

DETENTION LEARNING PACKET #10:

DISRESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

WHAT TO DO

This is a Detention Learning Packet. It consists of several pages of text and a Response sheet that asks questions about what you did, why you did it, and what goals you must set to avoid the same problem in the future. Read the text and try to remember what you read. Then read the Response Sheet and write answers to the questions.

WHAT YOU DID AND WHY IT WAS WRONG

You are in detention because you have failed to give respect to authority figures, such as your teacher or the principal. Maybe you have failed to show such respect in the past.

Failing to be respectful toward authority disrupts the entire educational process. It disturbs the orderly flow of the school day. When we fail to respect authority, we set ourselves up as our own authorities. We try to live only by our own rules, not by those that are already established. We become loners instead of team players.

Failing to show respect for authority shows a lack of regard for the rights of others. Sometimes teens forget that adults have rights too. They are too busy thinking about their own desires to remember that adults in positions of authority, like teachers and principals, also have the right to be heard, to practice their professions, and to work without interruption or disruption.

Respect is a sign of cooperation. Schools need the cooperation of everyone. This includes doing your job as a student by being in class on time, doing your work and trying your best to learn. It also means obeying your teacher and principal. When you are being disrespectful, you are not giving another person your cooperation. You are going beyond your boundaries as a student.

THREE STORIES ABOUT DISRESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

TOM TURNS AGAINST THE TEACHER

Tom isn't a very happy student. He's going through some bad times at home. His parents just divorced and his mother is working two jobs to help pay the bills. Tom has to come home right after school three days a week to take care of his younger brother and sister while his mother goes to her second job.

Tom is angry at the world most of the time. He takes his anger out on his teacher. When Ms. Jackson writes on the board, Tom whispers to Billy, who sits next to him, "Look at her! She's getting fat! Look at how fat Ms. Jackson is!"

Whenever Ms. Jackson is teaching the class, Tom interrupts her. He asks lots of pointless questions. He tries to catch her making mistakes. He tells jokes when her back is turned and gets the other students to laugh.

Tom is angry at other things in his life. But he takes his anger out on Ms. Jackson. Ms. Jackson would like to help Tom deal with some of his problems, but Tom won't let her. Instead, he disrupts the class and makes fun of everything she says. Tom has turned on his teacher instead of accepting help from her.

SALLY SABOTAGES THE SUBSTITUTE

Sally really likes her English teacher, Ms. Turner. She likes coming to class and reading new stories. She has a good memory and memorizes poems easily. Sally wants to be a writer when she grows up.

One day Ms. Turner was sick with flu. The school had to call in a substitute for three days while Ms. Turner stayed at home.

The substitute wasn't as pretty or as funny as Ms. Turner. She wasn't as much fun. Sally got bored and decided to make trouble.

Sally turned around in her seat and said to Marie, so loud that the substitute could hear her: "Yuk! What a bore this one is! I can't stay awake I'm so bored. I'll be glad when Ms. Turner comes back."

Sally kept it up for three days. She whispered to other students whenever the substitute teacher talked. She wouldn't do the writing assignments in class. When there was group work to do, Sally took a break and went to get a drink of water or walked off to the washroom. If the substitute teacher made a mistake in giving a page number, Sally giggled and started everyone else laughing. Sally disrupted the class so that the substitute teacher couldn't be an effective instructor.

When Ms. Turner came back, the class was three days behind. Ms. Turner had to spend the rest of the week making up for lost time. Sally had sabotaged the class, and everyone had to pay for it.

WAYNE WISES OFF AT THE PRINCIPAL

Wayne is the class clown. He knows more jokes than anyone else and he always remembers the punch lines. He can make a pun out of anything. Wayne wants to be a stand-up comic when he grows up.

Mr. Martin is principal of the school. His hair is getting a little thin on top. Wayne likes to make jokes about bald men whenever he thinks Mr. Martin can't hear him.

One day Wayne was out in the halls during study period without a hall pass. Mr. Martin walked by and asked to see his hall pass.

Wayne didn't have a hall pass, so instead he called Mr. Martin "baldy" and "egghead." When Mr. Martin tried to catch him, Wayne outran him and hid in an open broom closet. Wayne was disciplined for calling Mr. Martin names.

WHY PEOPLE ARE DISRESPECTFUL

Teens are growing up fast. They often feel confused and a little frightened because of the number of changes taking place in their bodies and minds. They aren't children anymore, but they aren't quite grownups, either.

One of the ways that junior high or middle school students sometimes cope with these strange new feelings is by striking out at authority figures. They talk back to parents and teachers and principals. Some go overboard and "talk down" to authority figures so that they appear "cool" and in control.

Sometimes teens are disrespectful toward authority because of peer pressure. Other students in their class talk back to teachers, so they do it too. Again, they think it makes them look "cool" and grown-up. Actually, it makes them look childish and immature. They just don't realize it.

Some students are simply going through a bad time at home, like Tom in our story. They are angry with their parents or brothers and sisters, or with things in general, and they take it out on the teacher and other students.

A few students just like to disrupt class. They don't care about learning and aren't motivated to work hard in school, so they bother other students and distract the teacher. Sometimes it's a cover-up for a learning problem or for poor grades. Other times, it's just a bad habit of interrupting the learning of others. The student who does this is thinking only of him or herself.

Whatever the reason, students who are disrespectful of authority are people who tend to be self-centered. They think of themselves and their own needs. They have very little respect for the rights of others. This is obvious from the way they act.

Students who are disrespectful of authority are often disrespectful of their peers. Other students may be interested in learning. They may enjoy the very lesson that another student finds boring. They need to be left alone so that they can learn and study in peace. A student's needs to learn consideration for others before he or she is thought of as "mature." Think about it!

Teachers and principals have rights, too. They are professionals who deserve respect because they have devoted years of study to learning how to teach or be a school administrator. They put in tremendous amounts of time and energy and have invested a great deal of money to get their credentials. They are where they are today because of their skills and knowledge. They have something to offer you.

When you finish junior high school or middle school, you will go on to high school. You might even go to college. Some of you will find a job and go to work. Whatever you do, there will be people in positions of authority. They are there for a reason: they are the college administrators and professors who have credentials in their fields, the managers and supervisors who are trained in particular areas of business. You may not agree with everything they say. You may not particularly like them. But you need to learn to work with them and to respect them as human beings who have rights just as you do. Cooperation is key!

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE DISRESPECTFUL

A school is a place to learn, develop skills, prepare for the future, work together and make friends. The school is what we call "a community." It is made up of people, students and teachers, counselors and principals, custodians and cafeteria workers, who all work together toward a common goal: to give people a place in which they can learn.

A community isn't something that happens overnight. It takes work to build a community. Everyone has to work together and cooperate.

When one or two people disrupt a class or make trouble in the halls or on the grounds, the whole community is interrupted. People don't learn as well. Lessons and ideas get lost. Everybody forgets to study and focuses, instead, on the person or people who are being disruptive.

If you show disrespect toward authority, other people feel that they can do the same. Then there's no order, and everyone simply does his or her own thing. How much can be accomplished in this kind of situation?

When people fail to respect authority, the result is chaos. The whole structure of the school falls apart. You wouldn't want to work in such a place. So you can't go to school when these conditions exist, either. It's not a good place to learn.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO IN THE FUTURE

Everybody knows that not showing respect for authority is wrong. What is important now is for you to find a way to be more respectful. Try to discover why you have been disrespectful in the past so that you can change your attitude. This means that you need to have some goals for yourself. The questions on the Response sheets that follow will help you to write goals for improvement.

STUDENT RESPONSE PACKET # 10.1
DISRESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

NAME _____

DATE _____

GRADE __ **HOMEROOM** _____

WHAT TO DO

Below are some questions about what you have read. These questions will help you learn why you get into trouble and how you can avoid getting into trouble in the future. Your teacher, a counselor, the principal, or your parents may read your answers. Your answers will not be graded.

Write your answers in the spaces below the questions. If there is not enough room, write on the backs of these sheets. Be neat, spell correctly, use good grammar, and write in complete sentences. If you don't understand what you are supposed to do, ask your detention supervisor.

When you finish, give the Learning Packet and your Response sheets to the detention supervisor and return to your desk. The supervisor will tell you when to leave.

1. You have been disrespectful toward authority. What did you do?

2. What was wrong with what you did (remember, be honest!)?

3. Why were you disrespectful? What were you feeling when you overstepped your boundaries?

4. You've read three stories about students who were disrespectful toward authority. What could you tell each of them about changing their behavior?

5. Why do schools have rules against disrespectful behavior?

6. How will you change so that you will be more respectful toward authority in the future?

7. Define the word "respect."

8. Write two goals that will help you to be more respectful.

STUDENT RESPONSE PACKET # 10.2

DISRESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

NAME _____

DATE _____

GRADE __ HOMEROOM _____

WHAT TO DO

Below are some questions about what you have read. These questions will help you learn why you get into trouble and how you can avoid getting into trouble in the future. Your teacher, a counselor, the principal, or your parents may read your answers. Your answers will not be graded.

Write your answers in the spaces below the questions. If there is not enough room, write on the backs of these sheets. Be neat, spell correctly, use good grammar, and write in complete sentences. If you don't understand what you are supposed to do, ask your detention supervisor.

When you finish, give the Learning Packet and your Response sheets to the detention supervisor and return to your desk. The supervisor will tell you when to leave.

1. You have been disrespectful again. Why were you disrespectful this time?

2. Why do you like it when people show you respect? (Remember that everyone likes to be respected!)

3. You've read stories about three students who failed to respect authority. How did each of the three characters disrespect authority?

4. Why do you think each character in the stories was disrespectful of authority?

Tom

Sally

Wayne
5. Explain how the two words, "respect" and "cooperation," go hand-in-hand.

6. Last time, you wrote two goals for yourself. Why didn't you reach them?

7. Write another goal for yourself. Remember why you didn't reach your goals last time.

8. Where can you go for help if you have trouble reaching your goal this time?