

Succeeding on the First Day

First-day tips for elementary teachers

Greet the children at the door and point them to their desks where you have already placed two easy-to-read name tags, one for them to wear and one to leave on their desks.

Plan a get-acquainted activity to help students (and you) learn each others' names.

Explain procedures for entering the room each morning: where to hang coats, when to be in their seats, how much conversation is permissible.

Tell how you will start each day. Then have them practice it. Finally, tell them whether their behavior met your expectations.

Describe how the lunch count, attendance and other daily tasks will be handled. Explain procedures for absences and late arrivals.

Explain each activity before it occurs and review the procedure as soon as you complete it.

Read the rules for behavior along with consequences and rewards. Point out the poster, bulletin board or chalkboard where they are listed. (See page 11 for suggestions.)

Give students a tour of the room and show them materials they may use.

Establish a specific location on the chalkboard or bulletin board for daily schedules, homework assignments and reminders of events and deadlines.

First-day tips for middle and high school teachers

Introduce yourself, including your background and special interests. Then have the students introduce themselves to you and one another in a similar manner.

Have students write on note cards their addresses, phone numbers, names of families/guardians and one interesting fact about themselves.

Hand out any notices from the school office and have students complete any required forms.

Outline your procedures for recording attendance and tardiness, giving assignments, collecting papers, making up work and issuing hall passes.

Post rules for classroom behavior on a bulletin board, poster, or — for the first few days — on a chalkboard. You may want to have the class help make the rules. Remember that they have no choice about some rules — so don't pretend they do.

