

Get to Know Your Students



ACTIVE LEARNING
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SINGLE LESSON – Customizable Templates

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

The first step to creating a positive classroom culture is forming positive student teacher relationships. And the first step to creating positive student teacher relationships is to make a plan to know your students as a group of diverse learners: people with different needs, backgrounds, or other considerations that affect how they learn and experience school.

Learning about your students will inform your lesson planning and your classroom routines. While there are many ways to do this, this resource includes four examples of back to school inventories that can get that process started from the first day of school.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

First, make a copy of this document and review each of the templates:

- [Introduction Letter](#)
- [Student Survey](#)
- [Index Card Reference Book](#)
- [Family Questionnaire](#)

Tailor these examples to your subject area, grade, and school context. Once you collect this information, make sure you have a plan to use what you learn as a reference throughout the year. Keep the following in mind:

- Compile information by class and student in a **private**, but easy for you to access, location.
- Take time to add notes to what you collect: a summary of important points, additional important information like accommodations from 504s or IEPs, reminders about allergies, etc.
- If students are writing longer form introductions, consider pulling out 1-2 significant points from their work and adding them to an extra column in a roster with other administrative information.
- Safeguard what you learn; students might share information with you that they don't want to discuss aloud in front of classmates or even other teachers.

<< TEMPLATE >>

INTRODUCTION LETTER ASSIGNMENT

DIRECTIONS

On a separate piece of paper, please type or very neatly hand write a short letter of introduction telling me why you ROCK! In other words, tell me why you are a wonderful person to know. What is great about you? You may be as candid as you like! In addition, you might include...

- Your interests/talents/skills/hobbies
- Your responsibilities outside school (jobs, taking care of family, etc.)
- How you work best as a student: in class & at home
- How you like to learn
- What makes it hard for you to learn
- How you would describe your personality
- How you would like to be treated
- How to get along best with you
- What you like to write
- What you like to read
- Your ideas about what our class should be like this year
- Your goals for this year
- Anything at all you want me to know about you

Strengths	Success Criteria	Suggestions for Improvement
	Share I shared at least ten significant details that help you understand why I rock and tell you important things you should know about me.	
	Plan I took time to organize my thoughts and explain my point of view in a way that makes it possible for you to follow along easily. I turned my letter in on time so that you could learn about me at the beginning of the school year.	
	Communicate I revised my letter to ensure that my writing was clear and understandable. I edited my work to make sure it was free of major errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics.	

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STUDENT SURVEY

DIRECTIONS:

Answer the following questions candidly and thoughtfully.

1. In one word, describe school.
2. Write one word that describes you as a person.
3. Who was the best teacher you ever had? Why?
4. If you could have lunch with a famous person, who would it be? Why?
5. What grade do you expect to earn in this class? What kind of grades did you get in [pre-requisite course] last year?
6. What are your favorite things to do when you're not in school?
7. Write down three things you did not understand in [subject area] class last year:

8. What extracurricular activities (sports, theater, band, student council, etc) do you want to participate in this year?

9. Do you have a job or other responsibilities outside of school?

11. What is one thing you would really like to know about me?

12. What is the most important thing I need to do as a teacher to help you succeed in our class?

13. If you had to choose right now, what do you want to do after you graduate from high school?

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INDEX CARD REFERENCE BOOK

DIRECTIONS:

Fill out the front and back of your index card with the following information.

Front:

You: First name, Last name	Nickname
Parent/Guardian Contact	
Name	
Email address	
Home phone	Work phone
Languages they speak	
★ Highlight the best way to get in touch with them.	
Second Parent/Guardian Contact	
Name	
Email address	
Home phone	Work phone
Languages they speak	
★ Highlight the best way to get in touch with them.	

Back:

Any medical information (allergies, specific conditions etc.)?
What should I know about how to help you learn best?
Do you have a <u>computer</u> and internet at home?
Tell me at least two things that make you awesome!

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FAMILY QUESTIONNAIRE: TELL ME ABOUT YOUR TEEN

Parents/guardians, please share any information that you think will help me understand your teen and how they learn best.

1. What is the most important thing I should know about your teen?

2. What is your teen passionate about?

3. What would you love for them to get better at?

4. From your perspective, how do they feel about high school?

5. Based on what you've seen, how do they learn best?

6. Based on what you've seen, what gets in the way of them learning?

7. What is the best way to motivate your teen?

8. What should I know about your family?

9. What does a typical afternoon and evening after school look like for your teen?

10. Who else lives with you and your teen (siblings, pets etc.?)?

11. What is your preferred method of communication (email, phone call, meeting, note...)?

12. Is there anything else you would like to tell me that will help me make this a successful year?

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