The Marble Jar

Adapted by Jodi Cooley: Original idea from unknown

Needed: A jar of some type – see through- and marbles. It usually takes about 3-6 weeks to fill depending on the class.

I use the marble jar as an incentive for many items. Marbles are a reward and are never taken away after they are earned (no matter how tempting it may be)! Once the jar is full, I give the reward of a 30 minute recess. This is free and students really think they are getting something great. Inclement weather? Indoor recess, movie, or party of their choice (popcorn, ice-cream, nacho, etc.).

How to earn marbles:

* Walking quietly in the halls. I start with 5 or 10 marbles depending on where we are going. For example if we are going to gym, I say “10.” If a student talks, gets out of line or whatever, I say “9.” And so on. Then when I pick them up from gym, we figure out how many we had for on our way to gym and then add 10. One of the weekly jobs is “marble jar person” and they put the marbles in the jar once we arrive back to class.
* .Perfect attendance: 5 marbles
* Perfect uniforms: 5
* Perfect homework
* Everybody has brought their book bag
* Everybody is on time
* When the class is doing such a great job at whatever they are doing, I say “put 5 marbles in the jar because this class is perfect!”
* I have to step out of the room for something – 10 marbles. The class is very good at letting me know how many they should get at this time – kind of cute.
* When we have a guest, I put a large circle on the board and 10 dots inside representing the jar and marbles. During the visit if there is any misbehavior, I quietly erase a dot making sure all students see this.
* If I have to speak with a parent and they remain calm, they can receive marbles.
* When I want students to do something quickly like clear their desks, or get ready to leave the room, I say 10 and start counting backwards. Whatever number I am on when they are finished or ready goes in the jar.

Once the jar is full, we add the shooter marble to the top and plan a time for the reward. Meanwhile, I draw a circle on the board and the marble person keeps track of the amount of marbles by writing numbers in the circle as we earn more marbles. Then, after the reward, we empty the jar and put those marble in and start over.