Steps to the Good Student Game

Sidebar 1: Teaching Students to Play the Good Student Game

Step 1: Define good student behaviors. Discuss with students the importance of coming to school to learn. Ask students to describe what learning means (e.g., listening, working, following directions, paying attention, and trying your best). Tell students they will learn how to play a game to help them learn called the Good Student Game. Summarize by listing the following behaviors that help students learn:

- Stay in your seat
- Work quietly

Step 2: Give examples and nonexamples of good student behaviors. Give students examples of classroom situations and ask students to give a "thumbs up" if they are using good student behaviors or a "thumbs down" if they are not using good student behaviors.

- Example: Mrs. White writes 20 multiplication problems on the chalkboard. She asks her class to copy the problems on paper and write the answers. The students follow her directions and write the multiplication problems.

- Nonexample: Mrs. Newberry hands out a worksheet on capitalizing proper nouns. She asks her students to follow the directions and turn in their worksheets when they finish. Without asking, Tommy gets up to sharpen his pencil, and without raising his hand Suzy says, "I don't understand how to do this."

Step 3: Model and monitor good student behaviors. Explain that monitoring is an important part of the Good Student Game. Monitoring means deciding whether or not you and the students in your group are in seat and quiet. Let students know that they will be working as a group and every group will have a monitor. Monitors change and everyone will have a chance to be a monitor. Show the monitoring sheet on an overhead and tell students that when the timer goes off, the group monitor will check "yes" if all group members are in seat and quiet and "no" if all group members are not in seat and quiet.

- Practice good student behaviors. Use a role-play situation in which you ask students to read a book. Quietly, tell several students to get out of their seats or talk to their neighbors. Set the timer for a minute or two.

- When the timer goes off, discuss whether or not students show good behaviors and model marking the monitoring sheet. Do this several times.

Step 4: Practice playing the Good Student Game. Before playing the game, tell students if they achieve an 80% or better on their monitoring sheets, they may earn a reinforcer (i.e., extra 5 minutes recess, quiet in-class activity, etc.). Offer praise and encouragement to help students demonstrate good student behaviors.

- Arrange students in groups of four or five so that group members can see one another.

- Provide one group member with a monitoring sheet and a good student behavior card.

- Tell students they will practice playing the Good Student Game. Give students an independent assignment. Set the timer for 1- to 2-minute intervals. Praise students for demonstrating good student behaviors. Feedback such as, "Group 1, you're doing a fantastic job of following the good student rules," or "Marty's team, thank you for working quietly," reinforces students for meeting teacher expectations. If students are not demonstrating good student behaviors, use a reminder such as, "I hope the timer doesn't go off. That would be a 'no' since you are not in your seat."

- After 20 to 30 minutes, collect the monitoring sheets. Administer the reinforcer to students meeting the goal.
