

DETENTION LEARNING PACKET #12:

THE WRONG RESPONSE

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 made the wrong response to some situation in which you were involved. Maybe you played when you were supposed to be studying, or talked back to your teacher. Maybe you were laughing or distracting other students in class or in study hall.

Possibly you've made bad choices in situations before. Maybe you are aware that you act improperly and maybe you are not aware of it. This Packet will help you to understand better what you are doing wrong.

Making a wrong response means not doing what is expected of you in a situation. It means laughing at a sad story or acting angry when everyone else is having fun. It means that you are behaving in a way that seems contrary to the situation: acting silly or distracting others in class, going to the washroom and spending half an hour doing your hair instead of doing homework, going out with your friends to the mall when you're a week behind in one of your classes.

It means not acting as the situation demands. Here are three stories about students who made inappropriate responses to a situation. See if you can figure out what was wrong with each one.

THREE STORIES ABOUT WRONG RESPONSES

CALVIN PLAYS THE CLOWN

Calvin never takes anything seriously. Whatever you say, he turns it into a joke. Nothing gets past him. He has a funny remark to make about everything.

Calvin spends all his time in class distracting other people. Whenever the teacher's back is turned, Calvin draws funny pictures of him or her. He makes jokes about everything in the book. No one seems to know when Calvin studies.

Calvin never seems to be doing what anyone else is doing. In the cafeteria, instead of eating, he starts food fights. During gym class, he goes off on his own. During homeroom, he gets a pass to go to the washroom and then sneaks out the back door to the basketball court. Since he didn't eat his lunch, he's hungry by mid-afternoon and sneaks a snack from his book bag during the history lesson.

People say Calvin "marches to a different drummer." The truth is that he's completely unpredictable. You never know what Calvin will do next. But you can depend on one thing: it will be different from what anyone else is doing. Differences can be good if they serve a purpose and don't create problems for others. But Calvin is different just to be different, and he does cause problems for other people.

WENDY WANDERS IN THROUGH THE WINDOW

Wendy tries to be different. She prides herself on never doing what others do. If everyone else has short hair, Wendy's is long. If everyone else is dressed in bright colors, Wendy wears black from head to toe.

One day Wendy decided that she was bored with entering the school through the door. She thought that it would be cool to come to class through the window.

Wendy's first period class was on the first floor and the windows were low to the ground. It was a warm day outside and the window was partly open. She could hear Mr. Perkins, the history teacher, talking inside.

Wendy pushed the window open just a little wider and crawled through. The window sill was wide, so Wendy sat on it for a minute while she looked through her book bag and found her pen and paper.

By this time, everybody was looking at Wendy. "Look at what she did!" Karen whispered. "Did you ever think of that? That's just too much!"

History class was in an uproar. It took Mr. Perkins ten minutes to get everyone calmed down and back to the history of the American Revolution. Wendy enjoyed the attention. When she was sure everyone had seen her, she hopped down off the window sill and found a seat in class.

For the next two days, Wendy always came to class through the window. It was just too, too boring to walk through the door like everyone else. She didn't stop until she was sent to the principal for disturbing class. Mr. Perkins ran out of patience. Do you blame him? Now Wendy will have to explain to the principal why she uses the window to enter her classroom.

TOMMY TUNES OUT

Tommy liked to listen to music. For his birthday, his parents gave him a Sony Walkman so he could listen to tapes or to the radio while he walked to school.

Tommy soon decided that he'd rather listen to music than study. Instead of taking off his Walkman and putting it in his book bag until school was out, he wore it to class. When Tommy got bored, he would turn up the sound. Sometimes he whistled or hummed along with the music. Sometimes he turned it up so loud that the other students could hear it, even without earphones.

Soon Tommy discovered that he could add some extra sound effects to the music. He began to play imaginary drums on his desk and add a little foot action. Some other students joined him and began to play other imaginary instruments. Soon there was a rhythm section going in the back of Ms. Davis' math class.

It didn't last long. Tommy and his friends were sent to the assistant principal's office for making a disturbance in class. Tommy tuned in the music he likes, but he tuned out the important things: his teacher and the math class. Now Tommy is sitting in detention, where it is very, very quiet!

WHY PEOPLE RESPOND INAPPROPRIATELY

A school is a community where people come to learn, develop skills, prepare for the future, work together and make friends. Part of being a community means that people are expected to behave in certain ways when in certain situations. They work when they are supposed to be working and play when others play. They come in through doors and use windows for light or fresh air. They listen to music in their spare time and concentrate on learning in class. In other words, they respond in ways that fit the situations where they are at the time.

Some people, like Calvin, Wendy and Tommy, look for ways to be different. They actively seek out ways to do things differently. They don't want to blend in with the crowd; they want to stand out. Sometimes, they don't even think about what behavior is called for in a given situation. They just do what they want to do at the moment. Is this being selfish? Most people would say yes. Would you?

Sometimes people behave inappropriately because they are immature. They may be twelve or thirteen or fourteen years old in terms of actual birthdays, but their mental age is lower. That means that they may act like a first or second-grader even though they are actually in junior high or middle school.

People who are immature want what they want at the very moment they first want it. They can't delay having fun or having the things they want. So if they

think of going outside or listening to music or eating candy, they have to do it right then, that very minute, regardless of what else is going on. We say that they need "instant gratification." What would school be like if everyone felt this way?

Other people simply aren't very observant. They don't notice what others do, so they have no idea of what they should be doing at a particular time. They've never noticed that mealtimes are times to eat and classes are places to study. They act any way it strikes them at any given moment. They've never taken the time to analyze situations and decide what to do at certain times. Could they be thinking too much of themselves?

Some people are like Wendy and take pride in being different. They try to avoid being like everyone else. In their minds, it's boring and not very cool to act like everyone else. They try wearing their clothes backward or coming to class through the window just to be different. At first people think their behavior is special or clever. But then people just get bored. "Oh, Wendy," they say, with a sigh. "She's just being weird again."

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ACT INAPPROPRIATELY

Since we come to school to learn and to work together, responding to situations inappropriately is not something that affects just the person who does it. It also affects everyone in his or her class.

A wrong response focuses all the attention on the person who acts inappropriately. Other students forget to listen to the teacher or to study the lesson. All eyes are on Calvin, Wendy or Tommy. The result is that everyone's learning is interrupted. No one learns much until the class settles back down.

People who respond inappropriately aren't very considerate of the rights of others. They don't stop to think how their acting out affects other students or the teacher. They don't stop to consider the rights of others. They just do what they want.

Finally, people who act improperly limit their own chances to learn and grow. Calvin acts like a clown and makes others respond to him only as a clown.

When Calvin tries to be serious, people don't believe him. Calvin will always be the clown to them. Will Calvin ever grow up? People are beginning to think of Calvin as one big joke. What a way to go through life!

In the same way, Wendy will always be the class wonder--the girl who came to class through the window--and Tommy will be the would-be musician with the imaginary band. It will take a long time for others to think of them in different ways.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO IN THE FUTURE

Everybody knows that responding improperly is a bad thing. It is important now to stop such responses and start behaving differently. Try to figure out why you have responded inappropriately to situations in the past so that you can change your behavior in the future. This means that you need to have some goals for yourself. The questions on the Response sheets that follow will help you to set these goals so that you can begin to improve the way you behave.

STUDENT RESPONSE PACKET # 12.1

INAPPROPRIATE RESPONSES

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 responded inappropriately to a situation. What was the situation and what did you do?

2. How did others react? How did this make you feel?

3. Why did you respond improperly? What were you feeling when you made the wrong response?

4. You've read three stories about students responding to situations inappropriately. What did Calvin do and why was it inappropriate?

5. What did Wendy do and why was it improper?

6. What did Tommy do and why was it inappropriate?

7. Give several reasons why people give the wrong response to situations.

8. Write two goals that will help you to respond better to situations in the future.

STUDENT RESPONSE PACKET # 12.2

INAPPROPRIATE RESPONSES

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 responded improperly to a situation again. What did you do this time?

2. What were you thinking about when you acted the way you did?

