21 Relationship-Building Ideas
For Various Modalities

Mail Communication

- Send letters and include self-addressed, stamped envelopes for students to mail a reply.

- Draw a picture or start a game on paper they can participate in and return to you.

Phone Communication

- Interview students by asking questions on an interest inventory

- Talk about a recent book read, show watched, or game played.

- Create a story together; the teacher starts and the student continues.

- For a Minute: One person gives the other person a topic, and they have one minute to share whatever they can about that topic.

- Madlibs: Have the child give you the necessary noun, verb, adverb, and so on, and then read the story back to them.

- Conference call: Use freeconferencecall.com (or a similar resource) to set up a conference number that students can use to call in and hear a daily story.

- Guess Who: Mail a few copies of the class photo and play a game of Guess Who over the phone using the class photo. Each player selects one person on the page, then players take turns asking yes or no questions to determine which player they have chosen. Possible questions to help narrow down the selection: Is it a boy? Does he have glasses? Does he have blonde hair? Does his shirt have a collar?

Virtual Communication

- Have small groups meet for lunch via Zoom or a similar group communication tool.

- Have a weekly or morning meeting—a brief gathering with a set routine and agenda to get the week or day started.

- Host a "recess" or "social time" a few times a week for students to come and visit with each other. You may want to play a game such as 20 Questions or Hangman, or just socialize.

- Use Google Forms to create and administer an interest survey.

- Use Flipgrid for asynchronous class communication. You can pose a question, and students can respond to you, view their classmates' responses, and even respond to each other. With this tool, the teacher has control of the length of videos and can even have it set up to approve responses before they post.

- Send short emails to check in and say hi. If you would like students to respond, say so in your email.

- Throw a Zoomapalooza (or some type of "palooza") celebration where students come together to connect.

- Use SeeSaw to connect with students and to have them connect and share work with each other.

- Teach students to use Marco Polo or Voxer for video or audio communication. Users can leave asynchronous messages to stay in contact. (If using either of these tools, be sure to have parent permission in place).

- Plan virtual field trips as a class.

- Send voice memos or a short video clip via text message or email.

- Use the Remind or Group Me App for whole group communication.