



# Back To School

**RESOURCE COLLECTION**

# 3 THINGS

EVERY TEACHER  
NEEDS TO DO ON THE

## First Day of School

TO SET THE TONE FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR

1

**Learn student's names and pronunciations.**

Excerpt from our  
Relationships First course

2

**Teach expectations for entering the room at the beginning of the day and sitting in the gathering area.**

Excerpt from our  
Daily Routines course

3

**Read aloud from the perfect first day book.**

We hope the resources in this book make your first few days of school amazing.

We truly believe that relationships come before everything else. If we set the tone with learning how they want us to say their names, set clear expectations, and read a great book, nothing can hold us back from having the best year ever!

Continue to the next page for actionable ideas for item #1.

# 1

## Learn student's names and pronunciations.

Print the next page to help you with this one!

Then try one of these activities so they stick:

### *Activity 1*

Have each child make a name table tent and decorate it! Collect them and redistribute them daily to help you memorize them.

### *Activity 2*

Take a photo of each child at open house or on the first day. Add their name to the photo so you can review it periodically to help you put the face with the name.

### *Activity 3*

Have students introduce themselves with an adjective that begins with the same letter as their name, also tie an action to it! For example: "Sporty Stella" + [action: pretend you're dribbling a basketball].

“A person's name is to him or her the sweetest and most important sound in any language.”

— DALE CARNEGIE

*Student Name*

*Pronunciation*

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## 2

### Teach expectations for entering the room at the beginning of the day and sitting in the gathering area.

On the next few pages, you'll find pre-written lessons to teach these two daily routines. These lessons use a system we developed for teaching students how to be successful in any routine while at school.

There are three parts to each lesson:

- **The 10 Steps to Teaching and Learning Independence** as it relates to the routine. This is a high-level view of what we're teaching during the routine lesson. We use these steps to teach and practice the expectations for all our daily routines such as lining up, walking in the hall, choosing a good-fit book, etc.
- **Sample I-Chart** to introduce and review the behaviors of the routine. You'll create this visual aid on chart paper together with your class.
- **Routine Lesson** containing language of what it might sound like to teach the routine to your class. We've pointed out the correlating 10 Step in the right sidebar so you can see how each step is integrated into the lesson.



# Our Morning Routine

## 10 STEPS TO TEACHING AND LEARNING INDEPENDENCE

- 1 Identify what is to be taught: **Our Morning Routine**
- 2 Set a purpose: Create a sense of urgency
  - Smooth, purposeful start to the day
- 3 Identify the behaviors of **Our Morning Routine** on I-chart
- 4 Model most-desirable behaviors
- 5 Model least-desirable, then most-desirable behaviors (same student)
- 6 Teacher places students around the room
- 7 Practice and build stamina
- 8 Stay out of the way
- 9 Use a quiet signal—come back to group
- 10 Group check-in: “How did it go?”

## SAMPLE I-CHART

Our Morning Routine	
Independent	
Students	Teacher
Walk quietly into the room	Greet students
Greet others with a quiet voice	Work with students
Hang up your coat.	
Hang up your backpack	
Sign in for attendance	
Report on lunch <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ordering</li><li>- Brought</li></ul>	
Get your book or book box	
Choose a location	
Sit down	
Read quietly	

Smooth,  
purposeful  
start to the day

Write the purpose  
of the routine here

Customize these  
behaviors to fit  
your morning  
routine.

**OBSERVE AND PLAN**

Students learn how to start their morning with the morning routine, so that each student has a smooth, purposeful start to the day.

**ENGAGE AND RELATE**

“ Class, we are going to learn how to enter our room when you come to school each morning. We learn this so you know how to have a successful start to each day.

← Steps 1, 2

**IDENTIFY TEACHING POINT**

“ Each morning we will all arrive at school by car, by bus, or by walking, and we’ll arrive at many different times. When you know how to enter the room, you are learning how to have a smooth, purposeful start to your day.

**SUCCESS CRITERIA**

“ You will know you are successful when you can independently enter the room and get started right away.

**TEACH**

“ Today I am going to teach you our morning routine. Here is the routine: (Write each behavior on the I-chart as they are announced and discussed.)

← Step 3

- Walk quietly into the room.
- Greet others with a quiet voice.
- Hang up your coat.
- Hang up your backpack.
- Sign in for attendance.
- Report on lunch.
  - Ordering
  - Brought
- Get your book or book box.
- Choose a location.
- Sit down.
- Read quietly.

Select students to model entering the room and following the morning routine. When they finish modeling, read each of the behaviors on the I-chart and ask the class if the student did each behavior. For example,

← Step 4

“ Did \_\_\_\_\_ walk quietly into the room? and so on. Finally, ask, Did each student have a smooth, purposeful start to the day?

Have students model the morning routine incorrectly and then correctly. End each practice time reviewing the behaviors and asking the question,

← Step 5

“ If this is how we do our morning routine, will each student have a smooth, purposeful start to the day?

**PRACTICE AND MONITOR**

“ Now we all get to show what it will look like and sound like when we enter the room and do our morning routine. You will practice, and when you hear the quiet signal, please stop and come to the carpet.

← Step 6

We place students in an appropriate space to begin practicing this routine. Students practice entering the room and doing the morning routine. When you make the quiet signal (we use a wind chime), students come to the carpet.

← Steps 7, 8, 9




## INSTRUCTIONAL PIVOT

Think: Did my instruction work? Yes / No

### REVIEW AND WHAT'S NEXT

“ Let's check in to see how each of us did. This check-in is only for you and will help you decide which behaviors you are doing well and which will be your goal for the next time we do our morning routine. Please put your hand in front of your chest to indicate how proficient you were in practicing that behavior. You will hold up

← Step 10

-  one finger if you found it hard to be independent with that behavior but you are going to work on it,
-  two fingers if you feel you did okay at being independent with that behavior but you think you can do better, or
-  three fingers if you were very independent with that behavior.

Rate yourself as I read each of the behaviors on the I-chart.

Based on how you checked in, what is your goal for the next time we enter the room and do our morning routine? What would you like to work on? Call on one or two volunteers to share their goal. Please tell your elbow partner what your goal is for the next time we do our morning routine.

### ENCOURAGE AND FEEDBACK

“ Today you learned how to enter our room and do our morning routine when you come to school each morning. We learned this so you know how to have a successful start to each day. You will enter and start the day this way each morning, I can't wait to see you each day!



# Gather Together

## 10 STEPS TO TEACHING AND LEARNING INDEPENDENCE

- 1 Identify what is to be taught: **Gather Together**
- 2 Set a purpose: Create a sense of urgency
  - Share learning
  - Learn more
  - Be respectful
- 3 Identify the behaviors of **Gather Together** on I-chart
- 4 Model most-desirable behaviors
- 5 Model least-desirable, then most-desirable behaviors (same student)
- 6 Teacher places students around the room
- 7 Practice and build stamina
- 8 Stay out of the way
- 9 Use a quiet signal—come back to group
- 10 Group check-in: “How did it go?”

## SAMPLE I-CHART

<b>Gather Together</b> Independent	
Students	Teacher
Listen for signal Clean up quickly Calmly and slowly walk to area Sit in spot Look at teacher Wait patiently	Signal Wait patiently Look at students

Share learning  
Learn more

Respectful

Write the purpose of the routine here. Use both corners if needed.

**OBSERVE AND PLAN**

This lesson introduces students to the practice of gathering together so we can share our learning and learn more.

**ENGAGE AND RELATE**

“ We gather together for lessons and read-alouds throughout the day. Meeting in our gathering area is one of my favorite times, because we are all listening, learning, and sharing together.

**IDENTIFY TEACHING POINT**

“ Today I’m going to teach you how to gather together so we can learn together.

← Steps 1, 2

**SUCCESS CRITERIA**

“ You will know you are successful when you stop what you are doing once you hear the quiet signal, clean up quickly, calmly walk to the gathering area, and are ready to listen and learn.

**TEACH**

“ You will be expected to come to our gathering area at different times throughout the day. The reason we gather together is that we will learn more and are able to share our learning. The quiet signal will tell you when it is time to gather together. When you hear the signal, you will clean up quickly, then calmly and safely walk to the gathering area, sit in your spot, look at me, and wait patiently for instruction to begin. (See sample I-Chart on previous page.)

← Step 3

Select a student to model walking from their seat to the gathering spot, finding their place to sit, looking at you, and waiting patiently for instruction (or a read-aloud) to begin. When they finish modeling, ask,

← Step 4

“ Did \_\_\_\_\_ quickly and efficiently clean up, calmly and quietly walk to the gathering spot, find a successful spot, look at me, and patiently wait for the lesson to begin? Yes. If this is how we gather together, will we get more learning in, and are we able to share our learning with others?

Then have a student model first the incorrect behaviors and then the correct behaviors. End each practice time reviewing each of the behaviors and asking the question,

← Step 5

*If this is how we gather together, will we get more learning in, and will we be able to share our learning?*

**PRACTICE AND MONITOR**

“ Now we all get to show what it will look like and sound like when we gather together. When you hear the quiet signal, please follow this routine. Make the quiet signal and have students practice walking to the gathering spot from their seats.

← Steps 7, 8, 9

**INSTRUCTIONAL PIVOT**


Think: Did my instruction work? Yes / No


**REVIEW AND WHAT’S NEXT**


“ Let’s check in to see how each of us did. This check-in is only for you and will help you decide which behaviors you are doing well and which will be your goal for the next time we gather together. Please put your hand in front of your chest to indicate how proficient you were in practicing that behavior.

← Step 10

“ You will hold up

 one finger if you found it hard to be independent with that behavior but you are going to work on it,

 two fingers if you feel you did okay at being independent with that behavior but you think you can do better, or

 three fingers if you were very independent with that behavior.

Rate yourself for quickly and efficiently putting your materials away. Rate yourself for calmly and quietly walking to the gathering spot. Rate yourself for finding your spot. How did you do at looking at me? Rate yourself for patiently waiting for the lesson to begin.

Based on how you checked in, what is your goal for the next time we gather together? What would you like to work on? Call on one or two volunteers to share their goal. Please tell your elbow partner what your goal is for the next time we gather together.

### ENCOURAGE AND FEEDBACK

“ Today you have learned how to quickly and efficiently come together in our gathering space. I just watched you, and noticed that everyone in the room was successful in getting ready for a whole-group lesson.

Cleaning up and calmly joining us in our gathering space is another way you show independence. Quickly being ready for a whole-group lesson will help us all become better readers, writers, mathematicians, and learners.

## Did you find these lessons helpful?



Take our Daily Routines online course and you'll receive 13 other lessons like these such as lining up, walking in the hall, taking a brain break, and more.

In this course, we'll guide you through the why and how of teaching routines and you can watch examples in real classrooms.

Offered by itself or bundled with two other courses, all perfect for back to school.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## Read aloud from the perfect first day book.

There are so many benefits of reading aloud to children that it is a nonnegotiable in our daily schedule. It doesn't matter if we teach wide-eyed kindergartners, rolling-eyed middle-schoolers, or towering-above-us high-schoolers: we start with powerful texts on day one and read something every day until they leave our presence on day 180.

It is always exciting to think about what book we want to start a new year with. Here are some of our favorite titles for the first day of school:



### THEY ALL SAW A CAT BRENDAN WENZEL

Our own perspective shapes what we see and feel and the students in our class may see things differently from each other.



### THE OK BOOK AMY KROUSE ROSENTHAL

This wonderful book sets the stage for the classroom community we want to create. We are unique, and it's ok to be OK at a lot of things.

### FRINDLE ANDREW CLEMENTS

Reading this begins our yearlong love affair with words.



### THE MOST MAGNIFICENT THING ASHLEY SPIRES

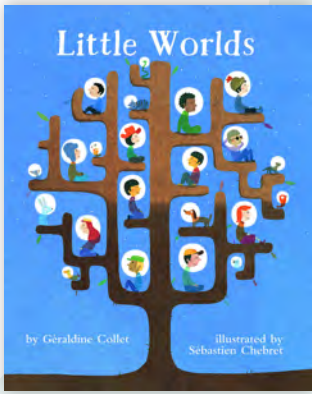
In this book, we'll discover the value of the creative process, working hard, and tweaking things when they don't turn out the way we want.



### FIRST DAY JITTERS JULIE DANNEBERG Everyone can relate to this.

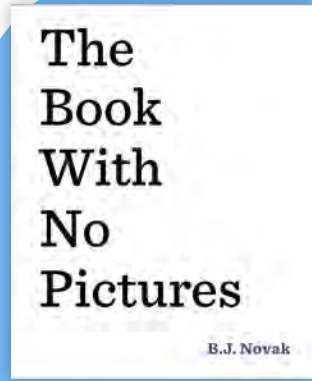


MORE BOOKS ON THE NEXT PAGE! →



**LITTLE WORLDS**  
**GÉRALDINE COLLET**

This is a perfect book to share as we get to know each other and bring our own little worlds into this new classroom community.



**THE BOOK WITH NO PICTURES**

**B.J. NOVAK**

We love this book because it helps us discover right away that reading is fun and that in this classroom, we are going to laugh a lot.



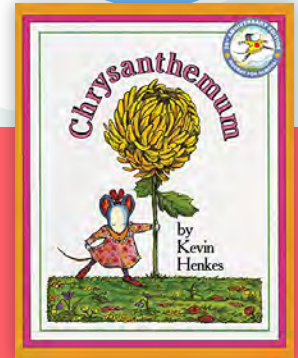
**ISH**

**PETER H. REYNOLDS**

This imparts an important message on day one that approximations will be celebrated.

**CHRYSANTHEMUM**  
**KEVIN HENKES**

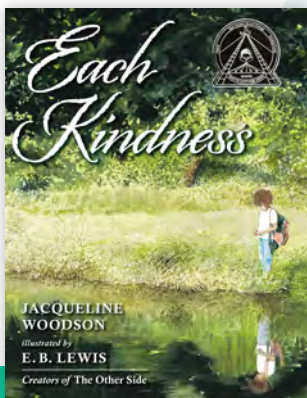
From here, we can discuss how we want to treat each other in our classroom.



**LOVE**

**MATT DE LA PEÑA**

We build our classroom community and start with love for ourselves and each other.



**EACH KINDNESS**  
**JACQUELINE WOODSON**

Not only will our classroom be characterized by celebrating our uniqueness, approximations, hard work, and laughter, but our kindness to each other will be evident to all.



**AFTER THE FALL**

*(HOW HUMPTY DUMPTY GOT BACK UP AGAIN)*

**DAN SANTAT**

We will work together to do great things.