



The
Nova Scotia
Teachers Union

HANDBOOK
for **BEGINNING**
TEACHERS

*helping you to survive &
thrive in the classroom*



PREFACE

This is the first Nova Scotia Teachers Union publication of its kind for new teachers.

Topics are approached from a general perspective so that the content is applicable to teachers in all settings.

This is by no means an exhaustive document. However, it does provide information that has been deemed useful by new teachers from around the province with whom it has been field-tested.

Your Input Please

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union welcomes your feedback on this handbook.

Contact Mary Jane Cadegan, Coordinator of Leadership Development and Outreach Programs, Nova Scotia Teachers Union. Telephone 1-800-565-6788 toll free, or 477-5621 locally; or fax 477-3517; or email mcadegan@nstu.ca.



Acknowledgements

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union would like to thank the *Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario* for permission to reprint material from their publication "Answering the Call" and the *British Columbia Teachers' Federation* for permission to reprint material from their publication "Beginning Teachers Handbook".

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union would also like to acknowledge the many new teachers from across the province who responded to drafts of this document. A special thank you must go to *Sandra MacDonald, Vice Principal, John W. MacLeod School, Halifax Regional School Board*, whose contributions to the content have added immeasurably to its value.

New teacher handbooks from the *Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation*, the *Manitoba Teachers' Society* and the *Alberta Teachers' Association* provided inspiration for the writing of this handbook.

Contacting the NSTU for Information

Keep in mind that you may contact the **Nova Scotia Teachers Union** for information or advice about any professional problem and you are strongly urged to do so.

- At the **school level**, check with your NSTU school rep.
- At the **Local level** contact your Local President. All Local Presidents' contact numbers are located in the NSTU Member Diary, which is distributed to all contract teachers each September.
- **Provincially:**
Call 1-800-565-6788 or 477-5621 and the receptionist will put you in contact with an appropriate staff officer depending on the particular problem you are facing.
Mailing address: 3106 Dutch Village Road,
Halifax, NS B3L 4L7
Web site: www.nstu.ca
Email: nstu@nstu.ca
(See Appendix G for a complete listing of NSTU email addresses)
Fax: (902) 477-3517



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Welcome to the

Nova Scotia Teachers Union





Welcome to the NSTU

*The Nova Scotia Teachers Union is **your**
professional organization.*



MESSAGE FROM THE NSTU PRESIDENT

Dear Colleague,

As a beginning teacher you represent the renewal, and the future, of the teaching profession. It is important that beginning teachers be supported in such a way that they feel well equipped to deal with instructional issues as they arise, and rapidly gain confidence and proficiency in the classroom. The Nova Scotia Teachers Union recognizes that, besides being very important, the role of the beginning teacher can be very challenging. This booklet is intended to provide you with information, advice and access to resources which will help you experience success and satisfaction in your teaching.

*The Nova Scotia Teachers Union is your professional organization, and your representative vis-à-vis the employer. If you have questions or experience difficulty, either from a contractual or professional perspective, the NSTU school representative may be able to help. The school rep can provide you with information on contracts and other publications and services available to you through the Union. Get to know your rep. Ask your school representative for a list of Local meetings.. Become involved. remember, it's **your** professional organization—**you** are the NSTU.*

Best wishes in all your teaching endeavours.

Sincerely



*BRIAN FORBES, President
Nova Scotia Teachers Union*



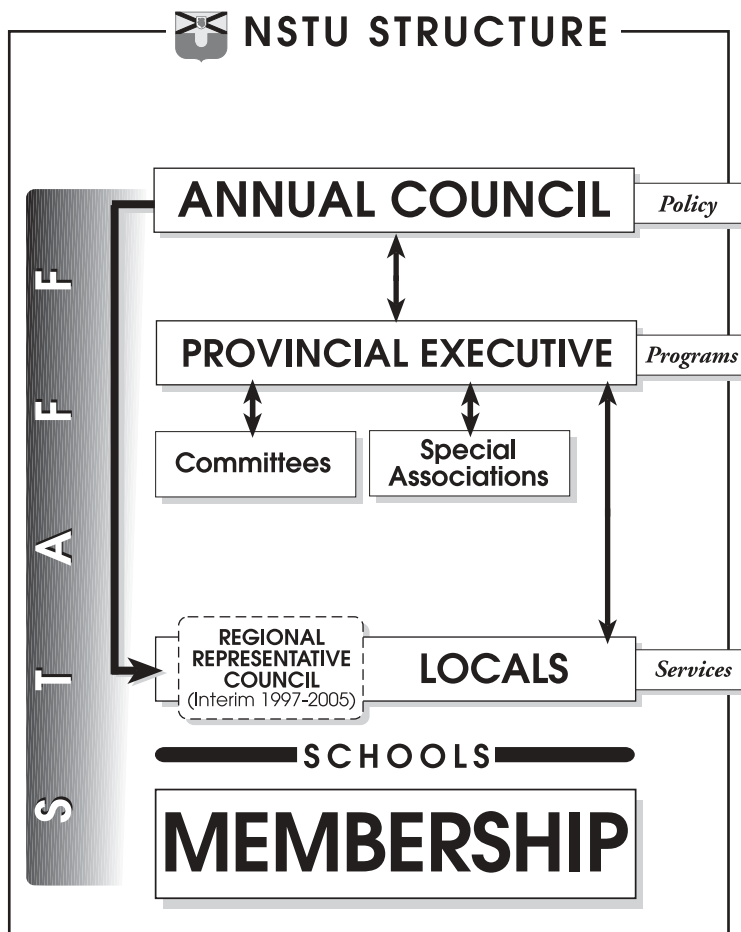
YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL IN A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

As a certified teacher, you assume a professional status. This status carries with it a set of behavioural expectations, which are outlined by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union in its Code of Ethics. This Code is provided as a guide to teachers in maintaining at all times the high tradition of the profession.

You will find the Code of Ethics in Appendix H.

Get Involved!

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union was founded in 1895 “to unify and elevate the teaching profession and improve the quality of education offered to the young people of Nova Scotia.” More than 100 years later, we continue to stand by that undertaking. As your professional organization, **the NSTU needs your commitment and involvement** so that our voice remains strong in support of public education.



NSTU Executive Staff

The NSTU employs 11 executive staff who direct and co-ordinate the activities and programs of the NSTU under the supervision of the Provincial Executive.



Forums for Local Participation

The NSTU provides structures designed to encourage member participation at the Local level.

NSTU School Representative

Every school has an NSTU rep who can either answer your question or put you in contact with someone who can.

Local Meetings

The NSTU is divided into twenty-two locals. Check with your school rep to see when and where your Local holds its general meetings and plan to attend. You will learn a lot and broaden your circle of professional colleagues at the same time. See your school rep for a list of meeting dates.

Local Committees

Locals have a number of standing committees and they are always looking for extra help. Through committee experience you will gain organizational and administrative experience that will enhance your professional capacity.

Local Executive

The Executive is made up of teachers elected by fellow teachers to conduct the business of the Local.



Forums for Regional or Provincial Participation

Once you are involved at the Local level you will become aware of opportunities for involvement either regionally or provincially. Committees, special associations, focus groups, annual council, provincial executive... all these depend on the involvement and commitment of members like you.

Provincial Executive

The Provincial Executive is comprised of teachers elected from across the province to represent NSTU members. They meet monthly and direct the business of the Union between Councils. A list of Provincial Executive members can be found in the Member Diary.

Regional Representative Council (RRC)

The RRC is made up of representatives from the Locals within the board. The RRC deals directly with the board.

Provincial Committees

The NSTU has a number of standing committees, as well as issue-based ad hoc committees, to which NSTU members can apply. Selection is based on a number of criteria including regional representation, grade level, gender, and experience.

Special Associations

The NSTU has twenty-five special associations. They are the means by which the Union serves the needs of its members in the area of curriculum and professional development. To become a member of the special association of your choice, contact central office.

Annual Council

Delegates are chosen from each Local to attend Annual Council, held each May. Council determines the policy which directs the NSTU between councils.

To obtain information on applying for NSTU committees or other involvement opportunities, check *The Teacher* or contact central office.



NEW TEACHER INITIATIVES

The NSTU also provides a number of programs and services designed specifically for new teachers:

Each One Reach One

This program matches an experienced Union member with a new teacher for the purpose of mentoring them into active participation in the organization. Support materials are available through the Local President.



Benefits of Membership Sessions

Sessions are designed to answer the question, “What do I get for my Union dues?”

Teacher Induction Program (TIP)

This NSTU-initiated program is co-sponsored locally by participating school boards. Up to five times per year, TIP brings new teachers together to help them problem-solve classroom issues and challenges.

Regional Conferences for New Teachers

These conferences are rotated around the province with up to two being held in any one year.

Handbook for Beginning Teachers: Helping You to Survive & Thrive in the Classroom

Local New Teacher Committees

Welcome Night for New Teachers in the Local

To find out which of these are available in your region, contact your school rep or Local President. All Local Presidents have contact numbers listed in the NSTU Member Diary, which is distributed to teachers in September of each year.



Personal & Professional Growth





Wellness

Our wellness depends not only on our lifestyle and how we cope with the physical demands we put on ourselves, but also on the emotional demands.



Taking Care of Yourself

Many beginning teachers are going through a transition from being a student to being a professional teacher. Transitional phases are sometimes difficult and painful. You may be away from family and long-time friends for the first time. There may be an awareness that your expectations and what you are able to do are different. You may also be overwhelmed with your workload and, to cope, you may work late into the night, on weekends, and at lunch and recess, to the point where your own personal well-being begins to suffer.

You are facing a challenge that all beginning teachers face—striking a balance.

Personal Life and Work Life

Your work can consume you. There is so much to do and learn. Your personal life often suffers in the first years of teaching. Exercise is forgotten and there is no time to meet new friends, let alone join them for activities outside of school. Taking time to relax every day and to exercise both relieves stress and makes your transition easier. It keeps you healthy. Exercise and meeting friends will help to maintain your energy levels.

You may experience a roller coaster of emotions, but it is important to stay “connected” with what is really going on. Experience life fully and act accordingly. Everyone has had to begin somewhere. Laugh at yourself and enjoy your talents, even when others do not. Recognize your emotions and express them appropriately. You will need to decide if you can live with the difference between your dream of what teaching “should” be and your discovery of its reality.

Perfectionism and Surviving

To have the perfect lesson and the perfect class where all students are working to their potential all the time is impossible. Realize that there may be students in your classroom with so many personal and home problems that no matter how well your lessons are planned or what you do, they will continue to challenge you. Try not to take this personally. Look for the help of more experienced teachers and your principal for support or ideas.

A teacher needs to contain the demands of the job and set priorities. It takes too much energy to be perfect all the time. No one expects a beginning teacher to be perfect. Survival of the first years depends on letting go of thinking you have to be able to do it all, all of the time.

Asking for Help versus Doing It All Yourself

You are a trained teacher with new ideas and information. Situations or concerns may come up that you do not know how to handle. Ask others and ask early. It is not a sign of incompetence to ask questions. Other people have experience in areas that you are not yet acquainted with. Asking early may save you a lot of grief and a lot of time.



Helping Others and Helping Yourself

Are you someone who is always there to help others, even if it takes time away from what you want or need to do? Helping others is a good thing unless it is to your detriment. When this occurs resentment sets in and eventually leads to problems in relationships. If you worry about everyone else's needs, you will not have any time to meet your own.

Saying Yes and Saying No

It is all right to say “no” to too many extracurricular activities or assignments. Beginning teachers often think they have to do everything that is asked of them and do it well. There are just so many hours in a day and you have just so much energy. If it is too much for you, say so. It doesn't help anyone for you to be so stretched that you cannot do anything well.

Maintaining Perspective

The first years of teaching are like being on an emotional rollercoaster—you move from exhilaration to disillusionment many times. Remember that this is normal, so try to maintain a balance—and don't become discouraged.

NSTU Counselling Services

The NSTU provides free counselling services to teachers. You can access this service by calling 1-800-565-6788 or 477-5621. See Appendix D for a description of the service.

Others Who Help

Nova Scotia Teachers Union Local

Your Local is a source of support and information. Find out who your school representative is and what services are available through your Local. Read your Member Diary and other Union material to find out how you can take part in your professional organization.

School Administrators

The principal and vice-principal are an important part of your support network. Don't wait for them to ask how things are going—let them know. When it's comfortable for you, you might invite an administrator into your classroom. Show an interest in their work so that you can gain a broader understanding of school operations.

Resource/Learning Centre Teachers

These teachers can help you to design appropriate learning activities for special needs children. In some cases these teachers also operate programs which may take special needs children out of your classroom for part of the day or week. A resource or learning centre teacher can be an important part of your support system. Find an early opportunity to meet them and discuss how you can best work together.



Library Staff

Teacher librarians, library technicians, and other library staff do more than look after the collection of library materials—they can assist you in cooperative planning and help you design research-based projects and information retrieval programs. Be sure to familiarize yourself with policies about using the resource center, but also take advantage of the staff's ability to help you develop resource-based learning strategies to enhance instruction. Your library staff may also assist you in ordering student and teacher resource materials. Many teaching materials are available through the government's Authorized Learning Resources catalogue. The ALR catalogue is updated annually. Your school should have a copy of it. The Web site address is «<http://alr.ednet.ns.ca>».

School Counsellor

Your school counsellor can help you overcome many obstacles. Find out if there are any ongoing concerns in your class from previous years. The counsellor can be invaluable when meeting with parents and is often a good source for strategies when dealing with difficult students. Remember that your students are your responsibility and the counsellor is there for support, not as a disciplinarian. Obtain information concerning procedures for referrals and who makes them.

Custodial Staff

A good working relationship with the school custodians will make life much easier for you. Ask the principal about the caretaker's responsibilities. Introduce yourself and discuss ways in which you can work together to keep your classroom a pleasant place for you and your students.

School Secretary

The school secretary is an important link between you and the administration. Learn about the secretary's responsibilities and what services might be available to you. Requests made of you by the school secretary are frequently for information required by the principal. Remember that these people have deadlines to meet as well and they appreciate promptness.

Educational Psychologists, Speech Therapists, Social Workers

Your school board employs some or all of these resource people. You will need to know about students with whom they have been working and about referral procedures.





Professional Development

You have a professional responsibility to keep abreast of new developments in education and to take part in ongoing professional development.



OPPORTUNITIES

Your Board will offer professional development opportunities throughout the year.

The NSTU also offers professional development opportunities through:

Special Associations

There are 25 curriculum-specific special associations, which plan October conferences and provide newsletters. To get a listing of these associations and to find out how you can join, call the NSTU at 1-800-565-6788 or 477-5621.

NSTU Local Professional Development committees offer sessions to teachers. Your school rep will have information about upcoming sessions.

Keep professionally current through the following vehicles:

The Teacher—The official publication of the NSTU, published 10 times per year and distributed to all teachers.

Aviso—The magazine for Nova Scotia's teaching profession, written by teachers for teachers. It is produced three times per year and distributed to all teachers.

Nova Scotia Learning Interchange «<http://ali.apple.com/nsli/>»—see Appendix E

FUNDING

Funding is available to support teachers in pursuit of professional development opportunities:

Professional Development Fund

Funding categories include conference grants, courses, short and long term educational leaves. For details on this funding, check your regional agreement under *Professional Development* or *Staff Development Fund*.

Sheonoroil Foundation

The NSTU has established the Sheonoroil Foundation to provide funding grants for anti-violence programs that have a direct and immediate impact on public school classrooms, students, teachers, staff, administration and community.

For further information, contact:

Local VP PD

1-877-224-DOVE
or sheonoroil@nstu.ca



FUNDING

Professional Development Assistance Fund (PDAF)

As a result of the Provincial Collective Agreement, an annual sum of \$150,000 is allocated for the purpose of encouraging innovative program development in schools.

Out-of-Province Conference Grant

Full-Time Study Grant

Summer Travel Fellowship

Educational Research Grant

Professional Development Profile

In August, 2000, the Government of Nova Scotia approved the implementation of a New Teacher Certification system. One of the components of the system requires teachers to maintain a Professional Development Profile. To fulfill this requirement, teachers must complete 100 hours of professional development every five years.

Participation in professional development activities count for P.D. hours. For clarification regarding the activities that count, refer to the pamphlet "Answering Your Questions about the Teacher Professional Development Profile." This pamphlet is available from NSTU central office.

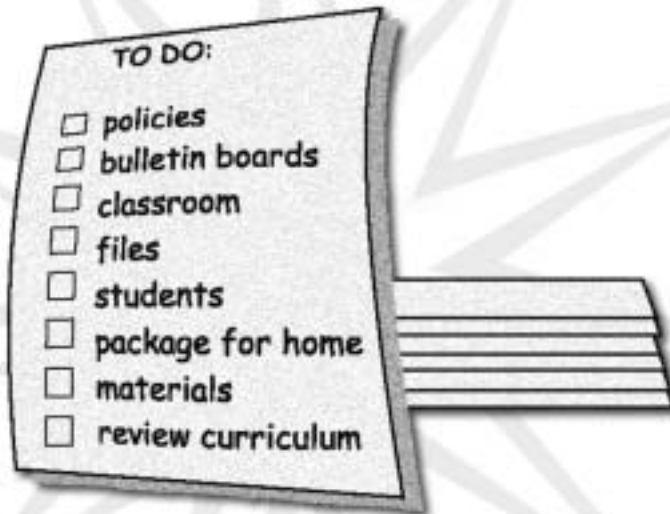
NSTU central office can provide information on all of these. Contact information can be found on the first page under "Contacting the NSTU for Information"





Surviving & Thriving in the Classroom





Getting Started

Summer is over and the new school year is about to begin. To make the year a meaningful one for you and your students, advance preparation is necessary – here is a checklist to help you get started:



Prior to the First Day

1. Ask your principal for curriculum guides and your copy of the Public School Program.
2. Ask your principal about the policy and procedures regarding:

<input type="checkbox"/> class lists	<input type="checkbox"/> schedules and timetables
<input type="checkbox"/> enrolment/parent information forms	<input type="checkbox"/> school arrival and dismissal times
<input type="checkbox"/> field trips	<input type="checkbox"/> school assemblies
<input type="checkbox"/> fire drills	<input type="checkbox"/> school council
<input type="checkbox"/> homework	<input type="checkbox"/> school handbook
<input type="checkbox"/> hospitality fund	<input type="checkbox"/> school keys and security
<input type="checkbox"/> library resources for students/teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> school-wide rules
<input type="checkbox"/> opening day	<input type="checkbox"/> staff meetings
<input type="checkbox"/> opening exercises	<input type="checkbox"/> staff parking
<input type="checkbox"/> paper and other supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> student evaluation
<input type="checkbox"/> petty cash	<input type="checkbox"/> student fees
<input type="checkbox"/> photocopies	<input type="checkbox"/> student supervision duties
<input type="checkbox"/> registration procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> substitutes



3. Assign bulletin board areas for displaying:
 - announcements
 - bulletin board ideas created by students
 - calendar and current events
 - different subjects
 - student work



4. Prepare your classroom in these ways:
 - duplicate materials needed for the first few days
 - have a receipt book ready if money is to be collected
 - make a checklist for forms which need to be returned
 - make signs for the room
 - organize your daily plan book to include learner outcomes
 - plan a textbook distribution record
 - plan the first day in detail
 - prepare an outline for the first week
 - prepare class list and post copy
 - prepare the classroom arrangements and seating plan
 - put your name outside the classroom door with a class list
 - set up learning centres



5. Prepare your files by setting up folders for:

- late and absent notes
- parent correspondence
- record keeping and examples of student work
- staff bulletins and memos
- substitute teachers
- students with medical problems
- students with IPPs and IMPs
- students needing resource help



6. Get to know your students through the following activities:

- find out which students are receiving special help
- prepare an inventory to find out student interests
- prepare tentative groupings for instruction
- read the cumulative records for each student
- review your provision for individual differences



7. Prepare a package to send home on the first day that includes:

- a welcoming letter
- forms required by the school
- supply list and costs; what the school provides



8. Assemble the following items:

- appropriate books for reading or reference use
- attendance materials
- classroom art supplies
- supplementary teaching materials
- textbooks and accompanying materials



9. Know your materials and how they support learner expectations by:

- reviewing the program of studies and relevant curriculum guides and teacher manuals
- reviewing key stage outcomes for grade level
- reviewing principles of learning



The First Day

A well-planned first day is crucial – it can set the tone for the remainder of the year. Plan for a memorable and interesting day. Learn students’ names as quickly as possible in order to personalize your teaching. Make your first day a meaningful one for you and your students by being organized, prepared and welcoming.

On your first day of teaching you should begin in a friendly, business-like manner. Communicate your classroom rules to the students. Classroom management works well when you, the teacher, provide the framework for classroom behavior and rules are then formed cooperatively with the students. Expectations worded in a positive way have greater impact than a list of things not to do.

Self-Reflection

One of the most powerful tools you have for learning is self-reflection. This means examining what you do and thinking about it. It includes asking yourself why you make certain choices over others, what you observe the results to be and what else you might do. It means asking yourself how you’re feeling about your work and yourself.

You might help this self-reflection by starting a journal. Write to yourself each day and look back occasionally. You’ll feel good about how much you’ve grown.

Your Role as a Teacher

As you begin your teaching career, remember that you, the teacher, are responsible for the student learning that occurs in your classroom. Your role is to:

- choose instructional styles and techniques
- diagnose student needs
- evaluate student progress and assess achievement
- form partnerships with parents to enhance student learning, and
- select appropriate teaching and learning materials.

Remember, some of your students may come from socio-economically challenged circumstances. Your sensitivity to their reality can make a real difference for them.





Classroom Management

The challenge is how to maintain a positive classroom environment with a minimum of disruptions. There is no doubt that this dilemma causes more anxiety for beginning teachers than any other aspect of their new career.

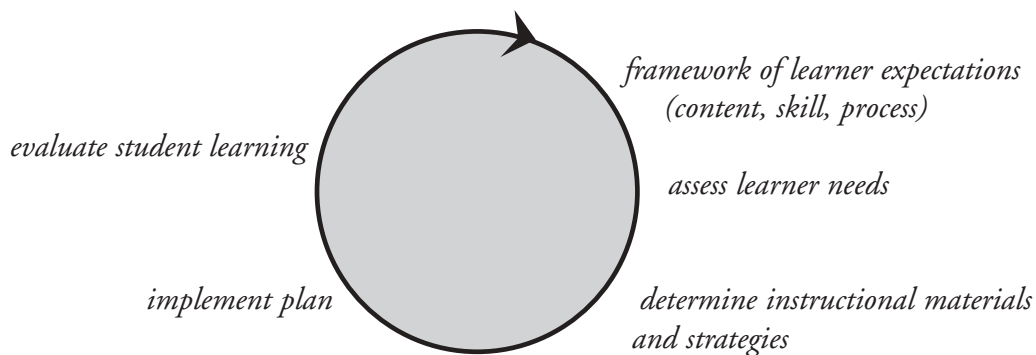


Planning

As a beginning teacher the more organized you are, the greater the opportunity you will have to succeed in your classroom.

Planning is the key to successful classroom management. You will need to plan for both the content and behavioral aspects of your students' learning. With thoughtful planning in place, you will be more confident in providing quality learning experiences for your students.

Instructional Loop



It is a good practice to organize and carefully prepare daily lesson plans, if possible, writing up your plan before you leave school each day. In the event that you will be away, it will provide a guide for a substitute to follow.



DISCIPLINE

The discipline aspect of classroom management focuses on prevention and problem solving, rather than punishment. A secure, inviting classroom, along with respect for the dignity of children and purposeful, well-planned activities, prevents most discipline problems. The teacher is crucial in establishing an effective learning environment. The objective is to instill inner self control in students, not merely to exert your control over them. Set the tone of your classroom from the start by being firm and fair; friendly, yet professional. When you are more confident of your ability to maintain order, you will be more relaxed and the students will perceive you as a person who really cares. Without order in your classroom, very little learning will take place. Remember that inappropriate behavior is a purposeful response to anger, a need for attention, power, or avoidance of failure.

Discipline and good behavior are learned. Guide your students to learn how to make better choices. **Help your students understand that with rights come responsibilities.** Encourage your students to be responsible for their own learning and behaviour. When students make choices, they learn new skills and gain social awareness from the outcome of those decisions.

What Works

Discipline is a teaching process. For effective results, tell students what you expect, provide a model for good behaviour, check for understanding and allow for practice and follow-up. Don't assume students know how to act appropriately—they need to be taught and coached to manage their own behaviour.

Create a classroom environment which provides structure and support and reinforces positive behaviour. Set your standards high; be clear and realistic in your expectations. Classroom conflict is more likely to be reduced if you:

- ✓ arrive in the classroom before students and, if possible, greet them individually as they enter.
- ✓ organize and prepare before each lesson
- ✓ insist that everyone be treated with a wholesome respect
- ✓ listen to students' opinions and consider students' feelings
- ✓ maintain a sense of humor and tolerant attitude
- ✓ assist children in making appropriate choices
- ✓ teach students decision-making skills
- ✓ help students live with mistakes and take them in stride
- ✓ use a quiet, friendly tone of voice
- ✓ show faith in the child and build on strengths
- ✓ help children to increase their feelings of self-esteem
- ✓ believe that all children are capable and lovable
- ✓ have a low-key, consistent and matter of fact manner
- ✓ use realistic, logical consequences and enforce them.



Your classroom management skills and your personality will determine the classroom climate (how your classroom “feels”).



What Does Not Work

Even with the most tactful and careful preparation, children will test you. Let students know that while you disapprove of their actions, you still value them. If you are going to show you are angry, do it because you have decided it is appropriate, and use it in a measured and consistent way. Be aware of the legal rights and responsibilities of both teachers and students.

Remember, successful teachers **DO NOT**:

- ✗ preach, nag, criticize or shout
- ✗ use excessive praise instead of encouragement
- ✗ punish as a way to teach appropriate behaviour
- ✗ accept excuses, bargain or blame
- ✗ use sarcasm, or try to embarrass or humiliate
- ✗ rescue children rather than teaching problem-solving skills
- ✗ act hastily without knowing the implications of their actions
- ✗ punish the whole class for the misdeeds of a few.

A Classroom Routines/Procedures Checklist

Establishing routines and procedures is one of the most effective ways of avoiding many disciplinary issues. Bear in mind that it takes time for routines and procedures to become habitual. Take the time up front to teach them well. Give lots of opportunities to practice. It will make the rest of your year go more smoothly!

Consider establishing procedures for the following:

- behaviour during PA announcements
- cues or signals for getting student attention
- degree of student talk allowed during seat work
- dismissing the class
- distributing supplies and materials
- fire drills and emergencies
- format for assignments
- permissions for fountain, sink, bathroom, pencil sharpener
- hall movement
- lining up
- lunch
- make-up work
- playground
- putting away supplies and equipment
- roll call, absentees, students who leave early
- student movement within the room
- tardy students



- what students should do when they finish early
- what to do when there is an interruption

Remember—routines and procedures must be *practiced*. Give students clear directions and sufficient opportunity to practice to make the routines automatic.

Rules and Consequences

When establishing rules and consequences, it is desirable to have the children participate —this gives students a sense of ownership.

Tips for Rules

- ✓ limit yourself to 3-6 rules
- ✓ state rules in positive terms whenever possible
- ✓ keep rules short, precise and succinct but broad enough to encompass many specifics
- ✓ post rules and send a copy home
- ✓ rules need to be taught
- ✓ give positive feedback to compliant behaviour
- ✓ be consistent

Sample rules

- students will be respectful toward students and class materials
- students are responsible to arrive on time and with all necessary materials

Consequences should

- be clear and specific
- have a range of alternatives
- not be a punishment
- be related to a rule
- be natural or logical

Remember, it isn't the severity of the consequence, but the consistency with which it is used that makes it effective.

Sample consequences

- time out
- one minute after class
- have student call parent
- write letter home
- visit to principal
- time out in another classroom



Think Sheet

A think sheet is a generic form designed to encourage students to think about their behaviour with the goal of improving behaviour in future situations.

The think sheet is **not a consequence**, and should be given **in conjunction** with a consequence.

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE

a) Three Basics to Remember:

1. ***Monitor student behaviour.***

- Use an “active eye”. See what is going on. Don’t become preoccupied with someone or something and ignore the rest of the class. It’s said that one teacher on his/her feet is worth two in the seat. This benefits your discipline program as well as being an effective teaching strategy.
- Simply looking the student directly in the eye for prolonged contact while you continue your lesson sends a non-verbal message that says “*I saw what you did and I want it stopped*”.

2. ***Be consistent.***

- Have the same expectations for appropriate behaviour for all students. Your students should know that you will enforce rules consistently and determine an appropriate consequence. Your goal is to be fair, but that might mean differing consequences for students. If one student frequently fails to return homework, you may choose a different consequence than you would for a student who forgets his/her homework for the first time. In knowing that you will be fair, but not equal, your students should understand that being equal is not always fair. In order to be consistent, be certain that the consequences for student behaviour are reasonable and appropriate.

3. ***Promptly manage inappropriate behaviour.***

- Effective classroom managers know that misbehaviour must be handled immediately or there is a risk of a snowballing effect. Instead of one or two students involved, soon there may be several. In order to provide maximum time for learning and to reduce minor behaviour problems, there are some strategies that you can employ that deal with behaviour in the least amount of time, with the least disruption and the least negative feelings.



b) Strategies:

- ***Proximity***

Continuing your lesson while you move about the room, pausing near “trouble spots”, can let the students know that even though they aren’t near the teacher’s desk, they are still expected to demonstrate appropriate behaviour. Getting “boxed in” behind your desk or lectern encourages misbehaviour in the far corners of the room.

- ***Pause***

The continuous sound of “teacher talk” can provide students with a noise screen for their own conversations. An occasional pause—just a few seconds of silence—can bring an off-task student back in focus.

- ***Touch/Gesture***

This can be added to the above strategies for emphasis. A touch on the shoulder—not a squeeze—or a shaking of your head helps to stress your message to the student.

- ***Asking for a Response***

Hearing your name can be an attention getter, even if you’re not paying attention. Working an off-task student’s name into a question can often bring the student back into the lesson. Remembering the student’s dignity, it would be appropriate to say the student’s name first, in order to allow them to hear the question they’ll be expected to answer. The purpose is to get the student back into the lesson, not to embarrass him/her.

- ***Active Participation***

Sometimes having the student respond to a question or become involved in an activity can eliminate the undesirable behaviour. Asking for a show of hands, having students perform a physical activity, or having each student write a quick answer to a question can make all students accountable for an immediate response.

- ***Rewards and Reinforcement***

Rewarding students with an enjoyable activity that is contingent on appropriate behaviour can be effective in motivating students to commit to completion of a task. “If we can finish this chapter by 9:45, we’ll have time to play the map game.”



Setting Limits

When the basic classroom management guidelines and strategies do not achieve desired results, you should move to the technique of setting limits. Limit setting helps students to make better behavioural choices by placing responsibility for behaviour on the student, not the teacher.

Guidelines for setting limits:

1. **Clearly state the inappropriate behaviour and why it is inappropriate.**
Saying “stop that now” is not a clear enough message.
2. **Give student a choice in the form of reasonable consequences, presenting the positive first.**
Even if the student makes a poor choice, this sets the stage for follow-up discussions about responsibility.
3. **Allow time for compliance.**
Walk away and give student “think time”—no less than 10 seconds. This maintains the sense of “choice.”
4. **Enforce consequences.**
Limits don’t work unless you follow through with the consequences.

Example: *Jane, you need to stop talking—you are disturbing others. If you do, you can leave at the end of class. If you don’t, you’ll stay behind for one minute. It’s your choice.*

- Remember, behaviour does not change overnight. By setting limits and enforcing consequences, you are providing a structure through which, over time, students can learn to make better behavioural choices.
- For behaviourally challenging students—keep detailed records (date, situation, consequence). This will help you and the student to identify patterns. These records can prove invaluable in follow-up discussions with the student, the principal or parents.





Teaching Strategies & Classroom Complexity

On any given day, a classroom teacher may have more than 1,000 personal interactions with students. These complex interactions must be interpreted on the spot. Because teachers respond to these immediate needs as they teach, they have little time to really reflect on what they are doing and planning to do. Teaching has two dimensions; one is working with the curriculum and the other is working with people. When these dimensions overlap, the work of teaching becomes multidimensional.



Teaching is often a hectic and isolated profession. So it is important to develop a repertoire of teaching strategies that become second nature to you. By having many teaching strategies the teacher is able to continually monitor the class and make adjustments during the busy complex teaching and learning process.

Teachers need to vary their teaching strategies. Often the process of learning is as important as what is being taught. The elementary math and science curricula are very hands-on. Teacher talk or lecture has its place in instructional strategies; however, don't fall into the trap of teacher talk when things get difficult. Approach your more experienced colleagues for helpful suggestions. You can also check the professional section of your school library or the NSTU's Bruce Hunter Memorial Library for resources on teaching strategies.

Essential Teaching Attitudes

Certain attitudes and personal characteristics will not guarantee success, but will go a long way in helping to have a productive and enjoyable teaching experience:

- ✍ Teachers like their students and respect their individuality.
- ✍ Teachers need to establish and maintain their credibility.
- ✍ Teachers need to be dependable and consistent.
- ✍ Teachers must value and enjoy teaching and learning and model these behaviours.
- ✍ Teachers need to be what they want their students to become.

Successful Lesson Planning

Well-planned lessons have the following characteristics:

- get and hold student attention
- focus student attention when beginning the lesson
- move at a good pace
- allow for monitoring of teaching and for student understanding
- provide for different learning styles
- have variety and are interesting
- include meaningful assignments
- contain the ingredients for success
- provide opportunities for student choices about their learning
- include opportunities for student assessment
- allow for student application
- make connections with real life
- are structured for maximum time on task
- link to previous learning
- end before they have gone on too long.



After you have selected the learner expectations from the program of studies, the process of planning to teach truly begins. As the designer of instruction, you will need to consider many things as you plan the lesson. How will you introduce the topic and get the student's attention? What instructional strategies will be most effective? How will you make a connection with the student? What opportunities are there for assessment and evaluation? All of these are important questions which apply to each lesson you design.

Let's consider teaching strategies. Teaching strategies can be grouped into five broad categories:

1. ***Direct Instruction***—the teacher imparts knowledge or demonstrates a skill.
2. ***Indirect Instruction***—the teacher sets up strategies, but does not teach directly.
3. ***Interactive Instruction***—the students interact with one another and the information—the teacher's role is one of an organizer and facilitator.
4. ***Independent Study***—the students interact more with the content than with the teacher or other classmates.
5. ***Experiential Learning***—the students experience and feel; they are involved in an activity.

Teachers consider many things when they choose which type of teaching strategy to use. You will need to consider the nature of the topic, resources available, age and maturity of the students and your personal teaching style. However, as a general guideline, it is safe to say that your lessons will be more successful if you structure opportunities for your students to be involved and to apply the knowledge they have learned.

Learning together provides for small group work, promotes interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual accountability and the need for increased group skills. There are a variety of approaches to grouping students for learning activities.

- ***Group investigation***—groups of two to six students work together using cooperative inquiry, discussion, cooperative planning and projects.
- ***Jigsaw***—individuals within the group learn parts of the material, discuss it with like members from other groups and then teach their own group.
- ***Teams, Games***—team members assist each other to master material or skills in order for the team to compete against other teams.



Effective Instruction

Effective instruction manifests itself in the knowledge, attitude and skill development of students. Teachers with effective instructional skills:

- understand the concept of multiple intelligences and integrate that understanding in their instructional design
- have clear expectations of their students
- can define their teaching role
- possess a sense of efficacy
- provide students with an opportunity to learn
- exhibit effective classroom management and organizational skills
- understand the curriculum and minimize student frustration
- actively instruct their students in large and small groups
- teach for mastery
- provide a supportive learning environment
- provide for student self evaluation
- teach thinking skills
- are flexible and able to modify plans, and
- are able to recognize and exploit teachable moments.

Teaching is complex. It requires you to experiment and find your most effective teaching style, while recognizing the different learning needs of your students. You will need to search out new and different methods to motivate your students and present materials. You will need to try different methods of grouping for instruction for different lessons. You will need to find out what works and what doesn't. Discuss ideas with your colleagues, ask questions and share experiences. You will need time to reflect on your teaching practice and to develop your teaching skills.

Questions you should ask yourself after each lesson:

- ? What worked well?
- ? What was the key to making it work?
- ? What connections were made to other learning or real life?
- ? What unexpected connections were made?
- ? If I did this again, what things would I change?
- ? What were the best resources?

Teaching is challenging and exciting work. Identify your mistakes and plan to correct them. Identify your successes and build on them.





Student Assessment and Evaluation

Your teaching plans must include well-designed methods of student evaluation.



Effective evaluation must serve a specific purpose. You will use the results of evaluation to:

- determine achievement in one learning sequence and readiness for the next
- test student knowledge
- provide feedback on the degree of success you are having with students
- give students the feedback necessary to make study plans
- improve your instructional strategies.

Properly constructed tests, direct observation and student interviews help you to measure progress. Evaluation should be continuous and consistent and you should use a variety of evaluation techniques.

When properly constructed, there is no better method than teacher-made tests. They can be objective short-answer questions, subjective essay questions, or they can be based on performance.

Student assessment and evaluation is an ongoing cooperative process among teachers, students and parents. Daily, teachers gather information and data on student achievement (assessment) and then make judgments about student growth (evaluation). There are many purposes for student assessment and evaluation such as for:

- making students aware of their strengths and weaknesses
- providing the teacher with information about future instructional needs
- gathering information on student progress to report to parents.

Student assessment and evaluation involves using a variety of testing strategies including check lists, peer and self evaluation, teacher-designed tests, projects, assignments and observations, as well as standardized and commercially-developed tests.

Tips for Assessment and Evaluation

- You will need to have a written procedure for evaluating student achievement in place before the beginning of the year. For example, you need to know if there is a percentage breakdown for each term. Copies of your student evaluation plan need to be given to students, parents and your school principal.
- Ask your principal for a copy of the system and school policies on student evaluation.
- Get a copy of the school report card so that you know how student achievement is reported to parents.
- Talk with other teachers of the same grade level or subject about strategies they use and appropriate weighting for different units of the curriculum.
- Use a variety of assessment strategies. For example, you should use a combination of short, written assignments, pre- and post-tests, projects, performances, tests, teacher observation, student self assessment and unit exams.
- Plan your student assessment and evaluation tasks when you plan for instruction. Make



sure that the assessment task is consistent with the type of learner outcome specified in the curriculum.

- Allow students some choice in the topic or method of presentation. Students will perform better if they enjoy the task.
- Avoid using evaluation as a threat or punishment. Students shouldn't feel like they're being tricked. Hand out your marking criteria when you give the students the task. Students need to know how they will be judged so that they can perform their best.
- Use student results as feedback on your test or project design. If there is a problem with the wording of a question—throw it out. If the project instructions were not clear—allow the students a second chance.
- Keep accurate records of student achievement. If you're using a computer marking program, you must still maintain a record book in case of a computer error.
- Keep parents informed of student progress. Parents should not be surprised with a student achievement problem on a report card or at parent- teacher interviews.

You can assist parents with their understanding of student assessment and evaluation practices by providing answers to the following questions:

- ? Is there an evaluation overview for the entire year?
- ? Are there things that parents can do before tests to help their child do better?
- ? Are there study tools or classes available to help a child prepare?
- ? What are the consequences of each test? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these tests?
- ? What are the consequences of each test? Who gets to see the results? Do they become a part of the child's permanent record?
- ? Can the child retake any of the tests if the results are unsatisfactory?
- ? Is there anything parents can do or should not do as a result of their child's performance on a test?
- ? What impact do the results of each test have in terms of the bigger picture of their child's performance in school?



Record Keeping

You will need to devise a simple method of keeping your student records current:

- Keep an anecdotal file where you can note pertinent information on work habits or behavioral problems. Specific comments and examples are the most useful.
- Some records can be kept by the students using graphs or comments to show weekly progress.
- Accurate record keeping is a prime responsibility of a teacher. When you report to parents, you will want to relate student achievement to the program objectives.

For a beginning teacher, making judgments about student progress may seem a bit overwhelming, but with organization and a good plan for evaluation, your students will receive quality information about their progress.

Reporting of Evaluations

There are many ways to inform students and their parents of the child's progress in school. It is important to communicate with the students and parents long before the first report card goes home.

Methods for reporting:

- ✍ Notes sent home
- ✍ Sending home results from tests
- ✍ Telephone calls home—reporting outstanding performance as well as concerns
- ✍ Progress reports
- ✍ Parent-teacher interviews
- ✍ Student-parent-teacher meetings
- ✍ Report cards.





Class Excursions

Class excursions are wonderful opportunities to allow students to expand their horizons. Trips allow students to see practical applications of what is experienced in the classroom. It affords enrichment to the regular program.



While the benefits can be readily identified, a teacher must be well prepared before taking a group out of the classroom setting. For the protection of all, two general rules should be applied to all excursions:

1. Students must be thoroughly prepared

- have the level of skill development required
- have an understanding of the purpose and be accountable for their learning
- be aware of acceptable behavior

2. Teachers must possess the required level of expertise/skill required to ensure safety of students.

Before taking the students away from the school, it is helpful if you have had an opportunity to take them to the gym or auditorium for an assembly or if you have had experience supervising activities in the school year. Class rules may need to be modified for these outings and you may not anticipate what modifications are needed until you are already too far away from your class to make them! The following is a list of suggestions for increasing your chances of having a positive trip experience:

- ***Talk about what you will see and hear on the trip.*** Knowing what to expect will make students more comfortable and more accountable for the learning outcomes. Don't assume that they will make the connection between the trip and the work you are doing in the classroom. Point out the value of the excursion to the students. Give them an assignment, a purpose for going.
- ***Review the "rules of the road" ahead of time.*** If you don't want bus songs, say so. Having partners or small groups set in advance will help manage attendance. Appoint a line leader if you don't have one. No one gets on the bus, and no one enters a building before the line leader who gets his or her cue from you.
- ***Check the school policy on travel.*** All school boards have specific policies on transportation of students in private vehicles.



- ***All trips need to be approved by the administration of the school.***
Let them know what you are planning and get approval before sending notices home. A copy of the student permission form should also be sent to the office. In addition to keeping the site administrators informed about what you will do, the secretary will find it a useful reference if parents are calling to ask about the trip.
- ***Make sure that the permission form includes all pertinent information*** about what the students need to bring and what time they should be at school if it is earlier than usual. Make this information detachable so that parents can have it on the evening before and the morning of the trip. Collect all completed permission forms in advance of the day of the trip.
- ***Ensure all relevant medical and other health concerns are noted.***
- ***Plan for contingencies.*** Make every effort to arrange to have a cell phone with you for emergencies as well as some cash in case you need to send someone home in a taxi.
- ***Arrange sufficient parent support.*** Check the policy at your school for adult: child ratios. Remember that the minimum ratio may not be appropriate for some activities that require more intensive monitoring. Plan what you will do if something goes wrong and a student needs to be sent home. Are there enough volunteers to send one home with the student? How will they get home?
- ***Double check on any bookings*** if you have arranged for drivers or a bus; call the day before to confirm. If taking public transit, make sure there have not been changes to the schedule. Buy bus tickets in advance and keep them in two baggies (one for going, one for coming). Put a parent volunteer in charge of looking after them and getting any transfers needed.



- ***If there is a fee involved, make sure you know what method of payment will be accepted.*** A company unprepared to accept cash or a personal cheque has embarrassed more than one teacher!
- ***Take along something to amuse the students if there is a delay.*** A novel you are reading, some brainteasers, even jokes will keep them from getting antsy.
- ***Take a first aid kit,*** even if you know one will be available wherever you are going. Grocery bags are crucial, especially for car or bus trips. Students with weak stomachs may need them; they are also great for garbage when receptacles are not available.
- ***Make reflection a part of the follow-up back at school.*** Students will remember more about the trip and you will be promoting the value of trips to the school and parent community.



Educational Partners





Communicating with Parents

The importance of developing strong parent-teacher partnerships is often overlooked. Teachers and parents share a common interest in helping students to achieve their fullest potential.



Partnerships with Parents

You can welcome parents as partners in learning by creating conditions where parents can assume roles as advisors, collaborators and supporters. In these meaningful roles, parents are not mere spectators – they are active participants in the teaching-learning process. Trust, respect and honesty are necessary conditions for parent-teacher relationships to flourish. Mutual support and open communication between the school and the home create a climate where the student is at the heart of the learning partnership.

Many teachers, particularly in elementary, phone the parents of their students early in the school year to make that important first contact. As well as the teacher explaining some of the classroom expectations, it is an opportunity to learn from the parents about other demands on the student's time like music lessons, community sports and other club activities or meetings.

Enlisting the assistance of parents is an important strategy to employ. Your approach will have a lot to do with the level of cooperation you will receive. Very few parents object to a teacher approaching them with an idea that might help their child if the idea shows the teacher's commitment to the success of that child. Consider parents as part of the support for a mutually agreed upon solution to discipline problems.

Apart from wanting to be kept informed about their child's progress, parents are also interested in other information about the school, such as:

- ? what are the school goals?
- ? what are your goals as the teacher?
- ? what is the child learning?
- ? how is the child being taught?
- ? what attendance and homework policies are in place?
- ? what courses and extracurricular activities are available?
- ? what is new, or being changed at the school and why?

Meet the Teacher Night

The first formal introduction to parents will usually be in the form of some sort of “Meet the Teacher” activity. This may have different names, but usually it is a time to introduce yourself and your curriculum.

- ***About Parents***– You will want to talk to colleagues to find out what parents expect from this session. You should also seek information regarding the demography of the parent population. Ask parents to identify two or three concerns before they attend the function. Treat parents as partners in the learning process.



- ***About You*** – As a first-year teacher, many parents will be coming to “check you out.” Be prepared to instill confidence regarding your instructional abilities. Talk about your relevant experiences (camp counsellor, club sponsor, etc.). Let your enthusiasm show!
- ***All About Your Classroom*** – You might consider discussing the following: rules and operating procedures, the subject(s) and goals of the curriculum, expectations for students, instructional materials.
- ***Your Presentation*** – You will want to be well prepared for this session. Some of the following techniques may be helpful:
 - use appropriate media and handouts;
 - outline what you are going to address (watch your timing to be sure you hit all relevant points)
 - present a sample lesson;
 - have handouts of curriculum, grading procedures, homework criteria, etc.
- ***Working Together*** – This is a good opportunity for you to identify how home and school can work together. Inform parents of when, where and how you can be reached and discuss how parents can best support their child’s learning out of school.
- ***Cautionary Notes*** – Don’t let one parent monopolize the discussion or sidetrack you; have a conference sign-up sheet available; don’t get caught in a student conference situation—this is not the intent of the session. Have key responses ready so you’re not caught off-guard: for example, *“Can we set an appointment to give this the time it merits?”*

Once you have opened the doors of communication with parents, you are on the road to developing a trusting relationship. There are several ongoing means of communication such as phone calls, newsletters, progress reports, notes, “happy-grams”, classroom meetings, mini-surveys, conferences (informal and formal), email and the use of a Web page.



Progress Reports—Interview Tips

1. *Before the Conference*

The best communication climate is a comfortable one; if you are relaxed, parents usually will relax, too. There are many communication techniques that will lead to a successful conference.

- ensure parents are aware of any major areas of difficulty before the conference
- be well prepared; collect dated samples of student work completed throughout the term to show improvement or decline in quality
- compile appropriate material to substantiate your evaluation
- check with colleagues for helpful tips regarding parent conferences
- prepare a conference form for record keeping to keep the discussion focused and to be an aid for future conferences
- successful conferences deal with only a few issues because of time constraints; ensure you know what points you want to cover
- send out an interview confirmation sheet
- before your first meeting with parents, review the academic history of the student
- if the students are not included in the conference, ensure they are aware of what will be discussed
- arrange informal seating around a table with the student work on display
- ensure privacy
- have appointments posted outside the door and keep to the schedule; parents needing additional conference time should be invited to come at a later date
- have chairs and an activity outside the classroom to make the wait a little less tedious

2. *During the Conference*

- greet the parents at the door
- introduce yourself with a friendly voice, but keep opening comments to a minimum to allow more discussion time
- no matter how many problems a student has, first find some positive things to report
- maintain the focus and keep the discussion on track
- be clear and concise in your comments; be an attentive listener
- keep the parents involved by encouraging them to share pertinent information with you
- with the parents' help, develop some goals for the rest of the year
- aim to stay within time limits
- if more time is needed, arrange for a follow-up meeting.



3. *Concluding the Conference*

- summarize the points covered and add these to your files
- highlight the conclusions and the agreed-upon actions
- if needed, set another date for an interview
- check that the parents have a clear understanding of what was discussed
- end as you began—on a positive note
- thank the parents and walk them to the door.

4. *Follow-up*

- if you or a parent have agreed to a specific strategy, program, etc.—it is advisable to send a written summary of what has been agreed to within a week of the conference
- keep your principal informed of concerns that have been raised
- keep written notes for future reference.

Sample

Progress Report Interview Format

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - state purpose of the conference - share something positive about the child - update on past concerns, if necessary. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Achievement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discuss academic strengths/weaknesses - present documentation - obtain parental input and reaction to information - develop one academic goal. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Interaction & Behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discuss social strengths/weaknesses and behaviour - present specific examples - obtain parent input and reaction - develop a behaviour/social goal, if necessary. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review goals - plan for follow-up - close on a positive note. |



Problem Solving Interview

There will be times when you will need to meet with parents or guardians to discuss ongoing problems or issues with students.

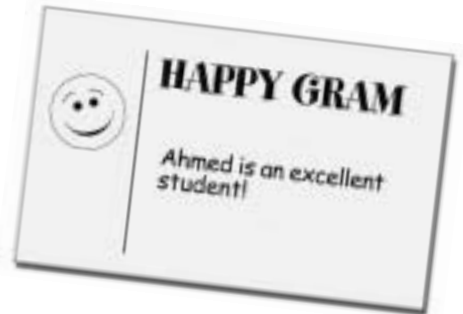
Sample

Problem-Solving Interview Format

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Introduction | - state purpose or concern
- update the situation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Description of the Problem | - describe the problem, present documentation
- discuss what has been done
- obtain parent input and reaction to problem. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Problem Solving | - suggest possible solution(s)
- discuss different alternatives
- obtain parent input and suggestions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Action Planning | - develop an action plan for improvement
- identify specific actions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Closure | - plan for follow-up
- close on a positive note. |

Tips for Communicating Regularly With Parents

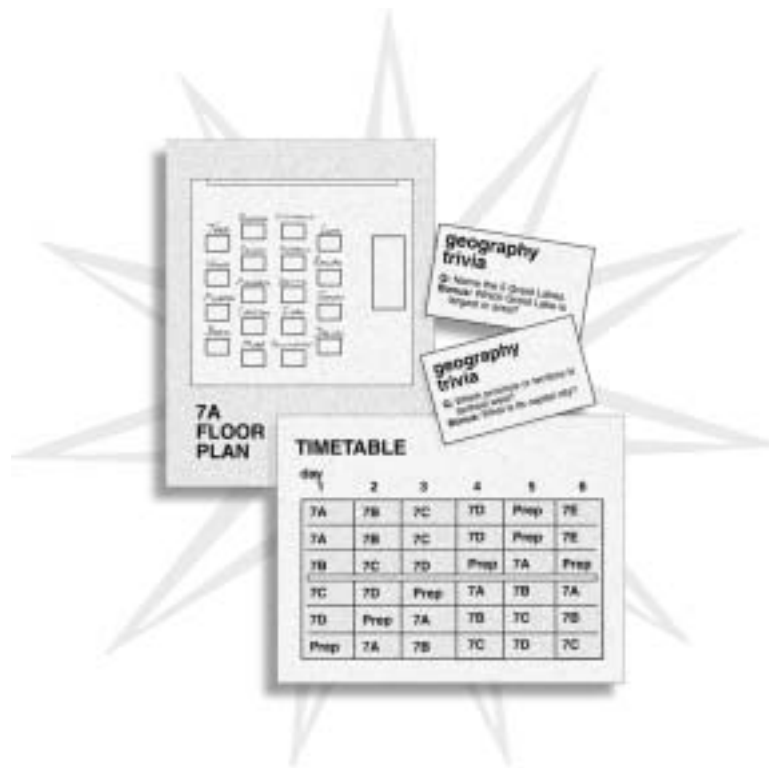
- phone calls about good things that the child has accomplished
- newsletters containing student work
- keep file cards for each child noting the positive things that have happened; use for sending home happy grams
- think of Education Week as an opportunity to communicate with parents
- when you discuss a problem with parents, be truthful, sincere and objective—they will respect your integrity
- find ways to get parents inside the school—let parents learn about their child’s program from you.



Tips for Phoning a Parent re a Student Concern

- begin with a statement of concern
- describe the behaviour in specific terms
- describe the steps you have taken
- seek input from the parent
- present your solution to the problem
- express confidence that together you can address the problem
- set a date for follow-up contact.





Preparing for Substitutes

Being prepared for times you may be absent will benefit not only the substitute teacher but also your students and, ultimately, you. Keep in your desk a kit of basic information a substitute may need.



Being prepared . . . even when you are not there

There will be occasions when you will need to be absent from school. You should check with your principal as to the proper protocol for teacher absence. If the absence is planned, i.e. you will be away for a scheduled meeting or a professional development day, then the principal will know well in advance and be able to call in a substitute teacher. However, if the absence is unplanned, i.e. illness or some other unforeseen circumstance, there should be a system in place whereby you notify the school and a substitute is called for you. In this event you will need to have a contingency plan for your classes for that day. It is your responsibility to ensure that a quality education program continues in your absence. Advance planning on your part will help to maintain a consistency of routine and will, in the long run, make it easier for you upon your return.

Substitute Information File

It is recommended that you prepare some basic information for the substitute teacher. This should be in a folder in an easily accessible place, either in your desk or in the main office. Basic information might include:

- ✍ The names of reliable students who could be of help.
- ✍ Daily and weekly timetable, indicating times.
- ✍ Seating plan(s).
- ✍ Map of the school, including key locations and fire exits.
- ✍ Supervision schedule and guidelines.
- ✍ Class list with phone numbers.
- ✍ Notes on procedures and routines such as taking attendance.
- ✍ Homework assignments and policy.
- ✍ Class rules, expectations and responsibilities.
- ✍ Information about students with special behaviour/health needs.
- ✍ Emergency lessons for each class that can be used by a substitute teacher who may not be specialized in your content area.

See Appendix C for sample forms to assist you in putting this information together.



Appendices





The
Nova Scotia
Teachers Union

HANDBOOK *for* BEGINNING TEACHERS

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Suggestions for recognizing student work and good behaviour







Congratulatory awards: Reward excellent performance and reinforce good behaviour with a personalized recognition.



Happy Holidays

From:

**Our
School
Here**

To:

PLACE
POSTAGE
HERE

Holiday Postcard

Clip art or student artwork can provide the face of the postcard. Adapt this concept for different events throughout the school year.

Your School Gold Card

CONGRATULATIONS!

You've been recognized for your thoughtful action. Deposit this card in the Gold Box in the office.

Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____ Teacher: _____

Gold Card

Recognizes thoughtful actions on the part of students. A draw from the Gold Box awards a prize.


Homework Pass

Allows a student to "skip" an assignment.

**Homework
Pass**

**YOU MAY TAKE A NIGHT OFF!
TURN THIS PASS IN FOR ONE
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT.**

1 night without
homework! Yippee!



STUDENT

TEACHER

DATE





APPENDIX **B**

*Forms for
contacting
parents*



Dear Parent or Guardian:

This note is to inform you that _____ did not have his/her
_____ homework done on _____ .

I am sending this note home for you to sign and return with your child tomorrow so that we can work together to help your child have a successful year.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours truly,

Date:

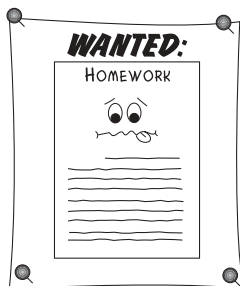
MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Dear Parent,

_____ needs to complete the following assignments:

The work is due by _____

Your help and support are greatly appreciated.



Sincerely,

teacher signature

parent signature

Please sign and return.

Missing Homework Notice:

It may expedite your response to have a form prepared ahead of time.

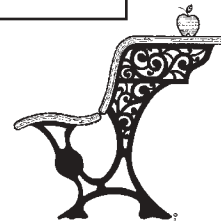


PROGRESS UPDATE FORM

name: _____ date: _____

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Speaks French				
Follows directions				
Completes homework				

Parents—Please sign and return to:

Teacher name:
School:**Fantastic Friday Phone Calls!!**

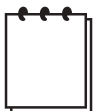
Name: _____

Class: _____ Phone: _____



Teacher: _____

Reason: _____



Response from parents: _____

This form is submitted to the principal, who makes the phone call for the teacher.



Your School

Student Positive Response Form

Student _____ Class _____
Date _____ Teacher _____

Teacher comments about the student

Administration Action







APPENDIX **C**

*Substitute
Information
File*



SUBSTITUTE INFORMATION FILE

The file should contain the following:

- Map of the school
- Emergency evacuation procedures
- Scheduling information
- Class list
- Seating plan (where applicable)
- Important classroom information
- Classroom routines
- Substitute Report to Teacher
- Emergency Lessons



1. **School Map** (*copy and affix, or sketch if one is not available*)

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Ask your administrator for a copy if your classroom doesn't have a one. Be sure to note location of fire exits, fire pulls and fire extinguishers; stairwells; first aid kits; and sprinklers.



2. **Scheduling Information**

School Bells / Class Times:

Duty Day / Time / Responsibilities

M

T

W

Th

F

Special Committees, etc.



3. **Class List**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
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31. _____
32. _____
33. _____
34. _____
35. _____



IMPORTANT CLASSROOM INFORMATION

1. *Teachers who will assist you:*

2. *Students who will assist you:*

3. *Classroom rules / discipline procedures:*

4. *Students with health / behaviour concerns, and how to address them:*

5. *Pets and plants:*

6. *Additional notes:*



CLASSROOM ROUTINES

Entering the classroom: _____

Signal for getting student attention is: _____

Attendance taking: _____

Collecting completed assignments: _____

Correspondence from home: _____

Tardiness: _____

Failure to bring materials / homework: _____

Distributing books, supplies: _____

Pencil sharpener: _____

Drinking fountain / bathroom: _____

Library: _____

Recess / lunch: _____

Free time activities: _____

Dismissal: _____

Additional notes: _____

Additional useful information: _____



SUBSTITUTE REPORT TO TEACHER

Substitute's name _____

Phone number _____ Date _____

In for _____

At _____ Grade _____

It was a _____ day.

Teacher plan was completed with the exception of

All marking was completed with the exception of

Observations re student behaviour

Observations re student completion of assignments

Additional Comments



EMERGENCY LESSONS

Educational Poetry

Function:

Listening, Oral Reading, Choral Reading, Discussion, Memory Gem, Vocabulary Development

Materials:

- *Individual copies of overheads or charts*
- *Poetry from books, magazines, newspapers.*

Instructional Options:

Listening:Teacher reads or recites and children listen for purpose.

Oral Reading:.....Pupils take turns reading to a partner.

Choral Reading:Teacher reads, class reads,

Discussion:Discuss what is meant, interesting parts, feelings.

Memory Gem:Choral reading, cover or erase some words, reread, continue removing parts until the poem is memorized.

Vocabulary Development:Choose interesting words, phrases, rhyming words, alliteration, etc.

Personal Items

Educational Function:

Motivation, Discussion, Creative Writing, Twenty Questions

Materials:

Something of interest: music box, special hat, stamp collection, etc.

Instructional Options:

Discussion:In a circle (if possible) take turns telling something they have learned, something they value.'

Creative Writing:Illustrate stories about the item that you have shown. Oral reading to partners and the class. List interesting words.

Twenty Questions:.....Before presenting your item, pupils ask you up to twenty yes/no questions to try and guess what the item is. After you present the item, pupils take turns as classmates try to guess their valued item.



Books, Short Stories, Myths & Legends

Educational Function:

Listening, Speaking, Vocabulary Development, Creative Thinking, Role Playing, Interviewing, Drama

Materials:

Books, short stories, myths, legends

Instructional Options:

Listening:Present five key words that illustrate story line. Pupils listen to see how these words are used in the story.

Speaking:Discuss the story keeping the five key words in mind. Pair up the students to retell the story using the key words as a guide. (One partner begins telling the story, signals for the second to take over, etc.).

Vocabulary Development: As the partners are retelling the story, walk around and listen for interesting words being used. Discuss these after giving students minimum time to retell the story. Add a few of your own.

Creative Thinking:Introduce the idea of a new ending. Again have pairs of students tell the story, using the new ending and attempting to use the new vocabulary.

Role Playing:Partners make conversation between characters in the story.

Interviewing:(Use a pen/pencil as a "microphone"). Interview a character from the story. (Partners again – switch roles on signal.)

Drama:Tableaux (Freeze Frames): Depict scenes using tableau scenes. Stress body language, eye control, facial expression.

Mime:Pupils can act out scenes as story is told/read.

Geography:Find the place mentioned, design an imaginary map.

Visual Arts:Plasticine scenes, posters depicting the moral, puppet making and subsequent conversations, story line cartoons.

Creative Writing:Speech balloons for the above cartoons (use quotation marks for direct speech), group chart stories for plot, character sketches, rebus stories, write a newscaster's report, convert the story to play format.

Math:Have pupils make up word problems using the characters and situations from the story, using currently studied math operations to test others.



Tongue Twisters*/Rap Songs

Educational Function:

Speaking, Creative Writing, Divergent Thinking/Art.

Materials:

Examples of tongue twisters and rap songs

Instructional Options:

Speaking:Practice orally. Take turns or do together.

Creative Writing:Pupils make up their own stories using alliteration.

Divergent Thinking

& Visual Arts:Design posters that include the pupils' tongue twisters and matching picture.

****Tongue Twisters***

1. *Cross crossings cautiously.*
2. *Crickets cry crackily.*
3. *A noisy noise annoys an oyster.*
4. *Big backed bumblebees buzz.*
5. *Four fat frogs fried fritters for food.*
6. *Silent slugs slither.*
7. *Six slippery seals sell sleds.*
8. *Sixty-six sickly sailors.*
9. *Bedbugs bleed blue blood.*
10. *Remember really rural roads?*
11. *Some shun sunshine.*
12. *Which is the witch that wished the wicked wish?*
13. *Round and round the rugged rock the ragged rascal ran.*
14. *She sells sea shells down by the seashore.*
15. *Red leather, yellow leather, red leather, yellow leather, red leather, yellow leather.*
16. *Does this small shop stock short socks, sir?*
17. *I saw him shave a cedar shingle thin.*
18. *Three-sixths is the same as six-twelfths.*
19. *Instead of "three-fifths" she said "thirty-thousandths".*
20. *Thread the tougher twine through the three tree twigs.*
21. *Which switch did you whip the witch with?*
22. *The last night at an inn was the greatest test.*
23. *Our old Austrian uncle arrived with aching ankles.*
24. *I don't know whether he said baths, mouths, and wreaths or bands, mounds, and breathes.*
25. *Why would leather be better to lather the latter ladder with?*



“Slider”

You’ve invented a new sport called “Slider”

- a. *Explain how the game is played.*
- b. *Make a list of rules to play the game correctly.*

To bring the sport to public attention:

- Design:*
- a poster
 - a magazine ad
 - a t-shirt
 - a bumper sticker

Write: a 30 second radio ad

The above lesson provides a clear example of a relatively portable experience that invites students’ involvement in a legitimate learning activity and simultaneously creates time for the teacher to plan subsequent learning activities.

Sponge Activities

- *Do a stretching or a resting activity*
- *Carry an interesting object and let students ask twenty questions.*
- *Use oral story problems in math.*
- *Read about a scientific discovery from a publication such as Owl or Time magazine.*
- *Play a new song and have students reflect on its meaning.*
- *Play educational charades.*
- *Play-act work roles and have teams guess the roles.*
- *Read a short story.*
- *Use a list of tongue-twisters. (See sample under Emergency Lessons)*
- *Sing action songs.*
- *Ask students where they have travelled (use the globe for reference).*
- *Do word searches or crosswords.*





Welcome to Counselling Services

Counselling Services works to strengthen and support the quality of personal and professional life for teachers, their partners and dependents throughout all school districts in Nova Scotia.

Counselling Services provides short-term assistance to teachers. Those requiring longer term intervention are, after an initial assessment, assisted by referral to an appropriate community-based professional. Workshops for school staffs are offered, as requested, on issues such as managing workplace stress, balancing home and career, and conflict management.

Appointments, at a mutually acceptable time and place, are required for all counselling sessions. To arrange an appointment, please call Counselling Services between 8:30 - 4:30 at the NSTU 477-5621 or 1-800-565-6788 (toll free).

No User Fees, Voluntary and Confidential

NSTU provides these services to its members at no additional charge.

All counselling requires the consent and participation of the client regardless of the referring circumstances. All information given by you to Counselling Services will be treated confidentially. Any release of information requires the signed consent of all parties involved who are over the age of twelve. Exceptions to this apply if subpoenaed by the Court or required under legislation.

NSTU Provides Quality Counselling Services

Therapists with Counselling Services are highly qualified, registered Master of Social Work professionals, recognized for their excellence as clinical therapists and workshop leaders.

If you have a suggestion, special request or difficulty with any aspect of your counselling, please discuss this with your therapist.

Sincerely,

Fran Reddy Chisholm, M.S.W., R.S.W.
Therapist

Peter Mullally, M.S.W., R.S.W.
Therapist





APPENDIX E — *Nova Scotia Teachers Credit Union Services*

The **Nova Scotia Teachers Credit Union Ltd.** offers the following
financial planning services to its membership:

budgeting

a basic overview of budgeting will include such topics as

- a) Establishing goals — long term (over 5 years)
- medium term (1–3 years)
- short term (less than 1 year)

estate planning

a basic overview of estate planning will include such topics as

- a) Wills
- b) Beneficiaries
- c) Tax Implications

RRSPs

a basic overview of RRSPs will include such topics as

- a) Planning for Your Retirement
- b) Budgets
- c) Risk and Reward
- d) Tax Implications
- e) RRIFs

investing

a basic overview for investing will include such topics as

- a) Stock Exchanges
- b) Investment Objectives
- c) Tax Implications
- d) Budgets

insurance

a basic overview for insurance will include such topics as

- a) Salary Continuation
- b) Ensuring Salary



Nova Scotia Teachers
 Credit Union Limited
 3106 Joseph Howe Drive
 Halifax, Nova Scotia
 B3L 4L7
 Local: 902-477-5664
 Toll-free: 1-800-565-3103
 Fax: 902-477-4108
 Email:
 msr@nstcu.ca
 Web site:
 www.nsteacherscu.com





APPENDIX F — *Nova Scotia Learning Interchange*



<http://ali.apple.com/nsli/>

The **Nova Scotia Learning Interchange** is a web-based professional development site designed and managed in partnership with Mount Saint Vincent University, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and the Department of Education. The NSLI is designed to assist teachers with

- ▶▶ professional development information
- ▶▶ over 40,000 teacher selected resource links (searchable by topic)
- ▶▶ over 2,000 Units Of Practice (UOP) (teacher designed & approved)
- ▶▶ events of the day
- ▶▶ discussion forums

Help is only a click away!

An Apple Learning Interchange Affiliate





APPENDIX G — *NSTU Web Site & Email Addresses*

for up-to-date information about :

NSTU programs and services • NSTU locals • NSTU special associations
The Teacher • *Aviso* • NSTU policy • Public Education Program issues
 curriculum issues • Program Development Assistance Fund
 Canadian Teachers' Federation • other provincial teacher organizations
 Education International

FIND IT ON THE NSTU WEB SITE:

<http://www.nstu.ca>



Email addresses for the Nova Scotia Teachers Union:

accounts@nstu.ca

aviso@nstu.ca

businessoffice@nstu.ca

centraloffice@nstu.ca

contractinfo@nstu.ca

counselling@nstu.ca

eip@nstu.ca

insurance@nstu.ca

library@nstu.ca

nstu@nstu.ca

pdaf@nstu.ca

pension@nstu.ca

pr@nstu.ca

president@nstu.ca

resolutions@nstu.ca

rta@nstu.ca

sheonoroil@nstu.ca

specassoc@nstu.ca

theteacher@nstu.ca

webmaster@nstu.ca

For general inquiries, or when you are not certain which department is most appropriate to respond to your inquiry, use the general email address:

« *nstu@nstu.ca* »





APPENDIX **H**

Code of Ethics



Code of Ethics

NOVA SCOTIA TEACHERS UNION

This Code of Ethics is a guide to teachers in maintaining, at all times, the high traditions of their profession.

I. Teacher and Pupil

- (a) The teacher regards as confidential, and does not divulge other than through professional channels any information of a personal or domestic nature, concerning either pupils or home, obtained through the course of his/her professional duties.
- (b) The teacher should be just and impartial in all relationships with pupils.
- (c) The teacher should assume responsibility for the safety and welfare of his/her pupils, especially under conditions of emergency.
- (d) The teacher should avoid giving offence to the religious and political beliefs and moral scruples of his/her pupils and/or their parents.
- (e) The teacher should be as objective as possible in dealing with controversial matters arising out of the curriculum subjects, whether scientific or political, religious or racial.

II. Teacher and Teacher

- (a) The teacher should not make defamatory, disparaging, condescending, embarrassing, or offensive comments concerning another teacher.
- (b) The teacher shall not make derogatory remarks about the professional competence of another teacher.
- (c) The teacher shall not accept the position of another teacher who has been dismissed unjustly.
- (d) The teacher shall not accept a position arising out of the unsettled dispute between a teacher, or teachers, and local authorities.
- (e) The teacher shall not sexually harass another teacher. Sexual harassment shall mean any unsolicited and unwanted sexual comments, suggestions or physical contact directed to a specific teacher which that teacher finds objectionable or offensive and which causes the teacher discomfort on the job. The accused teacher must be made aware of the nature of the objection prior to action being taken.

III. Teacher and Internal Administration

- (a) The teacher should observe a reasonable and proper loyalty to internal administration of the school.
- (b) The teacher responsible for internal administration should be loyal, fair, and just to the members of the staff.
- (c) The teacher responsible for internal administration should not of his/her own initiative, make any detrimental report, oral or written, on a teacher's efficiency without first discussing the matter with the teacher.



IV. *Teacher and External Administration*

- (a) The teacher should adhere to a contract until the contract has been terminated by mutual consent, or the contract has otherwise been legally terminated. A verbal agreement is a contract.
- (b) The teacher should not accept a salary below that which he/she would receive according to the scale negotiated between the NSTU and the school board.
- (c) The teacher should not accept a salary above that which he/she would receive according to the scale negotiated between the NSTU and the school board, without notifying the Local of the NSTU which is concerned.

V. *Teacher and Professional Organization*

- (a) The teacher should be a member of and participate in the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.
- (b) The teacher who in his/her professional capacity is a member of a committee, board, or authority dealing with matters affecting the educational program of Nova Scotia as a whole should be elected, appointed, or approved by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.
- (c) The teacher, or group of teachers, should not take any individual action in matters which should be dealt with by his/her Local or by the NSTU.
- (d) The Local should not take any individual action in matters where the assistance of the NSTU has been sought, or in matters requiring the authorization of the NSTU.

VI. *Teacher and Profession*

- (a) The teacher should maintain his/her efficiency by study, by travel or by other means which will keep him/her abreast of the trends in education and the world in which we live.
- (b) The teacher should engage in no gainful employment, outside of his/her contract, where the employment affects adversely his/her professional status, or impairs his/her standing with students, associates, and the community.
- (c) The teacher should not accept remuneration for tutoring his/her pupils except under unusual circumstances and with the approval of his/her supervisor or principal.

VII. *Teacher and Community*

- (a) The teacher should so conduct himself/herself in his/her private life that no dishonour may befall him/her or through him/her, his/her profession.





APPENDIX I — *Useful Resources*

USEFUL RESOURCES

Education Media Library

The Media Library at Learning Resources & Technology offers Nova Scotia educators free access to thousands of resources in video, audio and photographic formats. Teachers are welcome to book time in our preview room for personal evaluation of classroom resources. For more information, go to <http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca/medlib/index.html>.

Card Games

Every teacher has, at one point or another, been frustrated by the illicit card game in progress at the back of the room. You don't have to fight against the appeal of a deck of cards – put it to use in a creative and educationally acceptable fashion.

A number of books are available on educational card games. One of the best is *Reading, Writing and Rummy* by Margie Golick (Pembroke Publishers Ltd., Markham Ontario). Golick shows how to use a deck of cards as an educational tool through games that develop memory, number skills, visual/spatial concepts, and problem solving.

Creativity and Problem Solving

Students can benefit from problem solving activities which act as a break from subject-oriented lessons and activities. A number of “mental exercises and warm-ups,” such as brainstorming and Synectics, can act as sponge activities.

Two excellent source books are Edward DeBono's *Lateral Thinking* (Penguin Books, 1985) and Sydney Parnes' *Guide to Creative Activities* (Wiley 1977). *Teaching Creativity Through Metaphor*, by Donald and Judith Sanders (Longmans, 1984), is another book that teachers have found useful.

Memory enhancement skills are examined in *Improve Your Memory Skills*, by Francis Belleza (Prentice-Hall, 1982). This book includes a number of classroom activities that can help students remember names, faces and details. Popular techniques such as mnemonics are described.

Interpreting Dreams

Most students love to talk about their dreams. The sub can have some fun with a class by using the Dictionary of Dreams: 10,000 Dreams Interpreted, by Gustavus Hindman Miller (Prentice-Hall, 1984). The kids will really be impressed when you provide an explanation of a dream sequence in which someone is being chased by a giant pizza!



Trivia Games

The huge popularity of Trivial Pursuit® and similar games can be exploited easily in the classroom. Homemade trivia games can liven up Friday afternoons and lessen the agony of reviewing course content.

Mental Gymnastics for Trivia Freaks and Puzzle Nuts, by noted Canadian educator Ken Weber (Methuen Publications, 1984), provides a number of enjoyable trivia games and word puzzles.

It can also be a jumping-off point for developing your own games and activities.

Some excellent ideas and strategies that work especially well with general level students are also provided by Ken Weber in *Yes, They Can* (Methuen, 1974) and *The Teacher Is the Key* (Methuen 1982).

Using Newspapers and Magazine Articles

An interesting article from the morning's newspaper can be put to good use in the classroom. So can a short article from a magazine. Students can analyse, dissent, and criticize the article. They can debate a controversial topic raised by the article. They can write their own letter to the editor in reply to an article.

Books

- Canter, Lee and Marlene, Succeeding with Difficult Students, New Strategies for Reaching Your Most Challenging Students, Lee Canter & Associates, Santa Monica, CA, 1993.
- Canter, Lee and Marlene, Assertive Discipline, Positive Behavior Management for Today's Classroom, Lee Canter & Associates, Santa Monica, CA, 1992.
- Evans, Sandra M, M.S., Ed., Survive & Thrive in Teaching! A Handbook of Everything to do from Day One!, Teachers' Little Secrets, Virginia Beach, VA July, 1995.
- Evans, Sandra M., M.S. Ed., Teachers' Little Secrets . . . Essentials for Success and Happiness in Teaching, Teachers' Little Secrets, Virginia Beach, VA, 1995.
- Evans, Sandra, M.S., Ed., Professional Portfolios for New and Aspiring Teachers, Teachers' Little Secrets, Virginia Beach, VA., 1997.
- Johnny, Jivin', Jivin' Johnny's Classroom Teacher's Emergency Lesson Plans, Johnny Press, Ontario, Canada, 2000.
- Wong, Harry K. & Rosemary Tripi, The First Days of School, How to Be An Effective Teacher, Harry K. Wong Publications, Sunnyvale, CA, 1991.







Nova Scotia Teachers Union

1-800-565-NSTU • nstu@nstu.ca
<http://www.nstu.ca>

3106 Dutch Village Road, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7
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