

## **Lesson Plan for Clean Up Time**

***Developed by Andrea Racek, 2019***

Objective: To teach students how to clean up. It should not be assumed that when a teacher asks student to clean up, or calls clean up time that the child will know what to do. Even if they have “clean up” in other environments (home or other classes), they will not come into your classroom knowing your expectations. This lesson plan is designed to teach how to introduce clean up expectations in a gradual and intentional manner.

*OF NOTE: In my classroom I did not insist that students clean up an area before moving on. I believed that a half built tower left in the block area would inspire students entering to add on and serve as a jumping off point to a new building. This was especially true for students on the autism spectrum who had a hard time creating from scratch. This meant when it was time to clean up, all areas had something to clean up and we all had ownership over the whole classroom. I did not believe that if a student built it or played with it they had to clean it up. Everyone cleaned everything until together our room was clean.*

Importance of classroom jobs: *Giving everyone in the classroom a job empowers students and gives them ownership of their classroom. Some jobs related to clean up could be Class Inspector, Holding the Clean up Bag and/or Object Collector (see Ways to Clean Up)*

**Long term plan:** Introduce one or two areas each day during clean up.

Take the time to teach each area in an organized way. (This could take weeks)

Allow time in the schedule for this to be a lesson.

Make sure the areas have clearly labeled shelves and baskets with both written words and visual pictures.

Various Ways to Structure Clean Up:

1. Buddy Clean up *In my classroom every child had a buddy for the week, so cleaning up as buddies would make everyone accountable and add to the team feeling and class cohesiveness.*
2. Object in the Bag *One object of every toy or item that has been used is put into a bag. Students line up in front of the bag (as individuals or as buddies) and pick out of the bag. The item they pick is what they are in charge of cleaning.*
  - a. *Pros: Kids have ownership over their job*
  - b. *Cons: Students have no choice or control of their assigned area*
3. Team Clean Up *Divide the class into teams lead by teachers (team leaders). Each team is in charge of an area and is taught or coached by the teacher on how to do it and when it is done.*
  - a. *Pros: Building team*
  - b. *Cons; teacher dependent, although kids could eventually be team leaders.*
4. Use Choice Board *In my classroom we had a choice board for students to indicate where they were playing. The same system could be used to have students place their names on the choice board to indicate the area they want to clean up.*
  - a. *Pros: Board can limit and determine how many students needed in each area*
  - b. *Cons:*
5. Start where you are: *Once all areas have been introduced, students just start cleaning where they are and then look around for other areas that need help.*

**Short Term Plan:** Take the first days of school to intentionally teach how to clean up each area.

## Day 1

1. Bring *whole class* to one area and demonstrate where you want everything to end up. Have them sit in a circle with all the items of that area in the middle to sort out. Have students take turns by handing them an item to put away or asking each student one-by-one to choose an item from the middle pile and put it in the appropriate place. Use lots of praise when each item is placed away correctly. In this method, it will take one day to teach each area.
2. If the class is too big to fit in one area, or this would take too much time for everyone to have a turn, consider breaking the class in half and teaching 2 areas at a time. In this method it will take 2 days to teach 2 areas, as the groups would have to switch on the next day.
3. If staffing allows, consider three teams, three teachers and a rotation of three days.

## Procedure:

- Always give a 5-minute warning before calling clean up. Tell students where they will be meeting at the clean up signal.
- Consider a special audio indicator to mark the transition to clean up as different from other transitions. Often a favorite song in the background helps mark this part of the day. I would also suggest it NOT be singing, as it is hard to maintain a singing song and give directions, coaching and instruction at the same time. The music needs to continue while teachers teach this part of the day.
- Select the order of areas to clean up. Blocks or drama is usually a good place to start as it is often in use and there are many items to clean.
- Because there will only be one or two areas of focused clean up, teachers can clean the other unused areas at the five minute warning (otherwise areas will be left a mess-which might be okay for now if it can be cleaned by teachers later. This needs to be thought out).
- Gather students in the area in a circle, like group time.
- Preview all the shelves and containers of the area so kids know where everything will go.
- Model putting away a couple items (where should I put this one?)
- Then have kids take the items one at a time and put them away-praise by all for all!
- Continue with each item 1 by 1 or after each student has a turn, let them grab and go (depends on your class).

Adaptation: Backwards chaining is a concept to teach new skills in which a job is mostly done, allowing for a quick satisfaction rate of success. If there are 10 kids in the group, have the area mostly cleaned, except for ten items they can practice putting away. The task is less overwhelming, but then this area should be repeated with the full “mess” to truly practice cleaning an area.

## Day 2-the importance of giving time to practice a newly learned skill

1. If whole class lesson, repeat in a different area of the classroom. OR repeat the same area and increase independence-do with no coaching.
2. If using 2 groups switch the groups to introduce the other area OR go back to the one taught yesterday and let them practice it independently.
3. If using 3 groups, switch and introduce the other area OR go back to the one taught yesterday and let them practice it independently.

**Day 3-** same as day 2. Provide practice or introduce new area.

**Day 4-** provide practice time.

This only covers three or four areas of the classroom.

This process could take weeks to teach the whole classroom.

Some classes will be able to generalize how to clean other areas if shelving, bins and boxes are clearly labeled.

**Materials**

- Visuals for areas of the room.
- Visuals on shelves, baskets, bucket, etc.
- Bag if using the bag method.
- Audio music, clean up song recordings