

Consequence vs. Correction Case Studies

Objective: Improve your ability to determine when to give students a consequence or a correction in different classroom scenarios.

Task: In this activity, you will read and analyze classroom scenarios in which you must decide between giving a student(s) a consequence or a correction. Following discussion and reflection, you will generate two guidelines for directing your future decision making.

Adaptation for School Leaders: You can use these case studies for a mini-PD with your whole staff or a grade level team, adding in your own guidelines, and adapting the scenarios to your particular school context.

Estimated Time: 20-25 minutes

Background: One of the trickiest aspects of managing a classroom is deciding when to give a consequence versus a correction. The question is tough because teachers must decide each scenario on a case-by-case basis and they need to do so swiftly, consistently, and repeatedly. Here are some rules of thumb that great teachers follow when faced with this common dilemma:

- **Persistence and Repetition:** When students persistently engage in off-task behavior that they know they shouldn't, the teacher should err on the side of a consequence. If it seems like the cause is distraction or a misunderstanding, err on the side of correction
- **Degree of disruption:** If a student's behavior doesn't disrupt others' learning, then it's probably better to give a correction; if it does, give a consequence.
- **Motivation:** If a student is clearly testing your expectations, give a consequence. Tolerating willful defiance corrodes your authority in the eyes of the student as well as the rest of the class.
- **And, Not Or:** You could also give a correction and a consequence. If you do, it's better to give a correction before the consequence, because it gives the student time to reflect.

Directions

Step 1 (5-7 minutes) Analysis. After reading the rules of thumb (above), apply them—and any of your own—to the following case studies. Jot down whether you would deliver a consequence or correction and why, as well as script the language you would use
Option: Add 1-2 scenarios you've experienced, and determine, in hindsight, if you would give a consequence or correction.

Step 2 (8-10 minutes) Optional Discussion. With a colleague, share 3-4 of the scenarios, your rationale, and your language.

Step 3 (3-5 minutes) Reflection Record two takeaways you want to remember the next time you have to decide between giving a student a consequence or a correction.

Consequence vs. Correction Scenarios

Directions:

For each of the scenarios below, jot down whether you would use a consequence or correction, why, and script the language you would use.

Scenario	Consequence or Correction? Why?	Script your correction or consequence
1) A'fonte has had his head down three times throughout the lesson. You have used a non-verbal re-direct and he sat up slightly. A few minutes later you corrected him privately and he adjusted his posture. Five minutes later his head is down again.		
2) At the end of the Do Now, you give the class 3 seconds (with an audible countdown) to finish the word they're writing and sit in <i>SLANT</i> (or learner's position). Kelli, a student in the front row, continues writing after you have counted down to zero and all other students are sitting in <i>SLANT</i> .		
3) You notice Dyonte, who almost always follows directions, is whispering to the girl next to him during silent Independent Practice time. When you walk over to address the students, Dyonte slides something into his desk and says, "I was helping her with number 3!"		
4) During whole class instruction, Mark, a naturally energetic student, begins to do a little dance in his seat. When you look in his direction, he immediately stops. But once he thinks you're looking away, he continues.		
Add your own:		

Consequence vs. Correction Scenarios (Cont'd)

Scenario	Consequence or Correction? Why?	Script your correction or consequence
Add Your Own:		
Add Your Own:		

Reflection:

What are the two most important things you learned from this activity that you want to remember when deciding between giving a consequence and a correction?

- 1.
- 2.