The First Days
Survival Skills for the First-Year Teacher

February 19th
ASCD Future Teachers Conference

Presented by
Samantha Steele and Robin McMillin
When you think of the perfect learning environment, what do you see? What do you hear? Take a moment to jot down your thoughts and first impressions. We'll share with a partner in a moment.
Top 10 Tips
From First-Year and Veteran Teachers

1. Plan relentlessly: Create back-up plans and plans for teaching students of varying abilities.

2. Set high, consistently reinforced expectations for behavior and participation.

3. Show and require respect in the classroom at all times.

4. Reach out to parents and your administration, preferably early on and before a problem arises.

5. Consider participating in an extracurricular activity, which strengthens relationships with students and can be enjoyable as well.

6. Seek mentors, team teaching assignments and regular exchanges with fellow first-year teachers.

7. Be flexible and ready for surprises: for example, you could be assigned multiple grades, classrooms or subject areas.

8. Work closely with counselors or other school personnel authorized to respond to children’s social problems.

9. Take care of yourself physically and spiritually.

10. Love learning, love kids, and love teaching!
Survival Skills for New Teachers

Table of Contents

What do I need?
- Top 10 Tips from Veteran and 1st-Year Teachers .................................................. 3
- School Site Checklist ................................................................................................ 10
- Questions You Should Ask ...................................................................................... 11
- Calendar of Events .................................................................................................. 12
- Acronyms .................................................................................................................. 16

What does my classroom need?
- Before School Starts Top 10 To Do List .................................................................. 22
- Creating a Productive Learning Environment ......................................................... 23
- First Day Priorities .................................................................................................. 24
- First Day Scripting ................................................................................................... 25
- How to Make a Discipline Plan .............................................................................. 27
- What Should My Rules Be? ..................................................................................... 28
- Discipline Plan Example ........................................................................................ 29
- Class Rules Poster Example .................................................................................. 30
- Policy Example ........................................................................................................ 31

What will my students need?
- 7 Things Students Want to Know .......................................................................... 36
- Procedures to Rehearse ........................................................................................... 37
- Teaching Procedures ............................................................................................... 38
- Procedures Example ............................................................................................... 39
- Creating a Positive Learning Environment ............................................................. 41
- Praise, Encouragement & Feedback ....................................................................... 43
- Behavior Lessons ...................................................................................................... 44

What do I teach and how do I teach it?
- State Standards Information/Resources/Summary ....................................................... 49
- Top 10 Questions to Ask Myself as I Design Lessons .............................................. 50
- New Bloom’s Taxonomy, Keywords & Phrases ......................................................... 54
- How to Plan for Differentiated Instruction ............................................................. 60
- Discussion Tips & Stems .......................................................................................... 62
- How to Help ELL Students ..................................................................................... 64
- Planning for Assessment ......................................................................................... 65
## Survival Skills for New Teachers

### Table of Contents

**What else do I need to know?**

- How to Talk to Parents ................................................................. 69
- Parent Communication Log ......................................................... 70
- Conference Checklist .................................................................... 71
- Parent Info/Conference Questionnaire ....................................... 72
- Substitute Survival ....................................................................... 73
- Substitute Information Packet ..................................................... 74
- Setting Professional Development Goals .................................... 82
- Continuing Professional Development for Licensure Renewal ...... 83
- Professional Development Record Sheet .................................... 86
- What to Put in Your Personnel File ............................................ 88

**On my way...What now?**

- Internet Resources ....................................................................... 91
- An Ethic of Excellence .................................................................. 93
- The Case Against Zero .................................................................. 97
- Dreams and Wishes Can Come True ........................................... 99
- Habits of Mind: A Journey of Continuous Growth .................. 105
- My Own Top 10 Lists ................................................................. 106

**EDUCATION IS NOT**

*teaching people things they don’t currently know.*

**EDUCATION IS**

*teaching people behaviors they don’t currently practice.*
The First Days: Survival Skills for the First Year Teacher
Meet people.

Ask questions.

Get to know the lay of the land.

If you dare to teach, you must dare to learn. Teacher education rarely prepares the student teacher for noninstructional tasks. You may have lots of ideas for instructional activities, but you probably received no training in such noninstructional tasks such as how to keep a gradebook, act and dress for success, teach procedures and routines or deal with negative, nonsupportive and energy draining students and colleagues. Knowing who to ask and developing good working relationships with support staff and colleagues will start you off on the right foot and keep you moving forward.

Harry Wong, *The First Days of School*
School Site Checklist

Check in with your Principal and the Head Secretary to get information on these invaluable resources. Having this information will help your year run smoothly.

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<td>School Tour/Map of building</td>
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<td>Building Schedules&lt;br&gt;(Regular, Early Release, Assembly, Conferences, etc.)</td>
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<td>Reporting Time, Duty Schedules and Expectations</td>
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<td>Emergency Procedures</td>
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<td>Lunchroom Procedures—Students—Teachers</td>
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<td>Office Discipline Procedures (Referrals)</td>
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<td>Calendar/Big Yearly Events</td>
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<td>Parent Conferences—Procedures, Schedule, Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources Within the Building&lt;br&gt;Library, Production (copying, etc.), Aides, Supplies</td>
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<td>Resources Outside the Building—ESD</td>
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More Good Things to Know:
- Overview of the Staff Handbook
- Staff list—room assignments, prep times, contact information
- Student Files—Where they are kept and when to access.
- Curriculum Resources
- Teacher Evaluation Process / Evaluation Schedule
- Back-to-School Night/Parent Night
Questions You Should Ask

25 Questions You Should Ask During the First Days of School

1. How do I check out regular and supplemental texts?
2. What are the procedures for the use of audio-visual equipment?
3. How do I make arrangements for a field trip?
4. How do I sign up my class for the library?
5. How do I order films?
6. What are the procedures for taking a class to an assembly?
7. When am I responsible for locking my room?
8. What machines are available to use—copier, computer, VCR, laminator, etc.?
9. Where can I get free and inexpensive materials?
10. What are the attendance accounting procedures for students, and what are my responsibilities in attendance record keeping?
11. Will I be responsible for collecting money and what do I do with money I collect?
12. To whom do I report serious problems with a student’s health or behavior?
13. What student records must I maintain in cumulative folders?
14. What procedures do teachers follow for contacting parents by letter or phone?
15. What should I expect from a parent conference?
16. What should I do if I must leave my room during class?
17. What should I do in case of a medical emergency in my classroom?
18. How do I handle a fight between students?
19. How do I report a disciplinary problem?
20. How do I arrange for a substitute?
21. How do I apply for personal, professional, vacation or sick leave?
22. What is my salary and what deductions are taken?
23. Are there any unwritten rules for teachers in my school?
24. Where do I go if I am having trouble?
25. How do I know if I’m doing a good job?
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# Education Acronyms

## A Representative Sampling

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<td>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (plan for special needs students)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACT</strong></td>
<td>American College Test</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ADD</strong></td>
<td>Attention Deficit Disorder</td>
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<td><strong>ADHD</strong></td>
<td>Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</td>
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<td><strong>ADM</strong></td>
<td>Average Daily Membership (Attendance record for state funding)</td>
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<td><strong>AP</strong></td>
<td>Advanced Placement (college preparation class)</td>
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<td><strong>AR</strong></td>
<td>Accelerated Reader</td>
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<td><strong>AYP</strong></td>
<td>Adequate Yearly Progress</td>
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<td><strong>CBM</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum Based Measurement</td>
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<td><strong>CIP</strong></td>
<td>Continuous Improvement Plan (District)</td>
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<td><strong>CWPM</strong></td>
<td>Correct Words Per Minute (DIBELS, AIMSWeb)</td>
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<td><strong>DIBELS</strong></td>
<td>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills</td>
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<td>Education Resources Information Center</td>
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<td><strong>ESL</strong></td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td><strong>FBA</strong></td>
<td>Functional Behavior Assessment</td>
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<td><strong>FFA</strong></td>
<td>Future Farmers of America</td>
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<td><strong>FTE</strong></td>
<td>Full-Time Equivalency (student enrollment or employee status)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GED</strong></td>
<td>General Education Development (A passed GED results in a GED diploma)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRE</strong></td>
<td>Graduate Record Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDEA</strong></td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IEP</strong></td>
<td>Individual Education Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LD</strong></td>
<td>Learning Disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEP</strong></td>
<td>Limited English Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NCLB</strong></td>
<td>No Child Left Behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEA</strong></td>
<td>National Education Association (Union-national level)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Education Acronyms

## A Representative Sampling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OAKS</strong></td>
<td>Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (State Standards Testing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OC</strong></td>
<td>Occupational Therapist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCD</strong></td>
<td>Obsessive Compulsive Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ODE</strong></td>
<td>Oregon Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OEA</strong></td>
<td>Oregon Education Association (Union-state level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ORF</strong></td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OSAT</strong></td>
<td>Oregon Statewide Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PBS</strong></td>
<td>Positive Behavior Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PDU</strong></td>
<td>Professional Development Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEP</strong></td>
<td>Personalized Education Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLC</strong></td>
<td>Professional Learning Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PSAT</strong></td>
<td>Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PTA/PTO</strong></td>
<td>Parent-Teacher Association/Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RTI</strong></td>
<td>Response to Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SAT</strong></td>
<td>Scholastic Aptitude Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SED</strong></td>
<td>Severely Emotionally Disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SES</strong></td>
<td>Socio-Economic Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SIP</strong></td>
<td>School Improvement Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SIR</strong></td>
<td>Supported Independent Reading (School-wide Intervention Program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SLP</strong></td>
<td>Speech Language Pathologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SpEd</strong></td>
<td>Special Education</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SRO</strong></td>
<td>School Resource Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SSID</strong></td>
<td>Secure Student ID Number (State)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SST</strong></td>
<td>Student Services Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SWIS</strong></td>
<td>School Wide Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TAG</strong></td>
<td>Talented and Gifted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title I</strong></td>
<td>Provides funding to low SES schools to assist academically behind students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TSPC</strong></td>
<td>Teacher Standards and Practices Commission</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What Does My Classroom Need?

Survival Skills for the First-Year Teacher
The First Days: Survival Skills for the First Year Teacher
Prepare, prepare, prepare!

Write a detailed script for the first day.

Post your discipline plan and daily agenda.

The most important thing to establish the first week of school is CONSISTENCY. People do not want surprises or disorganization. Students want an environment that is safe, predictable and nurturing. Effective teachers have classrooms that are caring, thought-provoking, challenging and successful. They have this because they begin with classroom management procedures that create consistency.

Harry Wong, The First Days of School
Top Ten To-Do Before School Starts

☐ Plan seating assignments and make charts.

☐ Determine essential procedures for a smooth-running classroom.

☐ Over plan your lessons.

☐ Gather team-building activities to use early in the year.

☐ Identify a location to post your daily agenda.

☐ Post your discipline plan, including rules and consequences.

☐ Create a daily routine for the first five minutes of class (Bellwork). Have your first one ready and doable for student success.

☐ Prepare all supplies.

☐ Think of ways to learn your students’ names quickly.

☐ Commit to connecting with each student daily (eye contact, greetings, quick notes, high fives, etc.)
Creating a **PRODUCTIVE** Learning Environment

*New Teacher Self-Assessment and Goal Setting Check Sheet*

— Be sure you have student attention before beginning instruction or giving directions.

— Provide practice and processing time

— Post the agenda and the learning outcomes on the board, overhead or chart in the same place each day

— Explain the work to be done and how to do it

— Before students start working, check to be sure they know what to do and how to do it.

— Repeat and stress complex directions and difficult points; write out steps to any process having three or more steps

— Have students repeat and rephrase questions and explanations to each other

— Teach students how to use graphic organizers, mnemonics, visualizations and note-taking strategies

— Use a known process (like a graphic organizer previously used) to introduce or teach difficult new material

— Provide opportunities for students to use a variety of learning strategies

— Match the pace of instruction with the complexity of the concepts being studied.

— Mass practice at the beginning of new learning and follow-up with distributed practice throughout learning

— After practice of small chunks, move quickly to meaningful use of information and skills

— Build in and orchestrate movement; notify students of upcoming transitions

— Use flexible grouping determined by such variables as interest, readiness levels, information processing styles, student choice and, on occasion, random order

— Organize supplies, equipment, and papers so that they are easily accessible; eliminate clutter
First Day Priorities (Scripting)

Prepare, Prepare, Prepare!

Effective people know what they are doing. Go in to your first day of teaching with a plan; write a detailed script for your first day of school including the following:

- **Greet**: Greet your students at the door
- **Direct**: Direct them to their assigned seat
- **Work**: Tell the student to follow the assignment
- **About Me**: Introduce yourself
- **How tos**: Teach classroom procedures
- **Rules**: Teach classroom rules, consequences & rewards
- **Expect**: Communicate the expectations of the class
- **Move**: Plan for transitions and traffic control
- **Close**: Plan a daily closing procedure. *Remember, the bell does not dismiss the class, the teacher does!*

Resources

Here are additional examples of First Day Scripting (one example is on the next page):

- www.teachers.net/gazette/JUN00/covera.html
- www.teachers.net/gazette/JUN02/wong.html
- www.teachers.net/gazette/MAR03/wong.html
- http://teachers.net/wong/JAN10/
Example Script for the First Day of School

Scenic Middle School

Before Class

- Have a clearly marked sign on the door and on the front chalkboard that indicates the name of the class, the teacher, the hour, and the room number.
- Hand a copy of the Student Information Sheet to every student to be completed as bellwork.
- Setup individual trays for every handout the students will need to pickup. Be sure to 3-hole punch all handouts. Place a sign that reads "Please Take One" near the trays.
- Setup a sample folder and a pencil on the chalkboard sill to demonstrate for keeping papers.
- Use the overhead projector to display the seating chart. "OR" When class lists are inaccurate or not available, number the survey handouts with the computer station numbers and have students find the station number in the classroom. When they turn in their survey with their name and the station number, you can put them on the seating chart later in the day.

Greet at the Door

- Welcome each student with a handshake and hello.
- Look directly at each student, not the busy hallway or the growing line of people at the door, when they introduce themselves.
- Make sure every student is in the right place at the right time.
- Tell each student the following:
  1. They can find their seat by referencing the seating chart on the projection screen (or the number on the handout).
  2. Hand them the student information sheet
  3. They should grab the 3 handouts on the table at the student center.
  4. They should fill out the student information sheet immediately as bellwork.

Welcome and Introduction

- Welcome everyone to the first day of school and ask the students to take a few more minutes to finish the bellwork.
- Take attendance by referencing the seating chart (if available).
- Welcome everyone again and introduce yourself.
- Provide a few tidbits of appropriate personal information (educational background, family, pets, etc.).
- Explain your personal educational philosophy—hands on, hear-see-write-do, active learning.
- Stress that you are very excited to be here and that you look forward to a successful year ahead.

Syllabus Explanation (Handout 1)

- Ask the students to reference the Course Syllabus handout.
- Explain the basic course information.
- Provide instructor contact information.
- Discuss the course objectives.
- Identify the required class materials and reference the items setup on the chalkboard sill as a visual reminder of what each student will need.
- Explain the grading scale.
- Discuss specific academic requirements.
Example Script for the First Day of School

Scenic Middle School, cont.

Class Policies Explanation (Handout 2)

- Ask the students to reference the Class Policies handout.
- Discuss your overall discipline philosophy.
- Stress that a student chooses to break a rule.
- Explain the short list of simple class rules and ask the students to explain why they are in place.
- Stress that the class rules will be consistently enforced.
- Explain the tardy and late arrival policy.
- Discuss the importance of academic honesty.
- Discuss the attendance requirements.
- Explain the late work policy.
- Explain the make-up test policy.
- Ask each student to sign the back of the Student Information Survey in the space that indicates that they understand and agree to all of the class policies.

Class Procedures (Handout 3)

- Ask the students to reference the Class Procedures handout.
- Explain the purpose of class procedures by using an appropriate analogy from real life (like driving a car)
- Promise the students an organized and efficient classroom.
- Explain the importance of following procedures.
- Explain the difference between procedures and rules.
- Explain and rehearse the following procedures: entering the room, bellwork, picking up materials, coming to attention, arriving late, and leaving the classroom.
- Explain that other procedures will be explained and rehearsed as they become necessary (getting absent work, make-up tests, using the bathroom, getting a detention, getting extra handouts, handing in homework).

Dismissing the Class

- With a few minutes remaining, reiterate your excitement for the upcoming year.
- Tell the students that it was nice to meet all of them.
- Rehearse the procedure for leaving the classroom and require the students to wait for teacher dismissal before leaving the classroom.
- Collect student information sheets as the students leave the class.

Notes:

- When possible, set up seating charts ahead of time as random selection seldom works.
- Have a list of T.A. jobs ready to go.
- Have a place on the syllabus for parents to sign acknowledging policies & procedures as well as grades & expectations.
How to Make a Discipline Plan

*Present Rules Clearly and Provide Reasonable Explanations for Them*

**The Effective Teacher**

1. Has the discipline plan posted when the students arrive on the first day of school.
2. Posts a maximum of three to five rules or responsibilities.
3. Explains the posted rules and is willing to make changes as the class situation requires.

Harry Wong, *The First Days of School*

Clear rules provide for consistency in the classroom. Students much prefer knowing the rules, consequences, and rewards rather than having a teacher who arbitrarily changes or makes up new rules to fit the moment. Ineffective teachers make up rules as a reaction to problems, which makes the rules feel punitive. Setting rules before a problem arises allows the class to have an understanding of the expected behaviors in the classroom.

**Basic Structure for a Discipline Plan**

- **Rules:** What the expected behaviors are.
- **Consequences:** What the student chooses to accept if a rule is broken.
- **Rewards:** What the student receives for appropriate behavior

**Why you should have only three to five rules**

*Have you every noticed that your phone number, credit card, social security number, auto license number and ZIP code are written in groups of five numbers or less? That is because people find it easier to remember numbers in groups of three to five.*
What Should My Rules Be?

It is essential that you state your specific behavior expectations. Here are some examples from Harry Wong’s *The First Days of School* that you may want to consider for your discipline plan.

**Universal General Rules**
1. Respect others.
2. Take care of your school.
3. Be polite and helpful.
4. Keep the room clean.
5. Behave in the library.

**Universal Specific Rules**
1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Raise your hand and wait for permission to speak.
3. Stay in your seat unless you have permission to do otherwise.
4. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
5. No cursing or teasing.

**Specific Rules for Elementary Grades**
1. Wait for directions with no talking.
2. Eyes front when the teacher is talking.
3. Change tasks quickly and quietly.
4. Complete the morning routine.
5. Report directly to the assigned area.

**Specific Rules for Middle School**
1. Be in class on time.
2. Listen to instructions the first time they are given.
3. Have all materials ready to use when the bell rings.
4. Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself.
5. Do not use vulgar or offensive language.

**Specific Rules for High School**
1. Be in your seat when the bell rings.
2. Bring all books and materials to class.
3. No personal grooming during class time.
4. Sit in your assigned seat daily.
5. Follow directions the first time they are given.

**Specific Rules for the Cafeteria**
1. Follow correct traffic flow.
2. Choose a seat and remain there.
3. All food is to be eaten in the cafeteria.
4. Raise your hand to be excused when finished.
5. Scrape food into bins and put utensils in water.

The three most important student behaviors that must be taught the first days of school are these:

1. **Discipline**
2. **Procedures**
3. **Routines**
Discipline Plan for Room 16

Classroom Rules
1. Have all appropriate materials and supplies at your table and be seated when the bell rings.
2. Respect the people, equipment and furnishings of Room 16
3. Adjust your voice level to suit the activity.
4. Follow directions the first time they are given.
5. Observe all rules in the student handbook.

If You Choose to Break a Rule
- First Time: Name on board. Warning
- Second Time: ✔ One Check. 15 minutes lunch detention
- Third Time: ✔✔ Two checks. 30 minutes lunch detention
- Fourth Time: ✔✔✔ Three checks. 30 min. detention and phone home.
- Fifth Time: Referral to the office
- Severe disruption: Immediately sent to the office.

Names and checks erased each Friday afternoon.

Rewards
- Praise (daily)
- Positive notes home (random)
- Whole class radio time or free time (weekly)
- “Raise a Grade” certificate (monthly)
- Movie and popcorn party for the class (every 9 weeks)
- Various other positive perks (throughout the school year)
- The joy of learning (every day of the school year)

STUDENTS: I have read this classroom discipline plan and I understand it. I will honor it while in Room 16.

Signature ___________________________________________ Date __________________________

PARENTS: My child has discussed the classroom discipline plan with me. I understand it and will support it.

Signature ___________________________________________ Date __________________________

TEACHER: I will be fair and consistent in administering the discipline plan for Room 16.

Signature ___________________________________________ Date __________________________
1. Follow directions the first time given.

2. Keep hands and feet to yourself.

3. Raise your hand to get out of your seat.

4. Keep your voice to an inside working level.

5. No put-downs of classmates.

Example

Thank You!
Language Arts Policies

Mr. Curry

A. Note from the Instructor

I will lead a respectful and disciplined classroom. To achieve this I have established a few simple policies. As a student, it is your responsibility to comply with these policies. If you decide not to comply, there will be logical consequences. By enforcing these policies, I promise to you fairness and order in our classroom.

B. Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful

Keep Your Hands to Yourself- Respect your fellow classmates and their belongings by asking permission before initiating physical contact. Please respect the person who says no and refrain from touching them or their belongings.

Come Prepared- Bring two sharpened pencils (or a pencil and a pen), your spiral notebook and your binder for handouts. If literature books are needed, it will be posted by the door.

Use Respectful Language- Students will exhibit courtesy and respect toward all other students at all times. Hateful comments concerning race, gender, sexuality, political views, appearance, or of any other type will not be tolerated; this applies to serious as well as "joking" comments.

C. If you CHOOSE to Break a Rule:

The plan of accepted consequences is below. Of course there are behaviors that will warrant a Dean's Referral immediately. Examples of this include profane language, gross insubordination (refusing to do as asked) or violent behavior. Behaviors that are less severe, but in violation of the basic rules of the class will be dealt with in the manner described below.

1st Incident – Warning

2nd Incident – Phone call home

3rd Incident – Dean's referral and phone call home or Parent Conference
What Will My Students Need?

Survival Skills for the First-Year Teacher
Get to school earlier than normal.

Dress professionally.

Greet the students at the door.

The first days of school are critical. Your mission is to establish student routines and classroom procedures. Students do not want nor do they learn well in a disorganized environment. A well-organized, uncluttered and attractive room gives a professional and authoritative image that students respect.

Harry Wong, *The First Days of School*
7 Things Students Want to Know on the First Day of School

- Am I in the right room?
- Where am I supposed to sit?
- What will I be doing this year?
- How will I be graded?
- Who is the teacher as a person?
- Will the teacher treat me as a human being?
- What are the rules in this classroom?
Procedures to Rehearse with Students

Procedures and routines established early in the school year free up the rest of the year to be devoted to teaching and learning in the content areas.

Remember, it is the procedures that set the class up for success to take place.

~Harry Wong,

Moving About the Room

- Entering the classroom
- When you are tardy
- End of period class dismissal
- Changing groups
- Getting materials without disturbing others
- Handing out playground materials
- Sharpening pencils, drinking water, throwing something away

Communication/Interaction

- Listening to and responding to questions
- Participating in class discussions
- Indicating whether you understand
- Working cooperatively
- Coming to attention
- When you need help or conferencing
- Asking a question
- Saying “thank you”

Special

- Returning to a task after an interruption
- When a school-wide announcement is made
- Responding to an earthquake
- Responding to a severe weather

Doing the Work

- Getting to work immediately
- Knowing the schedule for the day
- When you need pencil or paper
- Finding directions for each assignment
- Headings on papers
- When you finish early
- Keeping your desk orderly
- Keeping your notebook/binder organized
- Checking out classroom materials
- Passing in papers
- Exchanging papers
- Returning student work

Moving About Campus

- Entering & Leaving the classroom
- Going to the office
- Going to the library or computer lab
- Walking in the hall during class time.
- Responding to a fire drill

The First Days: Survival Skills for the First Year Teacher
Teaching Procedures

1. **Explain**  (state, explain, model and demonstrate)
2. **Rehearse**  (practice under supervision in a relevant setting)
3. **Reinforce**  (rehearse, re-teach, practice until the procedure becomes a habit or routine)

“The number one problem in the classroom is not discipline; it is the lack of procedures and routines.” ~Harry Wong

✓ **Remind** the class of the procedure
✓ **Have the class experience** the procedure

Procedures!

- **P**lan for success
- **R**ehearse and reinforce
- **O**rganize before students arrive
- **C**osts nothing to do
- **E**xtra time gained for teaching and learning
- **D**on’t wait until next year; do it now
- **U** make a difference in students’ lives
- **R**ehearse some more
- **E**xperience a class that hums with learning
- **S**uccess is yours because procedures work!
Paying Attention

**Tracking** is looking at the person who is speaking and sitting so they can see you and make eye contact. Whenever the instructor is speaking, each student is to place their hands in their laps and silently track the instructor with their eyes.

**Entering the Classroom**

You are to enter the classroom calmly and quietly. Students who do not do this will be asked to leave the room and reenter as expected. It is expected that as soon as you enter you "stop at the back counter, pickup any handouts and hand in homework in the appropriate tray. You should then get anything you need from the Student Center (pencil sharpening, tissue, etc.). Once seated, check the side board for the day's bellwork *and begin before the bell rings*.

**Arriving Late**

When you enter the room late (with or without a pass) you need not disturb the class. Help the door shut quietly. Sign your name and the appropriate information on the orange clipboard by the door. Print clearly and sign only your name. If you have a pass, put it in the orange pocket on the wall above the clipboard. Pick up any handouts for the day before you go quietly to your seat.

**Tardy Definition:** A student is tardy if he is not *in his seat and working* when the bell stops ringing and does not have a pass. Consequences are as follows:

- **First Tardy** – Student receives a warning
- **Second Tardy** – Phone call home.
- **Third Tardy** – Referral to the Dean.

**Bellwork**

Everyday will begin with bellwork. You will find the bellwork on the side white board. Bellwork should be started before the bell rings.

**Picking up Materials for Day**

Any handouts that you will need on a given day will be found in the tray, on the back counter marked for your grade and says "Please Take One". If the tray or sign isn't there, you don't need to pick up anything, just begin the day's bellwork.
Exiting the Classroom

The bell does not dismiss the class, the teacher does. Please do not pack up until the instructor dismisses the class. You may save, log off and straighten the desk two minutes before the end of the period at the warning bell. Do not leave your seats until the class is dismissed by the instructor.

Extra Handouts

If you need a handout, because you were absent or just lost your first one, go to the appropriate "extras box" in the student center on the back counter, or go to the website from home and print one out. Do not ask me for handouts, go straight to the box or class website.

Attendance

If a student has an absence from class he or she is responsible for all assignments and homework missed. The student has as many days as he or she was absent to make up the assignments. Students must check the class calendar and with the instructor for missed work and quizzes. Extra handouts are available in the student center on the back counter.

Open Lab Hours

Open lab hours occur daily from 8:00 to 8:45 in the morning. Lunch time lab hours are not available due to classes being taught in the lab during that time. Open lab can be open after school until 4:00 p.m. as requested. See Ms. Burkhart to schedule after school time.

Open Lab Rewards

Each time you come in to Open Lab you will clock in and out on a timecard. You will receive 5 points of extra credit for every 30 minutes you accumulate (does not have to be in one session). Students can get a timecard (located in the Extra Handouts box) the first time they come into Open Lab.

Leaving the Room during Class Time

The bathroom may only be used in emergencies, please plan ahead. A Campus Key is needed for leaving the class. 1. Give your Campus Key to the instructor to be punched and 2. take the blue hall pass. It will be set for 3 minutes. When you return, 3. place the blue hall pass in the base to stop the timer. Anyone outside of the classroom for longer than the designated time will receive a tardy and its consequence. Do not ask to use the washroom or go to your locker before class begins; just go before you get to class.

Late Work

Late work will be penalized one grade per day late unless a Latework Coupon is attached. Completed work that has a Latework Coupon attached will not be penalized no matter how late it is. You can get extra Latework Coupons in the Student Center.
Creating a POSITIVE Learning Environment

New Teacher Self-Assessment and Goal Setting Check Sheet

— Learn student names and information about each one early in the year
— Greet students at the door with a smile and a handshake
— Use student names in examples
— Make a strong effort to interact in a positive way with each student each day
— Create opportunities for students to learn about themselves and each other
— Be knowledgeable about the fads, fashions, music, hobbies and other activities that are of interest to your students
— Display student work both in the classroom and in public areas
— Teach students how to set and work toward learning goals
— Encourage students to ask for and get help from one another
— Model respect in words spoken, voice tone, eye contact, and in body language
— Use music, books, posters, and pictures from different cultures
— Practice equity and explain to students the difference between equity (get what you need when you need it) and equality (all get the same thing at the same time)
— Provide student choice of learning process
— Explain the reason why you are doing what you are doing or making the decision you are making.
— Encourage students to monitor their own academic progress
— Change strategies to meet students’ needs rather than expecting students to change to meet teacher needs
— Take advantage of opportunities to use humor
Creating a **POSITIVE** Learning Environment

*New Teacher Self-Assessment and Goal Setting Check Sheet*

— Set up conditions where students can assess the effectiveness of their own learning habits.

— Remind yourself that you are a role model

— Develop a repertoire of ways to encourage your students

— Reinforce students’ attempts to solve problems and exert effort

— Make it a practice to recognize effective effort

— Resolve behavioral issues privately with minimum disruption of instruction

— Avoid sarcasm and ridicule

— Promote intrinsic motivation (I did it!) rather than extrinsic motivation (you did it so you get a sticker or a piece of candy)

— Show interest in students’ lives beyond the classroom by becoming involved in student activities

— Demonstrate respect for students as individuals

— Use flexible room arrangements to match instructional objectives

— Identify room arrangements that work best in small group work, whole class discussion and testing

— When working with a small group, position yourself so that you can monitor other students at work.

— Teach students to help you arrange/rearrange the student desks/tables quickly and safely

— Arrange the room so you can move around with ease

— Reduce distance and barriers between you and your students
Praise, Encouragement & Feedback

Building Intrinsic Motivation to Do Well

Effective praise can be informative as well as reinforcing, can provide encouragement and support, and can help teachers establish friendly relationships with students. Praise should be specific; that is, it should expressively mention what the person did to deserve the praise and should attribute success to effort and ability. “You must be really proud of yourself to have been so resourceful in finding the necessary materials to finish the task.”

Use selections from the list below to complete descriptive praises. Descriptive praise helps students know the meaning of these abstract terms when we link them to their own behaviors.

“You picked up all the sticks and leaves that fell during the storm, now that’s what I call…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>alert</th>
<th>curious</th>
<th>generous</th>
<th>persistent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>award</td>
<td>determined</td>
<td>gracious</td>
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<td>candid</td>
<td>efficient</td>
<td>helpful</td>
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<td>courageous</td>
<td>focused</td>
<td>patience</td>
<td>responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creative</td>
<td>friendly</td>
<td>perseverance</td>
<td>trustworthy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Behavior/Academic Plan Example

I use Positive Behavior Support (PBS) to implement my classroom behavior-academic plan. The PBS plan is structured to enable high behavioral expectations of students and promote a more positive classroom atmosphere. This is accomplished through the use of clear behavioral expectations that are explicitly taught; specific, positive feedback for appropriate behavior and consistent consequences for inappropriate behavior.

School-Wide Behavioral Expectations:

✓ BE SAFE
✓ BE RESPECTFUL
✓ BE RESPONSIBLE

The “Big 5” expectations are appropriate at all times and in all areas of campus. These 5 expectations are:

✓ Walk
✓ Use appropriate language and volume
✓ Hands and feet to self
✓ Show courtesy to others
✓ Keep the school clean

The Specific Settings in which the expectations will be applied:

✓ Entering andExiting the Classroom
✓ Participating in Class
✓ Restrooms
✓ Moving about the Classroom
✓ Class Discussions
✓ Library/Cafeteria
✓ Office/Health Center
✓ Playground Area/Gym
**RECESS Lesson Example**

**Objective:** To keep students safe and get everyone to the playground and back in a timely fashion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPECTFUL</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>SAFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Walk to playground area</td>
<td>✓ Take care of equipment</td>
<td>✓ Use equipment properly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Hands and feet to self</td>
<td>✓ Put equipment in proper place when done</td>
<td>✓ Report accidents promptly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Polite to aides</td>
<td>✓ Line up quietly and quickly when recess is over</td>
<td>✓ Wear appropriate shoes if running</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Appropriate language</td>
<td>✓ Keep jackets and sweaters with you at all times</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXAMPLE**

Students walk calmly to the recess area, discuss what they want to do and get a ball or equipment if needed. They greet the playground monitors politely and play a game.

**NON-EXAMPLE**

- John is running through the hallway and doesn’t even notice that he bumped Kenzie’s binder out of her hands as he went by.
- Student leaves a sweatshirt on the basketball court and goes to the slide to talk to a friend. Another “friend” takes the sweatshirt and puts it in the garbage. Upon return, an argument happens about the sweatshirt.

**Teaching Scenarios**

- Set up possible scenarios and discuss with students.
- Assign scenarios for role-playing positive examples (optional)
- Give more positive examples than negative non-examples.
- Practice on playground, demonstrate equipment and lining up procedures.
Behavior Lesson Plan:

Objective: Lesson Objective here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPECTFUL</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>SAFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXAMPLE NON-EXAMPLE
(if role-playing, act out positive EXAMPLES only. Discuss NON-EXAMPLES)

Teaching Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
<th>NON-EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activities & Follow-up

✓ Set up possible scenarios and discuss with students.
✓ Assign scenarios for role-playing positive examples (optional)
✓ Give more positive examples than negative non-examples.
What Do I Teach?
And how do I teach it?

Survival Skills for the First-Year Teacher
How can I locate the *Oregon State Standards*?

1. Go to the *Oregon Department of Education* online (ODE) http://www.ode.state.or.us
2. On the left menu palette, click on *Teaching and Learning*
3. Mouse over and down to *Standards*, then *Standards by Design*
4. Customize your standards by content and grade level.

Other useful ODE links:

- Video Tutorials & Help ............................................ [http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/help/default.aspx](http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/help/default.aspx)
- Searchable Standards .................. [http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/standards/searchablestandards.aspx](http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/standards/searchablestandards.aspx)
- Teaching and Learning Homepage ........................................ [http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=51](http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=51)
- Standards by Design ........................................ [http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=53](http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=53)
- Achievement Standards ........................................ [http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=223](http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=223)
- Instructional Resources ........................................ [http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=46](http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=46)
Top 10 Questions
I ask myself as I design lessons

1. What should students know and be able to do?
   • What should students know and be able to do with what they learn as a result of this lesson?
   • How are these objectives related to national, state, and/or district standards?
   • How are these objectives related to the big ideas/key concepts of the course?

2. How will students demonstrate what they know and can do?
   • How will I know what they have learned?
   • What multiple forms of assessment including self-assessment can I use?
   • What will be the assessment criteria and what form will it take?

3. How will I find out what students already know? (preassessment)
   • How will I help them access what they know and have experienced both inside and outside the classroom?
   • How will I help them not only build on prior experiences, but deal with misconceptions and reframe their thinking when appropriate?
4. **How will new knowledge, concepts and skills be introduced?**
   - Given the diversity of my students what are my best options for sources and presentation modes of new materials?

5. **How will I facilitate student processing (making meaning)?**
   - How will I help students make meaning of new information or processes?
   - What are the key questions, activities and assignments (in class or homework)?

6. **How will I check for student understanding during the lesson?**
   - How will I know what they have learned?
   - What multiple forms of assessment including self-assessment can I use?
7. What do I need to do to differentiate instruction so the learning experiences are productive for all students?

8. How will I “Frame the Learning?”
   - How will I frame the lesson so that students know the objectives, the rationale for the objectives and activities, the directions and procedures, as well as the assessment criteria at the beginning of the learning process?

9. How will I build in opportunities for students to make real world connections?
   - How will I facilitate their using the varied and complex thinking skills they need to succeed in the classroom and the world beyond?
10. What adjustments need to be made to the learning environment?

- How can we work and learn efficiently in a positive and productive classroom setting?
- How is data being used to make these decisions?

Materials to be Gathered or Prepared ________________________________

Time Line/Sequence for Lesson ________________________________
BLOOM’S REVISED TAXONOMY

Creating
Generating new ideas, products or ways of viewing things
Designing, constructing, planning, producing, inventing.

Evaluating
Justifying a decision or course of action
Checking, hypothesising, critiquing, experimenting, judging

Analyzing
Breaking information into parts to explore understandings and relationships
Comparing, organizing, deconstructing, interrogating, finding

Applying
Using information in another familiar situation
Implementing, carrying out, using, executing

Understanding
Explaining ideas or concepts
Interpreting, summarizing, paraphrasing, classifying, explaining

Remembering
Recalling information
Recognizing, listing, describing, retrieving, naming, finding
Bloom's Taxonomy

Key Words, Model Questions, & Instructional Strategies

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) has stood the test of time. Recently Anderson & Krathwohl (2001) have proposed some minor changes to include the renaming and reordering of the taxonomy. This reference reflects those recommended changes.

I. REMEMBER
Shallow Processing: Drawing Out Factual Answers, Testing Recall and Recognition

Verbs to Use For Performance Objectives:______________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe</th>
<th>Locate</th>
<th>Recite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define</td>
<td>Match</td>
<td>Recognize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify</td>
<td>Memorize</td>
<td>Select</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List</td>
<td>Omit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Questions: ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>How?</th>
<th>When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>Which is the best one?</td>
<td>What does it mean?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which One?</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What?</td>
<td>How much?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructional Strategies ____________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highlighting</th>
<th>Memorizing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
<td>Mnemonics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. UNDERSTAND
Translating, Interpreting and Extrapolating

Verbs to Use For Performance Objectives:______________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classify</th>
<th>Illustrate</th>
<th>Represent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defend</td>
<td>Indicate</td>
<td>Restate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
<td>Interrelate</td>
<td>Rewrite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish</td>
<td>Interpret</td>
<td>Select</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain</td>
<td>Infer</td>
<td>Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>Summarize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend</td>
<td>Match</td>
<td>Tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give Example</td>
<td>Paraphrase</td>
<td>Translate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bloom's Taxonomy
Key Words, Model Questions, & Instructional Strategies

Model Questions:

State in your own words. State in one word...
Which are facts? Explain what is happening.
What does this mean? What part doesn't fit?
Is this the same as...? Explain what is meant.
Give an example. What expectations are there?
Select the best definition. Read the graph (table).
Condense this paragraph. What are they saying?
What would happen if...? This represents...

Instructional Strategies

Key Examples
Emphasize Connections
Elaborate Concepts
Summarize
Paraphrase

STUDENTS Explain
STUDENTS State the Rule
“Why Does This Example...?”
Create Visual Representations
(Concept Maps, Outlines, Flow

Charts Organizers, Analogies)
PRO|CON Grids
Metaphors, Rubrics, Heuristics

III. APPLY
Knowing When to Apply; Why to Apply; and Recognizing Patterns of Transfer to Situations that are New, Unfamiliar or Have a New Slant for Students

Verbs to Use For Performance Objectives:

Apply Judge Select
Choose Organize Show
Dramatize Paint Sketch
Explain Prepare Solve
Generalize Produce Use

Model Questions:

Predict what would happen if...
Choose the best statements that apply
Judge the effects

What would result if...
Tell what would happen
Tell how, when, where, why
Identify the results of

Tell how much change there would be
Bloom's Taxonomy
Key Words, Model Questions, & Instructional Strategies

**Instructional Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modeling</th>
<th>Part and whole sequencing</th>
<th>Simulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive apprenticeships</td>
<td>Authentic situations</td>
<td>Algorithms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Mindful” practice – NOT a</td>
<td>“Coached” practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“routine” practice</td>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IV. ANALYZE**
Breaking Down Into Parts, Forms

**Verbs to Use For Performance Objectives:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analyze</th>
<th>Differentiate</th>
<th>Point Out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Categorize</td>
<td>Distinguish</td>
<td>Select</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classify</td>
<td>Identify</td>
<td>Subdivide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare</td>
<td>Infer</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model Questions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the function of...?</th>
<th>What does the author believe?</th>
<th>What's the relationship between?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What's fact?</td>
<td>What does the author assume?</td>
<td>The least essential statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion?</td>
<td>Make a distinction.</td>
<td>are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What assumptions...?</td>
<td>State the point of view of...</td>
<td>What's the main idea? Theme?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What statement is relevant?</td>
<td>What is the premise?</td>
<td>What inconsistencies, fallacies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What motive is there?</td>
<td>State the point of view of...</td>
<td>What literary form is used?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is related to, extraneous</td>
<td>What ideas apply?</td>
<td>What persuasive technique?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to, not applicable.</td>
<td>What ideas justify the</td>
<td>Implicit in the statement is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What conclusions?</td>
<td>conclusion?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instructional Strategies**

| Models of thinking          | Reflection through journaling     | Discussions and other          |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------| collaborating learning activities|
| Challenging assumptions     | Debates                          |                                   |
| Retrospective analysis      | Decision-making situations       |                                   |
Bloom's Taxonomy
Key Words, Model Questions, & Instructional Strategies

V. EVALUATE
Assess According to Some Set of Criteria, and State Why

Verbs to Use For Performance Objectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appraise</th>
<th>Criticize</th>
<th>Compare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>Defend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model Questions:

What fallacies, consistencies, inconsistencies appear?
Find the errors.

Which is more important, moral, better?
Which is more logical, valid, or appropriate?

Instructional Strategies:

Challenging assumptions
Journaling

Debates
Decision-making situations

Discussions and other collaborating learning activities

VI. CREATE
Combining Elements Into A Pattern Not Clearly There Before)

Verbs to Use For Performance Objectives:

Choose
Combine
Compose
Construct
Create
Design
Develop

Do
Formulate
Hypothesize
Invent
Make
Make Up
Originate

Organize
Plan
Produce
Role Play
Tell

Model Questions:

How would you test...?
Propose an alternative.

Solve the following.
How else would you...?

State a rule.
Bloom's Taxonomy

Key Words, Model Questions, & Instructional Strategies

Instructional Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modeling</th>
<th>Debates</th>
<th>Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenging assumptions</td>
<td>Discussions and other</td>
<td>Decision-making situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection through journaling</td>
<td>collaborating learning activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Web References:

- [http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/bloom.html](http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/bloom.html)
- [http://www.fwl.org/edtech/blooms.html](http://www.fwl.org/edtech/blooms.html)
- [http://apu.edu/~bmccarty/curricula/mse592/intro/tsld006.htm](http://apu.edu/~bmccarty/curricula/mse592/intro/tsld006.htm)
- [http://amath.colorado.edu/appm/courses/7400/1996Spr/bloom.html](http://amath.colorado.edu/appm/courses/7400/1996Spr/bloom.html)
- [http://www.stedwards.edu/cte/bloomtax.htm](http://www.stedwards.edu/cte/bloomtax.htm)
- [http://quarles.unbc.edu/lsc/bloom.html](http://quarles.unbc.edu/lsc/bloom.html)
- [http://www.wested.org/tie/dlrn/blooms.html](http://www.wested.org/tie/dlrn/blooms.html)
- [http://weber.u.washington.edu/~krumme/guides/bloom.html](http://weber.u.washington.edu/~krumme/guides/bloom.html)

References


Compiled by the IUPUI Center for Teaching and Learning, Revised December 2002
How to Plan for Differentiated Instruction

Step 1- Know Your Students

Determine the ability level of your students.
This can be done by surveying past records of student performance to determine capabilities, prior learning, past experiences with learning, etc.

Survey student interests.
It is also important to get to know your students informally. This can be done by an interest inventory, an interview/conference, or asking students to respond to an open-ended questionnaire with key questions about their learning preferences (depending on the age group).

Is behavior management a problem?
This is key when planning for activities that require less structure. However, it is still important to determine learning styles and preferences for students who may have a hard time controlling their behaviors. Sometimes knowing preferences can help to motivate students to attend to any tasks that are presented.

Step 2- Have a Repertoire of Teaching Strategies

Because "one size does not fit all," it is imperative that a variety of teaching strategies be used in a differentiated classroom.

Direct Instruction
This is the most widely used and most traditional teaching strategy. It is teacher centered and can be used to cover a great amount of material in the amount of time teachers have to cover what students need to learn. It is structured and is based on mastery learning. More information can be found on:
http://www.teach-nology.com/teachers/methods/models/

Inquiry-based Learning
Inquiry-based learning has become very popular in teaching today. It is based on the scientific method and works very well in developing critical thinking and problem solving skills. It is student centered and requires students to conduct investigations independent of the teacher, unless otherwise directed or guided through the process of discovery. For more information, go to:
http://www.teach-nology.com/currenttrends/inquiry/

Cooperative Learning
Probably one of the most misunderstood strategies for teaching is "cooperative learning." Yet, if employed properly, cooperative learning can produce extraordinary results in learning outcomes. It is based on grouping small teams of students heterogeneously according to ability, interest, background, etc. However, one of the most important features of cooperative learning is to pick the best strategy that will be used to assign the task for students to accomplish. The more popular strategies include JigsawII, STAD-Student Teams, or Group Investigation. For more information, go to:
http://www.teach-nology.com/currenttrends/cooperative_learning/
How to Plan for Differentiated Instruction

Step 2- Cont.

Information Processing Strategies
Teaching students "how to" process information is a key factor in teaching students how to strategically organize, store, retrieve, and apply information presented. Such strategies include, but are not limited to, memorization, KWL, reciprocal teaching, graphic organizing, scaffolding, or webbing. More information on this topic can be found at: http://www.teach-nology.com/teachers/methods/info_processing/

Step 4- Identify Ways to Assess or Evaluate Student Progress

Once again, we cannot assume that "one size fits all." As a result, varying means of student assessment is necessary if students are to be given every opportunity to demonstrate authentic learning. Authentic assessment has been around for a long time and is now taking the limelight as we attempt to measure students' progress in a fair and equitable way. A variety of assessment techniques can include portfolios, rubrics, performance-based assessment, and knowledge mapping. For more information on this topic go to: http://www.teach-nology.com/currenttrends/alternative_assessment/

The Bottom Line

Differentiated instruction is about using teaching strategies that connect with individual student's learning strategies. The ultimate goal is to provide a learning environment that will maximize the potential for student success.

The important thing to remember is to hold on to the effective teaching strategies that lead students to positive learning outcomes and to make adjustments when necessary. It's about being flexible and open to change. It's also about taking risks and trying teaching and learning strategies that you would have otherwise ignored.

It's about managing instructional time in a way that meets the standards and also provides motivating, challenging, and meaningful experiences for school age students who are socialized to receive and process information in ways that require differentiation of experience. These are very exciting times for the teaching profession; we are faced with a generation of learners who are challenging us to think about how we deliver instruction.
Discussion Tips & Prompts

Making Personal Connections
- What did the story remind you of?
- Tell about at least one connection that you can make personally with the characters or story. Do you have some shared interest, feeling, or experience? Are you like or different from one of the characters?
- What kind of reader would like this book?
- Is there any character in this story/book like you? How is this character like you?
- Is there a character in this story/book who would make a good friend?
- Compare at least two characters to yourself, your family, or your friends.

Identifying Important Elements
- What are two of the most important ideas from this story?
- What was the author trying to tell you about life with this story?
- What do you think was the most important or most interesting part of this story?
- Who do you think was the most important character? Why was this character important?
- As you get into your novel, you should get to know the main character. Describe the person physically, but also give examples of how she or he feels and what she or he does.
- Choose a character in the book who is important but not the main character. Describe this person, explain her or his relationship to the main character, and tell why she or he is important in the story.
- What surprised you in this story? Why was that a surprise? What did you expect instead?
- Does the title fit the story? Why or why not?

Expressing Feelings About the Story
- How did the story make you feel? Tell what parts made you feel this way.
- Why do you think other students might or might not enjoy reading this story/book?
- Would you recommend this book to someone else? Why or why not?
- Would you read another book by this author? Why or Why not?
- What was going through your mind as you read this story?
- What was your favorite part of this story? Why is that your favorite?
- Which character did you like best or least? Why?
- How did your feelings change as you read this story?

Noticing the Author’s Craft
- If the author of this book were in our classroom right now, what would you say to or ask that person?
- If you could change this book, how would you change it?
- Is anything in this book strange or weird? Why do you think the author put that in the story?
- Did the author write this book in a special way (for example, lots of visual images, flashbacks, told in the first person)?
- Why do you think the author wrote this story?
Prompts & Probes

Prompt: Have you ever felt like this character?

Probes:
- How does the character feel?
- Have you ever felt like that?
- What does/did the character want or hope or need?
- How are your experiences the same or different?

Prompt: Would you read another book by this author?

Probes:
- What were your favorite parts?
- What did those parts have in common?
- Did you like the main character?

Bloom’s Taxonomy Question Prompts

Evaluate/Create

- What would happen if...
- How would you improve...
- Determine what would happen if...
- Decide what would happen if there were...
- Assess how you would feel if...
- Imagine how...
- Predict what would happen if...
- Can you prove that...

Apply/Analyze

- Compare/Contrast the main view point of...
- Investigate some alternative ways the character...
- Illustrate with words and pictures your ideas about...
- Classify the characters with the characteristics of...
- How can you make use of...
- How can you solve...
- Choose the...

Remember/Understand

- Define the meaning of...
- List as many...
- Name as many...
- Retell the key events when...
- Describe in your own words...
- What was the solution to the problem?
Ten Things the Mainstream Teacher Can Do Today to Improve Instruction for ELL Students

These tips were adapted from the Help! They Don’t Speak English Starter Kit for Primary Teachers (1998) (developed by the Region IV and Region XIV Comprehensive Centers, the Center for Applied Linguistics, and ESCORT, a national resource center dedicated to improving the educational opportunities for migrant children) and from Integrating Language and Content Instruction: Strategies and Techniques (1991) by Deborah Short of the Center for Applied Linguistics.

1. **Enunciate clearly**, but do not raise your voice. Add gestures, point directly to objects, or draw pictures when appropriate.

2. **Write clearly**, legibly, and in print—many ELL students have difficulty reading cursive writing.

3. **Develop and maintain routines.** Use clear and consistent signals for classroom instructions.

4. **Repeat information and review frequently.** If a student does not understand, try rephrasing or paraphrasing in shorter sentences and simpler syntax. Check often for understanding, but do not ask "Do you understand?" Instead, have students demonstrate their learning in order to show comprehension.

5. Try to **avoid idioms and slang** words.

6. Present **new information in the context of known information.**

7. Announce the lesson’s objectives and activities, and **list instructions step-by-step.**

8. Present information in a **variety of ways.**

9. Provide **frequent summations** of the salient points of a lesson, and always emphasize key vocabulary words.

10. **Recognize student success overtly and frequently.** But, also be aware that in some cultures overt, individual praise is considered inappropriate and can therefore be embarrassing or confusing to the student.
## Planning Assessment Worksheet

<table>
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<th>Unit Focus</th>
<th>Date</th>
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How will I use the following assessment strategies in this unit?

**Preassessments:**

**Checks for Understanding:**

**Observations/Anecdotal Records:**

**Student Questions/Comments (in class and in journals):**

**Teacher Questions & Prompts:**

**Assignments, including Homework (Student Work Samples):**

**Peer Assessment:**

**Self-Assessment:**

**Quizzes:**

**Tests:**

**Performance Tasks (Short-Term & Long-Term)**

What form(s) will the assessment criteria take?

- [ ] Rubric
- [ ] Checklist
- [ ] Performance Assessment Task List
- [ ] Other ________________________________
What Else Do I Need to Know?

Survival Skills for the First-Year Teacher
The First Days: Survival Skills for the First Year Teacher
How to Talk to Parents

Communicating with parents is one of the most important things teachers do. When we work with parents, we improve learning. Most successful teacher-parent teams begin with a conference, usually before there's a need. Here are some tips to help make your parent communications productive and successful.

1. **Allow enough time.** If you’re scheduling back-to-back calls or conferences be sure to allow time to make notes in between.

2. **Get the name right.** Don’t assume that Jennifer Peabody’s mother is Mrs. Peabody.

3. **Open on a positive note.** Begin on a warm note about the child’s work or interests.

4. **Make specific comments.** Parents may get lost in generalities.

5. **Forget the jargon.** Lose education phrases like “performance-based assessment” and “least restrictive environment.”

6. **Ask for parents’ opinions.** Let parents know you want to work with them.

7. **Focus on strengths.** You’ll help if you review the child’s strengths and areas of need, rather than stressing weaknesses.

8. **Stress collaboration.** Let parents know you want to work together in the best interest of the child.

9. **Listen to what parents say.** Validate their comments and feelings by paraphrasing back to them what you heard them say.

10. **Ask about the child.** Ask the parents if there is anything they think you should know.

11. **Focus on solutions.** Things will go more smoothly if you’ll focus on solutions rather than the problem.

12. **Summarize.** Before the conversation ends, summarize the discussion and what actions you, the student and the parents will take.

13. **End on a positive note.** When you can, save at least one encouraging comment for the end of the conversation.

14. **Keep a record.** You may find it helpful later to have a brief record of the conversation. Make notes as soon as possible afterward, while the details are fresh.
## Parent Communication Log

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Person Contacted</th>
<th>Regarding / Notes</th>
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The First Days: *Survival Skills for the First Year Teacher*
Parent Conference Checklist

Getting parents to attend the conference is only half the battle. Once they've arrived, you have to make it clear that their involvement is vital to their child's success. Experienced teachers offer the following quick tips to help get your conferences off on the right foot -- and keep them there:

- Dress professionally.
- Start every conference on time.
- Make it clear to parents that you like their child.
- Remain calm and positive.
- Listen carefully and reflectively.
- Emphasize a spirit of collaboration and cooperation.

Following the "script" below will help you make each conference a productive experience as well as a pleasant one.

- **Welcome parents** at the door and thank them for coming.
- **Establish rapport** by sharing an anecdote about the student or by inquiring about an activity the student takes part in outside school.
- **Mention the student's strengths first.**
- Briefly discuss the student's progress in each subject area and show examples of their work.
- Briefly discuss the student's behavior, work habits, and social skills.
- Devote half the conference to the parents' concerns. Invite parents to share their thoughts and suggestions about the student and encourage them to ask additional questions about their child's progress.
- Set two or three immediate goals for the student and work with the parents to create a plan for meeting those goals. Provide any materials parents might need to implement the plan.
- Arrange for a follow-up phone call or meeting and let parents know how they can reach you if problems arise.
- Review the highlights of the conference and end on a positive note.
- Walk the parents to the door and thank them for coming.
- Take a few minutes to make personal notes about the conference. If you agreed to follow up on a particular issue, note it on your calendar.

### Conference Day Checklist

- Welcome sign
- Sign-in sheet
- Student work displayed
- Student work portfolios
- Music
- Refreshments
- Table for brochures & flyers
- Chairs for parents
- Report cards
- Parent questionnaire
- Forms that need to be signed
- Translators
- Videos/pictures of students
- Parent volunteers
- PTO/PTA membership forms
# Parent Conference Questionnaire

The parent teacher conference offers an opportunity for us to share insights and answer questions about your child. The following questionnaire is a tool to help us use our time together most effectively. If you have additional questions or comments beyond those listed, please share those with me as well.

Thank you for your thoughtful considerations. I look forward to our time together.

Student Name

Parent/Guardian Name(s)

Contact phone: ___________________________ Best time to call________________________

The goals I have for my student this year are ____________________________________________

My student learns best when __________________________________________________________

My student’s activities/interests outside of school are ______________________________________

What I want you to know about my student is ____________________________________________

Areas I’m concerned about:

- [ ] Work habits
- [ ] Behavior
- [ ] Classwork
- [ ] Attitude
- [ ] Homework
- [ ] Grades in _________________
- [ ] Study habits
- [ ] Relationships with other students
- [ ] Other _________________

Some questions I have (about curriculum, standards, grades, procedures, testing, etc) are: __________

Medical Information you need to know is ____________________________________________________

- [ ] I would like to volunteer in the classroom by _________________
- [ ] My workplace or I would be willing to donate ____________________________
Substitute Survival

*With routines in place, having a substitute can be stress-free.*

When planning for a substitute, start at the very beginning of the day. Don’t expect the substitute to know what time to open the door in the morning. Avoid general times like “around noon, start reading.”

**Here are some suggestions for what to include in your Substitute notebook:**

1. Daily schedule; include all classes (or content times), prep time, lunch and duty times.
2. School bell schedule
3. Class role sheet(s), including seating charts for each class and special work group.
4. Opening activities: attendance, lunch count, etc.
5. Location of the day’s lesson plans.
6. Alternate lessons plans (in case of an emergency where you were unable to prepare).
7. Location of all manuals an materials to be used (including procedures for distribution and collection if applicable)
8. Procedures for use of AV materials and equipment
9. Copy machine location and any code they may need in order to use it.
10. Specific clean up directions such as “All paper off the floor, notebooks in the crates and chairs on the tables.”
11. Classroom procedures for moving about the room, bathroom/drink trips, collecting student work and what to do if they get done early.
12. Classroom rules and discipline procedures.
13. Rewards and consequences
14. Names of students who can be depended upon. Assign responsible students with particular helping tasks, letting the sub know who/what/when etc.
15. Names and schedules of students who leave the classroom for special reasons, such as medication, remedial or gifted program, speech, etc.
16. Names and schedules of assistants and/or volunteers
17. Name and location of a teacher to call upon for assistance as well as office personnel contact information.
18. Procedures for dismissal
19. Floor plan of the building including emergency drill routes and procedures.
20. **Ask the substitute to leave a detailed review of the day.**

*Clean the classroom before your absence (if you know in advance). Both the substitute and the students will take better care of a tidy and well-maintained classroom.*
Dear Substitute,

Thank you for taking my class in my absence. Please take attendance and let me know who was absent. **If you would, please also leave me a note telling me how things went, who was most helpful, and what the class accomplished.** The following information will help you navigate the day, which I hope goes well!

Sincerely,

---

**Included in this packet you will find:**

- Classroom set up information
- My Daily Schedule
- Classroom Routines
- Rewards & Consequences
- Special Needs Student Information
- Names and Schedules of Volunteers/Assistants
- Emergency Information

**Also included separately are:**

- School Bell Schedule
- School Map
- Classroom Policies and Procedures Handouts
- Discipline Plan & Forms
- Emergency Lesson Plans (in case of sudden illness)
Classroom Set-up

You are substituting today for ___________________________ in room(s) ___________________________

- **Duty:**

- **Lunch/Prep times:**

- **Attendance Sheets & Seating Charts:**

- **Opening Activity Procedures** *(Attendance, Lunch Count, etc.)*:

- **Today's Lesson Plans** can be found:
  *(In the event I am unable to leave plans for the day, emergency plans are in this folder)*

- **Manuals and Materials** Location and directions for distribution and collection:

- **AV Equipment** Location and directions for use:

- **Copy Machine** Location & Code:

- **Clean up** directions:

*Substitute Information Packet*
## Teacher’s Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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**Special Duties:**
## Description of Class Routines

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td>Quiet Signal</td>
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<td>Restroom</td>
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<td>Pencil Sharpener</td>
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<td>Water Fountain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recess/Break/Line up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collecting Student Work</td>
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<td>When Done Early</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hall &amp; Hall Passes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Before Leaving</td>
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<td>Dismissal</td>
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</table>
**Rewards & Consequences**

**Rewards**
Please feel free to reward students generously with a warm smile, kind word and special attention. In addition, you may also give out the following to students who follow the rules or as a “carrot” for extra motivation to do well.

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<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Reward</th>
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**Consequences**
Students who choose to break a rule or who are not being safe, respectful or responsible receive the following consequences for their actions. Please record all discipline in your detailed review of the day so I may follow up with that student. Thank you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule/Behavior</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
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### Student Information

#### Student Helpers
These are students who can be depended upon to know the class procedures and routines as well as help in any tasks you require. They may also be assigned special jobs as listed below.

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<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Special Job</th>
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#### Special Needs Students
(Students who leave the classroom for special reasons, such as medication, remedial or gifted program, speech, etc.)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Need or Schedule</th>
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*Substitute Information Packet*
### Faculty/Staff Support

#### Classroom Aides/Volunteers/Teacher Assistants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Duties</th>
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#### School Personnel

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone/Extension</th>
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<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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<td>Vice Principal</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurse/Counselor</td>
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#### Teachers Available to Offer Assistance

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
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*Substitute Information Packet*

*The First Days: Survival Skills for the First Year Teacher*
Emergency Drills & Procedures

Emergency Drill Procedures are located:

First Aid Kit/Band-aids are located:

---

Fire Drill

Exit to Use:

Destination:

Location of evacuation diagram:

Fire Alarm is located:

---

Earthquake Drill

Instructions:

---

Lockdown Drill

Instructions:

---
Setting Professional Development Goals

The professional educator is always learning and growing. The professional educator is on an endless journey of looking for new and better ideas, new information, and improved skills to succeed with students.

Here are some topics you might use to develop your professional goals:

- Setting high expectations for student achievement
- Seeing that students perform at or above expectations
- Differentiated instruction
- Discussion skills in the classroom
- Using research and technological advancements
- Planning instructional strategies
- Applying higher-order learning skills
- Applying increasingly complex learning tasks
- Using cooperative learning
- Using invitational learning
- Using guided practice
- Planning according to types of students
- Maintaining a smooth flow and momentum of events
- Planning for assessment
- Formative and summative assessment
- Data-driven decision making
- Evaluating and improving classroom instruction

Suggested Activities for Professional Development:

- Join or organize a support group or professional learning community (PLC)
- Listen to and observe other effective teachers
- Listen to tapes and watch videos
- Read the literature
- Participate in conferences, seminars and additional course work
- Use the research (ERIC)

Implementing what you have learned:

- Identify what you need to resolve.
- Read to see what technique is available.
- Observe other teachers using this technique.
- Ask questions about the technique.
- Discover that many others are using the technique.
- Determine that the technique is a commonsense approach supported by research.

A professional is defined not by the business a person is in, but by the way that person does his or her business.
Continuing Professional Development for Licensure Renewal

Teacher Standards and Practices Commission
465 Commercial St NE • Salem, OR 97301

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Studies show that educators participate in continued professional development in order to enhance student learning. Educators wish to gain new skills that they may incorporate into their work with students.

Educators who hold Basic, Standard or Continuing Licenses are required to complete a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Plan in order to renew the license. This requirement does not apply to initial licenses. The Oregon CPD plan provides two options for the educator. One is a plan offered by the District. The second is an individual plan developed by the educator in collaboration with a supervisor or a CPD advisor. A CPD advisor may be a colleague, faculty member from an institution, or business or community member that is related to the activities of the plan and approved by the educator’s supervisor.

The educator will complete a form that identifies the CPD goals of the educator, the district and State, and will propose the activities necessary to fulfill the plan. At the conclusion of the cycle, the educator will reflect on the activities and how the plan has enhanced student learning. The advisor/supervisor will sign the form. The district will report "successful experience and completed CPD plan" on the Professional Educational Experience Report (PEER) Form when the educator applies for renewal of licensure.

WHAT IS A PDU?

A Professional Development Unit equates to one clock hour. One quarter hour of college or university credit equals 20 PDUs. One semester hour of college or university credit equals 30 PDUs.

Educators renewing Standard or Continuing Licenses in 2006 and beyond must meet the full requirement of 125 PDUs. Educators renewing Basic Licenses will complete 75 PDUs.
DOMAINS OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY

The professional development activities of an educator must be based on at least one of the six domains of professional competency. The domains are:

1. Subject Matter or Specialty
   - The educator may gain more background in the specific endorsement area or in specialty areas such as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or special education.

2. Assessment Strategies
   - The educator may develop new ways to assess learning. Examples of assessments are portfolios, demonstration performances, and written tests. An educator may work with the way assessment affects the curriculum design.

3. Methods and Curriculum
   - Educators may increase professional skills in classroom management, leadership, curriculum development, and administrative management.

4. Understanding Diversity
   - Educators may enhance ability to deal with diversity include understanding of learning abilities and styles, learning strategies, ethnic diversity, as well as economic diversity.

5. State and National Education Priority
   - The state and nation have set goals and priorities for curriculum and standards of achievement. Educators need to be aware of these priorities and their effect on work in the schools.

6. Use of Technology in Education
   - Educators may acquire skills in technology, computer programming, video operation, and multimedia in the context of enhancing student learning.
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

There are many activities that may be included in the educator's individual continuing professional development plan provided the activities meet the rule and are related to the goals of the plan. An educator's individual plan may use parts of an approved District CPD plan along with individual activities. Following are some suggested activities that may be included.

Additional course work--Courses may be undergraduate or graduate level if germane to the educator's current or anticipated assignment. One quarter hour equals 20 PDUs; one semester hour equals 30 PDUs.

Professional Conferences--A professional conference is any formal meeting, workshop, seminar or institute which addresses educational concerns.

Publication--An educator may write articles or reports that contribute to the effective practice of the profession. An educator may write and publish a book that focuses on relevant topics and applications or may develop curriculum in specific subject areas.

Peer or Student Teacher Mentoring--Mentoring is a systematic program of analyzing and discussing professional activities designed to coach or model new skills or strategies.

Site Committees--An educator may participate on a building site council working on school improvement.

Action Research--Action Research provides an opportunity for an educator or a group of educators to be involved in a substantial program or issue pertinent to one's assignment. Projects will last for at least two years and should focus on buildings or districts achieving their stated goals as measured by student performance or other evidence of effectiveness. The action research will culminate with a report on the findings and implications.

Internships—Planned work experiences in business, industry or the professions related to the educator’s assignment may be counted toward CPD requirements.
## Professional Training & Workshops

### PDU Summary by School Year

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<th>College Credits/Seat Hours</th>
<th>Total PDUs for Year</th>
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### Date

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**NOTE:**

- One clock hour = one PDU
- One quarter hour = 20 PDUs.
- One semester hour = 30 PDUs.
# Professional Training & Workshops

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<th>Professional Development Activity</th>
<th>PDU Hours</th>
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**NOTE:**
- One clock hour = one PDU
- One quarter hour = 20 PDUs.
- One semester hour = 30 PDUs.

Professional Training PDUs
What to Put in Your Own Personnel File

*It is in your best interest for you to take control of your employment records. Create your own file so you can verify and document your achievements and progress.*

Here is a recommended checklist of documents to keep:

- Copies of all your personal employment contracts
- Copies of any supplemental/extracurricular contracts, if applicable
- Current resume
- Retirement records and correspondence
- Certificates, licenses, diplomas, etc.
- Records on in-services and trainings (PDU Record Sheet)
- All observations and evaluations and your responses or comments
- Proof of Association (union) membership and information on benefit programs
- Record of school and college attendance, dates and degrees
- Transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate credits and degrees
- Record of accumulated sick leave, personal leave and if applicable, vacation leave days as well as forms of days used
- Record of commendations, awards and honors
- Copies of work/teaching schedules for current and past years
- Records of any incidents involving student discipline, violence, or other disruptive behavior
- Copies of letters and memos to and from administrators
- Copies of letters to and from parents and colleagues
- Copies of all documents in your district maintained personnel files
- Copies of letters of recommendations from your supervisor(s)
On My Way... Now What?

Survival Skills for the First-Year Teacher
Internet Resources

TSPC (Teaching Standards & Practices Commission: http://www.tspc.state.or.us/)

Harry Wong: http://www.EffectiveTeaching.com

Teacher’s Net: http://www.teachers.net

Education World: www.education-world.com

Education News: www.educationnews.org

About.Com: www.k-6educators.about.com

Busy Educator’s Newsletter: www.glavac.com


AskEric Lesson Plans: http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/index.shtml

The Lesson Plans Page: http://www.lessonplanspage.com/

The Lesson Plan Library: http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/

Teachers Net-LESSON PLANS: http://teachers.net/lessons/

The Academy: http://ofcn.org/cyber.serv/academy/ace/

Core Knowledge: http://www.coreknowledge.org/CKproto2/resrcs/lessonsindex.htm

Lesson PlanZ.com: http://www.lessonplanz.com

United States Department of Education: http://www.paec.org/teacher2teacher

Teach-Nology: www.teach-nology.com/tutorials/teaching/differentiate/planning/
My Own Top 10 List of

Internet Resources

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Fostering an Ethic of Excellence

Ron Berger

For 25 years I've led a double life. I'm a full-time classroom teacher in a public school. To make ends meet for my family, I've worked during the summers, and sometimes weekends, as a carpenter. In carpentry there is no higher compliment builders give each other than this: That person is a craftsman. This one word says it all. It connotes someone who has integrity, knowledge, dedication, and pride in work—someone who thinks carefully and does things well.

I want a classroom full of craftsmen—students whose work is strong, accurate, and beautiful; students who are proud of what they do and respect themselves and others.

I want a classroom full of craftsmen.

In my classroom I have students who come from homes full of books and students whose families own almost no books at all. I have students for whom reading, writing, and math come easily, and students whose brains can't follow a line of text without reversing words and letters. I have students whose lives are generally easy, and students with physical disabilities and health or family problems that make life a struggle. I want them all to be craftsmen. Some may take a little longer; some may need to use extra strategies and resources. In the end, they need to be proud of their work, and their work needs to be worthy of pride.

I'm concerned when I pick up a newspaper these days and find an article about the "crisis" in education and how a new quick fix will remedy things. I think as a nation we've gotten off track regarding education. Our concern seems to be centered on testing and on ranking students, schools, and districts. I believe our concern should be centered on what we can do in our schools and communities to bring out the best in kids.

Some schools are very good; some are not. Those that are good have an ethic, a culture, which supports and demands quality work. Those schools that are not effective need a lot more than new tests and new mandates. They need to build a new culture.

In my work with schools across the country, I encounter places where students are remarkably good at something. These schools dominate state competitions in orchestra, chess, wrestling, visual arts, debate, and essay contests, and have done so for years.

What's going on here? I don't think this is genetics or luck. Private schools and universities can recruit talent, but these are public schools. Every year they take whatever kids they happen to get and make them stars. This phenomenon isn't limited to special areas. My colleagues at the Central Park East High School in Harlem and the Fenway High School in Boston work with urban students, almost all of whom are low-income and non-white, for whom the predicted graduation statistics are dismal. These schools graduate 95% of their seniors and send about 90% to college.

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Dr. Thomas Lickona, Editor • Marthe Seales, Assistant Editor
These schools don’t have any special magic. The key to excellence is this: *It is born from a culture.* When children enter a family culture, a community culture, or a school culture that demands and supports excellence, they work to fit into that culture. It doesn’t matter what their background is. Once those children enter a culture with a powerful ethic—an ethic of excellence—that ethic becomes their norm. It’s what they know.

**When students enter a culture that demands excellence, they work to fit in.**

Unfortunately, most students, I believe, are caught on school treadmills that focus on quantity of work rather than quality of work. Students crank out endless final products every day and night. Teachers correct volumes of such low-quality work; it’s returned to the students and often tossed into the wastebasket. Little in it is memorable or significant, and little in it engenders personal or community pride. I feel that schools need to get off this treadmill and shift their focus from quantity to quality.

Work of excellence is transformational. Once a student sees that he or she is capable of quality, of excellence, that student is never quite the same. There is a new self-image, a new notion of possibility. There is an appetite for excellence. After students have had a taste of excellence, they’re never quite satisfied with less.

Five practices (see box below) are essential for creating and sustaining a classroom culture of excellence: (1) assign work that matters; (2) study examples of excellence; (3) build a culture of critique; (4) require multiple revisions; and (5) provide opportunities for public presentation.

**Classroom Projects That Inspire Excellence**

When I speak, I begin with slides of children’s work—work by my own students and students in other classrooms in our school. People sit up. They point to things on the screen. There’s electricity in the room.

* A science project. I show slides of my 6th-grade students managing a scientific project, done in collaboration with a local college laboratory, to test the town’s homes for radon gas. The slides show students preparing surveys, kits, and informational packets for the families in town and learning the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet program to do data analysis of results. They show pages from their final radon report for the town. The report turned out to be the first comprehensive radon picture of any town in the state. After being featured in the media, our report was requested by towns all over the state, by the state radon commission, and even by

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<th><strong>Creating a Culture of Excellence: Five Pedagogical Practices</strong></th>
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<td>1. Assign work that matters. Students need assignments that challenge and inspire them. At the Raphael Hernandez School in Boston, for example, middle schoolers take a study of vacant lots in their Roxbury neighborhood. Students researched the history of the sites and interviewed neighborhood members regarding what uses they would prefer for the lots. Their proposals were formally presented to the mayor of Boston and his staff, and one of the sites was later converted into community gardens.</td>
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<td>2. Study examples of excellence. Before they begin work on a project, the teacher and students examine models of excellence—high-quality work done by previous students as well as work done by professionals. What makes a particular science project, piece of writing, or architectural blueprint so good? What was the process of achieving such high quality? What mistakes and revisions were probably part of the process?</td>
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<td>3. Build a culture of critique. Formal critique sessions build a culture of critique that is essential for improving students’ work. The rules for group critique: “Be kind; be specific; be helpful.” Students presenting a piece of work first explain their ideas or goals and state what they are seeking help with. Classmates begin with positive comments and phrase suggestions as questions: “Have you considered . . . ?” The teacher uses the critique session as the optimal opportunity for teaching necessary concepts and skills. Through this process, students have regular experiences of being able to improve the quality of a piece of work as a result of feedback from others.</td>
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<td>4. Require multiple revisions. In most schools, students turn in first drafts—work that doesn’t represent their best effort and that is typically discarded after it has been graded and returned. In life, when the quality of one’s work really matters, one almost never submits a first draft. An ethic of excellence requires revision.</td>
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<td>5. Provide opportunities for public presentation. Every final draft students complete is done for an outside audience—whether a class of kindergartners, the principal, or the wider community. The teacher’s role is not as the sole judge of their work but rather similar to that of a sports coach or play director—helping them get their work ready for the public eye.</td>
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the federal radon commission. The slides show a classroom transformed into something like a non-profit company—
printing and mailing off copies of the report, responding to requests and questions with individual cover letters. This was
work that mattered.

♦ **Biographies of seniors.** In another project, my 6th-graders interviewed senior citizens and wrote their biographies.
_No one needed to tell them the reason for doing a quality job. These books were to be gifts to the seniors, gifts that
might become precious heirlooms. Because their work would have this public audience, students were motivated
to seek critique from everyone. They read the drafts of their biographies to the whole class for suggestions. They labored,
draft after draft, on their cover designs. They wanted their books to be perfect. This, too, was work that mattered.

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**Once students see that they are capable of excellence, they are never quite satisfied with less.**

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**Archiving Excellence**

One of my jobs as a teacher is to be an archiver of excellence. Wherever I am, in my school or in other schools, I am on the lookout for models of beautiful work, powerful work, important work. These examples set the standards for what my students and I aspire to achieve in school.

In my library I have photographs of historical architectural scale models built by 4th-graders in Decatur, Georgia, that would set a high standard even for high school students. I have a field guide to a pond in Dubuque, Iowa, written and illustrated by elementary school students, that is bookstore quality. I have statistical math studies designed by 3rd-graders in Maine. I have photocopies of students’ stories, essays, reviews, novels, and poetry. I have videotapes of portfolio presentations by students from all over the country. And I have 25 years of models from my own classroom and school—copies, photographs, slides, and videotapes—that I draw from almost daily.

When my class begins a new project we begin with a taste of excellence. I pull out these models of work by former students, videotapes of former students presenting their work, exemplary work from other schools, and examples of work from the professional world. We discuss what makes the work powerful; what makes a piece of creative writing compelling; what makes a scientific or historical research project significant and stirring.

**Culture Matters**

The achievement of students is governed to a large degree by their family culture, neighborhood culture, and school culture. Students may have different potentials, but in general their attitudes and achievements are shaped by the culture around them. Students adjust their attitudes and efforts in order to fit into the culture. If the peer culture ridicules academic effort and achievement—it isn’t cool to care openly about school—this is a powerful force. If the peer culture celebrates investment in school, this is just as powerful. Schools need to consciously shape their cultures to be places where it’s safe to care, cool to care.

When children first come to school, they do care. An enthusiastic attitude toward learning seems universal in kindergartens. By secondary school, however, things are very different. I am struck in particular by conversations with middle school and high school students from poor urban or rural neighborhoods who attend large schools. When I ask about the social norm for showing interest in learning, I am often met by friendly laughter. Students say you would be out of your mind to raise your hand in class or otherwise show interest in school. This attitude appears to be a primary obstacle to achievement in these schools.

**Jason’s Story: The Power of Positive Peer Pressure**

I was raised with the message that peer pressure was something negative. Peer pressure meant kids trying to talk you into smoking cigarettes or taking drugs. I realized after ten years of teaching that positive peer pressure was often the primary reason my classroom was a safe, supportive environment for student learning. Peer pressure wasn’t something to be afraid of, to be avoided, but rather something to be cultivated in a positive direction.

**Schools need to create a culture where it's "cool to care."**

A few years back I got a boy who was new to my school as a sixth-grader. He entered the class with a bad attitude and wasn’t about to change it to please an adult.

This boy, whom I’ll call Jason, was clear about who he was. The evening of the first day of school I read through his background sheet, an introduction form he had filled out to let me know a bit about his life and interests. I met with him the next day to learn more about him. I learned that Jason’s father was a logger who spent his life alone in the woods cutting firewood. Jason worked with him whenever he had the opportunity—clearing brush, cutting and stacking wood, and working with heavy equipment. Jason was proud of his
skill in the woods, and he loved his life there.

Jason hated school, he said. He hated teachers. He had always done terribly in school, but it didn't matter; he didn't need school—his father hadn't needed school, and he didn't either. Soon he could leave school and cut wood full-time and make a living. He hated the fact that he didn't live with his father. He hated the fact that his mother had moved to this junky town. He hated women and girls in general.

Jason made no friends the first two days of school. In the classroom and on the playground he was suspicious and unfriendly. On the third day, I took the class and their parents on an Outward Bound-type adventure trip to build a sense of community and challenge. We climbed a mountain and went cave-exploring together. The students and parents were scared and excited and knew they had to work together as a team. Underground, in the dark, Jason couldn't worry about whose hand he was grabbing for help. He helped others, even girls, and they helped him. He got compliments from others for his support in the tight squeezes and smiled for the first time.

But he wasn't a new person. The trip had been a beginning, had built important bridges, but back in the classroom it wasn't long before his scowl returned. He'd be darned if he was going to put any effort into his schoolwork.

**Adult Approval Was Not Enough**

If my teaching personality were all I had going for me with Jason, I wouldn't have gotten too far. Adult approval was not the big motivator in his life. Fortunately, I had the power of the school culture on my side. Students in my school have learned to care since pre-school. They have shared their work with pride with different audiences since they were four years old. They have been surrounded by models of strong work and children who enjoy school, care about their work, and are outspoken about it. They have learned to feel that a safe and inclusive emotional environment is the norm. This is not to say that work or behavior is always good, but rather that it is expected.

**Our students have learned that in order to fit in, working hard and respecting others are expected.**

There was no role for a mean-spirited class clown in our classroom. Jason may have garnered social power and attention in other schools by cracking jokes at the expense of others or at the expense of class lessons, but here he got only frustration and complaints from peers. Jason may have fit in fine in other schools by turning in lousy work, but here, during our regular classroom critique sessions, he was met with critical eyes and helpful suggestions from peers. When Jason turned in sloppy, meager work, other students advised him to put a little more care into it. At first, he met their suggestions with defensive anger.

**The turning point for Jason came when he pinned up something for class critique that was well done and was showered with compliments from the class. They knew what a breakthrough this was for him. He actually blushed. In the same way, the first time Jason stepped out of his role as a bully to do something nice for another student, it was discussed during our morning meeting, and he was met with unfamiliar praise.**

During the course of the fall, Jason's work began to improve, along with his attitude. At one point he looked at his work and smiled. "I'm proud of this," he said. "I think it's the first good thing I've ever really done in school. I think the class will like this."

**Jason had bought in to school.**

Jason's academic skills didn't become stellar overnight, and his personality remained difficult at times. But he was a different kid. He made eye contact with me and with others. He was proud of his work. He was willing to put time into reading and writing. He had bought into school.

**An Ethic of Excellence**

How do I really know what I have done for students? How do I know what my school has done? I think of my life in my small town. The policeman is a former student. I trust him to protect my life. The nurse at the medical clinic is my former student. I trust her with my health. The lifeguard at the town lake is my former student. She watches my grandsons as they swim. There may not be numbers to measure these things, but there is a reason I feel so thankful trusting my life to these people. They take pride in doing their best. They have an ethic of excellence. 

*Adapted from Ron Berger's *An Ethic of Excellence: Building a Culture of Craftsmanship with Students (Heinemann, 2003).* Ron Berger was a public school teacher for 28 years and is now a school consultant/designer for Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound. He can be reached at rberger@massed.net.*
The Case Against the Zero

Even those who subscribe to the “punishment” theory of grading might want to reconsider the way they use zeros, Mr. Reeves suggests.

BY DOUGLAS B. REEVES

This is not a trick question. If you are using a grading scale in which the numbers 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0 correspond to grades of A, B, C, D, and F, then what number is awarded to a student who fails to turn in an assignment? If you responded with a unanimous chorus of “zero,” then you may have a great deal of company. There might be a few people who are familiar with the research that asserts that grading as punishment is an ineffective strategy, but many of us curmudgeons want to give the miscreants who failed to complete our assignments the punishment that they richly deserve. No work, no credit — end of story.

Groups as diverse as the New York State United Teachers and the Thomas Fordham Foundation rally around this position. Let us, for the sake of argument, accept the point. With the grading system described above, the failure to turn in work would receive a zero. The four-point scale is a rational system, as the increment between each letter grade is proportionate to the increment between each numerical grade — one point.

But the common use of the zero today is based not on a four-point scale but on a 100-point scale. This defies logic and mathematical accuracy. On a 100-point scale, the interval between numerical and letter grades is typically 10 points, with the break points at 90, 80, 70, and so on. But when the grade of zero is applied to a 100-point scale, the interval between the D and F is not 10 points but 60 points. Most state standards in mathematics require that fifth-grade students un-

DOUGLAS B. REEVES is the chairman and founder of the Center for Performance Assessment, Boston, Mass. His most recent publications are Assessing Educational Leaders (Corwin Press, 2004) and Accountability for Learning (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2004).
Understand the principles of ratios — for example, A is to B as 4 is to 3; D is to F as 1 is to zero. Yet the persistence of the zero on a 100-point scale indicates that many people with advanced degrees, including those with more background in mathematics than the typical teacher, have not applied the ratio standard to their own professional practices. To insist on the use of a zero on a 100-point scale is to assert that work that is not turned in deserves a penalty that is many times more severe than that assessed for work that is done wretchedly and is worth a D. Readers were asked earlier how many points would be awarded to a student who failed to turn in work on a grading scale of 4, 3, 2, 1, 0, but I’ll bet not a single person arrived at the answer “minus 6.” Yet that is precisely the logic that is employed when the zero is awarded on a 100-point scale.

There are two issues at hand. The first, and most important, is to determine the appropriate consequence for students who fail to complete an assignment. The most common answer is to punish these students. Evidence to the contrary notwithstanding, there is an almost fanatical belief that punishment through grades will motivate students. In contrast, there are at least a few educators experimenting with the notion that the appropriate consequence for failing to complete an assignment is to require the student to complete the assignment. That is, students lose privileges — free time and unstructured class or study-hall time — and are required to complete the assignment. The price of freedom is proficiency, and students are motivated not by threats of failure but by the opportunity to earn greater freedom and discretion by completing work accurately and on time. I know my colleagues well enough to understand that this argument will not persuade many of them. Rewards and punishments are part of the psyche of schools, particularly at the secondary level.

But if I concede this first point, the second issue is much more straightforward. Even if we want to punish the little miscreants who fail to complete our assignments — and I admit that on more than one occasion with both my students and my own children, my emotions have run in that direction — then what is the fair, appropriate, and mathematically accurate punishment? However, veneful I may feel on my worst days, I’m fairly certain that the appropriate punishment is not the electric chair. Even if I were to engage in a typically fact-free debate in which my personal preference for punishment were elevated above efficacy, I would nevertheless be forced to admit that giving a zero on a 100-point scale for missing work is a mathematical inaccuracy.

If I were using a four-point grading system, I could give a zero. If I am using a 100-point system, however, then the lowest possible grade is the numerical value of a D, minus the same interval that separates every other grade. In the example in which the interval between grades is 10 points and the value of D is 60, then the mathematically accurate value of an F is 50 points. This is not — contrary to popular mythology — “giving” students 50 points; rather, it is awarding a punishment that fits the crime. The students failed to turn in an assignment, so they receive a failing grade. They are not sent to a Siberian labor camp.

There is, of course, an important difference. Sentences at Siberian labor camps ultimately come to an end, while grades of zero on a 100-point scale last forever. Just two or three zeros are sufficient to cause failure for an entire semester, and just a few course failures can lead a student to drop out of high school, incurring a lifetime of personal and social consequences.

This issue is as emotional as anything I have encountered since the phonics versus whole language debate. Scholars regress to the persuasive tactics of professional wrestlers (no offense intended to wrestlers — this article will generate enough hate mail as it is), and research and logic are subordinated to vengeance masquerading as high standards. Because the emotional attachment to the zero is so strong, I have given up advocating that 50 points should represent the lowest grade. What do I think we can do to preserve some level of sanity in our grading system is to return to a four-point system. As no longer equal 100 points, but four points. If there is a need for greater specificity, then we can choose an infinite number of digits to the right of the decimal point and thus differentiate between the 3.449 and 3.448 to our heart’s content. But at the end of the day in such a system, the F is a zero — one point below the D. It is fair, accurate, and, some people may believe, motivational. But at least the zero on a four-point scale is not the mathematical travesty that it is when applied to a 100-point system.

December 2009 / January 2010

Dreams and Wishes Can Come True

The struggles of beginning teachers are many. Statistics show that 17% of new teachers will not return for a second year. In the first three to five years of teaching, over 50% of the teachers will not return to the classroom.

What is it that these three successful teachers did in their first year to keep them in their classrooms and defy the national odds?

Sarah Ragan: Lost Without Procedures

Sarah says, “In my first year, because I’m a Title I teacher, the school term started late for me. I watched the other first-year teachers with interest—I wanted to learn from what they did. Unfortunately, every single one of them struggled on their first day. Without fail, they would engage their students—not in learning, but in never-ending battles over pencils, hallway behavior, noise levels, and so on.

“I decided that would not be me. I had read The First Days of School in college, and that evening, I went home and wrote my First Day of School Script.”

Sarah’s script contains

- a welcome message,
- classroom procedures,
- behavior guidelines,
- a statement of high expectations, and
- a promise to her students.

See CD to view Sarah’s First Day of School Script.

When the term started for Sarah, she set down with her first, fourth, and fifth grade students and introduced them to how the classroom would be run. As a class, they discussed and modeled each classroom procedure.

Sarah explained the purpose of the procedures, walked students through their responsibilities, and made sure every single class member understood that the class would achieve success by working together.

From that day forward, there was never a question of what Sarah’s students ought to be doing—her students knew what to do from the minute they stepped in the classroom, to the time she dismissed them.
Everyone Is a Star

Sarah emphasizes that in her classroom, everyone is a star. Her behavior guidelines are called the STARS behavior guidelines.

Strive to do your best
Treat people and property with respect
Act in a trustworthy and respectful manner
Reflect on your actions
Show a cooperative spirit

With these guidelines, Sarah has found—much to her initial surprise—that the same students who exhibit behavior issues in other classrooms do not have issues in her class. Sarah’s students know to enter the classroom each day, look at the schedule written on the board, and get right to work. They are engaged and learning every minute of class!

Sarah proudly shares, “There is zero downtime in our time together. My students understand that I expect them to work hard, but also to have fun.

“I’ve actually been assigned some of the more difficult students to work with—students that my principal calls ‘some of the most streetwise students in school!’ These students begged to come to my class. They don’t know why they want to come, but I do. My class is well-managed. Everything is organized, and I am well-prepared.”

Sarah even had the pleasure of calling a particularly “streetwise” student’s home to tell his grandma how wonderfully he was doing.

“My students are responsible for themselves and stay on-task throughout class. I connect with each student personally. I know what their cat’s name is, and I know the reason they couldn’t get to sleep last night was because the neighbor was playing loud music. I encourage my students to do their best!”

It Is Never Too Early or Too Late

Every single one of Sarah’s students made progress last year. “This is not because,” as Sarah humbly shares, “I am an extraordinary teacher.”

It is because Sarah’s students had a purpose.

They knew what to do (objective),
when to do it (agenda),
and to what extent to do it (rubric).

Sarah, in her very first year of teaching, received glowing evaluations. From the excellent rapport she has with her students, to the brisk pace of lessons and the warm and inviting classroom environment she has created—Sarah rated “above standard” while the rest of her first-year colleagues floundered.

Sarah’s advice to new teachers is simple. Create a plan and work it. “Even though the first day of school has come and gone, it is not too late to have an effectively-managed classroom. Create a classroom management plan and implement it, and you will see changes in your students and yourself beyond your wildest imagination.
“Without procedures, none of what I teach would make a difference.”

Stacey Greene: Practice Makes Perfect

Stacey Greene jokes that her students must be sick and tired of having to practice procedures over and over again until they get them right. Yet, she knows that a little extra effort at the start of the school year is far better than having to raise her voice at her students or to lose her cool with them mid-term.

Stacey respects and treats her students as she would like them to treat her. So, on the first day of school, she greets every student at the door with a firm handshake, a cheerful “Good Morning,” and a big smile. She reasons, if even she—the teacher—was nervous, her students would be nervous, too. Stacey feels responsible to put her students at ease on their first day of school!

Start on the Right Foot

Stacey organizes her classroom so everything is in place for her students to begin learning immediately. There are clear directions posted on the board and the students have no time to visit with each other or to wander around the room. They put away their book bags, find their assigned desk quickly, and start on the bellwork.

Once all her students are seated and working diligently, Stacey calls for their attention and introduces herself. She has a detailed, minute-by-minute First Day of School Script prepared and knows exactly what she wants to tell her students.

Stacey says, “After the initial butterflies, having a script gives me confidence. In fact, I have so much for the students to do that the time goes by in a flash!”

Stacey’s First Day of School Script contains notes, reminders, and procedures. She has

- a welcome greeting,
- morning bellwork ready to be posted before the students enter the classroom,
- an introduction of herself and a building community discussion,
- a discussion on rules, procedures, and expectations—what they are and why they are needed,
- cues for student input on the kinds of rules, procedures, and expectations they think are necessary for the class to run smoothly,
- the school assembly procedure and a practice,
- the bathroom procedure and a practice,
- assignment of classroom jobs, defining students’ responsibilities, and a practice, and
- the lunch procedure and a practice.

A crucial element of Stacey’s effectiveness is she introduces and practices the procedures with her students before they are left to carry them out on their own.
Effective Teaching...

by Harry and Rosemary Wong

This article was printed from Teachers.Net Gazette, located at http://teachers.net

Connect with Your Students

Stacey shares, “Before I started teaching, I would hear disgruntled teachers complain, ‘No matter what I do, the students just don’t get it.’ By ‘it,’ they were referring to the rules and expectations of the teacher.

“I was naturally concerned that despite my best efforts when I start teaching, my students would not get ‘it,’ either. To my pleasant surprise, I’ve found that it’s not rocket science. In fact, it is common sense. I find my students respond to a strategy that we all employ when communicating in our daily lives:

“When someone doesn’t understand what you would like them to do, rephrase your request, or try to break your request down into terms that they will understand and can relate to. In short, connect with your students.

“The key to a well-managed classroom is making sure that classroom procedures are clear, straightforward, and easy to follow. Students must understand how to do the classroom procedures, as well as why they are doing them—it is the only way that we, as teachers, will gain their cooperation.”

The Only Constant Is Change

Stacey says, “Learning never stays the same, and children are not the same either. The only sure thing is I will have to try something new with every new class that I’m privileged to teach.

“I hope and pray that I will never become a teacher who is so set in my own ways that I cease to be open to new ideas and techniques. For then, nobody wins. The teacher who is not dissatisfied with uncooperative students is preventing them from doing their best.

“I am happy with the tone that I set on the first day of school, and every day things get better. Looking back, I can think of many things that I would have done differently. But the great news is that I have next year, and the year after, and many more years ahead to give my students the best first day of school ever!”
Nick Saadipour: A “Light Bulb Moment”

Nick Saadipour quit an exciting career as an actor to teach. Soon after walking into the classroom, he found himself stressed out. Nick had to remind himself daily why he had entered the profession. Perhaps he had been mistaken in believing teaching was his calling!

Barely weeks into the school year, Nick attended an inservice meeting. Speakers included Harry Wong, Chelonnda Seroyer (featured on the DVD in The First Days of School), Cindi Rigsby (North Carolina Teacher of the Year for 2008 - 2009), and motivational speaker Derek Greenfield. At the end of the workshop, Nick left saying to himself, “Every one of those speakers was more inspiring and moving than a good episode of the Oprah Winfrey show!”

Even better, Nick left the workshop with a renewed energy and a promise of success. He had had a “light bulb moment.”

At the start of school, Nick thought he was well-prepared. He had read The First Days of School and had a Classroom Management Plan in hand. Unfortunately, Nick neglected one key component of a successful classroom management plan.

He introduced his students to his classroom procedures, but overlooked the need to rehearse and reinforce those procedures.

The problem was not in Nick’s procedures, but in his implementation of procedures. Professional actors rehearse their lines and actions day in and day out to ensure they do everything right. So how could Nick expect his students to be experts at his classroom procedures if he hadn’t given them the opportunity to rehearse the procedures?

Slow and Steady Wins the Race

After the workshop, Nick went back to his students and explained that though he had set high expectations for them, but he had failed to model how the classroom would run. In fact, during a fire drill, he realized to his horror that his students were just sitting in class, waiting for him to explain the evacuation procedure. He had never modeled the procedure for them.

Besides modeling how each procedure would look and what it would sound like, Nick related its purpose to his students. His students soon realized:

Classroom procedures are not just for the teacher’s benefit. They benefit everyone in class.

Slowly but surely, as the class rehearsed the procedures, Nick could see the procedures gelling in their minds and having a positive effect on the learning environment. Nick says, “I remember vividly the first time I walked into the classroom and saw that a student was not doing the bellwork. Before I had a chance to say something, another student said, ‘What’s the procedure, please?’ I couldn’t help but smile.’” At the end of the year, Nick realized he only had to write a single discipline referral.

“All I want is a well-managed classroom where students can feel comfortable and are encouraged to learn and give their best. That is my guiding principle for everything I do.
“There is a major difference in my attitude between last year and this year. Last year, I was sitting in the new teacher conference, wondering what sorts of awful notes my substitute was leaving for me about my students. As expected, when I returned to class, I received a laundry list of complaints from the substitute.

“This year, I returned from an absence to find a note from the substitute saying that she had experienced the ‘best class ever!’ and that she would love to cover my class any time I was out.

“That is a true testament to the power of procedures and expectations in the classroom. I still have so much to learn, but now, instead of being afraid and doubtful of my calling, I cannot wait to see where my teaching career takes me. I know that I can only get better as the years progress, and I can barely contain myself from shouting from the rooftops:

“To all new and struggling teachers, take heart, because procedures work!”

Procedures are shockingly simple and allow you to live your dream of making a difference in the lives of children. Just do it and see your wildest dreams come true.

Harry & Rosemary Wong products: http://EffectiveTeaching.com
The Habits of Mind

Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick have identified are

1. Persisting
2. Managing impulsivity
3. Listening with understanding and empathy
4. Thinking flexibly
5. Thinking about thinking (metacognition)
6. Striving for accuracy
7. Questioning and posing problems
8. Applying past knowledge to new situations
9. Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
10. Gathering data through all senses
11. Creating, imagining, innovating
12. Responding with wonderment and awe
13. Taking responsible risks
14. Finding humor
15. Thinking interdependently
16. Remaining open to continuous learning
My “TO DO” List

To Be Ready for the Opening of School

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My Own Top 10 List of Systems for
Organizing Myself & My Teaching Materials

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My Own Top 10 List of Systems for Organizing My Learners & Their Materials

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My Own Top 10 List of Instructional Tips I Want to Remember

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My Own Top 10 List of Tips to Remember in Planning & Pacing

1. Begin with the End in Mind...and Keep it in Mind!

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My Own Top 10 List of Formative and Summative Assessment Ideas I Want to Remember

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My Own Top 10 List of Strategies for Organizing

A Productive Learning-Centered Environment

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My Own Top 10 List of Strategies for Orchestrating

A POSITIVE Learning-Centered Environment

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My Own Top 10 List of Strategies for Working with Parents as Partners

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My Own Top 10 List of Systems for Organizing Professional, District & School Documents

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These materials and more can be found on the Central Point School District 6 website:

www.district6.org/staff/newteachers