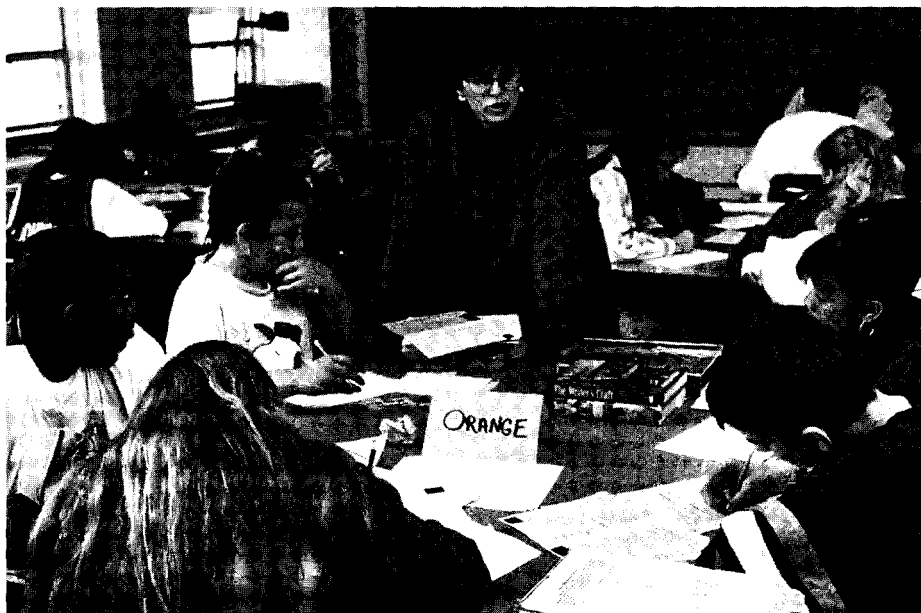


# Chapter 5

## *Logical Consequences*



## Objectives

Chapter 5 prepares preservice teachers to meet INTASC standards #2 (Student Development), #5 (Motivation and Management), #8 (Assessment), and #9 (Reflective Practitioner) by helping them to

- use knowledge about human behavior drawn from the research of Adler, Dreikurs, Albert, and Nelsen to develop strategies for classroom management.
- understand the motives for student behavior.
- evaluate research concerning the use of consequences as an alternative to traditional punishment.
- learn strategies for applying natural and logical consequences in the classroom.
- understand the basic principles of Logical Consequences.

## Scenario

At the end of her first year of teaching, third-grade teacher Sara Prabhu spent a few days reflecting on what she wanted to do differently the next year. Although she planned to change the physical setup of her classroom and revise several of her teaching strategies, the area she felt that needed the most improvement was her classroom-management plan.

When Sara began teaching, she adopted the discipline plan her cooperating teacher had used during Sara's student-teaching experience. This plan required the establishment of classroom rules and consequences. Throughout each day, students turned cards as they violated classroom rules. As more and more cards were turned, the consequences became more severe. After using this model for a year, however, Sara was frustrated and felt there were many flaws in her plan. The most critical flaw was that the consequences were not tied to the misbehavior or the motive for the misbehavior. Because Sara saw little connection between the behavior and the consequence, she was sure her students failed to see the connection as well.

During the summer, Sara was determined to find a classroom-management plan that better fit her teaching style and personal philosophy. She read numerous books and articles on classroom management and finally found an article written in the early 1970s on the use of logical consequences. Intrigued, she read the works of Rudolf Dreikurs. Dreikurs's model made sense to her, because the consequence for misbehavior was directly tied to the misbehavior. She felt certain that by using logical consequences, her students would see the relationship between their behavior and their punishment.

When school began, Sara waited until she met with the class before developing the classroom rules. After a discussion of what would make their classroom run smoothly, the class agreed upon a set of rules. They established no consequences, because consequences were to be based on the behavior and on the motive for the misbehavior. A few days into the term, the lunchroom monitor told Sara that a group of her students had failed to clean their table and had left it too messy for other students to use. Thinking of the appropriate logical consequence for such behavior, Sara sent the students to the cafeteria to clean the table and to apologize to the cafeteria staff. During the weeks that

followed, Sara often had to struggle to find an appropriate logical consequence for each misbehavior but remained confident that students were learning from the consequences rather than simply feeling punished.

## INTRODUCTION

The last chapter in Part I on classroom management as discipline is based on the original work of Rudolf Dreikurs. Since the late 1960s and 1970s, many teachers, like Sara Prabhu, have adopted Dreikurs's model, **Logical Consequences**. When developed, Logical Consequences represented a shift from a behavioral focus on discipline to a more humanistic approach, using the concept that the motivation and goals of student behavior must be considered in the development of a discipline plan. However, understanding the motivation behind behavior should not negate the need for appropriate consequences for misbehavior. Therefore, a major focus of Logical Consequences is to control student behavior while helping students recognize the consequences of their decisions.

Expanding Dreikurs's discipline concepts, Linda Albert and Jane Nelsen have provided a more current twist to Dreikurs's original theory. Albert (1996) and Nelsen (1987) stress that it is important to understand why students behave in a particular way. Through this understanding, teachers can develop strategies to handle particular problems. The premise behind Logical Consequences, however, is not just to control behavior but also to assist students in taking responsibility for their actions and behaviors.

Many of the concepts of Logical Consequences are based on the work of the Viennese psychiatrist Alfred Adler (1958), who proposed that all behavior has a purpose. According to Adler, each individual act by a student is goal-driven. Unlike behavioral theorists, Adler did not see students as passively reacting to what is happening to them. Adler suggested that students are actively interacting with the environment and, even more importantly, that a student's behavior is a product of the student's appraisal and perception of the situation. Unfortunately, this appraisal is often subjective, biased, or inaccurate; but to students, perceptions and assumptions are reality and are therefore not questioned. Consider the following example.

Because Cynthia's ninth-grade teacher asked students to work problems on the board, Cynthia always dreaded going to math class. Because she was overweight, Cynthia hated going to the board, knowing her classmates were staring at her. Today, she was assigned a problem that she hadn't been able to work the night before. Standing in front of the board, she felt her face redden as she struggled with the problem. She kept her face to the board, praying the answer would emerge. Then she heard laughter coming from the back of the room. Assuming the class was laughing at her, she turned and yelled, "I hate all of you. I hate this class." She ran from the room before she could learn that the class was actually laughing at a late-arriving student who was trying to sneak into the classroom without being seen by the teacher.

Adler's premise is that all people are social beings, and the need to belong or to be accepted is a basic human motivation. Every action of a student is an endeavor to find a



## *Step-by-Step Logical Consequences*

To use Logical Consequences in your classroom, you will need to do the following things:

1. Evaluate the goal of misbehavior to determine if it is
  - Attention-seeking
  - Power-seeking
  - Revenge-seeking
  - Failure-avoiding
2. Provide interventions based on the goal.
3. Impose a natural or logical consequence when rules are broken or misbehavior occurs.
4. Build community in the classroom by helping students connect to each other and to you.

place in the social structure of the classroom. Ideally, students discover that contributing to the welfare of the group is the best way to gain and maintain acceptance by others. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. All too frequently, students fail to understand what actions would help them to be accepted by the class. To help students find their place in the class and, ultimately, in society, Albert (1996) noted that teachers must understand the following:

- Students choose their behavior. Teachers have the power to influence, not control, student choices. She suggested that some students have a choosing disability rather than a physical or learning disability.
- The ultimate goal of student behavior is to fulfill the psychological and emotional need to belong.
- Students misbehave to achieve one of four goals.

## **GOALS OF MISBEHAVIOR**

A student's behavior makes sense only when the teacher understands the reasons behind the behavior. Nelsen, Lott, and Glenn (2000) suggest that students are always making subconscious decisions based on their perceptions of their experiences in the classroom. The decisions they make become the basis of their behaviors. When students feel they do not belong, that they have no power, that they have been wronged, or that they cannot achieve, they act out in order to return balance to their lives. Perceptions and feelings become actions. In order to deal with the actions, Albert (1996) and Nelsen (1987) stress

that teachers must understand the goals students are trying to achieve by their actions. Based on Adler's original theory, Albert and Nelsen identify four student goals:

1. To seek attention
2. To gain power
3. To seek revenge for some perceived injustice
4. To avoid failure

The most common goal for children is **attention seeking**. Students often have the mistaken idea that they have self-worth only when attention is paid to them. Although all children want and need attention, attention seeking becomes a problem when the goal is not to learn or to cooperate but to elevate the personal power of the student. For these children, being ignored is intolerable. In order to be noticed by the teacher or their peers, they are willing to accept punishment, pain, and humiliation.

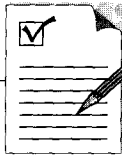
Attention seeking plays out in numerous ways, some constructive and some destructive. In the passive form of attention seeking, the child may appear to be a model child and in some cases is the teacher's pet. Unfortunately, the demand for attention becomes stronger and stronger. When no longer satisfied with small amounts of attention, the student becomes a nuisance, a show-off, or the class clown. The attention-seeking student will constantly ask questions, not for information, but for attention. All of these behaviors are designed to keep the teacher and fellow students focused on the attention-seeking student.

Albert (1996) notes that there is a silver lining to attention-seeking behavior in that the student wants a relationship with the teacher. Therefore, the teacher can redirect inappropriate behavior, so that the child gets attention in a more appropriate manner.

Albert (1996) states, "Young people don't lose their temper; they use it" (p. 41). This accurately describes the student who is **power seeking**. When the teacher tries to stop or redirect one of these students, a power struggle between the student and the teacher can ensue. In this situation, the student is trying to control the adult rather than get attention. The power-seeking student wants to be the boss and will contradict, lie, have a temper tantrum, or question the teacher's ability. Older students often have verbal tantrums and use what Albert (1996) calls the "lawyer syndrome" in which they drill the teacher as if the teacher were on the witness stand. Some power-seeking students are more passive. They are "sneaky," with their words representing one thing and their actions another.

Although the teacher may feel physically or professionally threatened, it is important that the teacher not engage in a power struggle with the student. Although power-seeking students can be extremely frustrating, Albert (1996) stresses that these students do have positive characteristics of leadership ability, assertiveness, and independent thinking, which can be redirected into more appropriate action.

**Revenge-seeking** behavior is the result of a long series of discouragements, in which the student has decided that there is no way to acquire the attention or power desired, and that revenge will make up for the lack of belonging. Although the teacher and other students may be the target of a student's anger or pain, the cause of this anger and pain may actually be the result of personal circumstances, such as a broken home, parental unemployment, or racial prejudice (Albert, 1996).



## Tips from the Field

As a means of maximizing one-on-one time with students, I make a point to stand outside my door during passing periods. As the students enter the room, I have the opportunity to greet them by name, congratulate them on their team's win the night before, ask them about their weekend, welcome them back if they have been absent . . . in short, acknowledge each of them so that they know they are an important part of my classroom. With a student load of 150 teenagers, it is a very efficient one-on-one connect *and* I am a presence in the hallway, which the administration appreciates!

Kathy Koeneke Heavers  
 Montrose High School  
 Montrose, Colorado  
 2005 Colorado Teacher of  
 the Year

Revenge-seeking students think everyone is against them. They think that teachers and fellow students are unfair to them, disregard their feelings, and hurt them. They are convinced that no one likes them, and because of this belief, they provoke others to a point at which relationships with the teacher and classmates are destroyed.

Students who feel beaten seek to retaliate. Revenge-seeking students are so deeply discouraged that they believe that only by hurting others can they find a place in the social atmosphere of the school. These students often threaten teachers and classmates. They can be the *victims* of a bully, or they can *become* the bully. Many harbor feelings that are manifested in violence toward themselves or others.

Revenge-seeking students know what the teacher holds dear and do what it takes to violate those values. Feeling personally attacked, the teacher feels hurt, disappointment, and dislike for the student. The behavior of these students often borders on the pathological and requires intervention from professionals. Therefore, it is important that teachers not retaliate or become emotionally upset. Only through an attitude of understanding and assistance can these students be helped.

**Failure-avoiding** students expect only failure and defeat, and after a while, these students simply give up. Feeling they cannot either achieve academically or find a place in the social structure of the class, they withdraw. Eventually, they sit alone and shrug off attempts by the teacher to help. Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1982) describe these students as extremely discouraged and defeated. They may refuse to try, because

- They are overly ambitious and fear they cannot do as well as they want to.
- They are competitive and fear they can't do as well as others do.
- They feel pressured by parents and teachers and incapable of meeting their expectations.
- They fear they will fail if they try.

Albert (1996) notes that a student who is avoiding failure rarely distracts or disrupts the classroom. Instead, the student sleeps or daydreams quietly throughout the class. The teacher may find it hard to determine whether the student *cannot* do the work or if the student *will not* do the work. Unfortunately, the student's discouragement is contagious, and soon the teacher feels helpless to reach the student. Often, the student is left alone to withdraw further from the teacher and other classmates.

Nelsen (1987) identified two clues to identifying mistaken goals. First, teachers should evaluate their reactions to students' misbehaviors. If the teacher feels irritated or annoyed, the student's goal is to get attention. If the teacher feels threatened, the student is displaying power-seeking behavior. If the teacher is hurt by the student's behavior, the student is probably seeking revenge. Finally, if the teacher feels inadequately prepared to help the student, the student is displaying failure avoidance.

The second clue is the child's response to the teacher's intervention. Attention-seeking students will stop their annoying behaviors for a short time if they receive attention from the teacher. The power-seeking student will continue to misbehave and may verbally defy the teacher. The revenge-seeking student's misbehavior will intensify when the teacher attempts to stop the behavior. Failure-avoiding students refuse to respond and withdraw further, hoping to be left alone. Consider the behavior of students in the following example:

After Ms. Brentner gave the directions to the class, she allowed the class to start on their homework during the last fifteen minutes of class. Walking around the room to make sure everyone understood her directions, she noticed Garrett staring off into space. Placing her hand on Garrett's shoulder, she said, "Garrett, you need to start to work."

*Attention-seeking Garrett* looks up at Ms. Brentner, smiles, and begins his work.

*Power-seeking Garrett* responds by loudly announcing, "This is stupid. It is the same stuff we did yesterday. Why do we have to do the same thing over and over again?"

*Revenge-seeking Garrett* violently jerks away from Ms. Brentner's touch and shouts, "Get your stinky hands off me. I don't need your help."

*Failure-avoiding Garrett* keeps his head down and looks at the paper on his desk. Speaking barely above a whisper, he says, "I can't. I don't understand how to do this."

Nelsen (1987) notes that it is much harder to discover the goal for behavior after students enter their preteens. Although more teens display the mistaken goal of power or revenge than younger students, other factors are at play as well. Peer pressure is extremely important to

teenagers, and Nelsen suggests that seeking peer approval is an additional goal for students. Teenagers also have the mistaken goal of excitement and will often misbehave “just for the fun of it.”

## REACTING TO STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Dinkmeyer and Dinkmeyer (1976) stress that to effectively work with students, teachers need to understand the goals of the students' behaviors. To do this, the teacher must work to determine the real issues underlying behavior. Table 5.1 further explains how to determine these goals.

A teacher's reaction to misbehavior should be related to the goal for the behavior. For attention-seeking students, reinforcement should occur only when these students are acting appropriately. Often these students are not aware of how annoying their antics have become and will try to correct their behavior when the teacher talks to them about the situation. In some cases, the teacher can provide a signal that indicates that

**TABLE 5.1** *The Four Mistaken Goals of Students*

Mistaken Goal	Student's Belief	Example of Student's Behaviors	Teacher's Reaction to Behavior	Student's Reaction to Intervention by Teacher
Attention Seeking	The student feels part of class only when getting attention from the teacher or other students	Constantly demands attention Desires to be teacher's pet Shows off Becomes the class clown	Annoyance/ Irritation	Stops momentarily but then resumes
Power Seeking	The student feels part of the class when controlling the teacher or other students	Contradicts Lies Has temper tantrum Questions teacher's authority or knowledge	Professionally threatened	Continues to verbally or physically defy the teacher
Revenge Seeking	The student feels left out of the social structure so strikes out at classmates or teacher	Is aggressive toward teacher or classmates Becomes a bully Threatens teachers or classmates	Hurt	Intensifies behavior
Failure Avoiding	The student feels incapable of achieving socially or academically and no longer tries	Sleeps or daydreams through class Attempts to be invisible	Inadequate to help student	Withdraws further from teacher or classmates

Source: Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1982); Nelsen (1987).



the behavior needs to stop. Unfortunately, the teacher and the attention-seeking student are not alone in the class, and classmates may give the student the attention he or she seeks. When this occurs, the student may stop trying to get the attention of the teacher and act out even more.

When dealing with a power-seeking student, the first requirement is disinvolvement. Because there is no reinforcement for the student if power is not contested, it is critical that the teacher not engage the student in a power struggle. The teacher should avoid a direct confrontation. Because neither the student nor the teacher wants to lose face, discussion of the student's behavior should take place in private. Albert (1996) suggests that this allows both the teacher and the student to save face as everyone is allowed to escape a heated situation.

When the teacher's power is challenged, it is best for the teacher to allow a cooling-off period. After both the teacher and the student have had an opportunity to become calmer, they can discuss the student's misbehavior. It is important that students be allowed to have their say. Many times this will defuse the situation because for many students, having their *say* is as important as having their *way*.

Albert (1996) stresses that power seeking can be reduced when students are allowed a voice in the classroom. She advocates granting legitimate power by involving students in decision making. When students can have a choice, they feel they have power. When students have real responsibility, they are less likely to strive for power in destructive ways.

For dealing with revenge-seeking students, it is important that teachers try to build a caring relationship. This begins by talking with the student about the behavior. In some cases, students aren't aware that they are taking out their frustrations on the teacher. In other cases, the students know exactly what they are doing and must not be allowed to physically or psychologically hurt other students or the teacher. Regardless of the motive or reasons for the behavior, revenge-seeking students must be required to return, repair, or replace any damaged objects (Albert, 1995).

In dealing with students seeking to avoid failure, the teacher should try to determine the cause of the problem. Albert (1995) suggests that teachers modify the instructional methods, provide additional tutoring, encourage the student to use positive self-talk, and teach new strategies to use when the students want to quit trying.

## CONSEQUENCES OF MISBEHAVIORS

Dreikurs rejected the use of punishment, because he felt that students associate the punishment not with their own actions but with those of their punisher (Queen, Blackwelder, & Mallen, 1997). Nelsen (1987) agrees that too often punishment creates what she calls the four R's of punishment: resentment, revenge, rebellion, and retreat.

Rather than punishment, Nelsen (1987) advocates a method that advances the social order. The social order consists of a body of rules that must be learned and followed in order for a classroom to be a caring place in which students can learn and grow. To learn responsibility, students must experience the consequences of behavior in order to preserve the "social order." The teacher is the representative of the social order, the person who imposes consequences for failing to respect the established rule.

Therefore, when a student breaks a class rule or behaves inappropriately, a consequence must follow. Every act has a consequence; some occur naturally, and some are teacher imposed. Natural and logical consequences are so called because their goal is to teach children to understand, anticipate, and make decisions based on the consequences of their actions in the real world (Nelsen, Lynn & Glenn, 2000).

**Natural consequences** are the results of ill-advised acts. They are the result of the evolution of events and take place without adult interference. Meyerhoff (1996) notes that there is no need for a teacher to provide natural consequences, because they will occur even without the teacher's intervention. It is the teacher's job, however, to make sure that the natural consequences of a student's behavior are not physically or psychologically harmful to the student.

Logical consequences are teacher-arranged rather than being the obvious result of the student's own acts (Meyerhoff, 1996). Logical consequences are needed when the misbehavior substantially affects others or when the potential natural consequence is too severe.

Logical consequences are a subset of punishment, in the sense that they are imposed stimuli used to reduce a target behavior (Elias & Schwab, 2006). It is for this reason that students often perceive logical consequences as punishment. Therefore, it is critical that consequences be related to the student's actions and be discussed with the student. If the consequences are not understood and accepted by the student, the student may consider the consequences as punishment rather than as a logical result of the student's own behavior. To avoid consequences being viewed as a punishment, Dreikurs and Loren (1968) provided the following criteria distinguishing logical consequences from punishment.

- Logical consequences express the reality of what happens in society when one breaks a law or rule. They are tied to the social order, because they represent the rules of living, which all human beings must learn in order to function in society. Punishment, on the other hand, only expresses the personal power of the teacher and the authority a teacher has over students.
- Logical consequences are tied directly to the misbehavior. Punishments rarely are.
- Logical consequences involve no element of moral judgment; punishment inevitably does. Logical consequences distinguish between the deed and the doer.
- Logical consequences are concerned only with what will happen now. Punishments are tied to the past.
- Logical consequences are applied in a nonthreatening manner. Often, there is anger in punishment.
- Logical consequences present choices for the student. Punishment demands compliance. When a teacher employs a logical-consequences approach, the student must be given the option of stopping inappropriate behavior or face the consequences of the misbehavior (Dinkmeyer & Dinkmeyer, 1976).

Only carefully and appropriately administered natural and logical consequences promote intrinsic motivation, self-control, and personal responsibility. Essential for these techniques to have their desired positive effect is that they are rooted in a caring relationship between teachers and students. Unfortunately, logical consequences are not always readily apparent or easily devised, but when used appropriately, they can have tremendous power in that they help students to learn accountability for their choices (Nelsen, Lott, & Glenn,

2000). In order to maximize the informational value of logical consequences while minimizing the control aspect, five elements are needed. To be effective, logical consequences must be related, reasonable, respectful, reliably enforced, and revealed. These five R's of logical consequences are explained in Table 5.2.

## HELPING STUDENTS CONNECT

One critical difference in the work of Dreikurs and Albert is that Albert's more current view of classroom management provides a more supportive, relational community in which students can take risks in thinking for themselves, take responsibility for their learning, seek teachers' help when necessary, and drive the cognitive benefits from peer interaction. Albert advocates a view of classroom management that focuses on creating classroom environments that are supportive of students' psychological needs and today's complex approaches to learning. Albert (1996) advises that providing consequences will not prevent students from misbehaving in the future if the consequences are not accompanied by encouragement techniques that build self-esteem and strengthen the student's motivation to cooperate and learn. It is important, according to Albert, that students be made to feel part of the classroom community by creating an environment where they feel capable, connected, and able to contribute.

**TABLE 5.2** *The 5 R's of Logical Consequences*

<b>The 5 R's of Logical Consequences</b>	
<b>Related</b>	A consequence should be logically connected to the behavior. The more closely related to the consequence, the more valuable it is to the student.
<b>Reasonable</b>	A consequence should be equal in proportion and intensity to the misbehavior. The purpose is for students to see the connection between behavior and consequences, not to make them suffer.
<b>Respectful</b>	A consequence should be stated and carried out in a way that preserves a student's self-esteem. It addresses the behavior, not the character of the student.
<b>Reliably Enforced</b>	A consequence should follow misbehavior. Threats without action are ineffective. Consistency is the key.
<b>Revealed</b>	A consequence should be revealed (known) in advanced for predictable behavior such as breaking class rules. When misbehavior occurs that was not predicted, logical consequences connected to the misbehavior should be established.

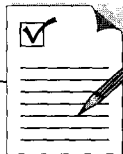
Source: Albert (1996); Nelsen, Lott, & Glenn, (2000).

Students can be made to feel capable by creating a classroom in which it is acceptable to make mistakes. The teacher needs to ensure that everyone can be successful by providing work appropriate for various learning styles and skill levels. The emphasis should be on completing work in a satisfactory manner and on continuous improvement.

Students need to believe that they can develop positive relationships with teachers and fellow classmates. To help students connect, Albert (1995) suggests that teachers

- Accept all students and encourage tolerance of diversity.
- Give attention to students by listening and showing interest in their activities outside of class.
- Show appreciation of students' kindnesses and good work through praise, phone calls, or written notes to parents.
- Use affirmation statements that are specific about a student's positive qualities.
- Build affectionate relationships with simple acts of kindness.

Teachers should also help students realize they need to contribute to the welfare of their classmates and to the positive atmosphere of the class. Allowing students to have leadership roles within the class can promote this awareness. Nelsen, Lott, and Glenn (2000) advocate the use of class meetings for that purpose. They suggest that class meetings can be the place where true dialogue and problem solving can begin. Class meetings should be held to discuss problems and issues of concern for the entire class.



### *Tips from the Field*

To help my students feel a part of the class, we have classroom careers that rotate each week. Some of the careers include

**Courier:** Serves as the teacher's messenger to deliver items to the office.

**Game Show Host:** Assists teacher in drawing of names, prizes, and reading questions.

**Horticulturist:** Takes care of the classroom plants.

**Lunch Monitor:** Takes daily lunch count, hands out lunch tickets.

**Paper Passer:** Passes out new assignments.

**Technologist:** Responsible for keeping the computer area neat and shutting down computers at the end of the day.

Krisanda Venosdale  
Fourth Grade  
Teacher  
Monroe School  
St. Louis, Missouri

Rather than using traditional classroom rules, Albert (1996) advocates the use of a classroom code of conduct. She suggests that students see classroom rules as adult-driven. Codes of conduct provide a framework for how everyone in the class, *including the teacher*, will interact and treat each other. With a code of conduct, students are held accountable for their behavior at all times. A code of conduct allows students to feel they have a voice in how the class will act.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

Many see Dreikurs's Logical Consequences and the later variations of Dreikurs's theories by Albert and Nelsen as a positive way of promoting communication and respect between teacher and students. They suggest that the model promotes autonomy by allowing students to take responsibility for their actions and choices. However, the model is not without its critics.

One criticism is that first-year teachers may have a difficult time identifying and understanding students' motives for misbehavior, because children often send false or mixed signals (Morris, 1996). Queen, Blackwelder, and Mallen (1997) contend that within the context of a classroom, it is impossible for even a veteran teacher to determine the goal of each child's behavior.

Kohn (1996) also questions Dreikurs's idea that student behavior is a choice. He states, "Adults who blithely insist that children choose to misbehave are rather like politicians who declare that people have only themselves to blame for being poor" (p. 17). He further suggests that such a concept removes the need for teachers to consider their own decisions and classroom demands in creating problem students.

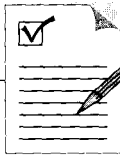
Even after teachers have established the motives for misbehavior, it may still be difficult to know how to respond to inappropriate behavior. Unfortunately, there is not always a natural or a logical consequence to fit the misbehavior.

Kohn (1996) calls logical consequences "punishment lite." He states that it is difficult to differentiate between punishment and logical consequences and questions whether there is a real difference between Dreikurs's model and other models that promote punishment for misbehavior.

## LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES IN THE CLASSROOM

### *Scenario*

When Erica McCaslin began her first year of teaching sixth grade at Bracey Middle School, she decided to use Cooperative Discipline as her classroom-management model. Rather than establishing a set of classroom rules, she allowed the students to spend the first few days of school establishing a classroom code. Dividing the class into groups, each group wrote what they thought the code should be. After putting all the codes on the board, parts from several were incorporated and the class agreed on the following class code:



## *Tips from the Field*

Students at Montgomery Central Middle School sign a code of conduct that reads

As part of the Montgomery Central Community,  
 I WILL set the example of a caring individual.  
 I WILL eliminate profanity toward others from my language.  
 I WILL not let my words or actions hurt others.  
 I WILL do my part to make MCMS a safe place by being more sensitive to others.  
 I WILL encourage others to do the same.  
 . . . and if others won't become a part of the solution, I WILL.

Joe Nell Waters  
 Principal  
 Montgomery Central Middle School  
 Clarksville, Tennessee

We, Ms. McCaslin's sixth-grade class, believe that all students should be treated with dignity and courtesy. We believe that we have the responsibility of helping everyone learn, and we will do nothing that prevents Ms. McCaslin from teaching or anyone from learning. We will show respect for each other, our teacher, our classroom, and the school.

Each student in the class signed the code of conduct and a copy was posted above the whiteboard.

The class agreed that if a problem developed between a student and Ms. McCaslin, Ms. McCaslin would handle the situation and provide the consequence for misbehavior. If a problem developed between two students, the students would be sent to a classroom tribunal who would decide the consequences. So that all students would have a chance to serve on the tribunal, three students were picked each month to serve as the tribunal, and no student could serve twice until all students had an opportunity to serve.

During the first month, Ms. McCaslin had several opportunities to see how well her plan was working. When Bethany failed to finish her assignment, Ms. McCaslin decided that Bethany would miss the opportunity to attend the assembly and would remain in the classroom to finish her work. When Jamal broke the aquarium when he leaned back in his chair, the tribunal decided he would have to pay to replace the aquarium. Jamal's parents agreed that Jamal would have to contribute three dollars a week from his spending money to the replacement of the aquarium. When Nick pulled the chair from under Kristin, causing her to fall to the floor, the tribunal decided that Nick would have to spend one hour in time-out writing a letter of apology to Kristin.



*Tom Watson/Merrill*

Allowing students to work together increases the feeling of community within the classroom.

Although Ms. McCaslin sometimes found it difficult to find an appropriate consequence for each misbehavior, she felt the plan helped students make the connection between their behavior and the consequence of their behavior.

## SUMMARY

Rudolf Dreikurs's *Logical Consequences* and Linda Albert's *Cooperative Discipline* are the last models presented with a focus on control. When developed, *Logical Consequences* represented a shift from a behavioral focus on discipline to a more humanistic approach based on the concept that the motivation and goals of student behavior must be considered in the development of a discipline plan. Expanding Dreikurs's discipline concepts, Linda Albert proposes a cooperative approach to help students connect, contribute, and feel capable. Based on Adler's original theory, Dreikurs and Albert identified four student goals: (1) to seek attention, (2) to gain power, (3) to seek revenge for some perceived injustice, and (4) to avoid failure. The idea that the consequence must fit the crime is the key to their theories, in that every act has a consequence; some occur naturally, and some are teacher imposed.

## KEY TERMINOLOGY

Definitions for these terms appear in the glossary.

Attention-seeking students	85	Natural consequences	90
Failure-avoiding students	86	Power-seeking students	85
Logical consequences	83	Revenge-seeking students	85

## CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

### Reflecting on the Theory

1. As Mr. Hoernschemeyer prepared to leave his seventh-grade class, he noticed that someone had carved the letters “JK” into a desk. Since Jack Kelly occupied the desk each sixth period, it was not difficult for Mr. Hoernschemeyer to guess who had damaged the desk.  
What should Mr. Hoernschemeyer do now? How can he apply the principles of Logical Consequences to resolving this situation?
2. In the opening scenario, Ms. Prabhu designed consequences based on the misbehaviors and the students’ motives for them. Do you agree with this method for determining the appropriate consequence for misbehavior? What problems might this method create in a classroom?
3. Kohn suggests that logical consequences are just “punishment lite” and that they are just punishments with a less offensive name. Do you agree, or are logical consequences different from punishment?

### Developing Artifacts for Your Portfolio

1. Describe five typical classroom misbehaviors. Describe a natural consequence, a logical consequence, and a typical punishment that might be used for each.
2. Observe the behaviors of three students. Describe the behaviors of these students. How does the teacher react to their behaviors? How do the students react to the teacher’s intervention? Based on your observations, classify the students’ behaviors as attention seeking, power seeking, revenge seeking, or failure avoiding.

### Developing Your Personal Philosophy of Classroom Management

1. Would you be comfortable using Logical Consequences as your classroom-management approach? Why or why not? Are there some strategies that you will definitely incorporate into your classroom-management plan?
2. Many consider a strength of Assertive Discipline to be the consistency with which punishment is administered. Logical Consequences provides for a more individual approach to discipline. Which do you consider to be more critical—to be consistent or to deal with students as individuals?



## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Further information about Logical Consequences and resources for its use in the classroom can be found by contacting

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