportion of time gain versus time loss in Responsibility Training.

PAT	
+	-
30:00	
1:17	:05
1:06	

On rare occasions students lose some time due to dawdling.

As you can see, the system is *rigged* so that the students *come out ahead*. When they gain, they gain in minutes. But, if they lose, they only lose in seconds. Five seconds actually represents a rather large time loss. It usually takes only two or three seconds for students to get into their seats when several of their classmates are urgently whispering,

"*Sit down! Sit down!*"

The time loss component of Responsibility Training is both necessary and the bane of my existence. It is necessary because Responsibility Training *does not work consis-*

tently without it. And it is the bane of my existence because it opens the door to abuse by poorly trained or negativistic teachers.

Time Loss Produces Consistent Success

First, let's deal with Responsibility Training working consistently. Responsibility Training is *group management*: all for one, and one for all. Turning management over to the peer group has significant advantages:

- Kids will do things for their peer group that they would never do for you.
- You side-step the resentment that some students harbor toward adult authority.

However, without the time loss component within Responsibility Training, the peer group lets you down just when you need them. The *many* do not stand up for themselves as their time is being wasted by the *few*. They just sit there and let it happen.

This tendency of the many to act like sheep comes from the natural awkwardness of any student taking a public stand for righteousness. Imagine, for example, that during a typical five-minute lesson transition, some student were to stand up and say,

"Class, some of us are dawdling and wasting valuable learning time. I wish everyone would just hurry-up so that we could get back to work."

While voicing a noble sentiment, this "goodie-two-shoes" has just distinguished him or herself as being the biggest dweeb on the continent.

If you want students to enforce your classroom standards, you must give them a reason for doing so that does not make them look like a bunch of "goodie-two-shoes." Enlightened self-interest is the ticket. The time loss component of Responsibility Training gives the students a

plausible vested interest in enforcing your standards. A student does not have to be a "suck-up" to say,

"Sit down! You're wasting our PAT."

Of course, you would not want students to become *overzealous* with rule enforcement so that they would get nasty. Nor would you want to make any student into a scapegoat.

Don't worry. There is much less of a tendency in that direction than you might think. Here are some of the reasons that overzealousness is all but nonexistent:

- **Students will not allow it.** They look at the overzealous student in an irked fashion and say something like, "Chill out."
- **You will not allow it.** You immediately set limits on it just like you would with any other form of disruption.
- **There is little reason for it to occur.** When the few can no longer abuse the many, you find that there is much less latent animosity between students that might surface at such times in the form of rude remarks.

Time Loss Opens the Door to Abuse

Next, let's deal with the fact that the time loss condition within Responsibility Training is the *bane of my existence*. Can you imagine a colleague who is a bit *negative* or *burned-out* eventually saying to the class,

"All right, class, it is only Wednesday, and you have already lost *half* of your PAT. If we continue like this, there will be *no* PAT this week!"

This teacher is obviously using Responsibility Training as a *weapon* by abusing the time loss condition. When used properly, time is lost in seconds rather than in minutes, and even then, time is lost only rarely. Furthermore, time

loss typically self-eliminates in a matter of days or weeks so that thereafter it exists in the students' minds as a *potentiality* rather than as an actuality.

For teachers to take large amounts of PAT from the students, they must be:

- **Poorly Trained:** This can easily occur when a teacher hears about parts of this system second-hand – often from a well-intentioned colleague who has been to a workshop. Since the manipulation of PAT smacks of “instant cure,” teachers are tempted to try it without other elements of the program being in place. When time loss is used for high-rate behaviors such as *talking to neighbors* and *out of seat* that are the proper domain of working the crowd and Limit Setting, excessive time loss is the natural outcome.

- **Extremely Negative:** Teachers can be negative for a variety of reasons ranging from exhaustion to career burn-out to a personality problem. When negativism is chronic, abuse of time loss will be chronic. When time loss becomes excessive, students become resentful and cooperation ceases.

Layers of Management

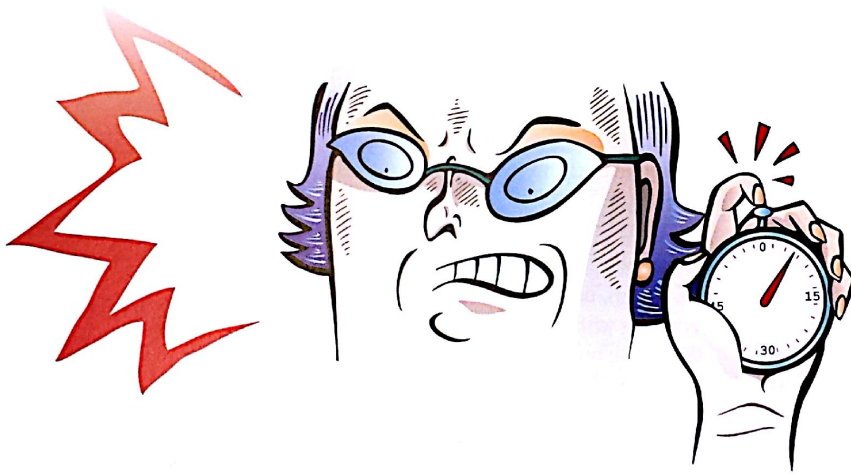
A Foundation for Successful Incentives

You consistently place yourself in a position to congratulate the group for its success because success was not left to chance. Each piece of behavior needed for an efficient lesson transition was carefully built and supervised.

The clean-up committee erased your boards properly because you had *trained* them to do so during the first month of school. And, they knew that, had they done a sloppy job, they would have done it over because you were supervising their work. The students moved their desks properly rather than dragging them across the room for the same reasons.

In addition, you systematically eliminated bootleg reinforcement as you worked the crowd. And, finally, as you worked the crowd, you set limits on any goofing off that you encountered.

The incentive of extra PAT for hustle was only *one* layer of management among *many* during the transition. Indeed, the incentive was not even the main one. Rather than saying that the students succeeded because of the incentive, it would be more accurate to say that the incentive succeeded



When time loss becomes excessive, students become resentful, and cooperation ceases.

because of the solid foundation of management upon which it was built.

A Slice of Life

To understand how discipline management works as a *system*, let's first list the four layers of discipline management. (See chapter 2, "Focusing on Prevention.")

1. Classroom Structure
2. Limit Setting
3. Responsibility Training
4. Backup System

The strategy for solving a problem is very simple:

- Extract as much management from Classroom Structure as you can before moving on to Limit Setting.
- Extract as much management from Limit Setting as you can before moving on to Responsibility Training.
- Extract as much management from Responsibility Training as you can before even considering the Backup System.

Think of discipline management as a four-layer cake. We would never serve a birthday cake by cutting off the top layer and serving it one layer at a time, would we? Rather, we would cut through all four layers to serve a slice of cake.

Similarly, we will never serve up one layer of our management system all by itself. Rather, think of every management dilemma as a "slice of life." The solution will potentially contain all four layers of the management "cake."

Management Deferred

By far, the greatest investment of time and energy in a well-managed classroom is in *Classroom Structure*. The

teacher will first rearrange the furniture in the room in order to *work the crowd*. In addition, the teacher will invest heavily in the *teaching of routines* early in the semester. During the teaching of a lesson, *working the crowd* will be facilitated by additional elements of

Classroom Structure which include *Say, See, Do Teaching* plus *Visual Instructional Plans* plus *Praise, Prompt, and Leave*.

Any management task that is not taken care of with Classroom Structure will be shifted to the next level, *Limit Setting*. Consequently, as we mentioned in Chapter 12, "Teaching Routines," teachers who do not spend enough time teaching classroom routines will find themselves constantly setting limits on the misbehavior that occurs during those routines.

Any management task that is not taken care of by Classroom Structure or Limit Setting will be shifted to the next level of management, *Responsibility Training*. Herein lies the problem.

If teachers get only a brief explanation of Responsibility Training without the rest of the program, they will have little choice but to use it as a "solo" management procedure. When used solo, Responsibility Training comes across as a cure-all. The natural tendency, then, is to use Responsibility Training, and especially *time loss*, to manage *everything* – talking to neighbors, out of seat, wandering around the classroom, dawdling, not having pencils – you name it!

Success with Incentives

Rather than saying that the students succeeded because of the incentive, it would be more accurate to say that the incentive succeeded because of the solid foundation of management upon which it was built.

The proper domain of Responsibility Training is relatively *narrow*. It builds behaviors such as hustling or showing up on time with books and pencils – those jobs for which Classroom Structure and Limit Setting are poorly suited.

If you were to ask Responsibility Training to bear the entire burden of discipline management, it would collapse under the weight of that burden. You would back yourself into continually *taking* time rather than *giving* it. As a result, the system would become a weapon rather than a gift, and its entire intent would be perverted.

Automatic Bonuses

Right Place, Right Time, Right Stuff

Automatic bonuses are used when you cannot measure the amount of time that the students have saved. Imagine, for example, that the students are in their seats ready to go when the bell rings. How much time did they save? You have no way of knowing. You can only measure time *loss*.

When the students are on time, *automatically* give them a bonus of a predetermined size. The size of the bonus is up to you, but one minute is the norm.

Automatic Bonuses

Automatic bonuses are used when you cannot measure the amount of time saved.

They are most commonly given for students being at the right place at the right time with the right stuff.

Automatic bonuses are most commonly given for students being at the *right place* at the *right time* with the *right stuff*. They are most useful in training students to begin class on time rather than wasting the first five minutes of the class period with “settling in.”

Imagine, for example, that the students are in their seats ready to go when the bell rings. As always, they are in their seats for more reasons than one. You greeted the students at the door, the students had a Bell Work assignment, and you worked the crowd during Bell Work while setting limits on any goofing off. As a final layer of management, you provided an incentive.

Having laid the groundwork for the success of the incentive, you are now in a position to congratulate the students at the beginning of class with the daily “automatic bonus routine.”

“Class, thank you for being in your seats. That is one minute. How about pencils? (The students hold up their pencils.) Good! That’s two minutes. Let me see lab manuals. (The students hold them up.) Good! Three for three.”

You then walk to the board and add three minutes to the bonus column of the PAT.

PAT	
+	-
30:00	
1:17	:05
1:06	
3:00	

Daily automatic bonus routines eliminate the wasting of time during “settling in.”

Taking Responsibility for Pencils

Now, let's imagine that, thirty seconds before the bell rings, a girl in your class discovers that she has no pencil. That pencil is worth a full minute of PAT.

She asks the students near her for a pencil, but nobody has an extra one. As you walk by, the student says,

"May I please borrow a pencil?"

You answer,

"I don't lend pencils."

You knew that was coming, didn't you? It is now fifteen seconds until the bell rings! What should the poor girl do? What if she said to the class,

"Hey, you guys! I need a pencil!"

In a class of thirty, twenty-nine other students have a vested interest in this girl having a pencil. She will get a pencil. When the whole class wants something to happen, it will happen.

The beautiful thing about this pencil routine, apart from the girl having a pencil, is that it is not *your* pencil. Even better, you do not care whether the person who loaned the pencil gets it back. It is *not your problem!* Group management makes it *their* problem. You are no longer caught in the middle.

Learning to Help Each Other

Some students are just forgetful. Imagine for a moment a boy in your class who often forgets things. He is a good kid, but just a little flaky. He forgets homework and deadlines and pencils and notebooks.

Think of responsible people, in contrast, as having "Post-It notes" all over their brains. When my kids were in school, my brain was buried under Post-It notes, as was my wife's.

"Bring refreshments to school for Brian's birthday party at 11:00 today."

"You have to chaperone Anne's field trip, and the bus leaves the school at 1:00."

"Dinner will be late this evening because Patrick has a basketball game after school."

Some people have never learned to bother with Post-It notes – flaky kids, for example. They don't "sweat the details." You can remind them a dozen times, but they will still forget and then say, "Nobody told me."

Switch perspectives for a moment, and imagine that you are a student who shares science class with the flaky kid. Your locker is next to his, and you remember (because you have a Post-It note on your brain) that today is lab day. As you grab your lab manual, you remember that last week the class failed to get its bonus minute because "Mr. Flake" forgot his manual. To make sure that it does not happen again, you say,

"Hey, Herb. Got your manual?"

When students have a vested interest in "taking care of business," they often take care of it when you are nowhere around. Neither Classroom Structure nor Limit Setting can do that.

Bonus Contests***Contests Are Optional***

When we began experimenting with PAT at the high school level, a few teachers, for no apparent reason, posted the running totals of PAT for each class period on the board. These classes consistently earned more PAT than classrooms in which the teachers did not post PAT. The difference was about five to eight minutes of PAT over the course of a week.

PAT Bonus Contest Prizes

First Place	5 bonus minutes
Second Place	4 bonus minutes
Third Place	3 bonus minutes
Fourth Place	2 bonus minutes
Fifth Place	1 bonus minute

By including bonus points for rank order, everyone has a vested interest until the end of the contest.

As an experiment, we asked all of the teachers to post running totals of PAT for each class period. Sure enough, when the teachers who had not posted PAT began to do so, their classes' net PAT immediately shot up by five to eight minutes per week. It seemed that the class periods were competing with each other without even being aware of it.

To maximize the benefit, we instituted a formal contest in which bonus PAT was the prize. During a five period day, bonuses would be given as shown in the box above. Notice that even last place got a bonus minute. You can afford to err in the direction of generosity if PAT is always used for learning.

Cutoff Point Contests

An incentive system will be more powerful if everyone participates, and it will be less powerful if people drop out. One of the problems of having prizes based on *rank*

order (first through fifth place, for example) was that fourth and fifth places tended to quit trying when they saw that they could not catch up. Soon, not trying became a habit.

To eliminate this tendency, we substituted *cutoff points* for rank order. Cutoff points were the rough equivalents of the time typically earned by competing class periods, but evenly spaced. The example below is for a teacher who gives each of five class periods 30 minutes of PAT to start the week with cut-off points at increments of three minutes.

The beauty of cutoff points is that any class can earn extra minutes of PAT at any time with just a little more effort. This greatly increases peer involvement. In addition, since class periods are not actually competing with each other, they can all earn the "first place" bonus. This tends to eliminate the problem of dropping out.

PAT Bonus Cutoff Points

45 minutes of PAT earns	5 bonus minutes
42 minutes of PAT earns	4 bonus minutes
39 minutes of PAT earns	3 bonus minutes
36 minutes of PAT earns	2 bonus minutes
33 minutes of PAT earns	1 bonus minute

The beauty of cutoff points is that any class can earn extra minutes of PAT with just a little more effort.

Layering Bonuses

Teachers will often want to use a field trip, a movie, or a big project of some kind for PAT. Since these activities require an extended PAT, teachers are tempted to save PAT for several days or weeks in order to accumulate the necessary time.

This extension of the time frame for Responsibility Training typically has disastrous results as kids simply give up. However, you can have the class work for long-term goals without giving up the power of short-term reinforcement by *layering bonuses*. Simply keep two sets of books side by side.

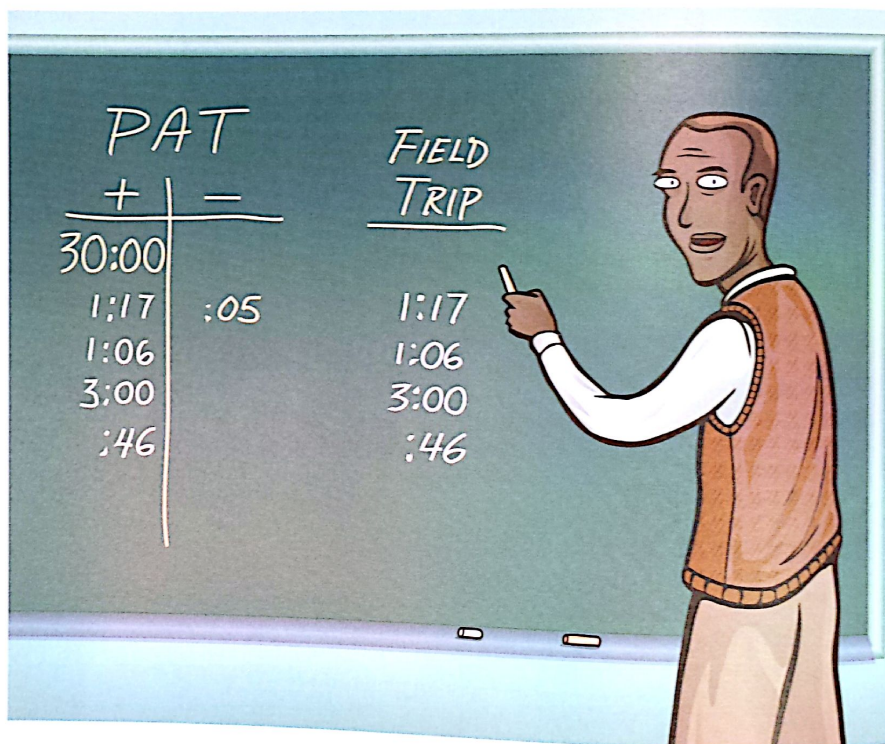
Imagine, for a moment, that you are a fourth grade teacher who would like to have the class earn time for a field trip. Keep two PAT tallies side by side at the board — one for the normal PAT that might occur at the end of the day, and one for the field trip. Whenever you add a Hurry-up Bonus or an Automatic Bonus to the daily total, add the same bonus to the field trip total. Only bonuses add to the field trip total, not the initial gift of PAT.

Discipline from a Distance

Small Group Instruction

How do you manage goofing off in the classroom when you are *seated* during small group instruction? As soon as you sit down, the rate of disruption skyrockets. Not only do you lose “working the crowd,” but Limit Setting becomes pro-

hibitively expensive. You have to stop instruction and stand up before you can even begin. You turn toward the disruptive students, and they “shape up.” As soon as you sit down, they start goofing off again. This is called, “yo-yoing the teacher.”



You can have long-term goals without giving up your short-term incentives by keeping two bonus tallies on the board.

Data taken during small group instruction showed that both *talking to neighbors* and *out of seat* tripled as soon as the teacher sat down. In addition, *time-on-task* among students *not* in the small group plunged by over fifty percent. This degree of goofing off translates into the noise level that most teachers have learned to accept as the price of small group instruction.

that, teachers only had to point to the wall clock when they caught the eye of a disruptor.

Later on we learned how to exploit *bonuses* so that management was more a matter of giving than of taking. Yet, from a seated position, the original version provides an effective alternative to the widespread goofing off typical of small group instruction. To put it simply, time can be substituted for proximity. Using the stopwatch from a seated position is like beaming your body across the room. Talking stops, and “the wanderer” literally jumps into his seat to turn off the stopwatch.

Beware of More Abuse

The very magic of using Responsibility Training for *talking to neighbors* and *out of seat* when you are seated can be highly seductive. It can train even the best teachers to use time loss for high-rate disruption at other times *in lieu of working the crowd*. This can be disastrous.

It is important to discriminate the *change in ground rules* for the use of time loss that occurs when the teacher is *seated* during small group instruction as opposed to when the teacher is *mobile*. When you are mobile, you *never* use time loss for high-rate disruptions like *talking to neighbors* and *out of seat*. When you are seated, you *must* use time loss for these same high-rate disruptions.

Responsibility Training is robust enough to absorb time loss for high-rate disruptions if its use is limited to *small group instruction when the teacher is seated*. Problems occur only when the teacher “steps over the line” and uses time loss for the sake of convenience when *not seated*.

To help delineate the proper use of time loss in Responsibility Training, trainees learn the following rule:

Never use time to manage a behavior that you could have managed with your body.

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your body.**

This dilemma of managing from a seated position produced some of the research that evolved into Responsibility Training. At the beginning, we gave the teachers a stopwatch to hold up as a warning cue when they saw a disruption on the far side of the classroom. If the disrupting students returned to work, no time was lost. But, if the disruption continued, the teacher started the watch and let it run until the students were back on task. Any time on the stopwatch was deducted from PAT.

The peer group immediately began “shushing” disruptive students. In the research, disruptions were reduced by over 80 percent, and time-on-task doubled during the first week. By the end of the second week, disruptions were down by 95 percent, and time-on-task was the same as when the teacher was working the crowd.

More importantly, time loss was small. By the end of the second week, time loss averaged about fifteen seconds during a one-hour class period. By the end of the third week, most of the stopwatches were in the drawer. After

Open Field Settings

Physical education teachers sometimes find Limit Setting difficult due to sheer distance. When students are goofing off on the far side of the gym or at the other end of the playing field, the use of physical proximity for management becomes impractical.

Teachers in open field settings usually find themselves substituting the time loss of Responsibility Training for the physical proximity of Meaning Business more often than teachers in regular classrooms. If used judiciously, this can work.

Hurry-up Bonuses can also increase hustling in such settings to create time for a sizable PAT by the end of the class period. I know physical education teachers whose kids hustle through "dressing out" and required assignments in order to get:

- a three-on-three basketball tournament
- access to gymnastics equipment
- access to the weight room

Eliminating Annoyances**Pencil Sharpening**

While automatic bonuses help us with part of "pencil management," we are still left with the problem of sharpening pencils during class. The first step toward solving this problem is to inform your class that you do not allow pencil sharpening after the bell rings.

To deal with broken pencil leads, you need a canister of sharpened pencils on your desk. They should be short, grungy pencils. If you buy nice new pencils, break them in half, sharpen both ends and break off the eraser. The little pencils used to keep score at golf courses are perfect. Instruct your students as follows:

"If you break your pencil lead during class and have no other pencil, hold your pencil in the air so I can see it. I will nod to you at which time you may leave your seat to exchange pencils at my desk. Leave your pencil on my desk, and take one out of the canister. You may get your own pencil back at the end of class when you return mine to the canister."

Typically, this is the end of the problem. Occasionally, however, a student might take advantage of the situation by killing time at your desk looking for the best pencil in the canister. First, try a little "heart-to-heart" talk with the student to see if the problem will go away without further sanctions. If the problem persists, you may need to put students on the clock when they get out of their seats to exchange pencils. When students see that you have the situation covered, they usually "shape up" without you ever having to actually take away time.

Hall Passes

Hall passes allow administrators to know whether students they meet in the halls *should* be out of class. There are many legitimate reasons for students being out of class. The use of hall passes only becomes a problem when students use them to go to the restroom.

The flim-flammetry of using hall passes to go to the restroom becomes clear in the light of one biological fact – *an average three-year-old child can sleep through the night dry*. This means that teenagers who "need" a pass out of class in order to avoid wetting themselves might have a little brother or sister who "held it" last night for *eight hours while unconscious*. Does this sound as though the teacher is being taken for a ride?

You need to understand that every institution on the face of the earth has a toilet training program. There are only two options:

- When you gotta go, you gotta go.
- When you gotta go, do it on your own time during the breaks provided.

Option number one provides an incentive for abusing use of the hall pass as a means of getting out of class. Option number two removes that incentive.

The simplest way to eliminate the abuse of hall passes is to eliminate their use for going to the restroom. Of course, any student with a note from a physician would be excepted. For the rest of the student body, the rule is – *go to the bathroom during the breaks provided.*

Teachers at the primary level, however, express a need for hall passes given their experience with such young children. These concerns are legitimate.

As always, management problems are solved most easily when they are solved preventatively. Let me share an observation. Primary teachers often bring their classes in from recess and march them right past the restrooms without stopping. These are frequently young teachers who lack experience with child rearing.

Anyone who has raised children knows how flaky young kids can be about having to go to the bathroom. I would ask my own kids when we were near the restrooms, “Do you have to go?” and they would say, “No.” Five minutes later when we were nowhere near a restroom, they would

be doing the one-legged dance. Soon parents learn not to ask. You just say, “Go in and *try!*”

Additional Incentive Options

Add-On Programs

During workshops teachers often assume that whatever is not explicitly *included* in the program is, therefore, *excluded*. As a result, teachers sometimes ask at the break whether they might be “permitted” to continue using a particular incentive program that they have found useful even though it is not included in *Tools for Teaching*.

For the sake of clarification, Responsibility Training is not the “be all” and “end all” of incentive management. Rather, it represents a breakthrough in *efficiency*. It allows the teacher to hold the *entire class* accountable for a *wide range* of behaviors *all day long* for no more effort than a tally of time on the board.

Any other incentive program that you may be using in class can be run along with Responsibility Training. They won’t interfere with each other.

For example, elementary teachers often have “responsibility charts” upon which students can earn stars or points for doing basic tasks during the day. In a similar vein, primary teachers often use a point system similar to Responsibility Training for students who cannot tell time. If you have something that works, hang on to it. Here are some additional ideas for solving classroom problems that can operate side-by-side with Responsibility Training.

Tattling

How do you eliminate tattling? It can be a constant headache that puts the teacher “over a barrel.”

Imagine a boy who continually comes in from recess complaining about how some student tripped him or

You can run
your own
incentive programs
along with
Responsibility
Training.

pushed him down. If you *listen* to the tattling each day, you reinforce it. If you *don't listen* to the tattling, you appear to be hard-hearted and uncaring. What to do?

Enter *response-cost management*. The most common example of response-cost management is the legal system. The good news is that the system offers you justice. The bad news is that lawyers are expensive.

Most people will not pay \$10,000 in lawyer fees to redress a \$1,000 grievance. The cost of utilizing the legal system limits your willingness to use it. Cost, therefore, “manages” frivolous lawsuits so that the courts are not flooded with them.

Apply the same logic to tattling. In order to manage the rate of tattling, you will need a response that is expensive enough to eliminate frivolous tattling.

For this you will need a Tattle Box. Take a shoe box, cut a slit in the lid, and prominently label it “Tattle Box.” When little Sammy comes in from recess complaining as usual about some horrible crime, look concerned and say:

“Sammy, I want to hear all about what happened on the playground. Here is a pencil and a piece of paper. I want you to describe exactly what happened. Give me a full paragraph, and remember to put your name, the date and the time of day at the top. When you are done, I will check it for spelling and punctuation. When you have corrected it, you can put it in the tattle box. Start writing while I get things going with the rest of the class.

Many times Sammy will say, “Oh, that’s all right.” and sit down without writing anything. So much for that tattle.

Sometimes, however, a student will actually write out an “incident report.” When they are done writing, scan it and drop it dutifully into the Tattle Box. This will allow you to

pick up serious problems or patterns of conflict that need to be dealt with right away.

On Friday you will have Tattle Time. Solemnly turn the Tattle Box *upside-down* and lift the box off of the lid so that the oldest tattles are on top. Pick up the tattle on top and read the time and date.

“Our first tattle is from Jennifer on Monday morning. Jennifer, can you tell me what happened?”

Chances are, Jennifer will give you a blank stare. This gives you a chance to be nurturant and congratulatory.

“Well good. I am so glad that you children are learning to take care of these problems on your own.”

Drop that tattle into the waste basket and pick up the next one as you continue with Tattle Time.

“Our next tattle is from Todd on Tuesday. Todd, can you tell me what happened?”

Chances are, you will get another blank stare. More congratulations are in order. Occasionally there will be a tattle that is actually remembered. Since the tattle is obviously still a live issue, this is your opportunity to deal with it. You may initiate some group problem solving or a “human development circle.” During group problem solving you can teach students to express feelings and resolve conflict. When the air is clear, proceed to the next tattle.

You can easily limit the duration of Tattle Time if you wish. Start it ten minutes before PAT, and throw in a Hurry-up Bonus.

“If we get done with Tattle Time early, we can begin PAT early.”

Naturally, I assume you can tell the difference between a tattle and a child who needs immediate attention due to

being hurt or severely upset. Within the limits of good judgement, however, the Tattle Box has a perverse beauty.

Raffles

How do you get kids to turn in homework. Well, actually, you can't. Homework happens at home, and parents are in charge of managing it. But you can produce a moderate level of improvement by instituting a raffle.

When you greet students at the door, collect homework. Give each student who hands you their homework assignment a raffle ticket. Don't buy raffle tickets. Make a weird design on a piece of paper, make copies, and cut them into small pieces.

Most teachers will hold their raffle at the end of the day or week. Usually teachers raffle off food treats or junk that has been left in class. The range of things that can be raffled off is limitless. You can even make a "power pass" out of a 3x5 card that entitles the winner to turn in an assignment one day late or skip a homework assignment.

Raffles can also help with sloppy desks. First, have a class-wide house cleaning. Then, tell the students,

"Be prepared for an 'Oink Attack.' More than once today I will simply stand up and say, 'Oink Attack!' Everyone must then open their desks. I will come around and drop a raffle ticket into each desk that is still neat."

Have "Oink Attacks" fairly frequently at the beginning, and then thin the "schedule of attacks."

Hassles with Computers

Schools that provide computers for students encounter an entirely new species of management problems – "hardware hassles." Students show up to class with dead batteries or without a power adapter or without any laptop at all.

As with pencil management, teachers have used automatic bonuses to make students more responsible.

Bonuses can be given if everybody's battery is charged or if everybody has their power adapter.

However, the benefits of this approach are limited because, unlike pencils, students don't have extra batteries and power adapters that they can share. Sometimes incentives can be augmented by a change in Classroom Structure. For example, one school dealt with dead batteries by having a multi-charger in each classroom so that students could switch out dead batteries quickly. Another school ran retractable power cords from the ceiling so students could recharge during class.

Individual Bonuses

What about Larry?

Can you imagine having one student in the class who might ruin bonuses for the group just to show that he or she can? Most teachers report that they have at least one such student. As always, let's call this student Larry.

Larry is the reason that group incentives have such a poor record in the research. With group incentives, you cannot give a reinforcer to *anyone* unless *everyone* has acted responsibly. Consequently, one student can always ruin it for the group, and there always seems to be at least one of these students in every class.

Failsafe Mechanisms

Of course, we cannot allow Larry to ruin Responsibility Training. If he ruins the incentive, Larry now controls the class by being negative and oppositional.

Preventing this will require a failsafe mechanism. The following chapter will describe the failsafe mechanism designed to motivate Larry to join the group. That failsafe mechanism is called Omission Training. Larry's individualized program will, in turn, create a general pattern for dealing with students having special needs.