



# Stepping Stones to Success

Teacher to Teacher



# Stepping Stones to Success

## **Developed By**

School Improvement Writing Team  
and the  
CTE Resource Center

## **Developed For**

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# Introduction

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When asked for a piece of advice for new teachers, a 29-year veteran teacher said, “It’s a labor of love. And it’s also a lot of hard work.”

This guide for new teachers, *Stepping Stones to Success*, is intended to provide practical tips and useful information for anyone new to the teaching profession. Beginning this journey can seem overwhelming, but taken a step at a time, it’s a journey that will offer more rewards than regrets, more excitement than tedium, and more victories than losses.

On January 28, 1986, Christa McAuliffe boarded the space shuttle, *Challenger*, to make history as the first teacher in space. Even though Christa did not complete that mission, her legacy as a teacher lives on. Her motto was “I touch the future, I teach.” Of all the careers one could choose, the teaching profession truly impacts the future in ways unlike any other career. Be glad that you have chosen this admirable profession, and enjoy your journey!

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# Understanding Local Policies and Protocol

**“Good order is the foundation of all good things.” Edmond Burke**



# Understanding Local Policies and Protocol

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There are 132 school divisions in Virginia. Each one has its uniqueness, including rules, procedures, and most importantly, local policy. Don't confuse the law (Code of Virginia) with local school board policy. While policies are derived from the Code of Virginia, each can still be very different.

Make it your responsibility to learn about your local school board policy. This probably will not be your most interesting read, but it may be your most important read. Know your school board members. Attend school board meetings. This will help you understand the local issues that are driving policy-making, and you will get to know something about the decision-makers in your school division. Remember that school board members in most Virginia localities are elected officials, and constituents can and do hold them accountable. So it is important to your job that you develop a degree of political savvy.

Likewise, become very familiar with your school's rules and procedures. Become involved in as many school activities as possible.

## ***What are some of the most important sections of the state Code of Virginia with which I should become familiar?***

- Standards of Quality, Standards of Accreditation, General Powers and Duties of School Boards, Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Child Abuse and Neglect, Crimes and Offenses Generally. Available online at the Virginia Department of Education Web site (<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE>).

## ***What do I need to know about local policy?***

- Mission statement; school board members and duties; suspension and expulsion policy; crisis management plan; personnel policies; grievance procedures; statement of ethics; attendance policy (staff and students); student code of conduct; general curriculum and instruction; student records and confidentiality
- Not all school divisions will have all of the policies mentioned above, and some may be embedded in other sections.

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**NOTES:**

# Understanding Local Policies and Protocol

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## ***What do I need to know about my school?***

- Every school has its own culture. This is not written down anywhere! Keep your ears and eyes open, and learn your way around. It's a lot like traveling in a strange place, or "When in Rome, do as the Romans do!"
- If available, look at old yearbooks and other school publications. Study the trophy cabinet display. Take note of awards received.
- Introduce yourself to the cafeteria workers, the custodians, the secretaries, and the bus drivers. Ask them how long they've been at the school and what they like the best about the school.
- Attend PTA meetings, even when you may not be required to do so. Find out who the PTA/PTO president is, and at the first meeting, introduce yourself. Offer to help out.
- Attend sports events and other extra-curricular activities. Elementary students are thrilled to see their teachers at events outside of the classroom. Middle and high school students are too cool to admit to that, but they really do appreciate a teacher's interest in their activities.
- Know your school's dress code. ALWAYS DRESS PROFESSIONALLY, even if others do not.

### ***IDEAS!***

*For each middle and high school student, review the school's student code of conduct. They should already have this in the student agenda. If not, provide a copy for discussion. Use it as a model to discuss the written format of a policy, how policies and laws differ, how policy is made, and the consequences when policy is not followed.*

*For elementary students, have them write or draw thank you notes to the cafeteria workers or the custodians.*

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## **NOTES:**



# Understanding Your Community

**“It takes a village to raise a child.” Anonymous**



# Understanding Your Community

Every school's community is unique. If you are teaching in a community that is new to you, consider some of the following questions. There are no right or wrong answers, just thoughts to ponder.

<b>Questions to consider</b>	Write your answers below, as you discover the uniqueness of your school's community.
<b><i>On what night(s) is (are) choir rehearsal(s) or other important community activities?</i></b>	
<b><i>What is the first day of hunting season?</i></b>	
<b><i>What are the religious holidays on the calendar?</i></b>	
<b><i>What are the religious prohibitions or requirements that exist in your community?</i></b>	
<b><i>Are your students involved in community activities outside of the school day?</i></b>	
<b><i>What is the average length of bus rides for students? How many of your students walk to and from school?</i></b>	
<b><i>What are the arrangements for before-and-after school care and supervision of children?</i></b>	
<b><i>Is there evidence of gang activity in the community?</i></b>	

NOTES:

## Understanding Your Community

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<b>Questions to consider</b>	Write your answers below, as you discover the uniqueness of your school's community.
<b><i>To what degree are extended family members involved in the students' lives?</i></b>	
<b><i>What services are provided by community social services, law enforcement departments, and other agencies?</i></b>	
<b><i>Which businesses in the community will help support the school with materials, field trips, and such?</i></b>	
<b><i>Do you have a Parks and Recreation service and is there collaboration between the service and the school?</i></b>	
<b><i>What are the community health issues, and are there community services to address these issues?</i></b>	
<b><i>Are there wellness and fitness centers available to children and families?</i></b>	

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NOTES:



A black and white line drawing of a landscape. In the center, a river flows from the left towards the right. A path of five stepping stones crosses the river. On the left bank, there are several trees with star-shaped leaves. On the right bank, there is a large, dense tree with many small leaves. The background shows a simple horizon line and some distant landforms.

# Establishing a Safe and Secure Learning Environment

**“An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.” Mahatma Gandhi**



# Establishing a Safe and Secure Learning Environment

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## Questions

## Answers

***What can I do before school starts to set the tone of my classroom?***

Call each student prior to school to introduce yourself, welcome him or her, and communicate your expectations.

***How can I establish a positive environment on day one?***

Be friendly; have a sense of humor; be fair, be organized, be well-prepared, communicate simply and succinctly.

***What is my role regarding discipline?***

You are the leader. You set the example and model appropriate behavior. You determine the climate of the classroom. You guide, teach, shape, motivate, direct, correct, and set expectations.

***Will greeting my students at the door help with classroom management?***

Yes. Not only will the students know that you're glad to see them, but if you're at the door, you can help monitor behavior in the hallway.

***Will having a daily routine help with classroom management?***

Yes and no. You need to have specific procedures for the students to follow when they come to class and during class. Make sure you add variety regarding your placement in the classroom so you and the students don't become complacent.

***What if I'm having a bad day?***

Under no circumstances should you take it out on the students. Maintain your cool and your composure. Don't ever have the "deer in the headlights" expression or I'm the "boss of you" stance.

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**NOTES:**

# Establishing a Safe and Secure Learning Environment

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## Questions

***What if I feel myself getting angry?***

***How can data help with classroom management?***

***What are some additional key points to remember that will help me as a new teacher?***

## Answers

Count to 10 or 20 or 30 (silently). Take a few deep, slow breaths. Remember, if you add a “d” to anger you get “danger.” Students look to you for calmness and control.

If you collect data regarding discipline and can evaluate the trends, you will be able to adjust your methodologies to change behavior. (Look for more information in the Managing Your Data section.)

1. Be prepared. Good, sound instruction that keeps students engaged is one of the best, if not the best way to maintain order and ensure student success.
2. Be calm, and maintain self-control at all times. Remember, you can’t control the students. You can only control yourself and how you respond or react to your students.
3. Have a sense of humor. If you make a mistake, admit it. Admitting a mistake not only lets the students know you’re human, it helps build trust.
4. Be consistent.
5. Treat all students with the same respect.
6. Use quiet or non-verbal cues to get the students’ attention.
7. Don’t speak or teach until the students are quiet.
8. Don’t sit down and teach. Move around the room. Moving around the room keeps the students alert and helps you redirect inappropriate behavior as soon as, or even before it occurs.

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**NOTES:**

# Establishing a Safe and Secure Learning Environment

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## Questions

***What are some additional key points to remember that will help me as a new teacher?***

(continued)

## Answers

9. Keep lines of communication open with the parents and guardians. Call about the good things students do, not just the inappropriate.
10. "Look around the corner." Before you make a decision, make certain you think of the consequences.
11. NEVER SAY OR DO ANYTHING THAT YOU DON'T WANT RECORDED ON VIDEO OR AUDIO TAPE, OR IN A LETTER TO THE SUPERINTENDENT!
12. ALWAYS BE A ROLE MODEL.

### **IDEAS!**

*Have students help develop classroom expectations.*

*After the first two weeks of school, when you've settled down somewhat, set a goal to phone a certain number (maybe 3) of students' homes per day. This is an excellent strategy that will assist you in classroom management more than you know!*

*Continue to make calls for praise and problem-solving reasons.*

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**Notes:**





# Preparing for Teacher Observations

**“There is something that is much more scarce, something finer far, something rarer than ability. It is the ability to recognize ability.” Elbert Hubbard**





# Preparing for Teacher Observations

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The purpose of teacher observation look-fors is to improve the delivery of instruction. Quality instructional practices improve achievement on the Standards of Learning Assessments to ensure that schools become fully accredited as required by the state Standards of Accreditation. Schools must also meet or exceed Annual Yearly Progress under the No Child Left Behind Act. If principals and/or department chairs do not give you their expectations, then you can use the following information as a guide.

## **ATMOSPHERE FOR LEARNING**

### ***All Students***

- are engaged in learning
- feel safe and secure in their environment, and have a positive climate for learning
- have enough equipment to complete activities individually or as a group
- accept and follow directions
- are afforded the opportunity to participate
- are provided immediate feedback—specific and constructive
- are assured the potential to achieve some success.

### ***The Teacher***

- is visibly the supervisor and facilitator of learning
- is a consistent, firm, respectful, and fair disciplinarian and displays professionalism in behavior and attire
- displays classroom management/does not struggle to maintain order
- divides the year into instructional units that take into account the curriculum framework, curriculum content pacing guide, differentiated learning (i.e., student modifications, facilities, equipment, student/teacher interests)
- uses time management, minimizing transition time, while maximizing active learning time (bell-to-bell teaching and learning)
- moves around the classroom while teaching and assisting
- maintains eye contact with students/moves toward students when interacting

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## **NOTES:**

## Preparing for Teacher Observations

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- varies instructional strategies (e.g., illustrations, grouping, demonstrations, discussions, coaching)
- offers praise when praise has been earned, rewards the strengths and strengthens the weak spots
- uses bulletin boards and wall displays
- uses games and simulations to spark interest, provide a break in the routine, and supplement a unit of instruction
- writes lesson plans on a 15–20 minute cycle. (Plans may include a review of previous skills/concepts, introduction of new skills/concepts, lead-up activity/game, guided practice/questioning, independent practice, assessment, and closure.)

### ANTICIPATORY SET

#### **The Teacher**

- establishes the importance of the objective
- uses key, lead-in questions
- introduces and/or reviews key vocabulary
- reviews previous topics, terms, or activities related to new instruction
- uses examples, analogies, or situations of interest
- uses prearranged sounds, gestures, or teacher positions to elicit a student's attention
- is an enthusiastic role model
- sets attainable goals with a schedule
- reviews key concepts that link previous learning to new experiences
- uses a demonstration, picture, chart, object, or other item related to the topic
- offers rewards for progress.

#### **IDEAS!**

*Electives are good sound instruction and are integral to the educational process. Teachers of elective courses must strive to master each of the "teacher look-fors," but may also have additional elective-specific strategies that need to be mastered as well.*

*All teachers are READING TEACHERS and must assist in the pursuit of reading mastery in the age of NCLB and SOL mastery.*

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#### **NOTES:**

# Preparing for Teacher Observations

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## EXPLANATION/MODELING

### **The Teacher**

- defines and explains key terms and ideas
- uses level-appropriate language to present objective
- incorporates illustrations
- paces instruction
- uses a sequence that is clear and orderly
- uses a voice that is clear and pleasant
- uses mannerisms that do not distract from instruction
- uses teaching strategies that reflect good planning.

## DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING

### **All Students**

- are given learning choices
- are encouraged to “think outside the box”
- are interacting productively with one another
- are required to explain how they arrived at answers
- are grouped flexibly to ensure an appropriate level of challenge for everyone
- are carrying out classroom routines independently to maximize instructional time
- have multiple resources available for learning and research
- may practice learning styles that most benefit them
- are engaged in self-assessment and/or peer assessment periodically.

### **IDEAS!**

*Differentiation of Instruction should be used daily in all subjects. If a teacher is truly using differentiated instruction then all student needs are being met to reach full potential. The special education student, the gifted student, and all those in between are being challenged. If students are successful then the teacher is successful. Thus, when using differentiated instruction, you have a win/win situation—teachers and students WIN!*

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**Notes:**

# Preparing for Teacher Observations

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## QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

### *The Teacher*

- uses questions as a teaching method
- incorporates “hands-on-teaching-strategies” [HOTS]
- provides an opportunity for ALL students to participate, and calls on students randomly, avoiding a pattern
- asks follow-up questions: “Why? Do you agree? Can you elaborate? Can you give me an example? What if?”
- surveys the class and takes a quick visual scan while questioning
- encourages student questions.

## CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

### *The Teacher*

- asks students to substantiate and summarize their answers—Why do you think so?
- utilizes critical thinking activities: (cooperative learning, think-pair-share, pair check, roundtable, two-way interview)
- assesses student learning objectively
- circulates around the classroom observing how a critical step is done
- asks for a show of hands
- provides guided practice in order to check a student’s independent practice (gives a short quiz, sponge activity, warm-up)
- has students explain in their own words
- actively engages all students
- reviews facts and concepts throughout the lesson
- asks questions that will develop students’ thinking skills
- has students ask each other questions on the topic
- monitors nonverbal student responses.

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**NOTES:**

# Preparing for Teacher Observations

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## CLOSURE

### *The Teacher*

- includes time for closure
- reviews or summarizes the main facts, concepts, or skills of the lesson
- relates the ending to the introduction
- ties the lesson to past learning and/or future learning
- incorporates student practice into the ending of the lesson
- engages students to participate in the closing
- references key problems or events in the lesson.

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**NOTES:**





# Getting to Know Your Students

**“Getting to know you, getting to know all about you.  
Getting to like you, getting to hope you like me.” Oscar Hamerstein**





# Getting to Know Your Students

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It is essential to get to know your students' likes, dislikes, backgrounds, and learning styles. It also makes teaching much more enjoyable and effective. Below are a few activities to make this process easier.

**The name repetition game:** This activity not only helps students learn each other's names, but it also teaches them that repetition is a good study technique.

1. Have students sit in a circle; if class is very large, two or three circles might be more appropriate.
2. Tell the students that they will introduce themselves by first name and a gerund, telling a favorite activity they like to do. If they are too young to understand gerunds, use "-ing words" instead.
3. Demonstrate by saying, "I'm Katie, and I like swimming." If you'd rather not use your first name, it is fine to be more formal.
4. Tell the students that after the first person in the circle introduces himself or herself, the next person in the circle will introduce himself or herself and repeat what the one before him said.
5. The third person in the circle will introduce himself or herself and repeat what the first two have said. The group continues until everyone has introduced himself or herself and repeated everything that has come before.
6. It is permissible for students to help each other if repeating all the names and favorite activities becomes too difficult.

**The paper bag collage** was developed by Dr. Alice Rose of Chesterfield County. Students each obtain a full-sized grocery bag to decorate and fill. The decorations can be drawn, painted, or collaged at home and these should represent personal hobbies, likes, passions, and interests. For those students who do not have access to supplies at home, teachers could provide materials and time in school. Students should also fill the bag with objects that represent themselves and make a memorable impression on their classmates and teacher. Students bring their creations to school and present these to each other. The teacher can provide instruction that promotes good oral language and listening.

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**NOTES:**

## Getting to Know Your Students

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**The biopoem:** Biopoems are formulaic, unrhymed poems focusing on characters. They are effective as getting-to-know-you activities but also as structured writing assignments later in the school year.

(Source: Gere, A.R., ed. *Roots in the Sawdust; Writing to Learn across the Curriculum*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1985.)

<b>Biopoem Formula</b>	<b>Biopoem Example</b>
First name Four traits that describe the character; Relative of (brother, sister, daughter...); Lover of (list three things); Who feels (list three things); Who needs (list three things); Who fears (list three things); Who gives (list three things); Who would like to see (three items); Resident of; Last name	Suzie Energetic, opinionated, verbal, and mature; Mother of Sara and Ben; Lover of sports, education, and theatre; Who feels successful when students read and write; Who needs a daily swim, time to read, and music; Who fears snakes, cancer, and war; Who gives food, books, and advice; Who would like to see Florence, Dublin, and Paris; Resident of Virginia; Jones

**A picture is worth 1000 words:** As students enter the classroom, take their smiling pictures with an instant or digital camera. Post the pictures with nametags around the room. Adding more information below the pictures is an optional and helpful activity. *Be sure to check your local policy about taking and displaying photographs of students. Most school divisions require parents to write a letter denying such permissions, and it is then allowed for all other students. Check to be sure.*

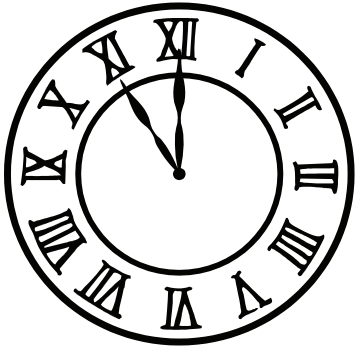
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**NOTES:**

# Getting to Know Your Students

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**The appointment clock:** Create a clock face or list of times to distribute to your students.



Ask students to move around the room and schedule appointments with as many different classmates as is appropriate. Students should record each other's names around the clock or by the times in the appointment chart.

Instruct students to keep the appointment sheet in their notebooks for use throughout the year.

When you want students to work with a partner, ask them to find the classmate for their appointment for a particular time. Vary the appointment times so that students will work with different, but self-selected, partners over the course of the term.

- 7:00 am \_\_\_\_\_
- 8:00 am \_\_\_\_\_
- 9:00 am \_\_\_\_\_
- 10:00 am \_\_\_\_\_
- 11:00 am \_\_\_\_\_
- noon \_\_\_\_\_
- 1:00 pm \_\_\_\_\_
- 2:00 pm \_\_\_\_\_
- 3:00 pm \_\_\_\_\_
- 4:00 pm \_\_\_\_\_

**I like me because:** Ask students to find a partner from the appointment clock. Have them sit face to face. One partner tells what he/she likes about himself/herself for approximately two minutes while the other listens. They change rolls. Then have everyone find a different partner on the appointment clock to repeat the process. Continue as time permits, and repeat as necessary during the first weeks of school.

(Source: Scannell, Edward E., and John W. Newstrom. *Even More Games Trainers Play*. NY: McGraw Hill, 1994.)

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## NOTES:

## Getting to Know Your Students

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**Writing successes and goals:** During the first week of school, have each student write a letter or memo to himself or herself stating a success from the previous year and defining a goal for the current year. You might give them the structure that appears below. Collect, read, and save these to distribute to students near the end of the year to see if they've met their goals.

Memo

To: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My greatest success last year in school was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My goal for this year is to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**NOTES:**

# Getting to Know Your Students

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**Interest inventory:** Knowing your students' preferences and interests enhances your teaching, for example, when assigning topics for reports or suggesting books for them to read. Use this or another inventory to learn about your students.

1. Outside of school my favorite activity is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I work at \_\_\_\_\_. My job is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The sport(s) I like to watch is (are) \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The sport(s) I like to play is (are) \_\_\_\_\_.
5. After high school I plan to \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The job I want to be doing as an adult is \_\_\_\_\_.
7. In school my favorite subject(s) is (are) \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The subject(s) in which I get the best grades is (are) \_\_\_\_\_.
9. I would like to learn more about \_\_\_\_\_.
10. My main hobbies or leisure time activities are \_\_\_\_\_.
11. For pleasure, I read \_\_\_\_\_.
12. I spend about \_\_\_\_\_ hours or \_\_\_\_\_ minutes a week reading for fun.
13. The best book I have ever read was (title) \_\_\_\_\_.
14. The book I am reading now is (title) \_\_\_\_\_.
15. My favorite magazine(s) is (are) \_\_\_\_\_.
16. The part of the world that interests me the most is \_\_\_\_\_.
17. When I am finished with school, I hope to live in \_\_\_\_\_.
18. The kinds of books or stories I like to read are \_\_\_\_\_.
19. My favorite TV show is \_\_\_\_\_.
20. What makes me angry is \_\_\_\_\_.
21. What makes me laugh is \_\_\_\_\_.
22. My favorite person is \_\_\_\_\_.
23. Next summer I plan to \_\_\_\_\_.

## **IDEAS!**

*Good-News Communication: This is your chance to communicate positive actions to your students' parents or guardians. When your students do something well, call, e-mail, or send a postcard or note home.*

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**Notes:**





# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

**“The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.” William Arthur Ward**





# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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## The Instructional Strategies Identified as Most Effective

- Identifying Similarities and Differences
- Summarizing and Note Taking
- Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
- Homework and Practice
- Nonlinguistic Representations
- Cooperative Learning
- Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback
- Generating and Testing Hypotheses
- Cues, Questions, and Advance Organizers

(Source: Marzano, Robert J., Debra Pickering, and Jane E. Pollock. *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Deve. 2001.)

## Eight Research-Based Strategies for Reading Comprehension

Readers who comprehend, use many strategies, almost subconsciously. But these same strategies can be taught to students who do not comprehend independently. The strategies are:

- Making connections
- Asking questions
- Making inferences, predictions, conclusions, and generalizations
- Determining importance and summarizing
- Visualizing
- Clarifying
- Synthesizing
- Monitoring comprehension

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**NOTES:**

## Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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Readers cannot be expected to learn all the new strategies simultaneously, but if teachers model and transfer strategies gradually, students will begin to read strategically with comprehension. For more information consult: *The English Standards of Learning Enhanced Scope and Sequence, Grades 6–8*. <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/EnhancedSandS/english.shtml>

### MAPP

MAPP is an instructional framework that works well for transferring new skills to students. The acronym stands for:

- **M**odel the new strategy.
- **A**nalyze the process interactively.
- **P**air up for practicing new strategy.
- **P**ractise strategy independently.

Let's see how MAPP works with a skill students need the first time they are issued lockers and need to open the lock. First, the teacher models opening a lock slowly and carefully in front of a group (preferably small) of students. Next the teacher analyzes and explains the process out loud, probably while modeling it again: 1) Turn the dial clockwise several times to clear the lock. 2) Turn clockwise to the first number in the combination. 3) Turn counter-clockwise past zero, and stop at the second number in the combination. 4) Turn clockwise to the last number in the combination, and pull up on the horseshoe shaped bar firmly. The teacher might post or distribute the instructions. Next the students practice opening locks with partners. Finally, students practice independently until locker opening (or other new skill) is mastered.

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**NOTES:**

# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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## Alternatives to Round Robin Reading

***Do you remember the last time you were asked to read in front of a group? Were you nervous? Can you remember what you read? Did you have a chance to practice before you read aloud in front of the audience?***

***Those feelings of being tongue-tied or nervous when reading to a group happen to students as well as adults, but teachers at every grade level and in all content areas continue to call on students to read aloud to their peers. Moreover, those students cannot decline the invitation to read aloud.***

***Round Robin Reading seems to be the norm, but it is far from effective. Most readers concentrate on the pronunciation and have little or no cognitive energy left over to concentrate on meaning. And the listeners aren't really listening; they may be reading ahead in preparation to read aloud, or daydreaming, relieved that their turns have passed. So no one is really absorbing the content that needs to be learned or improving reading fluency or comprehension. Are there alternatives?***

Yes, as teachers begin to realize that unrehearsed oral reading is not an effective teaching strategy, they will begin to replace it with strategies that are effective for building fluency and comprehension. **Choral reading** is an alternative that teachers may consider, especially with short prose passages and most poetry. The teacher reads the passage aloud to the class with an invitation to join in on the second reading. After the second reading, students can be called on to read aloud independently if such repetition is needed. This technique builds fluency and enhances comprehension.

Another alternative to Round Robin Reading is **echo reading**. Generally the teacher reads a line or a sentence, and the student (or students) repeats in response. Or the teacher can read a line or sentence, and the student (or students) can respond with the next. This technique is especially effective with poetry, but can be used with some prose. These reading techniques work well with predictive or repetitive text.

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**NOTES:**

## Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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### Alternatives to Round Robin Reading (continued)

**Guided reading** can be a very effective technique to enhance comprehension. The teacher asks a question or gives a purpose for reading to the students, who then read the text or a portion of it silently. Students then volunteer to read the answer aloud, and since they've already had an opportunity to practice the words and phrases while reading silently, they will be less nervous and better able to devote some of their cognitive energy to comprehension. The double exposure, once silent and once aloud, increases comprehension.

**Buddy reading** is often the chosen method for sharing the responsibility for reading. Peer groups must be trained to assist each other in positive ways for this technique to be effective for improving fluency and absorbing content. Students should be instructed to ignore any miscues that do not interfere with understanding. Since everyone has eyes on the text, each should be able to understand the ideas, even if some words are reversed, omitted, or mispronounced. When miscues do interfere with understanding, partners should be instructed to coach each other to reread or "try that sentence (or paragraph) again." Important content and technical vocabulary should be pronounced and clarified by the teacher, preferably prior to the buddy or small group reading.

An effective technique for reading aloud without resorting to round robin is **Readers' Theater**. Scripts are often available, or teachers can create their own by revising the assigned textbook. Students must be provided with rehearsal time and they must be encouraged to use the rehearsal wisely. Each student should find his lines, read them for meaning, and hunt for any stumbling blocks or unfamiliar vocabulary. Teachers must help clarify the vocabulary and other issues prior to reading the script in front of an audience, albeit a participating audience. Students should be encouraged to practice their inflections privately or with a coach prior to the performance. And since it is called Readers' Theater, most students accept and welcome the inclusion of a rehearsal as part of the preparation to perform.

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**NOTES:**

# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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## Alternatives to Round Robin Reading (continued)

**Read aloud** by the teacher is a perfect way to model effective reading and to present content to the students, especially when that content is beyond their instructional reading level. But some students listen more effectively than others. If possible, provide multiple copies of the text for those who wish to read along. Provide a note taking activity for students who need to listen and record with a purpose. Or allow students to draw what they visualize as the reader delivers the material. Give them a means to ask questions if necessary either in writing or by interrupting politely. And finally, if you are the teacher reading aloud to a class, practice beforehand. Almost everyone needs rehearsal to be an effective oral reader.

For more information, consult these texts:

Opitz, Michael F., and Timothy V. Rasinski. *Good-Bye Round Robin: 25 Effective Oral Reading Strategies*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998.

Timothy V. Rasinski. *The Fluent Reader: Oral Reading Strategies for Building Word Recognition, Fluency and Comprehension*. Jefferson City, MO: Scholastic Professional Books, 2003.

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**NOTES:**

# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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## PAR

PAR is the instructional framework for reading, developed by Judy S. Richardson and Raymond Morgan, both Virginia educators. PAR stands for **Preparation, Assistance, and Reflection** and is an easy way to remember the three stages of a reading lesson: before reading, during reading, and after reading.

During the **preparation** stage, teachers need to motivate students to read, point out, and teach any tricky or technical vocabulary. Teachers should give clues to text structure or the author's craft. Most importantly teachers may build, focus, and activate students' background knowledge about the content of the text.

During the **assistance** stage, teachers need to provide guidance to students as they read. Note-taking charts, embedded questions, guided reading, and sticky notes are but a few things teachers can provide. Tape or live readings can also assist readers, especially if they read along. What teachers need to avoid is assigning text to be read independently when the text is too difficult, long, or unfamiliar.

During the **reflection** stage, teachers need to help students assimilate new knowledge and/or themes into their schema. Providing time and structure for discussing the text, writing in response to the text, and extending the learning beyond the text are all examples of reflection activities.

For more information consult:

Richardson, Judy S., and Raymond F. Morgan. *Reading to Learn in the Content Areas*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2002.

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**NOTES:**

# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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An example of a PAR lesson with several activities at each stage follows:

## **Preparation: Jigsaw, Anticipation Guide, Discussion of Background Knowledge**

Get into color-coded Jigsaw groups, and distribute the cards containing these terms: **autonomy, constructing meaning, internal locus of control, learning to read, and reading to learn**. Regroup so that each group contains the people who have the same term, and work together to develop a definition and/or understanding of the term. Seek help from the instructor only if necessary. Rejoin your original color-coded group, and allow each member to teach his/her term to the rest of the group.

Individually, respond to the anticipation guide below by circling **agree** or **disagree** based on how you feel about each statement.

Anticipation Guide for <i>Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH</i> by Robert C. O'Brien					
Before Reading		Statement	After Reading		
agree	disagree	Reading to learn is more important than learning to read.	agree	disagree	
agree	disagree	Comprehension is always the goal of instruction.	agree	disagree	

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**NOTES:**

## Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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### Assistance: Note taking chart for recording ideas during teacher read aloud

As you listen to the chapter "A Lesson in Reading," fill in the jot chart below. You may write words from the text, your own ideas, or you may sketch. If ideas come to you that do not fit into the labeled boxes, write them in the area labeled "other ideas." Also as you listen, select one quote from the text that you feel is very powerful and that you would like to discuss with others.

Term	My ideas as I listen
autonomy	
constructing meaning	
internal locus of control	
learning to read	
reading to learn	
other ideas	
The quote I selected	

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**NOTES:**



# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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## Reflection: Summarizing, Moving beyond the literal, Returning to the Anticipation Guide

Fill in the summarizing chart below individually, and then share your summary with a partner. The “somebody” is a character from the chapter (Justin, Jenner, one of the doctors).

Somebody	
wanted	
but	
so	

Then, take the quote you’ve chosen, and record it below in the column marked “What does the text say?” Complete the rest of Gallagher’s Three Questions to prepare for discussion with your original color-coded groups.

<b>Gallagher’s Three Questions for <i>Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH</i> by Robert C. O’Brien</b>		
<b><i>What does the text say?</i></b>	<b><i>What does it mean?</i></b>	<b><i>What does it matter?</i></b>

Now, return to the anticipation guide, and mark how you feel about the statements. Discuss with the class how the story helped you change or intensify your position.

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**NOTES:**

# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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## Helping Students Ask Questions

Teachers need to model asking appropriate questions, but students also need to learn to ask questions which will lead to comprehension. A simple way to label questions for students is to call these questions thin and thick.

- **Thin** questions have small answers: a word or two.
- **Thick** questions have larger answers: several phrases or sentence. Often a combination of information from the text is needed to formulate answer.
- **Good readers ask both thin and thick questions.**

Thin–Thick Question Chart		
Title _____		Author _____
Page #	Thin question	Thick question
	Short answer	Large, thoughtful answer
sample	Who is the protagonist?	Why did Ben fly his kite during the thunderstorm?
	Ben	He had hypothesized that lightening might be powerful, and he wanted to try it out for himself. This is an example of hands-on learning. However, he had underestimated what might happen to him.

From *Guided Comprehension in Action* (2002) by Marureen Mclaughlin and Mary Beth Allen.

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**NOTES:**

# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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## Inference, Prediction, Conclusion, and Generalization

Inferences, predictions, conclusions, and generalizations all require readers to use higher-level thinking, and to use evidence from text along with information in their heads.

**Predictions** are the result of making a forecast of what is expected to happen.

**Conclusions** are the result of deductions based on or inferred from evidence.

**Generalizations** are the result of inferring, from a limited sample, a principle that applies to all.

**Inferences** are the result of judging. Readers must combine background knowledge with information in the text.

While encouraging students to make predictions and draw conclusions is not difficult, teaching them to make inferences and generalizations requires more strategy. One effective method is to use Gallagher's Three Questions: What does the text say? What does the text mean? What does the text matter? Teacher modeling and the use of MAPP may be necessary.

Gallagher's Three Questions from <i>Deeper Reading</i>		
<b><i>What does the text say?</i></b>	<b><i>What does it mean?</i></b>	<b><i>What does it matter?</i></b>
Copy a meaningful quote from the text here. Page numbers are helpful.	Paraphrase or interpret the quotation here. Making inferences is encouraged.	Connect the meaning of the quote to the real world. Move beyond the scope of the book.
"Before I build a wall I'd ask to know What I was walling in or walling out, And to whom I was like to give offence... He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'" "Mending Wall" by Robert Frost	If I create a wall, I will make it more difficult to leave my property, and I'll deny others free access. I may offend my neighbors. Frost doesn't seem to agree with his neighbor.	Walls create divisions. They separate us; they prevent us from interacting. Perhaps the best of neighbors do not need walls, but need to respect each other's borders. This poem connects with the debate about immigration.

For further information consult: Gallagher, Kelly. *Deeper Reading: Comprehending Challenging Texts, 4–12*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2004.

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### NOTES:

# Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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## Effective Vocabulary Instruction

According to Robert Marzano, there are six steps to effective vocabulary instruction:

1. The teacher provides a description, explanation, or example of the new term.
2. The students restate the explanation of the new term in their own words.
3. The students create a nonlinguistic representation of the term.
4. Students periodically do activities that help them add to their knowledge of vocabulary terms.
5. Periodically students are asked to discuss the terms with one another.
6. Periodically students are involved in games that allow them to play with terms.

For more information consult: Marzano, Robert. *Building Background Knowledge for Achievement*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Deve, 2004.

Eileen Carr and Karen Wixson provide four guidelines for evaluating vocabulary instruction. Students should:

- relate new vocabulary to background knowledge;
- develop elaborate word knowledge;
- be actively involved in word learning; and
- develop strategies for acquiring vocabulary independently.

Since there are hundreds of words teachers might identify as difficult, Michael Graves provides four essential questions helpful in “winnowing down the list to the words worth teaching.”

- Is understanding the word important to understanding the selection in which it appears? If the answer is no, then other words are probably more important to teach.
- Are students able to use context or structural analysis skills to discover the word’s meaning? If they can use these skills, then they should be allowed to practice them. Doing so will both help students consolidate these skills and reduce the number of words teachers need to teach.

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**NOTES:**

## Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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- Can working with this word be useful in furthering students' context, structural analysis, or dictionary skills? If the answer here is yes, then working with the word can serve two purposes. It can aid students in learning the word, and it can help them acquire a strategy they can use in learning other words. One might, for example, decide to teach the word "regenerate" because students need to master the prefix "re."
- How useful is this word being currently taught, outside of the reading selection? The more frequently a word appears in material students read, the more important it is for them to know the word. Additionally, the more frequently a word appears, the greater the chances that students will retain the word once the teacher has taught it.

For more information consult: "A vocabulary program to complement and bolster a middle grade comprehension program" by Michael Graves found in *Reading for Meaning, Fostering Comprehension in the Middle Grades* (2000) edited by Barbara Taylor, Michael Graves and Paul van den Broek.

One of the least effective practices teachers can use is the *dictionary only* method in which teachers post a list of words and assign students to "look each up and put each into a sentence," especially if this is homework. Such an assignment does nothing to help students learn new terms, because it does not take the stages of vocabulary acquisition into account. Baumann and Kameenui identify three levels of word knowledge that must be used to ensure depth of understanding and should be considered when choosing instructional activities.

1. Association: with a single definition or context;
2. Comprehension: broad understanding and ability to use, classify or identify the opposite; and
3. Generation: ability to produce a novel response.

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**NOTES:**

## Incorporating Instructional Strategies

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When students look up words, they are working in the association phase. When they put words into sentences, they have jumped to the generation stage. So for vocabulary instruction, effective teachers need to provide activities for students to grow into comprehension of the terms gradually.

For more information consult:

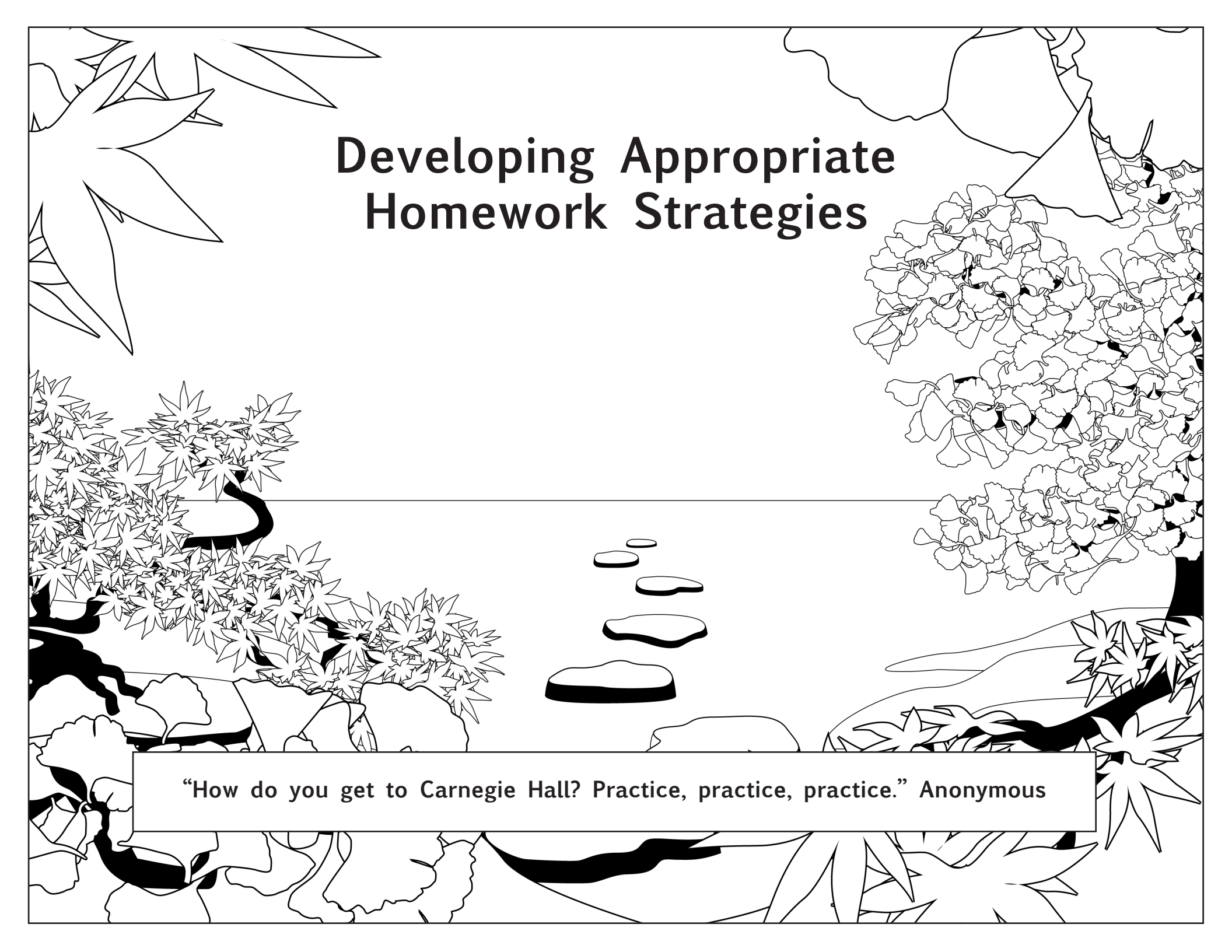
“Research on Vocabulary Instruction: Ode to Voltaire,” pp. 602–632. Flood, James, Diane Lapp, and Julie M. Jenson. *Handbook of Research on Teaching the English Language Arts*. Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Group, 1991.

For a variety of graphic organizers and alternatives to *dictionary only* practices consult: Allen, Janet. *Words, Words, Words*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 1999.

For a framework that includes these research-based suggestions and is appropriate across the curriculum see wordsalive at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Reading/wordsalive\\_voc\\_acq.html](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/Reading/wordsalive_voc_acq.html)

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**NOTES:**



# Developing Appropriate Homework Strategies

**“How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice.” Anonymous**





# Developing Appropriate Homework Strategies

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Follow your school and/or division policy regarding the amount and type of homework required at each grade level.

Parents and students will have many questions about your homework practices. Clarify your expectations early in the school year. Provide this information in writing to students and parents. If you need to make changes (and you likely will), make those changes in writing as well. Parents and students will appreciate your willingness to adjust your homework expectations to make the experience positive and beneficial. Here are some specific questions parents and students may have about homework in your classroom.

## ***How often will homework be assigned?***

Most parents and students appreciate a consistent homework schedule. This allows them to develop an after-school routine and plan other activities accordingly.

## ***How long should it take to complete the homework?***

As mentioned, follow local policy in this area. Invite parents to contact you if homework completion consistently takes much longer than expected. This may indicate an instructional mismatch for that student.

## ***What is the purpose of homework?***

Homework should not be “busy work”. Homework assignments can provide review/additional practice, an opportunity for follow up, or to spark interest in a new topic.

## ***Will homework count towards my grade?***

This may be addressed in your school/division homework policy. Most teachers give some credit for homework as a way of encouraging students to complete the work. It is important to recognize that in some instances, the work may reflect significant help from a parent, sibling, or friend.

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**NOTES:**

## Developing Appropriate Homework Strategies

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### ***When will the homework be returned?***

Teachers learn with experience to assign only as much homework as they can review and return in a timely manner. If students are to benefit from the homework practice, they need prompt and specific feedback from you as the teacher.

### ***I finished my homework but forgot to turn it in. Can I still get credit?***

Do not assume that because you don't have the homework, the student did not complete it. Your classroom procedure should explicitly outline how and when homework is to be submitted. Some students, particularly those with organizational or attention problems, will need additional support in remembering to submit completed homework.

### ***What happens if homework is not completed?***

Recognize that grades, or the threat of failure, are not motivating to some students, particularly those who struggle academically and find it difficult to complete homework. Consider instituting a logical consequence for missing homework that is not seen as punishment, such as missing a preferred activity to complete the homework.

### ***Am I expected to make up homework when I am absent?***

Keeping up with make-up work can be an administrative nightmare. You may wish to develop a process for making handouts or class notes available when students return from an absence. Inform students of the process, and hold them responsible for following through.

### ***How can I complete the homework if I don't have the necessary materials?***

It may be that many of your students don't have computer access at home. Some will lack basic supplies like paper, reference books, or newspapers. Rather than assuming that all students have the same resources available to them, either provide necessary materials or an alternate assignment. Basic school supplies may be available from parent organizations or community agencies. Check with your mentor about how to access these resources.

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**NOTES:**

## Developing Appropriate Homework Strategies

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### ***I am a conscientious student and was unable to complete my homework because of a family emergency. Will I be penalized for missing one assignment?***

Many teachers recognize that specific challenges arise and provide one-time coupons/or tokens for a “free” homework night. Students appreciate this opportunity, even if they do not ever use the coupon.

In summary, remember that you as the teacher, set the tone for your classroom including the importance of homework. If you assign meaningful homework activities that provide the opportunity for students to be successful, consistently enforce your homework expectations, and respond promptly and in a positive manner to student homework assignments, your classroom and your teaching will be more enjoyable, more productive, and less stressful for students.

#### ***IDEAS!***

*Encourage parents to collect items, i.e., markers, poster boards, scissors, and glue to have on hand for students to use for projects; also develop a school/parent collaborative for purchase of supplies.*

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**Notes:**





# Managing Your Data

**“Not everything that can be counted, counts.  
And not everything that counts can be counted.” Albert Einstein**



# Managing Your Data

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## Question

## Answer

### ***Why should I collect data?***

- So that you'll know whether or not your efforts, and more importantly, your students' efforts, are in fact having the intended results
- So that your decisions have a basis and a purpose
- To use for both short-term and long-term planning

### ***How do I find the time to collect data?***

- You're always collecting data. . . every visual observation, every mental perception, every note you take, every communication you have is a form of data. Don't think of it as separate and apart from what you're already doing.

### ***But I didn't do well in statistics!***

- "Hard" data (quantitative) can be challenging. Ask for help, if necessary. Learn by doing.
- "Soft" data (qualitative) is less difficult for most people, but no less important.
- WRITE IT DOWN. Keep a notebook; make frequent entries. Think of nothing as inconsequential. You never know when you may need to reach six months back and provide documentation related to a student or to something that happened under your watch.

### ***Besides test scores, are there other kinds of data that I should be collecting and analyzing?***

- Test scores only tell part of the story; you must collect and analyze the rest of the story.
- Develop your own surveys and questionnaires that will be unique to you and your students.
- Use telephone and e-mail to connect with parents, to ask questions of your administrators, and to share information with your peers. Teaching can be a very lonely job, unless you seek and find support and information from others.

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NOTES:

# Managing Your Data

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## Questions

### ***Can data reduce my stress?***

## Answers

Data reduces stress if you use data to analyze your classroom teaching. For example, if the principal says, “Get your test scores up!” and you have no idea what to do, then that causes stress. However, if you use data to analyze your class test scores, you will find the portions of the test that are causing the problems. If you use performance by question analysis (as with the Weekly Mastery Report), you will discover that you need to focus on specific essential skills. You will work smarter with less stress.

Also, use data to find the skill deficits in your classroom. You need to plan remediation, and “one size DOES NOT fit all.” When a student does not know an essential skill, the data does not tell you to send the student to a 20–day summer school to learn basic skills again. You can remediate the student on the specific essential skill area of weakness. If many of the class need remediation, re-teach to the whole class, giving enrichment activities to those students who do not need remediation. Conversely, if you have only a small group or an individual who needs remediation, handle it as a small-group tutoring session in or out of class.

### ***IDEAS!***

*Have your students keep their own data notebook. Begin with helping them set a few short-term goals for themselves, during a 9-week grading period. Encourage them to ask for input from parents, peers, and other teachers to develop the goals. Help students set realistic goals, and be sure to consider both hard (quantitative) and soft (qualitative) data. Use the notebook as a resource for parent-teacher-student conferences.*

*(adapted from ICLE)*

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### **NOTES:**



# Managing Your Data

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## Questions

***Why should I use formative assessments (teacher-made and benchmark tests)?***

***How can I ensure the quality of my divisions' benchmark tests?***

## Answers

We analyze SOL classroom success by scoring SOL assessments. Students receive individual scores on SOL tests, but the main reason we give formative assessments is to analyze and determine if the classroom program is effective with all students year after year.

When you want to assist students, you need formative assessments, teacher-made, and 9-weeks tests, to determine what students did not master in class. This data shows you how the student is doing at that point in time (weekly, end of each 4.5, and/or 9 weeks based on your division requirements). You are taking a sample of how your students are doing on specific essential skills to determine where there are deficits. You can use formative assessments also to determine how effectively you are facilitating instruction. Is your instruction aligned to the Blueprints, Essential Skills, and division Pacing Guide? Your Blueprints, Pacing Guide, and Curriculum Framework should be used daily as a guide for planning, teaching, and learning to ensure coverage of the essential skills. When you get this formative assessment data, you need to make instructional corrections and also use this data to improve your intervention/remediation program.

You may be asked to be on a quality control committee made up of teachers who teach a specific subject. This committee will create the new 9-weeks assessment test bank and ensure that those items are not available to teachers for practice. Therefore, children do not see the items before the actual 9-weeks test. The level of security for the 9-weeks test should match that of the SOL test (i.e. number the test booklets, count out booklets, collect booklets).

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**NOTES:**

# Managing Your Data

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## Questions

***How can I ensure the quality of my divisions' benchmark tests?***  
(continued)

***How do I design quality formative assessments for my classroom, and how will I know if the content will match my divisions' 9-weeks formative assessments?***

## Answers

Teachers SHOULD NOT make copies of these assessments. All the cautions that you would have on the SOL test should be applied to the 9-weeks assessment as well.

Nine weeks tests (formative benchmark assessments) are aligned to your pacing guides. If you have 50 skills to teach in your SOL content area in less than 180 days, then you need three 9 weeks divided into the 50 skills. You should teach a third of the skills the first 9 weeks, and your test needs to assess that third. The second 9 weeks you teach and assess that third of the skills, and then, your third 9 weeks teach/test only that third of the material. We suggest this design (as opposed to cumulative), because at the end of the first 9 weeks, you should use your benchmark data to design a remediation program that is going to enable you, as the teacher, to address those skill deficits. If you want to truly assess skill deficits, you need many items per essential skill on the assessment. If it is a cumulative test, you may have to use some items to measure the skills from way back in the first 9 weeks. If your assessment discretely measures the specific skills each 9 weeks, you will have more items per skill than the third you have to assess. This can overwhelm your students.

If your division chooses to administer cumulative assessments, they should only be given the fourth 9 weeks, after the SOL test. The value of the fourth 9-weeks test, especially if it is cumulative, is its use in assessing skill deficits for children who may need summer school or an intervention during the summer. Many times, you do not get your SOL tests back before the summer school is planned and implemented. Only send a student to summer school (on any intervention program) if you know the skill deficits are going to be addressed in a specific and prescriptive manner.

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**NOTES:**

# Managing Your Data

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## Questions

***How do I design quality formative assessments for my classroom, and how will I know if the content will match my divisions' 9-weeks formative assessments?***

(continued)

***Why should I use the SOL Blueprints? I have an old set that was left in my room. Can I use those?***

## Answers

Teacher-made and benchmark tests need to be closely aligned to the Blueprint and Curriculum Framework, and Pacing Guide. For instance, if you know your Blueprints, one reporting category may have 40% of the test items, another reporting category might have 23% of the test items, yet another reporting category might have 30% of the test items, while only 7% of the test items fall in a fourth category. You want a 9-weeks test that matches that level of emphasis as indicated by the Blueprint.

Your divisions' 9-weeks tests need to measure the same level of thinking as expected in the Standards. Your classroom tests must ask questions at the same level of thinking or same level of complexity (consider Bloom's Taxonomy) or in the same format as the SOL test. You need to use the Performance by Question, the Blueprints, and the released test items all as guides in designing your test questions to be sure that they're aligned to the DOE resources.

First, teachers should always use the most up-to-date SOL Blueprints. Teachers should be aware that the 2005 Blueprint is, in some cases, radically different than the 1995 Blueprint. Three reporting categories may have at one time been worth 40%, 40%, and 20% percent of the SOL assessment. The new one may only have two reporting categories worth 70% and 30% of the SOL assessment. So, that makes a big difference in the level of emphasis placed on certain reporting categories and should affect what is taught as the focus of classroom instruction. Thus, teachers need to be intimately familiar with the Blueprint to plan their instruction.

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**NOTES:**

# Managing Your Data

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## Questions

***Why should I use the SOL Blueprints? I have an old set that was left in my room. Can I use those?***  
(continued)

***How does data make an impact on my intervention and remediation programs?***

## Answers

Second, when you get your SOL test data back, it may show that students have deficits in a particular reporting category. You need to go to the Blueprint to find out what standards apply to that reporting category. Once you find out the deficit standards, you can go to another document like the Curriculum Framework and find out the essential skills that must be remediated. Essential Skills are those skills taught in class to meet the standards. The Blueprint (focus of teaching in the particular content area) is the link between the essential skills (curriculum framework/lesson plans) and the SOL data (assessment results).

Data is the basis for planning interventions at the beginning of a remediation program and also determines if your program is effective at its completion. We need to design remediation programs based on individual students' needs identified from data. It is not a "one size fits all" process. Group students for remediation based on specific student weaknesses on the essential skill components. Regardless of the remediation format (in-school tutoring, after-school tutoring, summer school, Saturday school, in-class remediation, year-long remedial reading), you must have a post-test after your remediation. The post-tests tell you if your remediation program is effective.

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**NOTES:**

# Managing Your Data

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## Questions

***What are the levels of curriculum alignment that I need to be concerned with?***

## Answers

There are three levels of alignment:

The first level of alignment, *Content Alignment*, looks at the *Curriculum Framework* to be certain you are teaching the essential skills. Some teachers assume they are content aligned because they are teaching to the textbook. Be very careful not to teach a textbook from page one to page 329. Instead, your job is to teach the *essential skills* as well as to find the materials that match the *essential skills*.

The second level of alignment is *Emphasis*, teaching the right stuff in the right proportions. As explained in #4, some reporting categories have a 70% content weight where others have a 20%. You must teach it in the right proportion to that of the *Blueprint*. Otherwise, the students are not going to get what they need and they (and you) are not going to be successful.

The third level of alignment is *Assessment*. You could be teaching the right stuff, and you could be teaching it in the right amount of emphasis, but the way you assess the knowledge could be totally different in level of thinking, or it may not be in the Standard of Learning testing format.

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**NOTES:**

## Managing Your Data

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### DATA—How to read it. What to do with it.

A prescriptive plan should be written for each student based on their needs and level of developmental skills to learn the content.

Teachers should use a Weekly SOL Mastery Report to monitor student achievement on the SOL objectives taught that week. This device should be used as the basis for weekly remediation. Remediation must start after the first week of school to assist all students toward gaining 100% mastery.

Teachers will teach the content for a minimum of an entire block or period per day that the class is held. Student/Teacher “time on task” is essential in meeting the goals and objectives leading to SOL mastery.

Teachers should review for assessments about 20 minutes each day of the week prior to the day of the weekly assessment. They will review 10 minutes the actual day of the assessment. When giving 4.5- or 9-weeks benchmark assessments, the teacher will review up to an entire period prior to the assessment using a study guide and/or graphic organizer.

After grading the 4.5- and 9-weeks assessments, teachers should chart the data and show comparison graphs for where students are as a class in comparison to like classes. Incentives and rewards can be established between like classes creating healthy competition. Again remediation by teachers (or other tutors) should be based on the needs of individual students on SOL-based material.

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**NOTES:**

## Managing Your Data

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Each 9-weeks benchmark assessment should stand alone. In other words, the first 9-weeks content should not be on the 2nd 9 weeks–assessment. Then, the three 9-weeks benchmark assessment results and concepts can be used to review with the student prior to the SOL or end-of-course assessment. However, remediation (teacher tutoring during class time, volunteer tutor during the school day, and/or before/after school tutoring) should continue on those concepts where students lack mastery until those SOL objectives are mastered.

All prescriptive plans for individual students should be updated each 9 weeks by the teacher or grade level teacher teams (per administrator request) in an effort to know the weaknesses of the student (lack of mastery in specific SOL areas), what the teacher plans to do to address the lack of mastery, and to update student progress.

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**NOTES:**

### Prescriptive Plan

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Strengths and Weaknesses by Content Area: (Circle strength or weakness.) (Include SOL or mock SOL scores from previous year.)

 Writing \_\_\_\_\_  
           S      W

 Reading \_\_\_\_\_  
           S      W

 Math \_\_\_\_\_  
           S      W

 Social Studies \_\_\_\_\_  
           S      W

 Science \_\_\_\_\_  
           S      W

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Dates:

1st 9 weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd 9 weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd 9 weeks: \_\_\_\_\_

Target Goals:

 Reading: \_\_\_\_\_ Writing: \_\_\_\_\_ Math: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Studies: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Science: \_\_\_\_\_

Results/Student's Status (Pass/Fail):

 Reading: \_\_\_\_\_ Writing: \_\_\_\_\_ Math: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Studies: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Science: \_\_\_\_\_

Students Current Needs:

- Remediation: Reading
- Remediation: Writing
- Remediation: Math
- Remediation: Social Studies
- Remediation: Science
  
- In-class tutoring: Reading
- In-class tutoring: Writing
- In-class tutoring: Math
- In-class tutoring: Social Studies
- In-class tutoring: Science
  
- Remediation Recovery: Reading
- Remediation Recovery: Math

 Successful Strategies to be introduced by the Teacher this 9 weeks:

- Mentor
- One-on-one tutoring
- Study buddy
- Daily parental communication
- In-class tutoring
- Remediation recovery tutoring
- Cooperative learning group
- Individual Instruction
- Individual behavior contract
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

 Successful Strategies to be continued by the Teacher:

- Mentor
- One-on-one tutoring
- Study buddy
- Daily parental communication
- In-class tutoring
- Remediation recovery tutoring
- Cooperative learning group
- Individual Instruction
- Individual behavior contract
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures:

Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Example of: Weekly SOL Mastery Report

(Circle one): English **Reading** Math Science Social Studies

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Place an X under the corresponding number from the weekly SOL assessment for the stated child. Determine the percentage of students you need to pass the final SOL. That should be your goal for each child on the weekly assessment (i.e. if they have to get 70% on the SOL for your subject, then they need to make 70% on each weekly assessment, otherwise they will need remediation on that SOL). If the majority of the class does reach the necessary percentage of mastery, it is to your advantage to re-teach the entire class, giving enrichment activities to those who do not need re-teaching.

SOL Objective	prefixes, roots	analogies	similes	hyperboles	meta-phor's similes	pre/suffixes	analogies	prefixes, roots	hyperbole	meta-phor's similes	suffixes, roots	analogies	hyperbole	similes	total missed by student
SOL #	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	
Test Question #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Student Name															
Doe, John	X			X						X				X	4/14--71%
Edward, Kay			X	X									X		3/14--79%
Fleming, Linda		X					X					X			3/14--79%
Garrett, Mona					X					X					2/14--86%
Hampton, Nan		X					X					X			3/14--79%
Isaacs, Michael				X					X				X	X	4/14--71%
Jenkins, Peter	X					X		X			X				4/14--71%
Kates, Reese															0/14--100%
Lee, Samantha	X		X			X		X				X		X	6/14--57%
Mann, Tanner				X						X				X	3/14--79%
Nabbs, Victor		X					X			X		X			4/14--71%
Otter, Willie		X					X					X			3/14--79%

## Example of: Weekly SOL Mastery Report (continued)

SOL Objective	prefixes, roots	analogies	similes	hyperboles	meta-phor's similes	pre/suffixes	analogies	prefixes, roots	hyperbole	meta-phor's similes	suffixes, roots	analogies	hyperbole	similes	total missed by student
SOL #	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	6.3b	
Test Question #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Student Name															
Pullman, Zelda				X			X			X		X	X		5/14--64%
Queen, Anna															0/14-100%
Ramsey, Boyd					X						X				2/14--86%
Sutton, Cecil				X					X				X	X	4/14--71%
Talley, Douglas	X					X		X			X				4/14--71%
Umber, Faye															0/14-100%
Vail, Gail															0/14-100%
Williams, Henry							X			X		X			3/14--79%
Young, James							X								1/14--93%
<b>Total Missed by SOL #</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>58/294 80% Class Average</b>

# Managing Your Data—Standards of Learning Options for Exceptional Education Students

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## Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments

### ***About the Standard of Learning (SOL)***

The Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools describe the commonwealth's expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K–12 in English, Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, Technology, the Fine Arts, Foreign Language, Health and Physical Education, and Driver Education.

These standards represent a broad consensus of what parents, classroom teachers, school administrators, academics, and business and community leaders believe schools should teach and students should learn.

### ***Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in the Standards of Learning Assessment Program***

Decisions about the need for and selection of accommodations for students with disabilities are the responsibility of the IEP team or 504 committee. The use of accommodations by a student when participating in the Standards of Learning assessments must be determined individually for each test and identified in the student's IEP or 504 plan. Accommodations allow students with disabilities an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement.

Accommodations should be those that the student needs during classroom instruction and assessments as identified in the student's IEP or 504 plan. Accommodations should not be used only for participation in a Standards of Learning assessment(s).

Typically, accommodations can be classified in the following categories:

- timing/scheduling
- setting
- presentation
- response

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### **NOTES:**

## Managing Your Data—Standards of Learning Options for Exceptional Education Students

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Accommodations may also be classified as standard or nonstandard. Standard accommodations allow the student to take a test in a different way without changing what the test is measuring. Accommodations that significantly change what the test is measuring are referred to as non-standard accommodations. A student, who has passed a Standards of Learning assessment utilizing any accommodation, including a non-standard accommodation, has passed for all purposes, including earning a verified credit.

A list of standard and nonstandard accommodations is provided to school divisions in the Department of Education's *Procedures for Determining Participation in the Assessment Component of the Virginia's Accountability System*. Questions about any accommodations not listed should be directed to the school division's director of testing who will consult with Department of Education staff as needed.

### Virginia Alternative/Alternate Assessment

This section includes information on the various alternative and alternate assessment options for the state of Virginia.

These include:

#### **VAAP (Virginia Alternate Assessment Program)**

The purpose of the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) is to evaluate the performance of students who have traditionally been exempt from state assessment programs. Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 1997) reflect the intent to extend educational accountability and reform to all students, including those with disabilities. Although these students represent a relatively small portion of the overall school population, the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program was developed with the belief that these students are a part of our accountability system and that the evaluation of their achievement represents an important component of our quest toward high standards.

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**NOTES:**

## Managing Your Data—Standards of Learning Options for Exceptional Education Students

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### ***VGLA (Virginia Grade Level Alternative)***

This section will assist you in completing steps for submitting, scoring, and reporting a VGLA for a specific student. The VGLA is available for students in grades 3–8 as an alternative assessment for SOL testing. Students who qualify to participate in the VGLA will be required to demonstrate individual achievement of grade level content standards as presented in the SOL test blueprints for the academic content area in which they are being assessed. Students will compile a collection of work samples to demonstrate performance on any and all on-grade level SOL on which they have received instruction.

### ***VSEP (Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program)***

The purpose of the VSEP is to help address concerns for some students with disabilities who have attained the knowledge and skills addressed by the Virginia Standards of Learning, but are unable to access the assessment(s) due to the nature of their disabilities and type of accommodations they use to access content. The Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program (VSEP) will enable certain students whose unique disabilities are not amenable to the various testing accommodations offered on Standards of Learning tests to earn verified credits toward the Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas or to meet the literacy and numeracy requirements of the Modified Standard Diploma through another process.

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**NOTES:**





# Making the Most of Your Mentor

**“ Never become so much of an expert that you stop gaining expertise. View life as a continuous learning experience.” Denis Waitley**





# Making the Most of Your Mentor

<b>Principles of Effective Mentoring</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	
<b><i>Mentoring</i></b>	<b><i>Mentors</i></b>	<b><i>Mentees</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is bigger than induction;</li> <li>• is a complex process and function;</li> <li>• involves support, assistance, guidance, but not evaluation;</li> <li>• requires time and communication; and</li> <li>• should facilitate self-reliance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide initial support and guidance to the novice as the school year begins;</li> <li>• continue to provide support during the school year with frequent and regular interaction in the classroom;</li> <li>• develop and maintain a focus for work with the novice rooted in standards-based teaching practices;</li> <li>• support and challenge the novice to improve his or her teaching practices;</li> <li>• provide empathy and assistance to novices coping with the stresses of teaching;</li> <li>• take responsibility for supporting, facilitating, and challenging novices into standards-base practices;</li> <li>• view role as facilitator of self-reflection, problem-solving, and instructional improvement; and</li> <li>• recognize trustworthiness and professional growth as the defining dimensions of the mentor/novice relationship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate actively in the mentoring relationship by sharing previous preparation and experience;</li> <li>• build a professional relationship, with open and honest dialogue;</li> <li>• schedule time for conferencing;</li> <li>• identify skills and areas of concern;</li> <li>• seek additional help from mentor;</li> <li>• accept feedback from mentor in order to develop as a professional</li> <li>• observe experienced teachers at work; participate in grade/subject level activities to plan curriculum and evaluate student progress;</li> <li>• attend all new teacher activities, seminars, and other professional development.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Mentoring programs</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should involve collaboration with institutions of higher education;</li> <li>• align their goals with those of the school division; and</li> <li>• should be evaluated.</li> </ul>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Mentors</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should be selected based on identified criteria; and</li> <li>• should be trained.</li> </ul>		

**NOTES:**

## Making the Most of Your Mentor

<b><i>Developmental Stages of Teacher Concerns</i></b>	
<b>How the Mentee Feels</b>	<b>What the Mentor Can Do</b>
<p>I. Survival stage: Teachers are focused on SELF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How am I doing?</li> <li>• Will I make it?</li> <li>• Do others approve of my performance?</li> </ul>	<p>I. Survival stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for opportunities to provide specific praise.</li> <li>• Express interest in mentee's ideas.</li> <li>• Empathize by sharing personal experiences from your first year of teaching.</li> <li>• Reflect on things that are going well, on successes as well as setbacks.</li> <li>• Share your coping skills and encourage the mentee to lead a balanced life that includes time for self, family, and friends.</li> </ul>
<p>II. Task Stage: Teachers begin to focus on trying to get things done and therefore confront time constraints. They can feel overwhelmed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson planning</li> <li>• Grading papers</li> <li>• Finding resources</li> <li>• Paperwork</li> <li>• Extra-duty assignments</li> <li>• Graduate school</li> <li>• Parent conferences</li> </ul>	<p>II. Task Stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist mentee in prioritizing the many tasks her/she feels compelled to complete.</li> <li>• Open your lesson plan files, and invite mentee to adopt or adapt them.</li> <li>• Share your methods for accomplishing common teaching and management tasks efficiently.</li> <li>• Encourage mentee to speak with and/or observe colleagues who demonstrate exemplary practice in areas of mentee's interest.</li> </ul>

**NOTES:**

# Making the Most of Your Mentor

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<b><i>Developmental Stages of Teacher Concerns</i></b>	
<b>How the Mentee Feels</b>	<b>What the Mentor Can Do</b>
<p>III. Impact Stage: Teachers' concerns shift to student learning. They tend to be child-centered and measure their success by their ability to engage students in meaningful learning. They ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are my students learning?</li><li>• How can I raise achievement levels?</li><li>• Is this meaningful to students?</li></ul>	<p>III. Impact Stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commend mentee for being student centered.</li><li>• Engage mentee in collegial dialogue that focuses on meeting the needs of individual learners.</li><li>• Expose mentee to more complex teaching and learning strategies.</li><li>• Encourage mentee to collaborate with or observe outstanding teachers who can model best practices not yet mastered.</li><li>• Focus conversations on mentee's efforts to make progress with challenging students.</li></ul>

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**NOTES:**

# Making the Most of Your Mentor

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## A Dozen Suggestions for Mentor/Mentee Collaboration

1. Collaborate in planning and/or teaching a unit.
2. Work together to analyze a lesson plan that did not work well.
3. Work together to develop a classroom assessment.
4. Improve questioning techniques together.
5. Share an instructional resource, such as the Enhanced Scope and Sequence.
6. Observe each other trying out a new strategy.
7. Brainstorm a list of possible solutions to a problem.
8. Plan a strategy for solving a classroom management problem.
9. Share and discuss professional journal articles.
10. Attend a meeting or conference together.
11. Share beliefs that all children can learn.
12. Share enthusiasm for teaching and learning.

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**NOTES:**

## Needs Assessment Questionnaire for New Teachers

Choose the response that most nearly indicates your level of need for assistance. Circle your level (Elementary, Middle, or High)

**5 — very high need      4 —high need      3 —moderate need      2 —some need      1 —very low need**

A. ____ Learning more about what is expected of me as a teacher	N. ____ Problem-solving strategies
B. ____ Communicating with administrators	O. ____ Motivating students
C. ____ Communicating with my colleague	P. ____ Having high expectations for all students
D. ____ Communicating with parents	Q. ____ Teaching students with special needs
E. ____ Classroom management techniques	R. ____ Diagnosing student needs
F. ____ Variety of teaching strategies	S. ____ Accommodating individual differences
G. ____ Planning for professional growth	T. ____ Evaluating student progress
H. ____ Understanding school culture	U. ____ Being organized and prepared
I. ____ Maintaining student discipline	V. ____ Completing administrative paperwork accurately and on time
J. ____ Long-range planning	W. ____ Dealing with stress
K. ____ Finding resources and materials	X. ____ Understanding my legal rights and responsibilities
L. ____ Understanding the curriculum	Y. ____ Understanding the division's evaluation process
M. ____ Managing my time and work	Z. ____ Administering standardized tests

Please respond to the following:

List any needs you have that are not addressed in the list above. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If necessary, be more specific about a need addressed in the list. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What types of support, not currently available, would help you as a new teacher? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# Debunking Myths

“It ain’t necessarily so.” Ira Gershwin





# Debunking Myths

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Myth	Real Life in the Classroom
<b><i>“Don’t smile ‘til Christmas!”</i></b>	Be welcoming; a smile goes a long way in that effort. And humor is a good teaching technique as long as it is not at a student’s expense.
<b><i>“It’s OK to dress like the kids.”</i></b>	Be professional: sneakers are fine for recess or field trips, but you probably want more adult type shoes in the classroom. And you should choose your clothes for practicality as well as for a professional image. Your best silk suit is probably not the choice of attire when planning finger painting. Nor are jeans appropriate.
<b><i>“It’s OK to be one of the kids.”</i></b>	You are the adult in the classroom. If you are too playful, inconsistent, or juvenile, the students may not respect the rules, guidelines, or routines. Your language must elevate them, so don’t talk like a youngster either.
<b><i>“Boys will be boys!”</i></b>	Sitting still all day is hard on boys, and girls. But condoning rough-housing or bullying is not ok. Boys (and girls) need to be polite to each other and to the adults in the school, on the bus, on the playground, in the locker room, on the athletic field, and in the parking lot. And no, they haven’t all learned this at home.
<b><i>“They’ll out grow it.”</i></b>	Yes students do grow, but they will not outgrow bad habits or inappropriate behaviors if these are condoned. Correct, model, reinforce... Students do need to be shown how to spell and write properly, use scissors and other tools, walk in the halls, pick up after themselves... and behave appropriately toward classmates.

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NOTES:

## Debunking Myths

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### Myth

***“Do as I say, not as I do!”***

***“What is said in the teachers’ lounge stays in the teachers’ lounge.”***

***“The teacher is always right.”***

***“The teacher has all the answers.”***

***“The teacher has the last word.”***

### Real Life in the Classroom

Students mimic: that is why we model strategies and lessons. So keep that in mind when choosing other behaviors as well. If they see you smoke, hear you swear or gossip, or break the school rules, they may assume that it is ok for them to do it as well.

Teachers are human and are not always able to keep things to themselves. Sometimes opinions stated in confidence do become well known. Guard your tongue, and never speak ill of a student. More importantly, do not divulge confidential information.

Teachers make mistakes. If you misspell a word on the board and a student points it out, thank him and fix the mistake. When you make a mistake, admit it and try to fix it.

When a student asks a question for which you do not have an answer, acknowledge it as a good question and work to find the answer with and/or for the student. And remember that not all questions have one right answer: some have many right answers; some have none.

Teachers for whom this is an important credo will probably find themselves involved in conflict with students. This stance is usually more about having control than anything else. If you’re wrong about something, admit it. If you’re not sure about something, offer to find an answer. If it is a behavior issue for the student, remember that you’re the adult, and your job is to help the student learn. This includes learning appropriate behaviors.

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NOTES:

# Debunking Myths

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## Myth

***“It’s OK for me to take out my mood on the students.”***

***“Some children just can’t learn.”***

***“If you can read, you can teach reading.”***

## Real Life in the Classroom

Emotions are neither good nor bad; they just are. It is okay to say to your students—in a calm way—that you’re having a bad day. But it is NEVER okay to use that as an excuse to terrorize the kids. Take deep breaths and repeat: “I am the adult here. I know how to manage my own behavior.”

Of all the myths, this is perhaps the most damaging to kids. Remember, all children can learn, just not in the same way on the same day. As the teacher, it is your responsibility to differentiate instruction so that, as a professional, you have provided the very best instruction to accommodate the learning needs of every student.

Learning to read is a very complex process, and most adults went through it so long ago that they don’t really remember how they learned. Moreover, not all students learn in the same way or at the same pace. Teaching reading requires being very analytical about the reading process, and while everyone is responsible for encouraging students to read (and write), often it takes a trained professional to help those readers who struggle to decode and comprehend. Seek help, and learn from the specialists in your school and community.

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NOTES:

# Debunking Myths

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Myth	Real Life in the Classroom
<b><i>“It’s OK to sit at my desk to teach.”</i></b>	Moving around the classroom is vital to good management and active engagement of students. If you are passive, they may think it is ok to be passive. It may be advisable to sit next to a student for a conference or to join a cooperative group, but sitting in the front or back of the room giving assignments is not interactive enough.
<b><i>“Special education students are not my problem.”</i></b>	Every student is special in some way, and even those not identified for service do need differentiation in instruction. Moreover, all students in the school are every teacher’s responsibility. If you lack the expertise to reach special students, any students, seek help from specialists and/or colleagues. And read and follow the provisions in the IEPs.
<b><i>“I don’t teach in a testing grade or subject, so the SOL assessments are not my problem.”</i></b>	Every teacher in the school is responsible for preparing students to do their best on end of year assessments. If you teach at an untested grade, and there are few of those, you are still preparing students to test well when they do get to the tested grade level. One year is not enough to prepare to write well or understand scientific concepts. And if you are teaching music, art, foreign language, or physical education there are many ways to collaborate with the core teachers to include their essential skills in your lessons.
<b><i>“When several students misbehave it is ok to punish the whole class.”</i></b>	Group punishment alienates everyone, even the student or students who may have broken the rules. If you must correct behavior, do so for that student or small group only. Don’t keep the whole class in from recess because three students were silly during your instructional time.

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NOTES:

# Debunking Myths

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Myth	Real Life in the Classroom
<b><i>“I’ve planned my lessons, so I’m good to go!”</i></b>	Planning is essential, but unpredictable events are rather predictable. Power outages, sick students, fire drills, interruptions from supervisors or parents and a myriad of other unplanned events can disrupt your well-laid plans. Have plan B in place, and be flexible. It is also a great idea to try to prepare your students in the beginning of the year so that they may have a routine to follow if an emergency should arrive. It may save someone’s life.
<b><i>“Teachers don’t buy groceries.”</i></b>	Some of your students are going to be surprised when they see you at the supermarket, the movies, the fitness center, or even at church. Remind them that you are a human being with a life outside of school. Don’t hide, but present yourself in a way similar to the one you use in the classroom.
<b><i>“Teachers really don’t make that much difference.”</i></b>	Again, Hiam Ginott tells us, rather poetically in “Between Teacher and Child” I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or de-humanized.

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NOTES:





# Handling Stress

**“Laughter is like the human body wagging its tail.” Anne Wilson Schaefer**





# Handling Stress

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- Most things you worry about will never happen.
- To deal with stress, you must figure out what's causing it.
- YOU HAVE TO SET ASIDE A FEW MINUTES EACH DAY FOR YOURSELF.
- There are 24 hours in a day. Use them wisely. Plan. Plan. Plan. Organize. Organize. Organize.
- Every great achievement was once considered impossible.
- Problems create opportunities.
- When you make decisions with kindness, especially when the decision involves a child, you will usually make the right decision.
- Regardless of age, or gender, or race, or religion, we all need about the same amount of love.
- If you want to cheer yourself up, try cheering up someone else.
- When you go home, take a nice bath or shower. Put up a "DO NOT BOTHER ME" sign. Light candles. Play music. Relax. CHILL!
- Use your plan time to plan, and to be by yourself. If you are around others, you won't get as much done.
- Stress-reduced living is like playing basketball; it takes a lot of practice.

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**NOTES:**

## Handling Stress

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- Pace yourself. Here we go again....Plan. Organize. Plan. Organize. Twenty-four hours in a day. Use them wisely.
- Don't say "Yes," when you know in your heart and mind you should be saying "No."
- If you laugh and drink at the same time, whatever you're drinking may come out through your nose.
- Remember, we don't live in a perfect world. Schedules will change. Someone will pull the fire alarm during your planning time when you were going to put lesson plans together or grade papers. Go with it. You have no control over it. OH, Wait! You could have planned or organized better.
- Don't use food to de-stress, but every now and then eat a piece of chocolate, or pie, or something delightful. Don't overdo it.
- There's no elevator to success; you have to take the steps.
- Don't let other people rent space in your head; pretty soon there won't be any room for the important stuff.
- Never underestimate the power and potential of the human spirit; especially your own.
- If you smile at someone, you almost always get a smile in return.
- Keep your desk clean and your room current. Take down old stuff...outdated stuff. It's depressing.
- Develop Teflon skin, you know the kind that lets things just slide off. You don't get burned, and the good stuff hangs on. "Teflon it."

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**NOTES:**

# Handling Stress

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- Be persistent. Did you know that Walt Disney was turned down 302 times before he got financing for Disneyland?
- Count to 10.
- Take time to exercise, even if it's just a 10-minute walk.
- Keep a sleep routine. Don't vary your bedtimes during the week.
- BREATHE!!
- Keep a worry stone in your pocket, and rub it when you feel yourself getting stressed.
- Celebrate little steps.
- Be humble. Say "please" and "thank you." It has a calming effect.
- Keep a folder of good things that happen—a good journal. Read it when things seem to be taking a negative turn. Celebrate the good stuff.
- If you need to go to a private counselor, go. There's no shame in talking to a professional. They don't tell our innermost thoughts to anyone, and they listen. Everything you say will be confidential.

## **IDEAS!**

*Remember, students have stress too. Be sensitive to their needs. Give them space; ask discretely, "Are you okay?"*

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**Notes:**

## Handling Stress

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- Stay away from negative people. Don't listen when other teachers say bad things about students. Leave the room. Listening to negatives about others will make you negative.
- Don't work hard; work smart. UH. OH. Here we go again.... Plan. Organize. Plan. Organize.
- Treat your students the way you want to be treated.
- Don't be afraid to challenge yourself. There's no greater success.
- Celebrate what's right and good with the world....with the children.
- Celebrate the good in the child. Look for the good. If you can't find it right away, keep looking. Change angles. Change lenses. Change the lighting.
- Celebration creates passion and vision. You need to have both, and your students do too.

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**NOTES:**



# Knowing the Non-negotiables

**“The hardest thing in life is to know which bridge to cross and which to burn.”  
David Russell**



# Knowing the Non-negotiables

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(Or . . . Things you have to do whether you want to or not!)

Teachers must be very creative people. The “art of teaching” requires that a person has the ability to think on his or her feet, to remain calm in a sea of turmoil, to pull the rabbit out of the hat at a moment’s notice, and to perform various and sundry tricks of the trade almost every day. There is a lot of room for creativity and spontaneity.

But there are some things that all teachers must be willing and able to do that are required, that cannot be changed, that cannot be negotiated. Below is a list—though not all-inclusive—of some of those things.

- Use the curriculum framework. This will ensure that your students will receive instruction on the curriculum on which they will be tested. Remember. . . written, taught, tested. That’s the curriculum you must be using.
- Know your school’s rules. There will be a student code of conduct that must be followed consistently by all teachers. You may know some who will want to deviate. Don’t be one of those teachers. Also be sure to follow the school’s established protocols for teachers, such as attendance at meetings and dressing appropriately.
- Know the processes and procedures of your school division. Some principals may provide an orientation for new teachers about this topic. Others may not. Make it your business to find out what the expectations are from the school division level.
- Learn about IEPs, 504 Plans, manifestation hearings, VAP and VGLA Assessments. If Special Education is not your field, you will still need to have a working knowledge about these unique aspects of special education.
- Attend all parent/teacher conferences. This may be your best opportunity to create understandings with parents about their child/your student. Parents can be your best allies, or your worst enemies.

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**NOTES:**

## Knowing the Non-negotiables

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- Keep your recertification current.
- If an emergency situation arises, find someone to cover your class. You may think they'll "be all right for just a few minutes." This is too risky, not only in terms of potential harm to a student, but also in terms of your own liability. Just don't do it.
- Keep your principal informed. The principal is your immediate supervisor, and you must keep him or her informed at all times.
- If you are going to stay in the building after regular hours, be sure to tell someone in authority that you are there.
- **Be sure you understand the expectations in your contract.**

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**NOTES:**





# Following the Law

**“Any society that needs disclaimers has too many lawyers.” Erik Pepke**



# Following the Law

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NOTE: There are numerous state and federal statutes regarding education. Each local school board is required to have a policy manual that follows state and federal law. Know what the law is, and know where the policy manuals are. Focus on teaching and act/make decisions as a reasonably prudent person when making those decisions. Following the law is usually about common sense.

## Question

***How to I keep myself out of court or jail?***

***Several of my students are from broken homes where parents have joint custody. Do I have to send information regarding the child to both parents?***

***Johnny has misbehaved and will be disciplined for the behavior. Can I tell him what the consequences are before I hear his side?***

## Answer

Don't do anything you don't want to see on TV, in the newspaper, on video tape, or audio tape.

Yes. When joint custody has been established, and legal papers have been submitted to the school, your responsibility is to inform both parents when sending home information. Don't assume that just because parents have joint custody that they communicate with each other. [Family Education Right to Privacy Act; 34 C.F.R. 99.4]

NO! Although Johnny has misbehaved, he still has an opportunity to tell his side. It's called due process and is addressed in the U.S. Constitution, 14th Amendment.

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NOTES:

## Following the Law

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### Question

***I just finished grading my students' tests on fractions and most of them did really well. Can I post their scores on my door so everyone can see the results?***

***Can I transport students in my private car?***

***If there is no state or federal law regarding a decision that I make, on what do I base my decision?***

***May I copy secured SOL test items to use as practice items?***

### Answer

Don't do it! Even children have the right to privacy. By posting names and scores you may be violating that right. (FERPA-Family Education Right to Privacy Act)

Please refer to your school board policy manual for the answer to this question.

Before you make a decision regarding students, make certain your local policies support your decision. Example: transporting students in a personal vehicle.

NO! This is a test security violation with serious consequences, such as jeopardizing your licensure. You may only use released practice tests. Refer to: <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/vdoe/supts-memos/2003/inf206a.pdf> 22.1.253.13:4.D

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NOTES:

## Following the Law

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### Question

### Answer

***Am I legally obligated to report suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect?***

Yes. Report it to an administrator and also directly to the local social services agency. 63.2-1509; 22.1-291.3

***May a student be disciplined for having or using a cell phone at school?***

The answer is guided by local school board policy and the student conduct code. 22.1-279.6(B)

***Are my students required to recite the Pledge of Allegiance?***

Yes. However, if “he, his parent or legal guardian objects on religious, philosophical or other grounds...” 22.1.202 (C)

***What is negligence?***

*Negligence* is defined as the failure to do something a reasonably prudent person would do under similar circumstances. 63.2-1509; 22.1-291.3

***May I discipline my students for misusing school computers or the Internet?***

Yes. Your school board has an “acceptable use” policy for computers and Internet use that puts students and staff on notice regarding appropriate conduct. 22.1-70.2

**Note: The numbers that are listed at the end of the answers refer to Virginia Code Sections.**

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NOTES:



A black and white line drawing of a landscape. In the center, a path of five stepping stones leads across a stream. On the left, there is a large tree with many small, star-shaped leaves. On the right, there is a large, rounded tree with many small, rounded leaves. The background shows more trees and foliage. The title "Collaborating with Parents" is centered at the top.

# Collaborating with Parents

**“If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that he is your friend.” Abraham Lincoln**





# Collaborating with Parents

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**Note:** The definition of parent may also include caregivers, such as step-parents, grandparents, foster-parents, or anyone who is the legal guardian of a child.

## Concerns

***I know it is important to communicate with parents, but how do I do that when I barely have time to eat lunch, let alone make telephone calls? And when I do get to the telephone, parents are at work.***

***Parents seem defensive when I call to discuss problems. How can I overcome that and get them on my side?***

## Advice

Finding time to call parents can be challenging. It can be helpful to collect information in a survey at the beginning of the school year about the best time to reach parents. For some parents, receiving a phone call at work is impractical, while others prefer it.

When leaving phone messages, as you inevitably will have to do, note the best time for you to receive return calls. This saves frustration on both sides.

Some teachers choose to make phone calls in the evenings when it may be easier to reach parents. Speak with whichever parent answers the phone. Don't show gender bias. (There may be exceptions to this rule in specific situations.) **Note:** Many parents will communicate with you by e-mail, so be sure to have a space for e-mail addresses on your survey of information.

Parents, particularly of struggling students, report that they dread receiving telephone calls from the teacher because they expect that it will be bad news. Taking the time to make a positive contact with parents, before a problem arises, can help establish a working relationship and get parents on your side.

Asking parents for their perspective and suggestions can also be beneficial. Asking questions such as, "Do you see this type of behavior at home? What works for you in similar situations?" indicates to parents that you value their input.

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**NOTES:**

## Collaborating with Parents

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### Concerns

***I am new to the community and come from very different circumstances from my students. How can I better understand the families of my students and gain their trust?***

***How can I make the best use of a parent-teacher conference?***

### Advice

Recognizing that cultural differences exist is an important first step. In these situations, an attitude of respectful interest is appropriate. Students and families will appreciate your interest and welcome the opportunity to educate you. In addition, experienced teachers and other members of the staff can answer your questions and help you understand the background and culture of your students. Don't be afraid to ask for guidance in this area.

Parent-teacher conferences are a wonderful opportunity for communication. Here are some suggestions to make the most of this opportunity:

Encourage parent participation by having a project or activity that students are excited about sharing. The enthusiasm of the students will get parents to attend.

Make parents feel welcome. Greet them warmly and call them by name. Provide a comfortable (adult-size) chair. Sit with parents at a table, rather than behind a desk.

Show parents you care by sharing a specific and positive comment about their child.

Provide parents an opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions.

End on a positive note by thanking parents for their interest and participation. Summarize any decisions or agreements, and make notes for items that require follow-up.

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**NOTES:**



# Using Resources

**“The brighter you are, the more you have to learn.” Don Herald**



# Glossary of Terms

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<b>504 Plan</b>	A 504 plan is a legal document falling under the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is designed to plan a program of instructional services to assist students with special needs who are in a regular education setting. A 504 plan is not an Individualized Education Program (IEP) as is required for special education students. However, a student moving from a special education to a regular education placement could be placed under a 504 plan.
<b>Accreditation</b>	Schools in Virginia earn their accreditation based primarily on how well students have mastered academic concepts and analytical skills.
<b>ADA</b>	The Americans with Disabilities Act gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.
<b>Anticipatory Set</b>	Anticipatory Set is the first stage of Madeline Hunter’s direct instructional model. It engages students in the content of the lesson by tapping into background knowledge, and it organizes the content by identifying the major concepts to be learned. It also focuses students’ attention and develops their readiness for the lesson.
<b>AYP</b>	Adequate Yearly Progress of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act provides that all public school campuses, school districts, and states are evaluated for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and required to meet AYP criteria on three measures: Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, and either Graduation Rate (for high schools and districts) or Attendance Rate (for elementary and middle/junior high schools).
<b>Bloom’s taxonomy</b>	Benjamin Bloom and his colleagues identified six levels of cognition: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
<b>Blueprints</b>	The Standards of Learning Test Blueprints provide a guide for test construction and preparation. These show which Standards are tested and which are omitted. They show the reporting category, number of questions, and materials allowed during testing. They are available on the Virginia Department of Education Web site.

## Glossary of Terms

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<b>Checking for Understanding</b>	Checking for understanding is part of Madeline Hunter’s direct instructional model. It determines whether students have “gotten it” before proceeding. It is essential that students practice doing it right so the teacher knows that students understand before proceeding to practice. If there is any doubt that the class has not understood, the concept/skill should be retaught before practice begins.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that all records and documents regarding students with disabilities remain undisclosed to the public but accessible to parents. This is a good idea for all students as well.
<b>CTE</b>	Career and Technical Education—The federal Carl D. Perkins Act defines “vocational and technical education as organized educational activities that —(A) offer a sequence of courses that provides individuals with the academic and technical knowledge and skills the individuals need to prepare for further education and for careers (other than careers requiring a baccalaureate, master’s, or doctoral degree) in current or emerging employment sectors; and (B) include competency-based applied learning that contributes to the academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills, and occupation-specific skills, of an individual.”
<b>Curriculum Mapping</b>	Curriculum maps are valuable planning tools for teachers, helping them to begin with the end in mind and to chart a course for the year. Typically, annual curriculum maps are organized by month or marking period and provide an overview of the enduring understandings and overarching goals; the standards-based essential skills and concepts; the methods of assessment that the teacher and students will be working on throughout the year (e.g., major writing assignments, projects, performances); and the major content resources.
<b>DARE</b>	D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) is a collaborative program in which local law enforcement and local schools join together to educate students about the personal and social consequences of substance abuse and violence.
<b>Data</b>	Data is quantitative and qualitative information that shows how teachers, students, or both are progressing on specific content.

# Glossary of Terms

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<b>Differentiation</b>	Differentiated instruction recognizes that students have varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, and interests. Differentiated instruction is a process to approach teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student’s growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is, and assisting in the learning process.
<b>Discipline Mapping</b>	Discipline Mapping is a method to analyze trends in behavior that interrupt learning in classrooms.
<b>Enhanced Scope and Sequence</b>	The Virginia Standards of Learning Enhanced Scope and Sequence is a resource intended to help teachers align their classroom instruction with the Standards of Learning that were adopted by the Virginia Board of Education. The Enhanced Scope and Sequence is organized by topics from the original Scope and Sequence document and includes the content of the Standards of Learning and the essential knowledge and skills from the Curriculum Framework. In addition, the Enhanced Scope and Sequence provides teachers with sample lesson plans that are aligned with the essential knowledge and skills in the Curriculum Framework.
<b>FBA</b>	Functional Behavioral Assessment is a plan developed by a committee of special education and classroom teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and parents to address a behavioral issue of a special education student who needs to modify inappropriate behavior.
<b>FERPA</b>	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, a federal law, requires parental or guardian consent prior to the disclosure of information from a student’s educational records.
<b>FLE</b>	Family Life Education is a program of instruction in family living and community relationships. It is taught from kindergarten to high school as appropriate for the age of the student.
<b>FOIA</b>	The Freedom of Information Act requires any public agency or body to provide all written documents not classified as confidential to any citizen upon request.
<b>Graphic Organizer</b>	Graphic Organizers, also called mind maps or concepts maps are pictorial or graphical ways to organize information and thoughts for understanding, remembering, or writing about. Graphic organizers, mind maps, and concept maps are powerful tools that can be used to enhance learning and create a foundation for learning.

## Glossary of Terms

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<b>IDEIA</b>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, which reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is designed to help children learn better by promoting accountability for results, enhancing parent involvement, using proven practices and materials, providing more flexibility, and reducing paperwork burdens for teachers, states, and local school districts.
<b>IEP</b>	Individualized Education Program is a written plan developed to meet the special learning needs of each student with disabilities. An IEP is a legal document developed by a committee of Special Education and classroom teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and parents to meet the special learning needs of each student with disabilities.
<b>LEA</b>	Local Education Agency or local school division
<b>Marzano</b>	Robert Marzano and his colleagues identified nine instructional strategies that make a real and positive difference in classroom instruction: identifying similarities and differences, summarizing and note taking, reinforcing effort and providing recognition, homework and practice, nonlinguistic representations, structured small groups, setting goals and providing feedback, generating and testing hypotheses, and activating prior knowledge.
<b>MO</b>	Measurable Objectives are the specific measures used to determine whether or not a goal has been achieved successfully. The objectives are instructions about what the students will be able to do. Use verbs, and include specific conditions (how well or how many) that describe to what degree the students will be able to demonstrate mastery of the task.
<b>Modality</b>	Modalities refer to learning styles and preferences: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile. Since students vary and use a variety of modalities, it is important that teachers plan lessons which use multiple modalities to help students understand the material.
<b>NEA</b>	National Education Association is America's largest organization committed to advancing the cause of public education.
<b>Portfolio</b>	A portfolio is a collection of a body of work from either a student or a teacher to be used as part of the evaluation process.



# Glossary of Terms

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<b>SOA</b>	Standards of Accreditation delineate the regulations for accrediting public schools in Virginia.
<b>SOL</b>	Standards of Learning describe the commonwealth’s expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K–12 in English, mathematics, science, history and social science, technology, the fine arts, foreign language, health and physical education, and driver education.
<b>SOQ</b>	Standards of Quality, part of the Code of Virginia, prescribe standards for public schools and are found at §§ 22.1-253.13:1 through 22.1-253.13:8 of the Code of Virginia.
<b>SRO</b>	School Resource Officer is a local law enforcement officer who is assigned to one or more schools to assist with law-related issues around student behaviors. The SRO may also provide instructions related to law enforcement issues.
<b>Threat Assessment</b>	A threat assessment is conducted when a person (or persons) threatens to commit a violent act or engages in behavior that appears to threaten an act of violence. Threat assessment is a process of evaluating the threat and the circumstances surrounding the threat, in order to uncover any facts or evidence that indicate the threat is likely to be carried out.
<b>Title I</b>	Title I provides financial assistance to public schools with high numbers or percentages of poor and/or migrant children to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards.
<b>Title IX</b>	Prohibits discrimination and states that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.
<b>TTAC</b>	Training and Technical Assistance Centers are located at many colleges statewide and provide technical assistance to schools focusing primarily on special education issues.
<b>VAAP</b>	Virginia Alternate Assessment Program allows for the evaluation of the performance of students who have been traditionally exempted from state assessment programs due to a disability.

## Glossary of Terms

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<b>VAESP</b>	Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals leads in the advocacy and support for elementary and middle level principals and other education leaders in their commitment to all children.
<b>VASSP</b>	Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals is the statewide advocacy and outreach professional organization for school principals and assistant principals committed to the improvement of secondary education, i.e. middle, junior high, intermediate, high school, combined, and vocational.
<b>VDOE</b>	The Virginia Department of Education operates within the executive branch of the state government as directed by the Board of Education. The State Superintendent of Schools is the chief administrative officer.
<b>VEA</b>	Virginia Education Association creates a deep and abiding interest in the cause of education in Virginia; promotes efficiency in classroom teaching and in the administration of schools; urges upon the electorate the importance of adequate support to all institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge in order that our government may have the sanctions of an enlightened public opinion.
<b>VGLA</b>	The Virginia Grade Level Alternative Assessment provides for an alternate method of assessing student knowledge measured against grade-level achievement standards. The VGLA is designed for the population of students with disabilities enrolled in grades 3–8 who are unable to participate in the SOL assessments, even with accommodations, and who do not meet the participation criteria for the VAAP.

# Curriculum Web Sites

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## English/Language Arts

*International Reading Association.* [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org). Goals are to improve the quality of reading instruction, disseminating research and information about reading, and encouraging the lifetime reading habit.

*NCTE: National Council of Teachers of English.* <http://www.ncte.org/>. Covers all aspects of the association including professional development, publications, programs, and teaching resource collections.

*read. write. think.* <http://www.readwritethink.org/>. Provides lesson plans, standards, Web resources, and student materials.

*VATE: Virginia Association of Teachers of English.* <http://www.vate.org/>. Covers all aspects of the association including publications, grants/awards, and current activities.

*VSRA: Virginia State Reading Association.* <http://www.vsra.org/>. Promotes literacy through collaboration, advocacy and professional development.

## History and Social Science

*History and Social Science Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework (2001).*

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/History/hist\\_ss\\_framework.html](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/History/hist_ss_framework.html). The History and Social Science Curriculum Framework defines the content knowledge, skills, and understandings that are measured by the Standards of Learning tests.

*History and Social Science Standards of Learning Enhanced Sample Scope and Sequence Guides (2004).*

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/EnhancedSandS/history-ss.shtml>. The Enhanced Scope and Sequence provides teachers with sample lesson plans and instructional resources that are aligned with the essential knowledge and skills in the Curriculum Framework.

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### NOTES:

## Curriculum Web Sites

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*Mali: Ancient Crossroads of Africa.* <http://mali.pwnet.org/>. This resource for elementary and middle school teachers and students includes background knowledge, lesson plans, literature links, and online resources on the West African empire of Mali.

Lesson plans are available at  
[http://mali.pwnet.org/lessonplan/lessonplan\\_elementary.htm](http://mali.pwnet.org/lessonplan/lessonplan_elementary.htm).

*National Council for the Social Studies.* [www.ncss.org](http://www.ncss.org). NCSS provides leadership, service, and support for all social studies educators.

*Staff Development Resources and Sample PowerPoints.* <http://chnm.gmu.edu/vcsssce/techresources.html>.

PowerPoint Presentation Topics include the following:

Teach In 2005: Standards of Learning and Instructional Resources in Virginia

Teacher Academy in United States History

Focus on Civics Instructions for K–3

The Role of Technology in Differentiating Instruction in Elementary Social Studies

Instructional Support for United States History to 1877

Teaching Reading in Social Studies

Resources and Technical Assistance for Schools in Academic Warning

Summarizing and Note Taking for Elementary History

Walk Smart, Virginia! (Fourth Grade Teachers—Virginia Studies)

Format of the Virginia Indian Web Site

Instructional Resources Virginia Indians Past and Present

*Standards of Learning Test Blueprints.* <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Assessment/soltests/home.html>. The Standards of Learning Test Blueprints serve as a guide to teachers, parents, and students in that they show Standards of Learning covered by a test, reporting categories of test items, number of test items, and general information about how the test questions are constructed.

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### NOTES:

## Curriculum Web Sites

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*Teaching and Learning Virginia K–3 History and Social Science Standards of Learning.*

<http://k3hss.pwnet.org/>. This Web site resource is provided for teachers and students. It includes lesson plans, school connections, literature links, reading strategies, and online resources for kindergarten through grade three.

Note: Review materials are available for each grade at

[http://k3hss.pwnet.org/kgrade/k\\_all.htm](http://k3hss.pwnet.org/kgrade/k_all.htm)

[http://k3hss.pwnet.org/1grade/1\\_all.htm](http://k3hss.pwnet.org/1grade/1_all.htm)

[http://k3hss.pwnet.org/2grade/2\\_all.htm](http://k3hss.pwnet.org/2grade/2_all.htm)

[http://k3hss.pwnet.org/3grade/3\\_all.htm](http://k3hss.pwnet.org/3grade/3_all.htm).

*Technology Resources from the Virginia Department of Education.*

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/vcsssce/techresources.html>.

Camping Out with the SOLs, U.S. 1 Review.

Play it Again, Sam: Virginia Studies Review.

*United States History Connecting the Past to the Present Web Site.* <http://ushistory.pwnet.org/>. Ready resources for the classroom include lesson plans, video clips, pictures, primary documents, Internet links, graphics, and maps. This Web site will enhance teachers' content knowledge and support the development of instructional strategies for teaching United States history.

Review materials are available at *Camping Out with the SOL United States History to 1877.*

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/vcsssce/camp.html>.

*Deer Park's United States History to 1877 Review Page.*

<http://socialstudies.cayennepaper.com/6thgrade.htm>.

Additional Instructional Resources for United States History to 1877. <http://ushistory.pwnet.org/links/index.php>.

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### NOTES:

## Curriculum Web Sites

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*Virginia Indian History and Social Science Web Site: An Online Resource for the Classroom.*

<http://virginiaindians.pwnet.org/>. Virginia's First People Past and Present is designed for elementary, middle, and high school teachers as a guide in the instructional planning process for teaching the history, geography, and economic systems of the Virginia Indians. Links to the eight state-recognized tribes of Virginia are included in this resource.

Lesson plans are available at

[http://virginiaindians.pwnet.org/lesson\\_plans/elementary.php](http://virginiaindians.pwnet.org/lesson_plans/elementary.php).

*Virginia Studies: Ready Resources for the Classroom.* <http://vastudies.pwnet.org/>. This is a Web site resource for teachers and students with lesson plans, school connections, literature links, reading strategies, maps, and online resources for Virginia Studies.

Note: Review materials are available at

<http://vastudies.pwnet.org/all/index.htm>.

*Virginia Studies Review Materials*

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/vcsssce/playitagain.html>.

## Mathematics

*AMTE. Association of Math Teacher Educators.* <http://www.amte.net/>. Covers all aspects of the association including conferences, committees, news, publications, jobs, and resources.

*The Math Forum @ Drexel.* [http://mathforum.org/library/resource\\_types/professional/](http://mathforum.org/library/resource_types/professional/). A Math Forum Internet Mathematics Library.

*NCTM: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.* <http://www.nctm.org/>. Covers all aspects of the association. Their motto is "More and Better Math for All Students."

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### NOTES:

## Curriculum Web Sites

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*Resources for Math Teachers.* <http://www.bluemoon.net/~watson/mteach.htm>. Resources include national organizations, government resources, technology and software, other online resources, recommended reading, math movies, and tutoring services.

### Science

*AAPT: American Association of Physics Teachers.* <http://www.aapt.org/> AAPT's mission is to enhance the understanding and appreciation of physics through teaching.

*Association for Astronomy Education (AAE).* <http://solar.physics.montana.edu/aae/>. Resources for teaching and learning about astronomy from kindergarten up through graduate school.

*Chemistry Education Association.* [http://www.cea.asn.au/CEA\\_home\\_page.html](http://www.cea.asn.au/CEA_home_page.html). Promotes the study and general knowledge of all branches of chemistry at the secondary level of education.

*East Carolina University Department of Math and Science Education: Professional Science Teachers Organizations.* <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/msed/ProfessionalScienceTeacherOrganizations.cfm>. Links to professional organizations and resources.

*Links for Chemistry Teachers.* [http://www.chemistrycoach.com/links\\_for\\_chemistry\\_teachers.htm](http://www.chemistrycoach.com/links_for_chemistry_teachers.htm). Includes chemistry lesson plans, demonstrations, experiments, and education sites and articles.

*National Astronomy Education Projects: A Catalog.*

<http://www.astrosociety.org/education/resources/naep.html>. This is an evolving list of those projects and programs in astronomy education to which anyone from around the U.S. can apply or from which anyone can receive materials.

*NESTAnet: National Earth Science Teacher's Association.* <http://www.nestanet.org/>. NESTA's purpose is the advancement and coordination of earth science education at all educational levels.

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### NOTES:

## Curriculum Web Sites

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*NSTA: National Science Teacher's Association.* <http://www.nsta.org/>. Covers all aspects of the association including news, focus on the classroom at all levels including college, professional development, conferences, and community information.

*The Physics Teacher Online.* <http://scitation.aip.org/tpt/>. Publishes papers on physics research, the history and philosophy of physics, applied physics, curriculum developments, pedagogy, instructional lab equipment, and book reviews. This journal's free access period is over. You must now subscribe to continue access.

*PSRC: Physical Sciences Resource Center.* <http://www.psrc-online.org/>. A collection of information and resources for physical sciences education.

*Science Teacher Associations.* <http://www.usetute.com.au/sciteach.html>. Find out what other science teacher associations are up to in other countries by following the links listed on this Web site.

*VAST: Virginia Association of Science Teachers.* <http://www.vast.org/>. A comprehensive professional organization dedicated to the advancement of science education for all.

*VIP: Virginia Instructors of Physics.* <http://www.vast.org/vip>. Sponsored by the University of Virginia for all levels of physics and physical science education in the state of Virginia. Its purpose is to end the isolation felt by so many high school physics and physical science teachers.

## Varied Subjects

*ACTE Online: American Council of Career and Technical Education.* [www.acteonline.org](http://www.acteonline.org). The largest national education association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for careers.

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### NOTES:



## Curriculum Web Sites

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*ADPRIMA*. [www.adprima.com](http://www.adprima.com). Straightforward, useful education information for new teachers and education students. Good source for buying educational resources.

*Busy Teachers Café*. <http://www.busyteacherscafe.com/>. K–3 teachers will find free worksheets, units, lesson plans, activities, education links, and suggestions for classroom management.

*Cornell University Center for Learning and Teaching*. [www.clt.cornell.edu](http://www.clt.cornell.edu). Offers Learning Strategies Center, Student Disability Services, International Teaching Assistant Development Program, Cornell Teaching Assistant Development Program, Faculty Instructional Support.

*Division of Assessment and Reporting*. <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Assessment/home.shtml>. This Web page is on the Virginia Department of Education Web site and covers numerous testing and assessment items, including Standards of Learning Tests.

*Education World: The Educator's Best Friend*. [www.education-world.com](http://www.education-world.com). A wide variety of resources under headings such as: Lesson Planning, Professional Development, Administrators Desk, Technology Integration, School Issues, EdWorld at Home.

*EducationalCyberPlayground*. [www.edu-cyberpg.com](http://www.edu-cyberpg.com). Publisher of print and online content for K–12 educators and the public.

*Elementary Educators*. [www.k-6educators.about.com](http://www.k-6educators.about.com). Lesson plans, units, and worksheets for teachers and parents.

*Inspiring Teachers*. [www.inspiringteachers.com](http://www.inspiringteachers.com). Beginning teacher's toolbox, teacher's toolbox, Inspiring Teacher's catalog, weekly tips newsletter.

*Lesson Planet: the Search Engine for Teachers*. [www.lessonplanet.com](http://www.lessonplanet.com). More than 70,000 online lesson plans, reviewed and rated by experienced K–12 teachers.

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### NOTES:

## Curriculum Web Sites

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*MiddleWeb: Exploring Middle School Reform.* [www.middleweb.com](http://www.middleweb.com). Resources for schools, districts, educators, new teachers, parents, and public school advocates.

*NEA: National Education Association.* [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org). Covers all current news of the NEA.

*The New Teacher Center.* [www.newteachercenter.org](http://www.newteachercenter.org). National resource focused on teacher and administrator induction.

*NSBA: National School Boards Association.* <http://www.nsba.org/site/index.asp>. Covers news and issues, provides resources.

*Reach Every Child.* <http://www.reacheverychild.com/>. Resources for teachers and students; lesson plans to make reaching students and using technology easier; topics include: In the Classroom, Classroom Support, About the World, and Special Interest.

*Scholastic.* [www.teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans](http://www.teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans). Lesson plans, activities, strategies, and tools.

*Sites for Teachers.* [www.sitesforteachers.com](http://www.sitesforteachers.com). Hundreds of educational Web sites rated by popularity.

*T/TAC Online.* <http://ttaonline.org/#>. Linking people and resources to help children and youth with disabilities.

*TeachersFirst.com.* [www.teachersfirst.com](http://www.teachersfirst.com). Web resources and lessons for K–12 teachers and students.

*Teacher Focus.* [www.teacherfocus.com](http://www.teacherfocus.com). A communication forum for new and veteran teachers.

*Teachers.net.* [www.teachers.net](http://www.teachers.net). Teacher chat, lesson plans, teaching jobs.

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### NOTES:

## Curriculum Web Sites

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*Teachers Network: By Teachers, for Teachers.* [www.teachersnetwork.org](http://www.teachersnetwork.org). Site includes daily classroom specials, lesson plans, videos, online courses, new teacher help, grants for teachers, dialogue with teachers, and a teacher store.

*Teacher Support Network.* <http://www.teachersupport.info/>. Broad range of support for teachers: trainee, new, serving, head, lecturer, and re-tired.

*Teachnology.* <http://www.teach-nology.com/>. Free and easy-to-use resources for teachers in all subject areas, teaching tips, and message board.

*VASSP: Virginia Association of Secondary Principals.* [www.vassp.org](http://www.vassp.org). Features legislation issues, conferences, workshops, member's exchange, and publications.

*Virginia's CTE Resource Center.* [www.cteresource.org](http://www.cteresource.org). Supports career and technical and occupational-technical preparation programs by providing resources for curriculum development and program design and implementation.

*Virginia Department of Education Web site.* <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/>. A comprehensive site for the Virginia Department of Education.

*Yahoo Education Directory.* <http://dir.yahoo.com/Education/>. Links to all aspects and levels of education.

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### NOTES:



# Communication Log

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Date	Form of Communication (e-mail, phone #, face-to-face)	Person(s) reached	Topic and notes



# Sample Lesson Plan Format

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Based on Madeline Hunter's Lesson Plan.

1. **Anticipatory Set** (focus). A short activity or prompt that focuses the students' attention before the actual lesson begins.
2. **Purpose** (objective). The purpose of the lesson.
3. **Input**. The vocabulary, skills, and concepts the teacher will impart to the students.
4. **Modeling**. The teacher shows in graphic form or demonstrates what the finished product looks like.
5. **Guided Practice**. The teacher leads the students through the steps necessary to perform the skill. They are given the opportunity to apply or practice what they have learned and receive immediate feedback.
6. **Checking for Understanding**. The teacher uses a variety of strategies to determine "whether students understand what has been presented."
7. **Independent Practice**. The students practice on their own in class or as homework.
8. **Closure**. A review or wrap-up of the lesson, "Tell me/show me what you have learned today."

Note: Your school or division may have specific expectations regarding lesson plans. However, Madeline Hunter's eight steps have stood the test of time.





# Words of Wisdom

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Below is a compilation of tips contributed by educators who, collectively, represent many years of teaching experience. Some of these ideas can only be mastered over time, but each of them offers sage advice. Though most repetition was avoided in this compilation, there were several key words and ideas that veteran teachers seem to value highly as stepping stones to success:

- A sense of humor
- Organizational skills
- Compassion
- Caring
- Respect
- Lifelong learning

Trust the veterans on these! They work.

## **Dr. Thomas L. Shortt, Executive Director, Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals (VAESP)**

- *Be flexible—remember that you too were once a student.*
- *Listen before reacting or responding. There may be real substance to what students are saying.*
- *Laugh at yourself. Let students know that you are human.*
- *Admit to mistakes. None of us are perfect.*
- *Have a sense of humor. It will be a long boring career if you don't.*
- *At the end of the day, consider all of the positive "happenings" of the day rather than the negative occurrences.*
- *Never say negative things about your students in the teacher's workroom/lounge or in public.*
- *Never say anything in the teachers lounge/workroom that you would not want published in the local newspaper.*
- *When angry count to 20 before responding.*
- *Remember that every child does not have the same quality of life at home.*
- *Get to know each child in your class—his/her strengths, weakness, family situation and social/economic conditions. This will help you understand his/her classroom behaviors.*
- *Community politics will get you fired faster than test scores. Get to know the political structure of the community.*
- *Never punish the whole class because you can't identify the student who committed the offense.*
- *When meeting with parents, it is often better to be spoken to than to speak.*
- *Remember that parents are sending you the best that they have—their child.*

## Words of Wisdom

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### **Dave Anthony, high school teacher**

*It's a labor of love. One needs to regard one's job as a calling and vocation. One needs the patience of Job, the humility of a monk and the sense of humor of Rodney Dangerfield. Do not take oneself too seriously and look for the blessings in what you do rather than dwelling on the burdens.*

### **Mary Whitley, Accreditation Specialist, VDOE and former teacher and principal**

- *I would recommend Harry Wong's *The First Days of School* for any new teacher, or one with experience, for that matter. I wish I had it when I started.*
- *Have someone you can ask questions without worrying about "sounding stupid."*
- *Overplan activities for every day.*
- *Have a classroom management system, but be ready to make changes if it isn't working.*
- *Call home often and with good things whenever possible. That way, when you do have to call home about a problem, you have them on your side.*
- *Enjoy! It will show.*

### **Joanne Dowdy, high school teacher**

*I am a 4th-year teacher at Mathews High School and remember vividly my first fire drill as a teacher. The bell began to ring and I said, "Follow me" and left the classroom. The assistant principal stopped me at the exit and said, "Ms Dowdy, don't you think it would be a good idea to make sure all your students make it out of the building?" Okay, being last does make sense in hindsight.*

*Embarrassing...yes. The bigger issue is that it could have been a safety problem for one of my students. Schools should cover safety procedures during orientation or in mentoring programs. My advice to new teachers without these programs is ASK BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS.*

## Words of Wisdom

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### **Susan Booth, former high school teacher**

- *Be firm, but fair. Treat with respect and expect it from the students.*
- *It doesn't matter if the students like you or not; you are an adult and do not need teenage friends.*
- *Always try to be prepared. After a while, students know when you are winging it.*
- *Grade and return papers to students. When papers pile up on the side table, students notice and see no reason for doing the work.*
- *If your movies are not related to the topic taught, the students probably have already seen it. If a popular movie is relevant, show just the section you're using for reference.*
- *Try to handle as much of your minor discipline infractions yourself. Save the referrals for the major infractions.*

### **Dr. Frank Ehrhart, retired, (38 years in profession, as teacher, coach, principal, superintendent), Valhalla, NY**

- *Relationship with principal—The principal is the instructional leader of the school, and teachers should be very familiar with the principal's philosophy and expectations, as pertains to both teachers and students.*
- *Take full advantage of the expertise and experience of mentors or other experienced and successful faculty. Be careful of faculty room gossip and negative attitudes that might be present among other staff members.*
- *Examine carefully the cumulative folder of each of your students. They should provide and contain important information, e.g., past grades, test data and results, discipline referrals, successes, family situation, etc. The more you know about each student, the better the opportunity for both teacher and student to succeed.*
- *Establish boundaries between teacher and student. Command respect. When you have the students' respect, you will have their attention, and you can influence and encourage their desire to learn.*
- *Build students' self-esteem and believe in their ability to perform well. Expect each child to perform to the best of their ability. Competition can be healthy or harmful depending on the individual and the teaching methodology employed.*
- *Prepare your classroom—Make it attractive and orderly. Your classroom should welcome students. Post important information around room.*
- *Have a sense of humor. Use it at the right time. Learning should and can be fun. Most importantly, stay positive. Great teachers are made, not born, through hard work and dedication. The reward is immeasurable.*

## Words of Wisdom

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### **Dr. Melanie Yules, Educational Consultant, former high school principal**

- *Use the digital camera to take “head shots” of the students. Import the pictures into a seating chart. This will help the teacher learn names quickly. It’s also a great tool for the substitute teacher when the classroom teacher is absent.*
- *Decide for yourself what is non-negotiable. There are certain classroom rules that the student must follow. Then let the students add one or two rules so they become part of the crafting of the classroom climate.*
- *Learn the fundamentals of teaching reading. If you weren’t trained as a reading teacher, you are one now. Seek out the reading specialist in your school and ask questions; have her observe and make suggestions. We’re all reading teachers.*
- *Assessments: Pre, during, and post. Waiting until the end of the unit is too late to check for understanding. Not all assessments are formal assessments.*
- *The week before school opens:*
  - *Read the school policies.*
  - *Know the school calendar (grading periods, test schedules, holidays, teacher work days).*
  - *Learn how the computer in your classroom works.*
- *Have lunch with other teachers.*
- *No question is a dumb question.*

### **Laurel Byrd, high school teacher**

- *I like to keep a copy of Bloom’s taxonomy nearby. I also have a list of activities for visual, auditory, and tactile learners. When I’m planning lessons, I check these over to make sure I’ve included some.*
- *MOST IMPORTANT—have 3 or 4 simple class rules posted. Then post a list of consequences in the order they will be used. Rather than yelling, simply point to the rule and the consequence and make sure it gets done. Go over these regularly at the beginning of the year. (If you can’t think of any, find a really good teacher and copy theirs.)*
- *Call home—especially with the good stuff. Parents love to hear that their kids are doing well and if you have to call for something negative, you’ve established a good relationship.*

# Words of Wisdom

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## **Shelia Miller, Specialist for Federal Program Monitoring, VDOE**

*Facilitate instruction, and have regard for all students in the manner that you would want someone to care for your child.*

## **Dr. Len Gereau, retired superintendent**

- *Dress professionally. Professional dress creates an atmosphere of respect and importance in the learning process.*
- *Maintain a voice tone where yelling/raising voice to an angry tone does not exist.*
- *Be prepared. Plan for more than you can accomplish so that “down time” is eliminated.*
- *Compassion and caring, along with character building, are priorities for every teacher. You are every child’s role model. The teacher must believe that every child can learn if given the right prescription for learning, which is the teacher’s job.*
- *Complete an individual child profile which includes reading level, individual hobbies, sports, Scouts, etc. Use this information to coordinate individual interests/talents, etc. in motivating individual academic competence.*
- *Develop and implement a weekly one-page (no educational jargon) parent newsletter that provides in simple language what will be covered in each academic area in the upcoming week.*
- *Use a variety of instructional strategies with a de-emphasis on lecture and an emphasis on hands-on applied learning approach with real-life experiences. Use manipulatives. Students learn by doing.*
- *Make the most effective use possible of available instructional time. Minimize interruptions.*
- *Maintain an exciting classroom with the effective use of learning centers, colorful bulletin boards and displays, graphs, charts, and timelines.*
- *The more reading and writing activities the better—across all areas of the curriculum*
- *Support and participate in staff development provided by the school division.*
- *Continue your education with graduate programs, and consider as a goal National Teacher Certification in your individual area of expertise.*



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