

Primary Source: Charlotte Hawkins Brown's Rules for School ^[1]

The following is a sample from Charlotte Hawkins Brown's The Correct Thing to Do, to Say, to Wear. Samples like this can illustrate the conduct that was expected in schools for the period.

How empty learning, how vain is art, but as it mends the life and guides the heart.—YOUNG

Every school has a definite set of regulations which its students are required to follow in order to maintain discipline and assure the smooth running of the schedule. Persons with varying degrees of power are charged with seeing that the regulations are kept. Aside from this, however, there is a standard decorum ^[2] that the student himself should foster in order to express himself to the best advantage, and exhibit the right attitude toward the other fellow. The cultivation of traits of honor, thoughtfulness, politeness, honesty, order, and proper appreciation of values is just as much a part of education as is the storing up in one's mind of a vast accumulation of historic, mathematical, and scientific facts.

The Classroom

1. Always greet the teacher when meeting for the first time, whether it be morning or not.
2. Be sure that you have everything you need--text, paper, pen, etc. Don't be a carpenter without tools.
3. When called on to recite, always make some sort of reply. Don't sit dumbly in the seat and say nothing. Don't even think too long. Valuable minutes are wasted thus.
4. When standing or sitting, hold yourself erect. Don't slouch. Talk clearly and sufficiently loud for everyone in the room to hear.
5. Don't make a habit of laughing at the mistakes of others. This often hinders a person from doing his best.
6. Don't deface property. Writing on or cutting into desks or chairs, writing and drawing in books, breaking the backs, or turning down the corners of pages of texts are evidences of poor training.
7. Make it your business to keep the room in order. Straighten the shades, keep the floor and desks free of waste paper, and erase the boards when they need it.
8. Don't Cheat. You will never learn by "copying" from your neighbor or from the book.
9. Do not argue with or contradict the teacher in class. If you think that she has made a mistake, wait until the hour is over and discuss it with her quietly at the desk.
10. Do not yell out the answers to questions; wait until you are called upon. The teacher will let you know when concert recitation is desired.
11. Don't mistake the classroom for a lunchroom or a bedroom.

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