

New (mostly HS) Teacher Suh-tarter List - Month 0 to 1

Guiding Principle: Keep it simple. Do it well. Have fun. Trust your instincts. We plan so that we can stay present during student-time. An extra hour of sleep helps you really listen to students much more than an extra hour of “planning”.

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BEFORE YOU SET UP ON CAMPUS

- ☐ **Leverage existing school structures.**
Re-label or situate your science tools/cues/etc within your school’s practices or values. Phrase units or framing using existing school goals.
- ☐ **Inventory your time.** Fill in your planning calendar with school holidays, testing dates, etc. This helps you be mindful of Ramadan (fasting) and celebrate students’ cultural commitments as you do academic or personal ones.
- ☐ Consistent, healthy boundaries keep you refreshed for your students ([how-to](#)).
- ☐ **Select benchmarks.** List the 5 most valuable learning minutes of each month.
- ☐ **Have Day 1 ideas. Don’t overload.** Pick 2 first-week activities (1 backup). Do something content-based on Day 1; students will be flooded with intros & re-entry. Trust your routines will build up through iterations, but start early.

PEOPLE TO ALSO MEET WITHIN MONTH 1



“When the paras are happy, the whole school is happy.”

- ☐ 1 hr with SPED -- ask: What’s worked best in the past for each student? What tools do you use that they know students benefit most from?
- ☐ DIY fidgets for all students: binder clip, bead on rubber band around pencil, beaded chenille straw, **velcro strip on desk**
- ☐ paper towel supplier
- ☐ tech/lab/storage room keyholder
- ☐ librarian/media specialist - invite them to teach citations lesson & using library resources; gives sense of community support
- ☐ concurrent math instructor - piggyback off graphical analysis skills in preparation for CAST; gives sense of wraparound support; potential for
- ☐ statistics/calc teacher - get tools for teaching/refreshing probability & equations
- ☐ the person who troubleshoots your pay & insurance

AFTER YOU RECEIVE ROSTERS

- ☐ Physically print out attendance sheet (rows: student lastname, _____ so you fill in, pronouns to remind yourself; cols: dates). Why? Legal reasons and at-a-glance self-reference for class progress.
- ☐ Nominate a seating arrangement but be open to changes. (If using anything in reach of student edits, take a photo for posterity.)
- ☐ Decide on a system for attendance to symbolize:
 - Attendance
 - Assessments
 - Check-In Later

EXAMPLE. This teacher only has 1 letter grade per week & uses the Do Now & Exit Ticket only to guide lesson planning. These formatives can indicate engagement level and recognize developing understanding. They lubricate the mental processes for attempting tasks during class time.

	Do Now		This week's assessment
	Exit Ticket		Present
			Absent
Hernandez, Nayeli			
Houston, Okey			
Lorenzo, Angel			
Martinez, Olga			
McCafferty, Oisin			
Matusmoto, Esther			

LIFEHACKS IN CLASSROOM (if possible)

- ☐ **Facing your upper torso towards the class increases student sense of teacher attentiveness to needs. (Answers unseen emotional bids from students.)**
- ☐ Physically cue classroom posters that are made either by you or students. (Skip stuff you won’t use or reflect on.)
- ☐ Reserve a table & seat by the door as a “speed bump”. Students can pick up anything you want to distribute, get a moment to reset for a different space, and enter feeling present. This is also a place they can finish any food, take a nap, or take a break for any reason. Gymnasium tape on Amazon draws an easy border.
- ☐ Will you organize lab materials by lab lesson vs. function/tool?
- ☐ Decide whether to keep class materials at tables or at stations. Give students time to tidy.
- ☐ Post enter and exit procedures & other safe space wellness visuals near where they’ll be used. Rules apply to teacher too!
- ☐ Post a one month calendar with important dates labeled; start class by reviewing the day’s calendar.
- ☐ Have a physical sample of the notebook/binder/folder a student should have. Keep this class copy in the room for student reference. Model setting up the page during class.
- ☐ Things that help with active students: single-sided velcro affixed (usually stickyback) to desks, walking around or leading and directing activities (after coaching & modeling), stamping assignments
- ☐ Clearly mark one shelf/box/cabinet where each class period’s things belong when not in use. Store notebooks/binders here.
- ☐ Make your hall/break/breather/visit vs. bathroom pass two different passes. Decide how water/tea/etc. breaks will be safely taken. Make sure administration & security know your

	break/pass policy.
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YOUR WORD CHOICE MATTERS - EXAMPLES	
Instead of...	Try...
Be quiet.	Can you use a softer voice?
What a mess!	It looks like you had fun! How can we clean up?
Do you need help?	I’m here to help if you need me.
I explained how to do this yesterday.	Maybe I can show you another way.
Do I need to separate you?	Could you use a break?
Stop crying.	It’s okay to cry.
Don’t be scared.	It’s okay to be scared.
Do you have any questions?	What questions do you have?
You’re OK.	How are you feeling?
It’s not that hard.	You can do hard things.
	That’s a tough one, but you’ll figure it out.
We don’t talk like that.	Please use kind words.
Great job! Good work getting your grades up.	That “A” reflects a lot of hard work.
	Look at your improvement!
	You worked really hard to ____.
	Your hard work paid off!
	That’s what we call perseverance!
	You make it look easy! You’ve really got the hang of it!
	The time you’re putting into ____ is really paying off.
	I can tell you really care.
	I see a very thorough job!
We’re doing great!	I really feel like a team when we work like this!
You’re cool. I like you.	I love being with you.
Good kid/student. Thanks.	Thank you for your help.
	I noticed you were really patient with your classmate.
	Thanks for helping ____, that made a big difference.
	Thanks for your cooperation.
Good/smart answer.	What do you think about it?
	Talk to us. Say more about what you mean.
	I can tell you spent a lot of time thinking this through.
That’s interesting.	You seem to really enjoy...



Mistaken Goals Chart from [Teaching Parenting the Positive Discipline Way](#) by Jane Nelsen and Lynn Lott

1	The child's goal is...	Undue Attention (to keep others busy or get special service)	Misguided Power (to be boss)	Revenge (to get even)	Assumed Inadequacy (to give up and be left alone)
2	If the parent/teacher feels...	• Annoyed • Irritated • Worried • Guilty	• Angry • Challenged • Threatened • Defeated	• Hurt • Disappointed • Disbelieving • Disgusted	• Despair • Hopeless • Helpless • Inadequate
3	...and tends to react by...	• Reminding • Coaxing • Doing things for the child they could do for themselves.	• Fighting • Giving in • Thinking "You can't get away with it" • "I'll make you" • Wanting to be right	• Retaliating • Getting even • Thinking "How could you do this to me?" • Taking behavior personally	• Giving up • Doing for • Over helping • Showing a lack of faith
4	And if the child's response is...	• Stops temporarily, but later resumes the same or another disturbing behavior. • Stops when given one-on-one attention.	• Intensifies behavior • Defiant compliance • Feels they've won when parent/teacher is upset • Passive Power	• Retaliates • Hurt others • Damages property • Gets even • Intensifies • Escalates the same behavior or chooses another weapon	• Retreats further • Passive • No improvement • No response • Avoid trying
5	...then the belief behind child's behavior is...	• I count (belong) only when I'm being noticed or getting special service. • I'm only important when I'm keeping you busy with me.	• I belong only when I'm boss, in control, or proving no one can boss me. • You can't make me.	• I don't think I belong so I'll hurt others as I feel hurt. • I can't be liked or loved.	• I don't believe I can belong, so I'll convince others not to expect anything of me. • I am helpless and unable. • It's no use trying because I won't do it right.
6	,which adults may contribute to by...	• "I don't have faith in you to deal with disappointment." • "I feel guilty if you aren't happy."	• "I'm in control and you must do what I say." • "I believe that telling you what to do, and lecturing or punishing you when you don't do it, is the best way to motivate you to do better."	• "I give advice (without listening to you) because I think I'm helping." • "I expect you to know why I focus more on your grades than I focus on you as a person."	• "I expect you to live up to my high expectations." • "I thought it was my job to do things for you."
7	Coded messages:	• Notice Me • Involve Me Usefully	• Let Me Help • Give Me Choices	• I'm Hurting • Validate My Feelings	• Don't Give Up On Me • Show Me A Small Step
8	Parent/teacher proactive & empowering responses include:	• Redirect by involving child in a useful task to gain useful attention. Say what you will do, "I love you and ____." (Example: "I care about you and will spend time with you later.") • Avoid special services. • Say it only once and then act. • Have faith in child to deal with feelings (don't fix or rescue). • Plan special time. • Set up routines. • Engage child in problem-solving. • Use family/class meetings. • Ignore (touch without words) . • Set up nonverbal signals.	• Acknowledge that you can't make them do something and redirect to positive power by asking for help. • Offer a limited choice. • Don't fight and don't give in. • Withdraw from conflict and calm down. Be firm and kind. • Act, don't talk. • Decide what you will do. • Let routines be the boss. Develop mutual respect. • Get help from child to set reasonable and few limits. • Practice follow-through. • Use family/class meetings.	• Acknowledge hurt feelings. • Don't take behavior personally. • Avoid punishment and retaliation. • Build trust. • Use reflective listening. • Share your feelings. • Apologize. • Make amends. • Show you care. • Act, don't talk. • Encourage strengths. • Put kids in same boat. • Use family/class meetings.	• Break task down to small steps. • Make task easier until child experiences success. • Set up opportunities for success. • Take time for training. • Teach skills/show how, but don't do for. Stop all criticism. • Encourage any positive attempt, no matter how small. • Show faith in child's abilities. • Focus on asset. • Don't pity. • Don't give up. Enjoy the child. • Build on interests. • Use family/class meetings.

Differentiating Early to Later Indicators of Developing Inquiry <i>(source: Institute for Inquiry)</i>	
Process Skill	Do the Students...
Raising Questions	☐ 1. Readily ask a variety of questions, including those that can and cannot be investigated? ☐ 2. Discuss how their questions can be answered? ☐ 3. Recognize a difference between an investigable and a non-investigable question? ☐ 4. Suggest how answers to questions of various kinds can be found? ☐ 5. Choose a realistic way of measuring or comparing things to obtain a result? ☐ 6. Help in turning their own questions into a form that can be tested?
Observing	☐ 1. Identify obvious differences and similarities between objects and materials? ☐ 2. Make use of several senses in exploring objects or materials? ☐ 3. Identify differences of detail between objects or materials? ☐ 4. Identify points of similarity between objects where differences are more obvious than similarities? ☐ 5. Choose to use aids to the senses (such as a hand lens or microscope) for study of details as necessary? ☐ 6. Distinguish which observations are relevant to the problem at hand?
Planning and Conducting Investigations	☐ 1. Start with a useful general approach even if details are lacking or need further thought? ☐ 2. Have some ideas of the variable that has to be changed or what different things are to be compared? ☐ 3. Maintain controls? ☐ 4. Have some idea beforehand of what to look for to obtain a result? ☐ 5. Choose a realistic way of measuring or comparing things to obtain a result? ☐ 6. Take steps to ensure that the results obtained are as accurate as they can reasonably be?
Predicting	☐ 1. Attempt to make a prediction relating to a problem, even if not derived from evidence? ☐ 2. Make some use of evidence in making a prediction, rather than basing that prediction on preconceived ideas? ☐ 3. Make reasonable predictions which fit the evidence without necessarily being able to make the justification explicit? ☐ 4. Explain how the evidence has been used in making predictions? ☐ 5. Justify a prediction based on patterns in information or observations (such as making interpolations or extrapolations)? ☐ 6. Justify a prediction in terms of an idea that might explain it?
Interpreting	☐ 1. Discuss what they find in relation to their initial questions? ☐ 2. Compare their findings with their earlier predictions? ☐ 3. Notice associations between changes in one variable and another? ☐ 4. Identify patterns or trends in their observations or measurements? ☐ 5. Check any patterns or trends against all the evidence? ☐ 6. Draw conclusions which summarize and are consistent with all the evidence?
Communicating	☐ 1. Talk freely about their activities and the ideas they have, with or without making a written record? ☐ 2. Listen to others' ideas and look at their results? ☐ 3. Report events in drawings, writings, models, paintings, etc.? ☐ 4. Use tables, graphs, and charts to record and report results when these are suggested? ☐ 5. Regularly and spontaneously use information from books (or other resources) to check or supplement their investigations? ☐ 6. Choose a form for recording or presenting results which is both considered and justified?

Developing Inquiry: Helping Students Develop their Science Process Skills (source: Institute for Inquiry)	
Provide Opportunities to Practice Process Skills	● Give students time and materials to ask and investigate questions about their environment ● Ask students questions that require the use of certain process skills.
To Make the Process Conscious, Design Tasks that Encourage Discussion	● Engage students in discussions, in both one-on-one situations and in small and large groups. ● Encourage students to articulate what they are thinking and compare what they are doing.
Model Process Skills	● Observations, focused by developmental indicators ● Writing prompts—tasks that require use of process skills ● Questioning—asking questions that require use of process skills
Gather evidence of student thinking as related to goals→	Based on the developmental indicators, decide whether consolidation of skill at current level or advancement to the next level is appropriate