

Secondary: First Five Days Template

Day 1

Meet at the door, Greet, and Seat

Meet students at door. Have a seating chart projected. While taking attendance, have a first day activity on desks that students can complete quietly and individually. Project the list or write it on your white board depending on the technology available in your classroom.

3 x 5 Card Activity: On the first day of school, hand out 3 x 5 cards and ask students to give you the following information:

1. Name, including nickname they prefer
2. Phone number
3. Name and phone number of the parent/guardian they prefer you call if you phone home
4. Previous school attended, or name of last year's teacher in your subject, or favorite teacher/subject
5. Books read or movies seen over the summer
6. Trips or exciting activities done over summer
7. What they do after school (work, soccer, ballet, play video games...)
8. Two things they are good at or are proud of
9. Hopes for this class
10. Anything else they want you to know (I hate to read aloud, I can't see the board, I don't speak English well, I love poetry) from the information on this card, make a "Find Someone Who ..." sheet so that as many students as possible are referenced.

Variation for 5x7 Card Activity: Ask them to write what they expect/want from your class. Have them respond to a current events story related to your discipline.

IDEA TO CONSIDER: Ask students to write about their summer vacation, including three key things, only two of which are true. Later, the process of others guessing which is the lie can become a get-to-know you activity contest.

Teach Procedure: Getting Attention/Quiet Signal Practice by having kids talk to people near them about their summer, then use signal to bring them back. You may want to use turning off the lights or raising your hand as a signal.

Introductions Introduce yourself, perhaps with a letter of introduction. Give an overview of the class. Show things that might inspire excitement about the coming year, like a video overview. You might also want to make a video of yourself and your summer, including you working to prepare your classroom!

Movement Activity

Secondary: First Five Days Template

Review some content or find out about student interests using a movement activity.

Four-Corners, also sometimes known as an Action Thermometer, works well for almost every subject area. You can focus on student likes and dislikes (Move to this corner if you love poetry, for example) or on opinions about controversial issues related to your subject or on current events.

Another approach is to use a class mixer. Create a “Find Someone Who” page for them to complete. You may use the information from your 3x 5 card activity or you may make your own list. You might consider a prize for that student who gets the most signatures. Have a class discussion about what were the easy, most difficult items, and if there was anyone who has missing items.

FIND SOMEONE WHO... (Each student can only sign once)

1. Went to Jefferson Middle School _____
2. Has three or more pets _____
3. May be the world’s worst speller _____
4. Has a birthday in September _____
5. Speaks three or more languages _____
6. Grew up in Pennsylvania _____
7. Has been to one of these places: Grand Canyon, Yellowstone National Park or Washington, DC _____
8. Has read all the Harry Potter books _____
9. Says they are a perfectionist _____
10. Hates to read aloud _____
11. Practices yoga or martial arts _____
12. Loves soccer and/or tennis _____
13. You did not know before this class _____
14. Has read 5 books over the summer _____
15. Has seen 5 movies over the summer _____
16. Enjoys poetry or science fiction _____
17. Has a headache or a sore throat _____
18. Loves caffeine or chocolate _____
19. Is a twin or has siblings who are twins _____
20. Has a notebook/folder already set up _____

Secondary: First Five Days Template

People Scavenger Hunt

You can choose items listed below to compose your list. You may want to shorten the list if you have a large class. You may arrange the items in a checker board grid so students may sign their names in various boxes. Be creative!

Find someone in the room who matches the descriptions below. You may ask any person three questions at a time before moving on to the next person. Try to get two names for each item.

1. Went 24 straight hours without texting
2. Went surfing
3. Posted a blog
4. Never set an alarm clock
5. Went to bed after midnight most nights
6. Went to two or more concerts
7. Stayed awake for more than 24 hours in a row
8. Watched the news at least 5 times
9. Saw at least 3 sunrises
10. Didn't eat any fast food
11. Spent more than 5 hours a day on screens
12. Saw 6 or more movies in the theatre
13. Flew on a plane
14. Had a birthday
15. Caught a fish
16. Cooked at least 3 meals for their family or friends
17. Worked at a regular job for 20 or more hours per week
18. Ate something they'd never eaten before
19. Painted something
20. Read 4 or more books
21. Played a sport regularly
22. Successfully completed at least one summer school class
23. Earned more money that they spent
24. Fell in love
25. Went on a family vacation
26. Spoke to family or friends in another country
27. Became or remained a vegetarian
28. Spoke to friends in a language other than English

Secondary: First Five Days Template

Homework

You can do any of a variety of things: anything from asking students to bring in a photo, object or song lyrics that says something about them to assigning a response to the teacher's introduction letter. Students could write a letter of their own.

Day 2

Meet at the door, Greet, and Seat

Greet students at door. Project seating chart. Have prompt or silent seat work for them to begin.

Teach Procedure: Start of Class

Common Traits of Effective Beginning Routines

- Completed Silently
- 10 Minutes Maximum
- Based on Content and/or Skills
- Credit Bearing
- No/Very Little Review Required
- Open-Ended, Nobody Can Finish Early
- Clear & Consistent Stop Signal

De-brief how they did already today. Explain and model what perfection looks and sounds like. Have them practice if needed.

Consider using one of the Organizers listed below for mixing students up to work on assignments together during the first week and during the year.

Appointment Clocks

Have students stand, greet anyone else and share their homework from last night (photo, song, object, letter). Student pairs can then make appointments to meet again on an appointment clock.

Make a copy of a clock for each student. Have students stand up and find a partner. If you have an odd number of students, one group will be a trio, but nobody should be in a trio more than

Secondary: First Five Days Template

once during the activity. Have partners exchange names on their papers for a particular time slot or label and then have them remain together and chat until you tell them to find another partner. The direction will be for everyone to find a partner and “make a 1 o’clock appointment.” The pairs trade names on their papers where it says 1 o’clock and chat until the teacher tells them to find a new partner and then trade names on the next number the teacher calls out.

Once students have made appointments with other students and filled in their clock, you can quickly pair up students for future activities by saying things like “everyone stand up and find your 6 o’clock partner.” Be sure to have them keep the clock or diagram in an easy to find location, perhaps in the front of their binder or taped to the back of a covered textbook.

Pair-Share

During the first week, the academic material should be engaging and relevant, and should be delivered in small “chunks.”

*For English, you might start with a short story (maybe even one about starting the school year like Jene Sheppard’s “Lost at C” or one of the many Gary Soto stories) or a poem.

*For history, you might start with a short biased historical text or a provocative current event.

*For math and science, you might start with a puzzle or real-life problem to solve.

*For PE, you might start with something about personal nutrition, fitness or obesity. After having students read a “chunk” of material (writing their questions, thoughts, connections etc.) have the students turn to a partner for a Pair-Share response.

Some questions you might have students discuss include:

*What did you like about this reading?

*What confused you about this reading?

*What did it remind you of in your own life or in others things you have read?

*What did it make you wonder about?

*What single word or phrase seems the most important and why?

Pair-Share is often introduced best by assigning a specific amount of time for each person to talk, such as 1 minute for partner A to talk first, and then 1 minute for partner B to respond to, or add to, what partner A said. Then 1 minute for them to talk freely (either can talk or both can talk) if they have anything left to say. Then move to the next question and switch roles, so partner B speaks first.

Model this for students so they are clear that they do not interrupt while their partner is talking for their 1 minute, but they can chat more freely in the last minute. Finally, give 2 minutes for each pair to complete a task, such as writing down the two best questions they have about

Secondary: First Five Days Template

what they read. Or what was the most interesting thing in the reading to them and why. Or what was the most confusing thing in the reading and why was it confusing to them. Or what was the most interesting or insightful thing their partner shared during their pair-talk.

Whole group de-briefing can include not just what students thought about the reading but also what they thought about the Pair-Share structure. In this way they can start to notice how they process information and what works for them and what doesn't.

Skills Lesson

Try using one of the Organizers listed previously. Remember the content is a small chunk as you are teaching students the structure and manner you want them to use while in your class.

Homework

Day 3

Meet and Greet

Reinforce Start of Class Procedure

Syllabus and/or Rules Activity

If you are using one, handout your **syllabus**. Have students stand and find a partner (use appointment clock or diagram for partnering) and complete a syllabus activity, like a scavenger hunt worksheet where the answers are in the syllabus. If you are not using a syllabus, you will need to review the classroom rules some other way. It is often a good idea to have students come up with the rules, using a **Rules Activity**. This can create more buy in and a sense of community.

The 3 B's

Give students three overarching principals like Be Respectful, Be Prepared, and Be Your Personal Best. Have students brainstorm a list of 3 specific rules that could go under each principle. Groups discuss and choose their best ones to present to teacher or class. You will choose the rules that most students agreed upon and add a few of your own as necessary. Your department/school/district may have these rules already. Find out before the year begins.

Teach Procedure: Restroom Policy.

Secondary: First Five Days Template

Have an area in the classroom where your bathroom passes live. For example, you may have 2 lanyards with a card on each that reads "Rm 251 Restroom Pass," so that students can wear the pass around their necks. Have a hook by the door where these are always hung, or a basket by the door where they are always kept, so students always know where to find them and can grab one as they leave the room. Your department or school may have a restroom policy already. However, you will need to have passes ready for students. You may have to make them or your school may supply them.

Introduce First Unit of Study- goals, objectives, and essential questions.

Content Lesson with guided practice. Keep in mind that a long lesson (over 20min) should include movement, multiple checks for understanding, and be chunked into smaller and connected pieces. Find ways to get 100% engagement when asking questions, using various **participation techniques**.

You will find many resources and ideas on line regarding total participation techniques. Do your research and consider which techniques you want to use. Whatever your choices, consider the following:

- *Requires intentionality
- *Helps appreciate student differences
- *Fosters student collaboration
- *Builds Confidence in students (especially in students that don't participate by choice)
- *Research shows that those who participate more have a higher self-concept
- *Peer rejection has a direct connection to class participation (peer rejection ceases, participation increases)
- *Must build TRUST

Homework - Consider the following:

Rules & Procedures Quiz tomorrow
Materials due in two days
Assign other homework as necessary

Day 4

Meet and Greet

Secondary: First Five Days Template

Start of Class Procedure

Syllabus & Rules Quiz

Skills Lesson

Have students moving at least once during this lesson.

Teach Procedure: Dismissal

Explain and show what perfect dismissal formation looks like. Have class practice if needed.

Homework

Materials due tomorrow

Assign other homework as necessary

Day 5

Meet and Greet

Start of Class Procedure

Materials and/or Completed Homework Check

Check to see who has all materials. Give points or rewards according to the system you set up.

Teach Procedure: Hand Raising

Content Lesson

As you introduce content for a unit, incorporate the skills and procedures taught earlier in the week, such as Talking to Text, Movement, and Pairing, as well as the newly introduced hand raising procedure.

Reflection Activity

This might be an exit slip or quick write or write-pair-share. Ask a few reflection questions, such as what they like so far about the class, what worries them, and one thing they've learned.

Homework