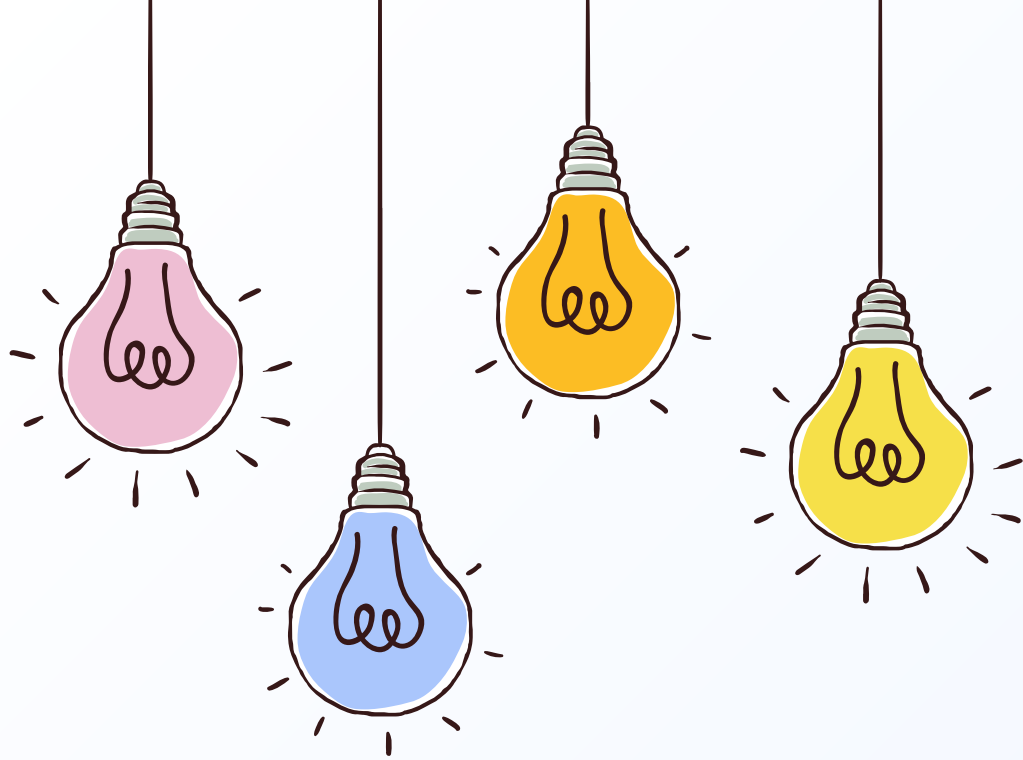




Grades 3-5: Preparing for the First Day of School

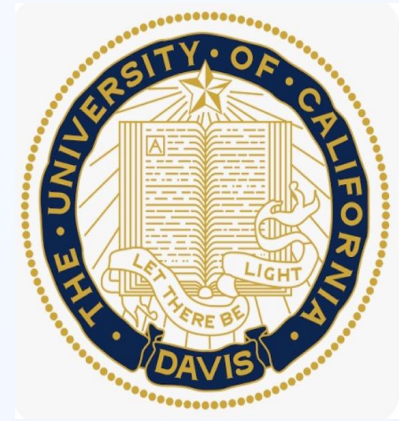
with Victoria Rodgers

Victoria Rodgers

- BA Child Development from Sacramento State
- Multiple Subject Credential and MA in Education from UC Davis
- 5th Grade lead at KI Jones Elementary School. Going into my 7th year of teaching. Have led PDs and been a mentor teacher for a few years now.
- 1 year- 4th/5th combo and 5 years- 5th grade
- When I'm not in the classroom, you can find me usually at home playing video games, reading, spending time with my niece and nephews, or going on trips!



victoriaro@fsusd.org



Who is in the room?

Please share with the people around you, your name, grade, site, and one thing you did NOT do this summer.

Example: My name is Victoria Rodgers (Ms. Rodgers), I teach 5th grade at KI Jones. This summer I sadly did not ride a unicorn, the official national animal of Scotland, through the streets of Edinburg.





Quick Connect

Turn and Talk

CHOOSE AN IMAGE



that best represents how you are feeling about *your first year of teaching*.



There are no right or wrong answers!

♥ Choose the image that feels most like you right now. ⚡



EXCITED TO GROW

I'm ready to learn, grow,
and see what's possible!



ALL THE FEELS

I'm excited and nervous—
I know it will be a ride!



A LITTLE OVERWHELMED

Lots to think about,
but I'll figure it out.



LOOKING FOR GUIDANCE

I'm hoping for support
as I find my way.



READY FOR ADVENTURE

I'm ready to take on the
journey ahead!



PREPARED (I HOPE!)

I've got my plans and supplies—
now let's do this!



HOPEFUL & INSPIRED

I can't wait to make a
difference!



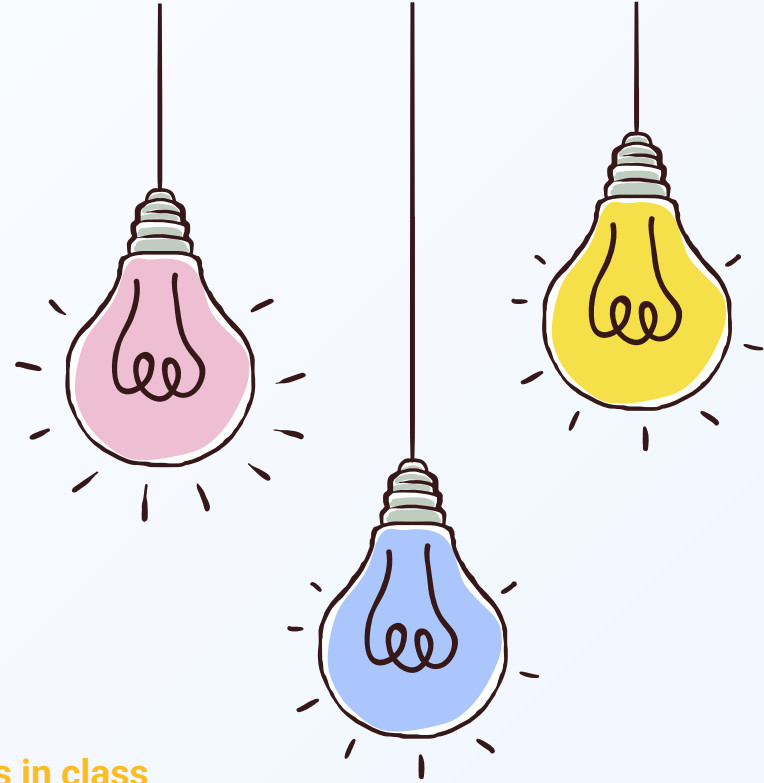
TAKING IT ONE DAY

I'm focusing on getting through
each day and doing my best.

⚡ Be ready to share why you chose your image! ⚡

Goals for This Session

- 1** **Setting up your Classroom**
Desks, Bulletin boards etc.
- 2** **Creating a welcoming environment**
Through building connections
- 3** **Creating Routines and Procedures**
How students are expected to conduct themselves in class
- 4** **Initial Family Contact**
Building and Maintaining relationships with families.



Plan Your Layout

Setting Up Your Classroom

(My classroom)

- Arrange desks so students can see you and each other **comfortably**.
- Create clear pathways for **easy movement**.
- In the beginning weeks, it's **advisable** to have them in rows if possible. You'll likely change their seats later or put them in groups. I also really like a giant U or double U if space allows.



Supplies and Materials

Setting Up Your Classroom

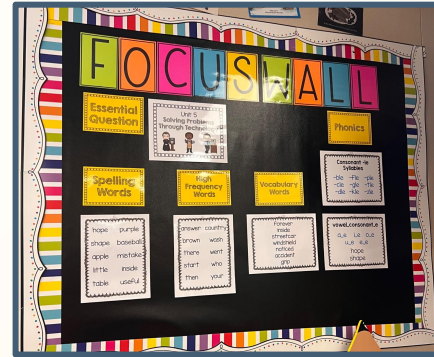
- Have a designated places for teaching materials, student supplies, and personal items.
- Keep frequently used items within easy reach.
- Label bins and shelves to keep things tidy and teach kids **how to use the labels!**
- **Have routines for students obtaining and returning supplies.**
- **Create a short routine to reset your classroom at the end of the day.*



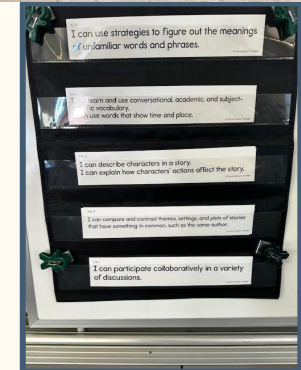
Bulletin Boards/Walls

Setting Up Your Classroom

- Use bulletin boards for learning goals, student work, schedules, birthdays, etc.. (Writing wall is important! Should stay current as possible.)
- Add Posters for motivation, hand-signals, procedures, or other resources.
 - i. You can also create these with your kids!



The clipboards are very lightweight. I got 25 of them from Amazon



Setting Up Your Classroom



- Keep your workspace organized, but approachable.
- Have your lesson plans and attendance tools ready.
- Find a system that works for you. (Ex: Google sheets, paper book, etc.)

Lesson Plan Week Outline Example

Setting Up Your Classroom



- You may consider setting up areas for different activities: reading corner, group work tables, tech station, etc.
- Make zones inviting and purposeful.
- Have a SEL corner aka Calming Corner. (This is not a disciplinary tool, it is a refocus center).

Setting Up Your Classroom



- Make sure exits are clear.
- Arrange furniture to accommodate all students comfortably.

Goals for This Session



Setting up your Classroom

Desks, Bulletin boards etc.

2

Creating a **welcoming environment**

Through building connections

3

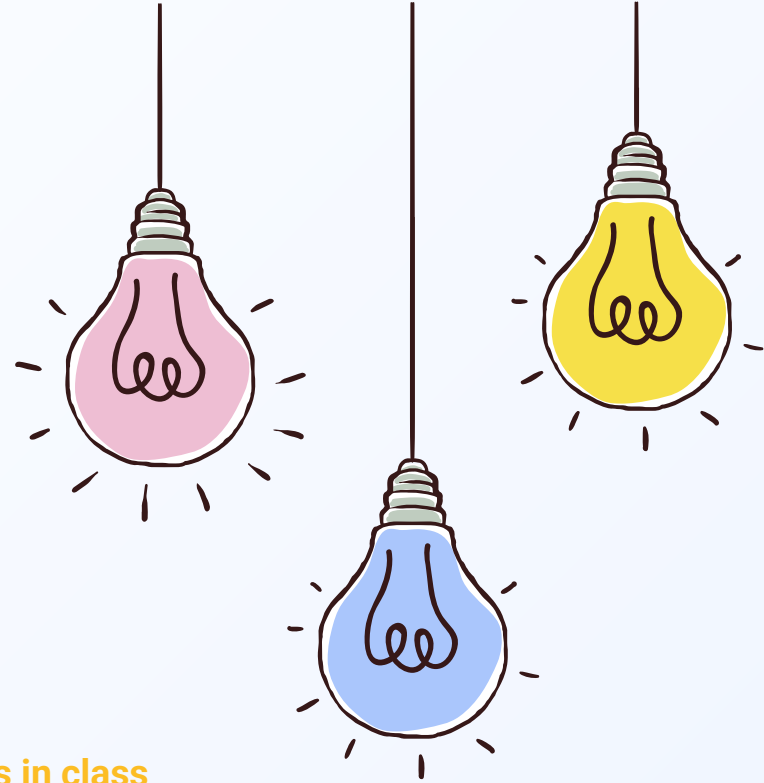
Creating **Routines and Procedures**

How students are expected to conduct themselves in class

4

Initial **Parent Contact**

Building and Maintaining relationships with parents.



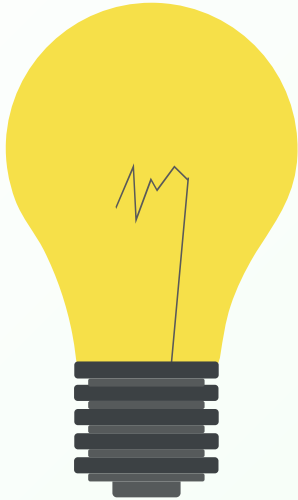


Turn-and-Talk:

- Ideas that you liked
- Ideas you want to do
- Questions that you have.



Creating a Welcoming Environment



Creating a Welcoming Environment

With Morning Meetings

Daily 5



Creates a friendly, welcoming atmosphere and set the tone for the day

Creates predictable routines

Helps the students connect with each other and you

Allows non-threatening ways to troubleshoot routines and expectations

My morning routine

Up-beat music is playing when students come into the classroom. Morning meeting slide is on the TV. There is a five minute timer on it, students know they can talk and get situated while the timer is happening, but they also must be getting ready. When the timer ends, their voices are off and the expectation is they are working on whatever the slide asks them to do. During the five minutes, I am relationship building. Once the timer is off and they are working, I am taking attendance.

MORNING MEETING

JANUARY 12, 2026

MORNING WORK

1. Homework:

Read 25 minutes.

Agenda, take out
Esperanza Rising, then
quietly read.

THINK ABOUT IT

Don't Quit: 1:22



SHARE OUT



**CAN YOU THINK OF A
TIME YOU WANTED TO
GIVE UP.....BUT YOU
KEPT GOING?**

QUOTE OF THE DAY



**I CAN'T CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF THE
WIND, BUT I CAN ADJUST MY SAILS TO
REACH MY DESTINATION. JIMMY DEAN**

POLL OF THE DAY

Which do you prefer?

1



2



5:00

First Weeks of School

A great time to focus on social-emotional learning (SEL)



What is Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)?

Children need social-emotional skills to thrive both in the classroom and in life. Social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula teach children techniques to:

- Gain confidence
- Set goals
- Make better decisions
- Collaborate with others in work and play
- Navigate the world more effectively

Social-emotional learning isn't just a feel-good activity. It's not psychotherapy or an attempt to parent kids. Nor is it a substitute for core academic subjects such as math, science, or literacy.

SEL Lessons: Second Step

District has a pacing guide to follow the lessons.



Instructional Minutes (SEL)

TK 10 minutes daily (M, T, Th, Fri)

Kinder 20 minutes daily (M, T, Th, Fri)

1st- 5th 15 minutes daily (M,T,Th,Fri)

Wednesdays= 10 minutes (all grades)



Turn-and-Talk:

- Ideas that you liked
- Ideas you want to do
- Questions that you have.



Goals for This Session



Setting up your Classroom

Desks, Bulletin boards etc.



Creating a **welcoming environment**

Through morning meetings



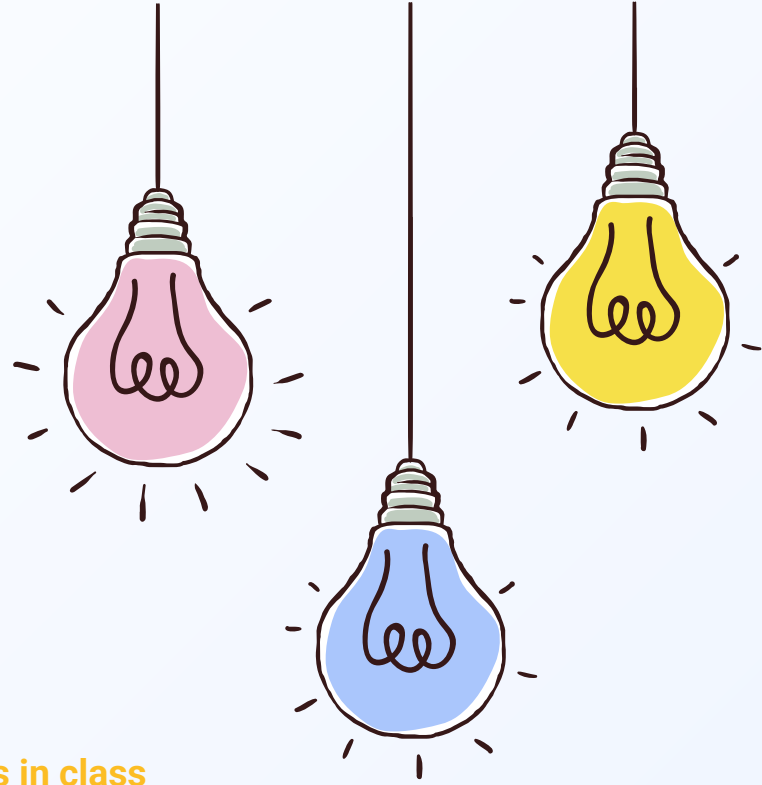
Creating **Routines and Procedures**

How students are expected to conduct themselves in class



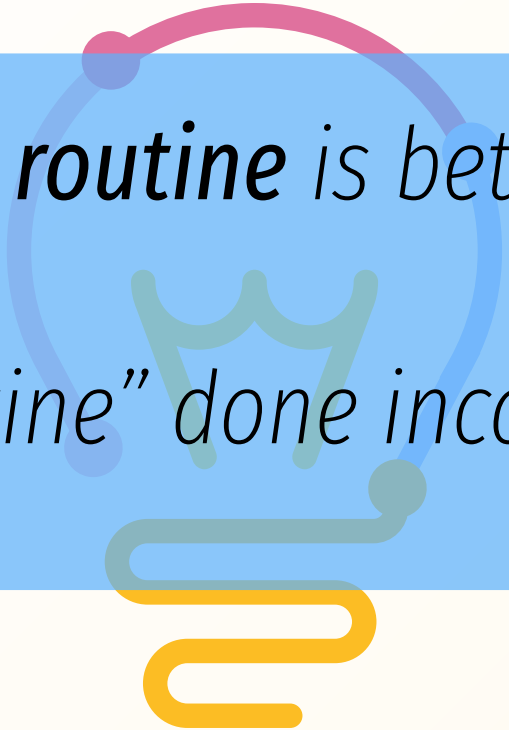
Initial **Parent Contact**

Building and Maintaining relationships with parents.



A Note on Routines

*A **consistent routine** is better than “the perfect routine” done inconsistently.*

A decorative graphic featuring a lightbulb outline. The top half of the bulb is a pink arc, the middle is a blue circle, and the bottom is a yellow wavy line. A green crown-like shape is inside the blue circle.

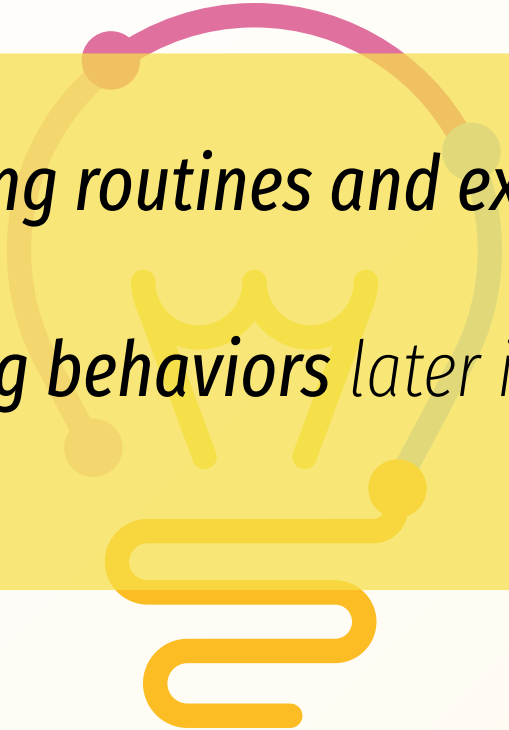
A Note on Routines

*Be **intentional**, and **take your time**. Teach.*

Model. Adjust if necessary. Repeat.

A Note on Routines

Time spent ***practicing routines and expectations*** means
less time managing behaviors later in the school year.



Creating Routines

1. Use this document to help you plan your procedures and routines.
2. **You don't need all of them,** but this is a good cross section of things to think about.



Procedures Checklist

Name: _____
School: _____
Grade Level: _____

	Area	Procedures
Use of Room Areas	Students' desks/tables and storage areas	
	Learning centers, stations	
	Shared materials, bookshelves, drawers	
	Teacher's desk and storage area	
	Drinking fountains, sink, bathroom	
	Pencil sharpener	
Use of School Areas	Bathrooms, drinking fountain, office, library, etc.	
	Lining up procedures	
	Cafeteria or kitchen	



CLICK IT NOW

Academic Discussions vs Calling on Hands vs Cold Calling

- **Calling on hands:** One student responds, and many students tune out.
- **Cold Calling:** Can make students feel nervous and clam up. Can be especially hard on Emerging Bilinguals or students who need extra support
- **In academic discussions,** ALL students respond, and ALL students are encouraged to listen to responses.
- **Academic Discussions** give Emerging Bilinguals students opportunities to practice speaking and listening skills while causing less anxiety.
- Create natural and engaging breaks in the classroom routine if done properly and with appropriate scaffolds and extensions as needed.

Tips from the Experts

- In the first 3 Days especially, create a festive atmosphere, not a "get down to business" factory atmosphere.
- Make a special effort to greet children in a positive and uplifting way each school day, not just the first week.
- Highlight all the good and exciting things that will be happening at the beginning of the school year, as well as throughout the year.
- Give students a chance to share good memories about the *summer, what they are looking forward to for the new school year, and something about themselves that they would like classmates to know.
- Give them time and opportunities to bond with each other.
 - *Time spent helping the students in a class bond in positive ways will bring large dividends later in the year as students work together in pairs, teams, and groups.*

*Keep in mind that school is a safe place for many of our students who may not have positive experiences at home. It is important to be sensitive to this when discussing summer vacation, which may have been a time of anxiety, turmoil, or even hunger.

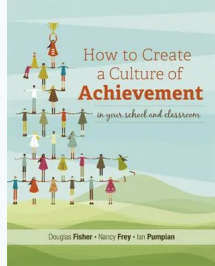
Tips from the Experts (Continued)

6. Allow students to have input into setting the rules for the classroom, in terms of both "do's" and "don'ts." * Ex: Location Posters

7. Give students an opportunity each day to reflect on what they are learning. At the end of the day, you could ask them to keep a journal and write down three things they are taking with them from the school day. Or it could be verbal. You could also make this a **think-pair-share** routine to close a lesson. I.E. "what's one thing you learned from this lesson, or are still struggling with?" Or compliment Friday!

8. Students need to see themselves represented on the walls. In the first few days, create something about themselves and hang it up for Monday.

*Personally, I rule more with expectations/procedures rather than rules. I want kids to discuss what to do, rather than not. How to Create a Culture of Achievement in your School and Classroom by Fisher, Frey, and Pumpian discusses five pillars to follow.



THE 5 PILLARS

of a Culture of Achievement

[Amazon Link](#)

From *How to Create a Culture of Achievement in Your School and Classroom*
by Fisher, Frey, and Pumpian



WELCOME



Create an environment where every student, family member, staff member, and visitor feels noticed, valued, and welcomed.



DO NO HARM



Establish expectations and disciplinary practices that teach students to become ethical, responsible citizens.



CHOICE WORDS



Use language intentionally. The words educators choose shape students' beliefs about themselves, their abilities, and their potential.



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN



Foster a growth mindset by communicating that every student can improve through effort, support, and persistence.



BEST SCHOOL IN THE UNIVERSE



Build pride and collective ownership so that everyone is committed to making the school the best possible place to teach, learn, and work.

★ Five pillars. One mission: *High levels of learning for all.* ★

Continuum of Engagement

We discuss early on about how they learn, what it looks like to be engaged, etc. [Video](#). I have a chart on the wall and each kid has a mini one on their desk to refer to.

We want to create a culture of internal motivation, sometimes external motivation gets us started with that. Ex: Class reward systems.

Continuum of Engagement

ACTIVE-----PASSIVE-----ACTIVE

DISRUPTING

Distracting others from learning

AVOIDING

Off task (doing something different from what the teacher wants me to do)

Looking for ways to avoid doing work

WITHDRAWING

Not working

Unfocused

Separate/ by myself

PARTICIPATING

Doing my work by myself or with others

Focused and paying attention

Responding to questions

INVESTING

Asking questions

Knowing what I am learning and why it's important

DRIVING

Setting goals

Asking for feedback

Checking my work

Leading learning

Disengagement

Engagement

Continuum of Engagement

DISRUPTING

Making it hard for others to learn



AVOIDING

Doing something different from what the teacher wants me to do



WITHDRAWING

Not working, not focused, losing interest



PARTICIPATING

Doing my work, paying attention



INVESTING

Asking questions



DRIVING

Setting goals, leading learning



Disengagement

Engagement

Build Your Classroom Culture Activity Ideas

- How best do you work?
 - Create 3 Blank posters labeled at the top with either: **By myself, with a group, or with the teacher.** Ask students to write their name on a Post-it Note and place it on the poster which indicates the way in which they work the best.
- Investigate the teacher
- Puzzle Challenge
- Marshmallow tower
- Notecard Tower (In order to use a notecard, they must write something they all have in common on it).
- Four Corners

ELA Expectations: First 15/20 Days (Benchmark 3-5)

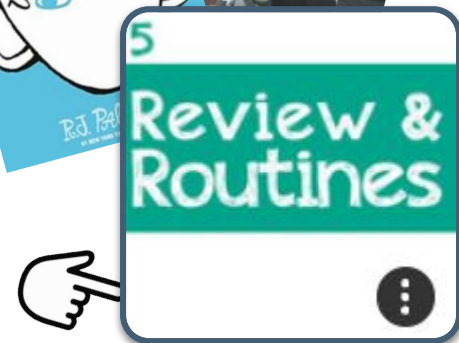
- Practice routines
- Call and response
- Suggested Read Alouds



3rd Grade



4th Grade



5th Grade

Math Expectations

I call it “Math Boot Camp.” I do it during the first full week of school. Each day we **learn a new skill** (math talks, thinking tasks, partner work, getting materials, whiteboard work etc.) and a **set-up something for us to be successful in math** (our notebooks, access the online platforms, sign up for Khan Academy Mappers, etc) and then **review one simple concept** from the grade before (or practice math facts)! We want it to be fun, engaging, and light. We are not trying to create a hate for math by the fourth day of school.

Example lesson: We read The Name Book, students discuss where their name come from if they know or can look up meanings, do a thinking tasks about names in groups of three (Building Thinking Classrooms).

Goals for This Session



Setting up your Classroom

Desks, Bulletin boards etc.



Creating a **welcoming environment**

Through building connections



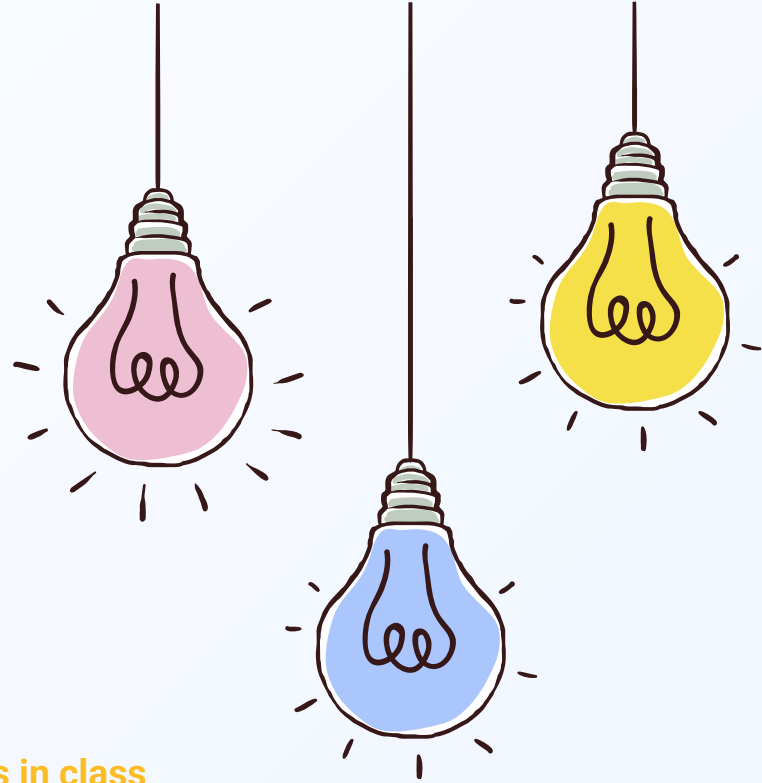
Creating **Routines and Procedures**

How students are expected to conduct themselves in class



Initial **Parent Contact**

Building and Maintaining relationships with parents.



Contacting Families

1. Make a reasonable goal for parental contact. About 3 a week. This can continue throughout the year.
2. If you anticipate you will contact a parent frequently, make a point to contact as early in the year as possible and have nothing but good things to say. ;)
3. Always make sure the first comment is positive, **especially** if you will be contacting this parent a lot. Infact, make a point to contact this parent with nothing but good news.

Contacting Families as a Welcome to the Class

1. Once teachers are announced to families, I send an email welcoming them to our class. I send out a flier that has information about me and a [family survey](#) to be filled out.
2. I try to CALL every family by the Friday of the first full week of school. I introduce myself, welcome them to the class, check-in on the survey, and see if they need anything from me. It is a very quick, positive phone call.
3. *Story time of why I love this!

Parent Square

POST ADD-ONS

 Calendar Entry/ RSVP

 Attach Photos Or Files

 Forms / Permissions

 Ask for Items

 Request Volunteers



 New Post

 New Post

 New Poll

☒ Appointment Sign Ups

Start a conversation or send a direct message to one or more people

 New Message



Direct Message

Create a separate conversation for each recipient. Like BCCs in email, each person sees only messages from you.



Group Conversation

Create one conversation for everyone. Like CCs in email, each person sees messages with others in the group.

Goals for This Session



Setting up your Classroom

Desks, Bulletin boards etc.



Creating a **welcoming environment**

Through building connections



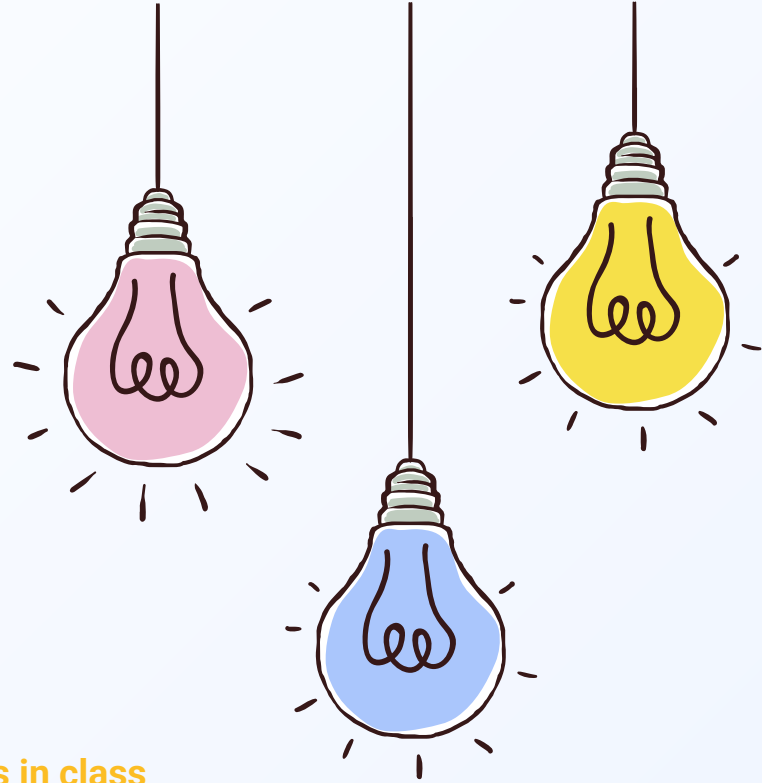
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Turn-and-Talk:

- Ideas that you liked
- Ideas you want to do
- Questions that you have.



Any questions/share out time