



 **TeacherVision**

# A Toolkit for New Teachers

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## Why We Created This Toolkit

Welcome to your first year of teaching! This is an exciting time for you. You are now going to have the opportunity to apply everything that you've learned to your own classroom. The first year is a year of growth with a lot of trial and error.

Challenges will come up that you didn't anticipate, but so will movements of clarity and joy. We are excited to provide a resource for you that will set you up for success, and we welcome you to the profession!

We created this toolkit because starting out as a new teacher can be tough ( we have been there). There is so much that you've been taught that is swirling around in your head. College courses and student teaching don't always prepare you for everything that will come your way once you finally get that first classroom of your own.

This toolkit is designed to present you with some classroom challenges you might encounter. It includes solutions, resources, and tips for those challenges, as well as teaching tips for how to implement them in your room.

We hope that these resources are helpful and become best practices that you can rely on throughout your teaching career.

The TeacherVision team

# Set Your Class Up for Success

## Challenge

You have spent weeks creating the classroom systems that will make your room run like a well-oiled machine. You have a classroom library, complete with a way to check out books. There's a file folder mailbox bin. You even have a time-efficient way to pass out and collect papers.

Once school starts however, none of your students know how to check out a book. Graded papers are piling up, and it takes three times as long as it should to pass out papers. Why didn't your systems work? You explained them all, so why don't your students know how to use them?

## Solution

A mistake that many beginning teachers make—including me—is to explain your classroom systems. Routines and procedures, just like any other skills, need to be taught. But how do you teach a classroom system? Just like you teach any other skill, of course!

1. First, you should introduce the routine or procedure to your students. Sometimes this occurs naturally. For example, if it's time to line up, you can introduce the procedure for lining up in your room. However, it is okay to simply introduce them randomly, though focusing first on the ones that will come up more quickly or more often is probably best.
2. Second, model the routine or procedure. You can show the students how to perform it, or ask a few students to act it out for you.
3. Next, have all the students practice the skill (if possible). If this can't be done all at once, try having them practice in smaller groups, or in shifts.
4. Over the next few days, continue to practice the skill. If the routine or procedure is one your class will use several times a day on a daily basis, they will probably not need to practice (unless they are performing it incorrectly). However, many routines and procedures come up less often, or even sporadically. For these, you will need to build in time for students to practice until they perform it correctly without prompting.

5. Then, be sure to correct and reteach any student who is completing a routing or procedure incorrectly. You may even have to refresh the whole class from time to time, especially after longer breaks. This is normal, so don't fret!
6. Finally, congratulate your students (and yourself!) on a job well done. Not really, but you can in your head, if you'd like.

### **Resource**

The [Routines and Procedures Checklist](#) will help you keep track of all the routines you might need to teach, with room to add a few more not listed. In addition, as you teach them, you can check off each individual routine or procedure, giving you a great visual reference of what you've went over, and what you still have to present. This checklist is also broken down over several days, so you have an idea of what to teach, when.

### **Tips**

Taking the time to really focus on teaching classroom routines and procedures may seem like a waste of time, but it actually will save so much time in the future that it will more than make up any time seemingly "lost" at the beginning. I usually devote most of the first two weeks of school to teaching, and practicing, all the routines and procedures we will use throughout the year. I may introduce new routines if some don't work with a particular group, or if some sort of change requires a new approach. For the most part, though, teaching these skills at the beginning of the school year makes the classroom run much more smoothly, which makes everyone much more happy!

# Routines and Procedures Checklist

## Day 1

- entering/exiting the classroom
- before school routine
- attendance/lunch count
- restroom/water fountain
- classroom rules
- quiet signal
- asking the teacher a question
- sharpening pencils
- using pens or pencils
- turning in work
- early finishers
- recording homework/planners
- dismissal
- walking in hallway
- behavior consequences/rewards
- cafeteria procedures
- location of
  - tissues
  - hand sanitizer
  - pencil sharpener
  - other
- daily schedule

## Day 2

- unpacking backpack
- turning in homework
- not completing homework
- heading paper (name, date, etc.)
- organizing desk/supplies
- getting supplies out
- noise level
- tattling
- emergency procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Day 3

- using classroom computer
- games/puzzles in classroom
- sending information home
- classroom library
- writing center
- classroom helpers
- absent work
- birthdays
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# Get Their Attention

## Challenge

You have a wonderful lesson planned to teach right after recess. The students come in the room boisterous, hyper, and very talkative. You need to get started on your lesson, but the noise in the classroom is intense. How can you get your students to focus on you and be ready to learn?

## Solution

You need an attention getter, often called a call back. Rather than losing your voice trying to yell louder than a roomful of kiddos, teach your class an attention getter! An attention getter is a word or short phrase that you shout, and then the kids answer you, or call back, with a matching word or phrase. You can use popular movie lines, song lyrics, or even something made up. And even if only a handful of students hear you, their classmates will join in once they hear the call back, which will quiet the entire group quickly and efficiently.

## Resource

The [Attention Getters](#) resource will help you select your favorite call backs to use with your students. You just say the word or phrase listed under Teacher, and teach the students the call back word or phrase listed under Students. Some of these are contagious, so choose wisely!

## Tips

Select three or four of your favorite attention getters and teach them to your students. Then rotate through them so the students don't get too used to one single call back. If you use the same one for an entire year, it can lose its effectiveness. I try to rotate mine in and out every so often. I've even used one call back for a specific situation, like indoor recess or lining up. Just be sure to teach the students the call back before you use it.

# ATTENTION GETTERS

## Teacher

Class, Class?

1, 2, 3, Eyes on Me!

Everybody Rock!

Hocus Pocus...

Line Up...

Macaroni and Cheese...

Peanut Butter...

Zip it, Lock it...

Ready to Listen?

Holy moly...

Hands on Top...

All Set?

Hi Ho, Hi Ho...

How are You Today, Class?

Yakety Yak

## Students

Yes, Yes?

1, 2, Eyes on You!

Everybody Roll!

Everybody Focus!

Buttercup!

Everybody Freeze!

Jelly Time!

Put it in Your Pocket!

Ready to Learn!

Guacamole!

Everybody Stop!

You Bet!

It's Off to Work We Go!

Very Fine, and Thank You!

Don't Talk Back!



# Get to Know Your Students

## **Challenge**

At the beginning of a new year, it is easy to get caught up in all we have to do as educators. We are so busy teaching rules and procedures, as well as beginning to teach content instruction, that sometimes we forget that one of the most important tasks we have as educators is to take time to build positive relationships with our students.

## **Solution**

Take some time on the very first few days of school to do some class building activities. This will help you get to know your students, and as an added bonus, your students will get to know each other better!

## **Resource**

The [Find Someone Who](#) resource will get your kiddos up and moving around. Each student gets his or her own sheet and must find another student in the room for each description. This activity is super flexible, so if you have a larger or smaller group, you can adjust the activity to meet your needs.

## **Tips**

















If you have a smaller group, you can let students fill in more than one box. You can also decide if you want to let students fill in a box for themselves. You may want to allow this with a small class but not with a bigger group. It's totally up to you! You can also add time limits, play music, or only allow students to ask other students who don't sit by them to add to the fun.

# Find Someone Who

Find a classmate that matches one of the boxes below and have them initial the box. Try to find a different classmate for each box.



Find someone who...

<p>has lost a tooth</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>likes to eat popcorn</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>likes to listen to music</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>has won a ribbon, medal, or trophy</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>
<p>has a pet dog</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>loves winter</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>likes to drink hot chocolate</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>likes to read</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>
<p>likes to draw</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>likes to play outside</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>has a little sister</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>has a November birthday</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>
<p>has an older brother</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>likes school</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>likes to use the computer</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>	<p>has a best friend</p>  <p>Initial _____</p>

# Communication is Key

## **Challenge**

Keeping up with the day-to-day activities required to run your classroom can definitely be a challenge. Remembering everything you need to do, even when you write things down, can also be difficult. So, when a parent sends a note to school or calls you on the phone to discuss an issue, chances are you aren't going to remember that conversation for very long, no matter how important it is.

## **Solution**

You need a handy place to write down any communications you have with parents. Even just jotting down a few words can remind you of the content of a particular conversation. Then, you will be able to remember any pertinent information weeks later, even after that phone call is no longer fresh in your memory.

## **Resource**

The [Parent Communication Log](#) is just such a handy place to record any parental discussions in which you may partake. Record the parent's name, date, and a quick description of the subject so you can refer back to it anytime you need to. It is also a great place to record when you contact a parent or guardian.

## **Tips**

Copy this resource front to back, and you'll have plenty of room to expand. Better yet, copy one for each student to be kept in a student file, and you'll have a great form to use just when you need it.



# Keep Good Records

## Challenge

Staff meetings, parent teacher conferences, and professional development workshops are just a few of the meetings you will have to attend this school year. Sometimes you just grab whatever paper you have lying around to take notes. Other times you forget to even bring paper and must borrow it from a friend. You try to take notes and keep them organized, but you keep losing agendas, loose leaf papers fly everywhere, and it's all just a mess!

## Solution

Finding a way to organize your meeting notes can be tricky. Writing notes all down in a similar fashion can be helpful, and storing them all in the same place helps to keep the information useable in a systemized way.

## Resource

Use the [Meeting Notes Recording Form](#) for all your meetings, as it is set up to record the name of the meeting, date, and has space to write any notes you'll need later that were discussed in the meeting. The design allows for plenty of note-taking space, and you'll be able to attach any agendas to the form, or simply copy down any important information.

## Tips

Copy this resource front to back, or leave the back blank for additional space to write notes. Keep all your notes in one folder or binder, separate with labeled dividing tabs, and voila! You have yourself a Meeting Notes Notebook!





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