



CLASSROOM PRACTISE OF THE 3Rs METHOD

By Wilson McCaskill

An important part of the 3Rs Method is the building of empathy and the understanding of behaviour. This is largely achieved by getting all students to imaginatively work through a range of conflict scenarios and letters of apology. The step after this is to have every student complete a 3Rs Method Guide Sheet from a perpetrator's point-of-view.

Having every class work through the scenarios and letters of apology and follow through by completing **Guide Sheet 1 (middle/upper primary) or Guide Sheet 2 (junior primary)** a few times, prepares students to handle the structure and required content of the 3Rs Method should they actually transgress.

Working through the 3Rs Method is beneficial for all students, even those who will not transgress. Allowing everyone to practise the process creates universal benefit. Rather than seeing this period of practise as time wasting, it can at the very least, be seen as time well spent on developing critical thinking and literacy skills.

As the 3Rs Method Guide Sheets are comprised of several parts, teachers can work through them part at a time and at a speed that suits their timetable and workload. Some parts may take longer to work through than others and some may trigger stronger discussion and debate.

Have no fear that this practise prepares students to simply give quick and easy, rote answers should they be held accountable as perpetrators. It will, in fact, prepare them to reflect more deeply, answer more honestly, and pursue repair and restitution with greater acceptance and understanding.

Guided through the conflict scenarios and letters of apology by their teacher, students flesh out the motives and objectives of perpetrators while devising strategies to effectively and appropriately deal with a broad range of inappropriate behaviours.

The use of scenarios allows for class discussion. The asking of insightful and penetrating questions promotes the meaningful repair and restitution required to reinstate safety and trust between disaffected parties.

The imaginative and empathetic immersion of students into the reality and circumstances of others, nurtures a deeper understanding of anti-social behaviour and its adverse affect on everyone within a community.

Teachers and students are encouraged to propose scenarios that reflect common occurrences in their school community. Such scenarios have the benefit of immediate



relevance and can be used to directly help the perpetrators and their targets, and empower others with the words and actions to help.

Example Of A Conflict Scenario

Neil has been taunting Dale about his friendship with Elise.

In this example Neil would be given the support of 3Rs Method, Guide Sheet 4 (Reflection and Repair)

USING THE SCENARIO:

Teacher: *Boys and girls, I would like you all to use your imagination and experience to help us understand more about behaviour. There are two boys called Neil and Dale. They are both your age, about 10 years old. They are friends, but for the past few days Neil has been teasing Dale.*

What has he been teasing Dale about? Well, a week ago a new girl called Elise joined their class and Dale has made friends with her and is helping her to feel welcome and comfortable.

Now, Neil doesn't think there's anything wrong with Elise but he's decided that Dale should be teased for being friends with her. In fact, the teasing is getting worse and is more like taunting now. If you were listening to Neil you'd think he wanted Dale to get really upset and have a fight with him.

Boys and girls, let's switch on our imaginations and find out why Neil is doing this, what he hopes to get out of it, what Dale thinks is going on and what he can do to end it. Let's also think about Elise. Does she know it's going on and how can she help Neil, Dale and herself?

Lots of things to think about boys and girls and I'm sure there will be lots of different answers and I hope you have questions you would like to ask.

Let's start. Who has an idea about why Neil is teasing and taunting his friend Dale?

The teacher's role is to help children probe beneath the surface of what is said and done to find the motives, intentions and objectives of the behaviour in question.

By the asking of insightful and penetrating questions, on the part of the teacher, children can be guided into a deeper understanding of behaviour that is empowering and beneficial.



Students should of course be encouraged to ask questions and debate each other's answers.

Class discussion will also reveal effective strategies for dealing with difficult situations.

A key part of the discussion process is to get children to be aware of the emotions that are motivating the behaviour of the characters.

Understanding the emotions that are in play helps children to work out thoughts the characters could use to take charge of their emotions. (See, Play Is The Way® Complete Program, Volume 1, SELF-REGULATION section,)

Succinctly encapsulating ideas by using maxims helps to cement them in place.

“If your feelings are in charge of your actions then you are the victim of your feelings. If your thinking is in charge of your actions then you are the master of your feelings. Be the master of your feelings, never a victim.”

“Feelings like nothing more than to take charge of actions. Don't let them. They are, and are meant to be the servants of thought. As servants they reward our lives with a multitude of experiences. As masters they lead us to ruin.”