Social Contracts:
A Proactive Intervention for the Classroom

Please read the following scenario:

It is the beginning of a new school year in Mr. Bailey’s sixth grade class. Mr. Bailey and the students have decided to create a social contract for the class, which will state principles, rules, and consequences for classroom behavior. The class spends an hour discussing different rules and consequences that could be included in the contract. Mr. Bailey types up the social contract and posts it on the wall. The completed social contract includes the following components:

**Classroom Principles**
- Be kind and respectful to one another.
- Take responsibility for your actions.
- Keep your space clean and organized.

**Classroom Rules**
- Keep your hands to yourself.
- Listen well.
- Don’t talk without raising your hand.
- Don’t call others “stupid”.

**Classroom Consequences**
- Detention
- Reminders
- Conference
- Contingency contract

Considering what you have learned in this lesson, answer the following questions about the social contract created by Mr. Bailey and his students. Use the questions and your answers to guide you in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the contract, as well as potential changes that could be made.
1. Do all of the classroom *principles* provide a value system and general guidelines for behavior? Explain your answer.

2. Do all of the classroom *rules* clearly define which behaviors are and are not acceptable within the context of the principles? Explain your answer.

3. Are the classroom *rules* positive whenever possible? Are they specific without being cumbersome? Explain your answer.

4. Are the classroom *consequences* positive, logical and clear? Explain your answer.

5. What changes could you make to Mr. Bailey’s social contract to make it more effective? Describe how you would remove, alter or add things to each of the three components, and explain why you would make those changes.