Building a Classroom Community

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

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Abstract

- As future educators, we realize the importance of building a community with caring learners. To assist us in our future careers, we chose to research the best practices and write lesson plans that correlate with these studies. Our goal is to incorporate our findings into our curriculum. We have included a review of literature to summarize our research. Also, we created a weekly schedule based on our student teaching experiences. The lessons are to serve as a structure in building this ideal classroom community. Classroom management, physical factors, routines and procedures, community circles, and character education are essential components of our lessons. As all experienced educators do, we too must reflect on our work. To conclude this thesis, we have included a reflection piece that explains our thoughts and ties everything together.

Acknowledgements

- We would like to thank Dr. Jill Miels for all the support, encouragement, and the inspiration that she provided during our preservice years. She was extremely helpful in advising us in selecting our resources and collecting our thoughts to form our thesis.
Purpose:
As future educators, this review of literature is to serve as our research to develop a basic plan of action. This plan will aide us in building a community of learners in the first few weeks of school.

Introduction:
As professional educators, it is vital to set the standards for behavior and academic achievement in the classroom from the very beginning. Setting expectations allows children to be at ease in the classroom for they are aware of what the teacher requires. In a classroom where the rules and expectations are clearly stated, the children may take more risks, be more creative, feel open to share ideas, and so on. This type of setting can lead to a community environment which considers each individual highly important. Students in a community feel safe in their environment because they know that their opinions will be respected and considered. Each student should have specific responsibilities within the classroom so he/she may gain the skills that he/she will need in the real world. By allowing students to become an integral part of the classroom environment, they will be empowered and self motivated to achieve to the best of their ability. Building a strong positive community foundation in the first few weeks of school is very important because it sets the tone for the remainder of the year. There are many dynamics to consider when building a positive community environment within the classroom. Classroom management, physical setup of the classroom, routines and
procedures, community circles, and character education are all essential components in an elementary classroom.

**Classroom Management:**

Classroom management, according to Jere Brophy, is helping children to be successful by arranging the environment and taking actions to maintain a learning environment. Alfie Kohn emphasizes classroom meetings as an integral part of classroom management. Class meetings allow students to take active roles in their classrooms. These meetings will improve communication skills, management skills, and thinking skills which will prepare the learners for the real world. Classroom meetings give children opportunities to discuss important or interesting events, decide on how they want the classroom run, plan for upcoming events and activities, reflect on the progress of the class, bring up concerns and brainstorm possible solutions to different problems. William Glasser’s Noncoercive Discipline theory states that students choose to behave as they do, nothing forces them. Both misbehavior and good behavior are choices made by the student. Class meetings were also a part of Glasser’s discipline philosophy. Rules and consequences should be set by the group as opposed to the teacher making the rules. This allows the students to build a democratic society. The teacher must also be a part of the rules, but his/her main job is to guide students into making the best choices possible and to carry out consequences that are logical and fit the misbehavior. Lee and Marlene Canter’s Assertive Discipline Philosophy suggests implementing positive recognition. Praise and support should be given to increase student self confidence and increase feelings of success. It also helps if children see desired behaviors modeled. This decreases the likelihood of misbehavior. Linda Albert’s Cooperative Discipline philosophy advocates a circle of friends within the classroom. This involves encouraging
students to help fellow students. It assures that each student will have a partner to talk with, someone to eat lunch with, and someone to walk with between classes. This will help form a classroom environment in which each child feels he/she is a valued member. The circle of friends is a way to form a positive caring community within the classroom; it also helps students to form friendships that last a lifetime.

**Physical Factors:**
According to Elizabeth Foster-Harrison, many physical factors impact classroom learning. The physical environment may yield positive or negative results. Light is extremely important in keeping children cheerful, comfortable, attentive, and less fatigued. All of which have to be present in creating a caring classroom community.

Color affects mood, emotional states, blood pressure, and psychomotor performance. Yellows and browns give a sensation of warmth; blues and greens create a relaxed state of mind. Homelike features (chairs, lamps, etc.) help students feel more comfortable, making the classroom feel cozy. The cozy classroom evokes the feeling of family rather than the harsh individualistic attitudes that are sometimes present within classrooms.

Temperature, organization, cleanliness of the classroom, and displays of the student work are all important aspects of important environment.

**Routines and Procedures:**
Routines and procedures are important because they structuralize the classroom. Just like expectations, they help students to know what is expected and what is not acceptable. This allows students to be more independent within the appropriate guidelines. According to Harry Wong, routines and procedures should be taught. His three step model includes explaining, rehearsing, and reinforcing. Incorporating simple positive reminders throughout the classroom will help students be successful in
completing the outlined routines and procedures. Possible suggestions of routines and procedures needed to be implemented include: attendance policy, collection of homework, organization of classroom jobs, restroom use, and attention (quiet) signals. Procedures and routines are important to eliminate chaos and may also be discussed in community circles.

**Community Circles:**
Community circles are a way to get the children involved within their community. According to Kohn, community circles are a part of classroom management. It is a time for each child to share his/her ideas, feelings, and concerns. It provides a forum for teaching problem solving. The children learn to listen and accept other people’s opinions. The students must also learn to compromise and reason which solution is most sensible and to reach a desired outcome.

**Character Education:**
Character education is essential to building a classroom community because students must have basic values in order to interact successfully with each other. *Character Counts* and *Life Skills* are programs that outline core attitudes which enhance behavior. When building a community it is imperative to have responsible, trustworthy, persevering, and integrative members. Character education helps not only within the classroom but also prepares children for the outside world. Life skills build a foundation for citizenship, allowing children to take what they learn in the classroom and apply it to the larger community around them.

**Conclusion:**
In conclusion, building a community of learners is essential for children to be successful. Many factors play a role in building the foundation for such a community. Even though the factors are discussed separately, they are all interrelated. Without one
factor there is a hole in the larger puzzle. It takes classroom management, physical environment, routines and procedures, community circles, character education, and the willingness of teachers and students to create a positive learning community.
This is a layout of what a normal week would look like in our third grade class.
The schedule is a hypothetical week that we created based on our student teaching placements.
This is a layout of what our first week might look like.

- The colored times are the lessons that are geared toward forming our classroom community. These lessons are written to the state standards and are located in section 4 of our thesis.
- Again, this is a hypothetical first week. Lessons and times are flexible to change.
### Week two

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- This is a hypothetical layout for week 2.
- The colored times are the lessons that can be found in section 4. These lessons are written to the state standards.
- Times and lessons are flexible to change.
Nametag-Puzzle

State Standards: There are no specific state standards for this lesson. It is written for the first day of school and is an icebreaker for the students.

Purpose: To welcome the students to their classroom in a positive manner.

Materials:
- Puzzle with a student’s name written on each piece
- Matching puzzle for each desk

Motivation: Greet the students at the door and introduce yourself. Ask the children for their names, shake their hands, and tell them how happy you are to have them in your class.

Body:
1. Tell the students to go to the back table to find a puzzle piece with his or her name on it.
2. The student is to then find his or her seat by finding the desk that has the same puzzle piece taped to it.
3. When everyone has found their desk and is sitting down, the students will be given ten to fifteen minutes to put the puzzle together in the back of the room.
4. The puzzle will be preserved and put it in the room for all to see.
5. Refer to the puzzle when encouraging students to work together.
6. Discuss with the students the idea that things work better together than apart ("Two heads are better than one.")
7. Introduce yourself to the class.

Closure: Go around the room and have each child say his/her name. Answer any questions that the children may have.
Organization

State Standards:
There are no specific state standards, although this organization helps to meet all of the standards eventually.

Purpose: To allow students to collect the materials they need and get organized for the school year.

Materials:
- All textbooks
- Agenda/planners
- Supplies in containers in the middle of tables (glue, crayons, scissors, erasers)
- Emergency card packets

Motivation: The students will find their desks in the nametag-puzzle lesson. Once they have been seated, the teacher will allow them to get acquainted with their seatmates.

Body:
1. The teacher will let the students know that there is much to be organized. 
2. She will pass out textbooks to each table and keep a record of what child gets what number book.
3. She will pass out the agenda planners and explain their use. She will take time to let the students write in their name, address, and any other important information asked for in the front of the planner. She will let the students know that these are to be used everyday! They must go with the child anywhere he/she goes. In this planner, all homework should be recorded. The teacher will allow the students to look through the planner, and will point out areas where homework can be recorded.
4. Next, she will pass out the emergency card packets. She will ask each child to keep the packet closed until it gets home to Mom or Dad. The teacher will take a student’s packet, open it up, and share the contents with the class. She will highlight the emergency cards and tell the students their purpose. “These are very important cards! They help us know who to contact if one of you got hurt.” She will ask the students to make sure that they are brought back within the week. These packets will then immediately go into book bags.
5. Finally, the teacher will ask the students to look to the center of their tables. In the center of each will be supplies such as glue, scissors, crayons, and erasers. These supplies will always be available, but must stay in the classroom at the table. They must not leave the classroom!

Closure: Students will be reminded that all of the information they just received is very important. Each table will share something about the organization of the room to summarize the “lesson.”
Rules/Consequences/Procedures (Day 1)

State Standards:
There are no specific state standards, although teaching these routines helps the students succeed in meeting all of the state standards.

Purpose: To allow students to feel and be safe within the classroom.

Materials:
* Markers
* Crayons
* Large pad of paper
* Teacher written rules
* Stapler
* Teacher written consequences

Motivation: The teacher will run across the room to “get something” and trip and fall. When she gets up, she will discuss with the students why it is important that we have rules and consequences.

Body:
1. The teacher will elicit from the students responses about why rules are important. She will make sure to get the input of as many children as possible.
2. Next, she will ask the students what types of rules they think the classroom should have. Each student may get input, and his/her ideas will be written down on the large class writing pad.
3. After everyone is satisfied that all important rules have been covered, the teacher will try to combine the rules into rules that she had already written. She will get the students to combine rules so that they are not repetitive.
4. Next, she will suggest her own rules that cover the rules that the children have written. For example, the teacher may ask, “Do you think we could put ‘respect others and their property’ down instead of ‘don’t push or shove, don’t hit, don’t take things that aren’t yours’? Is that about the same rule?”
5. The teacher will continue until all rules have been combined and set.
6. She will take the recopied rules and ask each student to sign saying that they agree to abide by these rules.
7. Finally, she will ask a student volunteer to post the rules somewhere in the classroom where everyone can see and remember them.
8. The teacher will tell the students that since they now have rules, they need to set some consequences for breaking the rules. She will explain the consequences aren’t meant to punish, but rather to remind that we need to stay safe at all times by following the rules.
9. The teacher will let the students know consequences that she has already set. These include:
a. First offence- a verbal warning
b. Second offence- a verbal warning
c. Third offence- the student must write a short paper about what rule he/she has broken, why it was the wrong choice, and 3 choices that he/she could take next time.
d. Fourth offence- stay in for recess and write the paper
e. Fifth offence- go to the office to see the principal

Note: The goal is to solve all of the problems within the classroom, rather than having to see the principal or an outside party. If something is done that harmful to a child’s well being, the first steps may be skipped and a more harsh consequence set.

10. These consequences are written and will be signed by the students as well, saying that they understand and agree.

11. The consequences will be posted by a student volunteer right next to the rules.

Closure: Students will be reminded that the rules are posted and everyone signed them, agreeing to follow them. The teacher will ask why rules are necessary, and what will happen if a rule is broken.
Brain Teasers

State Standards:
3.6.1 Analyze problems by identifying relationships, telling relevant from irrelevant information, sequencing and prioritizing information, and observing patterns.
3.6.2 Decide when and how to break a problem into simpler parts.

Purpose: To allow students to begin thinking critically and get to know the others in the classroom.

Materials:
- Logic problems
- Brain Quest (1000 Questions and Answers to Challenge the Mind) Grade 3

Motivation: A brain quest question will be written on the chalkboard when the students arrive in the morning. ("7 + what mystery number = 27?") They may think about this question until the lesson actually begins. At this time, the teacher will ask the students if they have any possible answers. She will take answers and discuss them with the students until the correct answer is found. She will let the students know that they will be answering more questions similar to the one that they have just discussed.

Body:
1. The teacher will pass out a logic puzzle to each child. Together, the class will read the first clue, and fill in the boxes of the puzzle with the correct marks (An “x” shows that the two events did not occur together; an “o” shows that they did.) After filling in all of the information given in the first clue, the teacher will ask the students to complete the puzzle with their tables.
2. She will pass out a deck of brain quest cards and various logic puzzles to each table.
3. She will let the students know that they are to work together at their tables to figure out answers to the questions. At least 1 logic puzzle must be completed, as well as at least 10 brain quest questions.
4. If students absolutely cannot figure out the problems on their own, they may go to another table to get help with the answer.

Closure: Each table will share their favorite question or activity and tell why they liked it. This part of the lesson may include asking a question to try to stump the rest of the class.
Steve, Russ, Chris, and Butch play baseball for the Junior Eagles. During the season each boy has batted home a different number of runs—10, 6, 4, and 3. See if you can make the team by batting the clues around and sliding home with a safe solution.

1. Steve has batted more home runs than Chris but fewer than Russ or Butch.

2. Russ batted in as many runs as Steve and Butch combined.

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Kevin, David, Julie, and Tom contributed a praying mantis, a katydid, a ladybug, and a wasp to their class insect collection. Don’t let the clues BUG you as you sort through the puzzle.

1. Kevin, David, and the boy with the wasp brought their specimens to school in jars with holes poked in the lids.
2. Julie lives next door to the boy who brought the katydid and down the street from Kevin.
3. The boy bringing the ladybug to school carried it in a baby food jar lined with grass.
Miss Hayes received a note from the school nurse giving special information about four of her students—Janet, Larry, Scot, and Glen. The special health information about the students included bronchial asthma, an allergy to penicillin, an allergy to bee stings, and glasses. See if you can match up everything.

1. The two boys with allergies are on the track team.
2. Glen's glasses were broken. He must sit in the front of the room until his mother is able to have them repaired.
3. Janet, Larry, and the boy who's allergic to bee stings all sit in row three.
Four friends—Niki, Maxine, Shelley, and Roberta—are bringing to class items for a display representing fall. The items they are bringing are goldenrod, a woolly worm, colored leaves, and acorns. Don't fall behind in discovering the solution.

1. Niki and the girl with the goldenrod brought their contributions to school in a vase of water.
2. Roberta, Maxine, and the girl bringing acorns helped the teacher clear off a table to arrange the display.
3. Shelley and Roberta are allergic to goldenrod.
4. The acorns were brought in a paper sack.
The nurse sent notes home with Gregory, Rachel, Karen, and Darrell explaining that to complete their immunization records she needed immunizations on measles, whooping cough, diptheria, and chicken pox. Work your way through these contagious clues to solve the puzzle.

1. Gregory, the girl who needed a record of measles immunization, and Karen are in Mr. Stuckey’s class.
2. Darrell and the boy who needs a record of whooping cough immunization are best friends.
3. The nurse needs Karen’s diptheria immunization record.
Mark, Leonard, Michelle, and Jim were semifinalists in the sixth grade’s spelling bee. *Dissatisfied, conscientious, auxiliary, and forcibly* are the words that finally disqualified them from the competition. Buzz through the clues to see how the bee stung these four students.

1. Mark lasted two rounds longer than Leonard, the girl who missed on the word *dissatisfied*, and the person who missed on the word *forcibly*.

2. Leonard was already disqualified when the word *conscientious* was given.
Kelly, Lara, Marla, and Neil are students in Miss Hanson's fifth grade class. They are putting together a leaf collection as part of their science unit. Each student has a new leaf—oak, sycamore, catalpa, dogwood—to add to the collection. Rake through the clues to determine who brought what.

1. Kelly is taller than the person with the sycamore leaf and the person with the catalpa leaf.
2. The girl with the oak leaf is seated behind Kelly.
3. Lara and the person with the oak leaf always eat lunch together.
4. The person with the sycamore leaf lives next door to Neil.
Doris, William, Gloria, and Bruce have just joined the school band. They will play the flute, the clarinet, the saxophone, and the oboe.

1. Doris and the girl playing the clarinet are best friends.

2. Bruce sits between the boy playing saxophone and the oboe player.
The four Newton children—Glenn, Brad, Shannon, and Kendra—all enjoy reading a different section of the newspaper—food section, funnies, classified, and editorial. See if you can determine who gets what.

1. Brad hands the funnies to his brother and then takes the section he likes.
2. Shannon and her sister, who likes the food section, can't cut things out of the paper until after their parents have seen it.
3. Brad loves to read the ads for used toys and free pets.
Each month the fifth graders in Mr. Lucas' room are allowed to order books. They bring their money and order blanks and give it to Mr. Lucas. Lynette, Paula, Trudy, and Jerome have ordered 2, 3, 4, and 7 books. Bookworm your way through the clues to see how many were ordered by each person.

1. Paula ordered more books than Trudy and Jerome but fewer than Lynette.

2. Jerome ordered more than Trudy.
Four girls in Ms. Mahrten’s home economics class—Tara, Jennifer, Krista, and Becky—are making an apple pie. Each one is in charge of part of the operation—mixing dough, rolling crust, peeling apples, and measuring the sugar and spice. See if you can slice through the clues for a sweet solution.

1. Tara asked the girl measuring the sugar to check the temperature of the oven.
2. Jennifer and the girl with the rolling pin and the girl with the pastry blender wanted to serve part of the pie to Miss McDannold, their principal.
3. Becky cut her finger and had to get a bandage from the school nurse.
4. Krista thought the girl rolling out the crust had the hardest job.
Kitty, Ruth, Jack, and Gary took a math quiz today and they scored 98%, 94%, 88%, and 70%. Check your score on computing which students received which scores.

1. Kitty scored higher than Gary and Jack but lower than Ruth.
2. Gary scored lower than Jack.
Barb, Terry, Karla, and Linda are on their school's softball team playing first base, second base, third base, and pitcher. Check your batting average by solving this puzzle without striking out.

1. Barb, Terry, and the pitcher all live on Metter Street and practice their batting together on Saturdays.
2. Linda is taller than the Terry and the girl playing second base, but she is shorter than Barb.
3. Terry is a faster runner than the third baseman.
A count, a duke, an earl, and a knight were discussing the nation’s problems with the king. Their names were Royal, Silverton, Towman, Uppercrust, and Vincent.

From the clues below, match the name of each man with his title.

1. “The peasants are very troublesome,” Royal said.

2. “Yes,” Towman agreed, “but we might be, too, if we were as poor as they.”

3. “You’re both wrong, of course,” said the king. “I don’t find them to be troublesome at all.”

4. “Oh, I didn’t mean that they cause trouble,” the duke corrected himself. The man who had agreed with him nodded.

5. “Aha! Fence-straddling as usual,” the knight thought. “Let’s see them get out of this one.”

6. Vincent, trying to prevent an argument, said, “Your Highness, I think that Royal and the count meant that the poverty of the peasants distresses them, not that the peasants try to cause trouble.”

7. Disappointed, but not wanting to seem to be disagreeable, Uppercrust said, “Yes, I’m sure that’s what they meant, Your Highness.”
## PROBLEM 4 CHART: Deductive Thinking Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Royal</th>
<th>Silverton</th>
<th>Towman</th>
<th>Uppercrust</th>
<th>Vincent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
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<td>Duke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knight</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
My parents always
rant and rave
About the things
I want to save.
My room, I know,
is much too small,
And things are piled
Along every wall.
But wouldn't you think
Just for my sake,
They'd let me keep
My python snake?
EXAMPLES OF DIVERGENT THINKING ORIENTED TASKS

Name as many animals as you can which might be pets.

How many ways can you think of to spend $1,000?

Tell 3 different ways a story might end.

How many shapes can you find in the room?

What shape did you find that no one else did?

Create a new animal which would be perfectly adapted to living in the desert.

Draw a picture of your new animal showing all its special features.

Describe a space colony so that others would want to live there.
Class Meeting/Journals

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.2.1 Explain that people are citizens of their community, state, and nation and explain the importance of good citizenship.
(Science) 3.1.5 Demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively while respecting the ideas of others and communicating one’s own conclusions about findings.
(Writing) 3.5.5 Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or purpose.

Purpose: To introduce the procedures of class meetings and the journals. Class meetings and journals will be forums where students discuss any problems, concerns, or ideas.

Materials:
- Journals
- Pencils

Motivation: “How many of you have been in an argument with a friend? How many of you wish you could have prevented the argument?” Discuss ways children can prevent arguments.

Body:
1. In this class we are going to have class meetings.
2. These meetings will be used to talk about problems, concerns, and ideas.
3. Any group member problem may be discussed; a student or teacher may introduce a problem.
4. When we come to our meeting everyone must keep an open mind and be willing to listen to others.
5. The discussion must be geared toward solving a problem (it should not become a blaming session)
6. The solution should not include punishment
7. Everyone must be willing to compromise
8. Students must take turns talking and must give another student time to complete his/her thoughts
9. This is not a time to share severe home or personal problems
10. Today we are going to have our first class meeting
11. First of all, does anyone have any problems or concerns about school or the classroom so far?
12. I would like to focus our meeting on expectations today.
13. Have the students discuss what they would like to happen this year in the classroom.
14. When everyone has shared, have the students return to his or her seats.
15. Ask them to spend ten minutes writing the idea(s) that they liked the most.

Closure: Ask the students if they have any topics that they would like to discuss in future class meetings.
Class Meeting

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.2.1 Explain that people are citizens of their community, state, and nation and explain the importance of good citizenship.

Purpose: To let the students discuss any concerns or ideas they have formed.

Materials: None

Motivation: Have the students form a circle to begin the class meeting. Place the agenda on the chalkboard.

Body:
1. Today I would like to go around the circle and let each of you tell us how you feel today.
2. I also want to know why you might feel this way. (Try to give each child 30 seconds to a minute to share)
3. Now that we got all that off of our chest, let us talk about our biggest struggles that we have faced our first week of school.
4. Discuss the struggles and prompt the students to give advice on how to help make the struggle disappear.
5. Does anyone have any other topics they would like to address?

Closure: Have the students jot down a few ideas for the next class meeting.
Shoe Box Self

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.2.1 Explain that people are citizens of their community, state, and nation and explain the importance of good citizenship.

Purpose: To give each student a chance to show what he/she will bring to the classroom community by sharing his/her interests and talents.

Materials:
• Paper bags or shoe boxes
• A box with a mirror inside
• Scavenger Hunt: List of Ideas

Motivation: Have the box with the mirror inside in your hands. Tell the children that what they will soon see in this box means more to you than anything else at this point in time. Have each child take a turn coming to the front of the room to look inside the box you are holding. Discuss what the children saw in the box.

Body:
1. Tell the students how important they are to you.
2. Tell them that they each have different things that they will bring to the classroom.
3. “Some like sports, some like math, some like art, and some like science.”
4. “We are all different and unique.”
5. “Together we can learn from each other.”
6. “The next few days we are going to share our personal interests, talents, and goals with each other.”
7. “You will be given a paper bag/shoe box to fill with items that tell something about you.”
8. “Everything you bring in must fit in the paper bag/shoe box. You may use pictures, items, or cut-outs.”
9. Model an example of your shoe box self. Pull out the items that you brought in and tell why you selected the items.
10. Hand out the “Scavenger Hunt: List of Ideas” to the students and read through the ideas

Closure: Brainstorm the different items that can be brought in and answer any questions.
Scavenger Hunt: List of Ideas

- Your favorite toy as a child
- A crayon (you pick the color) to represent your favorite color
- A magazine cut-out of a dancer, fire-fighter, etc to represent what your future goals are
- A book if you like to read
- Notebook paper or a pencil if you really like to write
- A calculator if you really enjoy math
- A stuffed animal to represent your favorite animal
- A picture of your family, friends, or yourself
- A trophy to show your accomplishments
- Any other item that you can think of that would tell us what you like
State Standards:
There are no specific state standards, although teaching these routines helps the students succeed in meeting all of the state standards.

Purpose: To allow students to develop routines that will facilitate smooth transitions between and among classes.

Materials:
- White board
- 3 paper plates (lunch count)
- Popsicle sticks with student names
- Posted fire and storm drill instructions

Motivation: The teacher will ask the students to remind her about rules, why they are important, and what our class rules are.

Body:
1. The teacher will begin by letting the students know that there are certain things that she expects to be done in a certain manner. These are called procedures. The teacher will teach some procedures today and some tomorrow.
2. She will start with the morning routine. There will be a white board with the day’s schedule everyday. Students may come into the room, look at the white board and proceed to the first “event” of the day. Students should look at the white board every day to see if there are any special instructions.
3. At this point, the teacher will show the students the white board, and today’s schedule written on it.
4. After they have looked at the white board, students should proceed to the lunch count and attendance procedure. The teacher will show the students 3 small paper plates. One will say “pack,” one “peanut butter, and one “main dish.” She will also show the students their names written on popsicle sticks. Their job, when they arrive in the morning, is to place the popsicle stick with their name on it onto the correct plate. The plates tell the teacher how many packed their lunch, how many need a free peanut butter lunch, and how many are going to eat the main dish that is being served. This routine serves dual purposes. It allows the teacher to call in her lunch count, and to take attendance.
5. The teacher will put the 3 plates and the popsicle sticks on a table and ask the students to complete the procedure that they just learned. She will explain that this procedure is to be completed every day as soon as the student has read the white board.
6. Students will come back to sit in a circle around the teacher. She will explain the end of the day routine next. She will let the students know that they are responsible for making sure that all items that need to go home are in their book.
bags at the end of the day. When the last class of the day, science, is over, students are to immediately pack their bags, complete their weekly jobs, and have a seat in the community circle area. The teacher will wait for most students to join her, and then she will begin reading a chapter book. Each day, a bit of the book will be read. When bus dismissal is called, students will quietly and quickly line up. The teacher will lead the students to the front doors to exit the building.

7. Students will practice this procedure.

8. Finally, the teacher will go over storm and fire drill procedures. She will begin by asking the students what a storm drill is. Students will give their input, and then the teacher will explain. She will let the students know that a storm drill is to keep us safe. If there is a big storm outside, we will go to a place in the building with no windows so that we are safe. We must be quiet during the entire procedure so that we can hear directions from teachers and the principal. The teacher will explain to the students their safety spot and the route they travel to get there.

9. At this time, the students will travel to their safety spot for a storm drill. They will practice as if it were a real storm.

10. When they arrive back in the room, the teacher will ask the students about a fire drill. Students will give their input. The teacher will explain that if there is a fire in the building we must all get out quickly so that we stay safe. In order to do this, we must remain silent and walk quickly outside. For this drill we also have a special route. The teacher will explain the route. She will also show the children the signs posted in the room that let us know where we are to go.

11. Students will complete the fire drill procedures as taught.

**Closure:** Students will be asked to quickly restate the procedures that they have learned today. They will also be asked reasons why we follow these procedures.
Rules/Consequences/Procedures (Day 3)

State Standards:
There are no specific state standards, although teaching these routines helps the students succeed in meeting all of the state standards.

Purpose: To allow students to develop routines that will facilitate smooth transitions between and among classes.

Materials:
- Cup by pencil sharpener with pencils
- Weekly job chart
- Homework trays
- Red apple
- Green apple
- Goat beanie baby
- Bear beanie baby
- 4 rulers with teacher’s name

Motivation: The teacher will pull three students aside before the lesson. She will ask one to sharpen her pencil as the teacher is giving directions during the lesson. She will ask another to come up and ask to go to the bathroom. The final student will be asked to go up to the teacher to hand in a paper. As the lesson begins the three students will complete their “assignments.”

Body:
1. The teacher will stop her three helpers. Then she will ask the students to explain to her what happened. The students will hopefully tell her that it was chaos. They couldn’t hear her directions over the pencil sharpener. She couldn’t teach because she had 2 children up in her face trying to talk to her. The teacher will explain that this is why we have procedures.

2. Sharpening pencils is the first procedure to be covered. The teacher will explain that students should sharpen their pencils in the morning as soon as the lunch count/attendance procedure has been completed. Students should have at least 2 pencils with them at all times. That way, if one breaks, there is another to work with. Pencil sharpening can also be done in the transitions between classes. There will be a cup near the pencil sharpener that any stray pencils will be placed into. The teacher may also put some new pencils into this container periodically. Students may take a pencil from the cup as long as they return it at the end of the day/lesson.

3. The teacher will explain handing in work next. All homework is due at the beginning of the day. There will be trays for each subject on the countertop. Each student is to place his/her work in the correct tray in the morning at arrival time. Students are to be responsible for placing their own work in the trays. They are not to take anyone else’s. This will hopefully eliminate blame and mix ups.
4. At this point, the teacher will ask the students about pencil sharpening. She will ask when appropriate times are and how many pencils should be with a child at all times.

5. Next, weekly jobs will be given and explained. (This is found in a later lesson.)

6. Finally, procedures for leaving the room will be explained. The teacher will let the students know that it is disruptive if they have to ask her to leave all of the time. But, she also needs to know where students are at all times. She is responsible for their safety! She will teach her procedures for going to the bathroom and to the nurse. There will be beanie babies and apples on the countertop next to the homework trays. The beanie babies are for students who have to go to the restroom. There will be one for the girls, and one for the boys. The apples will be for students who feel ill and must go to the nurse. The red apple will be for the girls, and the green will be for the boys. A student who needs to leave the classroom, will get the appropriate item from the countertop and place it at his/her desk. He/she will get the pass (a ruler with the teacher’s name) located next to the item that he/she took from the countertop and leave the room. The pass lets others in the hallway know that the student has a need/purpose to be out of the room in the hallway. The beanie baby or apple lets the teacher know who is gone and why he/she is gone. It also lets other students know that a certain privilege is in use, and they must wait.

7. The teacher will ask comprehension questions.

8. The class will then try the procedure. A student will be appointed to go to the restroom, another will be appointed to go to the nurse. The students will not really go; they will simply carry out the given procedures.

 Closure: Students be asked to turn to a neighbor and quickly discuss the new procedures. Each person will have 1 minute to talk.
I am a Puzzle

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.2.1 Explain that people are citizens of their community, state, and nation and explain the importance of good citizenship

Purpose: To show the students that they are important parts of the classroom community.

Materials:
- Large white puzzle (with no outside border pieces)
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils
- Paper
- Pencil

Motivation: “Life often feels like a giant jigsaw puzzle. Perhaps you’re the missing piece, looking for your space. Maybe you are the piece that gets everything started. Maybe you’re the last piece people notice, yet they can’t finish without you.”

Body:
1. The students are going to design and create a puzzle that represents them and their life.
2. This puzzle will be different from any puzzle the students have ever seen.
3. There is no “boxtop picture” to copy or follow.
4. The puzzle will be unique because it represents the unique student who created it.
5. Everything the student puts on the puzzle piece must represent them in some way.
6. Use these questions to start thinking about and planning what to put on the puzzle piece.
   - If life really were a giant jigsaw puzzle, what would your piece look like? What size, shape, color(s), and texture(s) would it be?
   - Who in my life means a lot to me?
   - What in my life means a lot to me?
7. Create your puzzle piece.
   - Start by making a sketch of your puzzle piece.
   - Use markers, crayons, fabric, pictures from magazines, glitter etc. to decorate your puzzle piece.
8. Write a brief description or explanation of your puzzle piece. “Why did you choose to design your puzzle piece the way you did?”

Closure: Have the students present their puzzle pieces (they may use their explanation to help them). Have the students put the puzzle together using their pieces. Again, this shows the students that they are a part of a larger puzzle. The reason the puzzle does not have borders is because the classroom is a smaller part of a larger community.
The Human Knot

State Standards:
(Math) 3.6.1 Analyze problems by identifying relationships, telling relevant from irrelevant information, sequencing and prioritizing information, and observing patterns.
(Math) 3.6.2 Decide when and how to break a problem into simpler parts.

Purpose: To see how we all have to work together to complete a goal. It takes the input and participation of everyone in the class to be successful.

Materials:
- Rope with knots

Motivation: I will show the children a rope that has been knotted many times. We will talk about how we could get the knots out. We will also discuss the fact that it may be impossible to unknot the rope. Sometimes knots are so tight and imbedded that they cannot be undone.

Body:
1. The class stands should-to-shoulder in a circle, placing both hands in the center.
2. When the teacher says go, everyone is to grab the hands of someone else, being careful not to grab both hands of the same person, or the hands of an individual on the right or left.
3. Once everyone is connected, the object is to untangle the knot without releasing the grip, except for permissible pivoting, as long as touch is maintained.
4. One pair will be instructed to release their grip.
5. Try to form a straight line.

Closure: Students will discuss what they have learned from the activity. They should notice that it takes cooperation and good listening skills to successful complete the goal. The same is true in the classroom. We all need to be active listeners and cooperate.
Friday Forum (Week One)

State Standards:
(Writing) 3.4.2 Discuss ideas for writing, use diagrams and charts to develop ideas, and make a list or notebook of ideas.
(Writing) 3.4.3 Create single paragraphs with topic sentences and simple supporting facts and details.
(Writing) 3.5.5 Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or person.

Purpose: Students will reflect upon the past week and respond to select questions.

Materials:
- Journal
- Pencil

Motivation: Discuss the highlights of the week. Make a web on the board.

Body:
1. Choose a few questions from the list below and place them on the board.
   - The best thing about this week was...
   - I didn’t like it when...
   - I was disappointed when...
   - I improved in...
   - I’m having trouble in...
   - The way I felt about being part of this class was...
   - I wish...
   - I wish our class could...
   - I want to know why...
   - I wish I had...
   - Compared to last week, this week was...
   - Next week would be better if...

2. Have students open their journals.
3. Instruct students to write about the given prompts.
4. Explain that their ideas and opinions might be beneficial to the class and that, while you will not reveal who wrote a certain response, you would like to share some responses with the class.
5. Instruct students to place a star next to any response they don’t want shared with the group.
6. Encourage students to use paragraphs in their writing. They should use a topic sentence and supporting details.
7. Give students time to respond to the given prompts.

Closure: Have about five students share their responses.
Classroom Atmosphere Survey

State Standards:
(Reading) 3.2.7 Follow simple multiple-step written instructions.

Purpose: To create positive student-teacher relationships and promote learning in the classroom. Also, to measure the feelings of students toward the teacher and the established climate of a classroom.

Materials:
- "Classroom Atmosphere Survey"
- Pencil

Motivation: Tell the students to look around the room and absorb the items around them. Tell the students to close their eyes and to think about their favorite part of the room. Also, have them think about how they feel when they enter the classroom.

Body:
1. Hand out the classroom atmosphere survey.
2. Read the instructions on the survey.
3. Reach each question out-loud and give the students a few seconds to answer.
4. Continue until the survey is complete.

Closure: Discuss how the students felt about the survey. Ask them if it was hard to follow. Talk about any concerns.
Classroom Atmosphere Survey

Directions: Please complete this survey by circling “No,” “Sometimes,” or “Yes” for each question.

1. This classroom is very enjoyable.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

2. I complete my work every day.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

3. My teacher knows about my family.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

4. My teacher really knows the subjects.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

5. My teacher is good at handling problems.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

6. I dislike school.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

7. Kids in this class are always willing to share.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

8. I tell my parents about things I do in school.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

9. Talking and sharing ideas are important here.  
   No  Sometimes  Yes

10. I have good friends in this class.  
    No  Sometimes  Yes

11. I am an important part of this classroom.  
    No  Sometimes  Yes

12. People in this school really enjoy kids.  
    No  Sometimes  Yes

13. I wish I had another teacher like this one next year  
    No  Sometimes  Yes

14. I can get help from my teacher.  
    No  Sometimes  Yes

15. I feel good when I talk to my teacher.  
    No  Sometimes  Yes

16. My teacher is good at handling discipline problems.  
    No  Sometimes  Yes

17. My teacher is usually too busy to help me.  
    No  Sometimes  Yes

18. There always seems to be interesting things to do in this class.  
    No  Sometimes  Yes
19. If I don’t understand, I can always find help in this room.

No  Sometimes  Yes

20. My teacher is a great storyteller.

No  Sometimes  Yes

21. My teacher encourages me to have new and different ideas.

No  Sometimes  Yes

22. I am a proud member of this class.

No  Sometimes  Yes

23. My teacher tells us what she/he does on weekends

No  Sometimes  Yes

24. Our classroom rules are easy to understand and follow.

No  Sometimes  Yes

25. We are frequently reminded of our class rules.

No  Sometimes  Yes
Relaxation Activities

State Standards:
(English) 3.7.14 Make descriptive presentations that use concrete sensory details to set forth and support unified impressions of people, places, things, or experiences.
(English) 2.7.4 Give and follow three and four step oral directions.

Purpose: To allow students to relax, and learn relaxation strategies that may help them during the school day. We do not learn or take in much information when we are tense and tight.

Materials: None

Motivation: Tell the students that you are assigning a large science project that is due tomorrow. The point is to get the students tense and uptight. Tell them that you aren’t really going to assign a project, but you wanted them to get tense so we could work on relaxation activities.

Body:
1. Students will follow the instructions that are slowly given by the teacher.
2. Sit with your back touching the chair and your feet flat on the floor.
3. Put your hands in your lap Get as comfortable as you can.
4. We always close our eyes when we relax because it helps us concentrate on what we’re doing and we can talk to our body more effectively.
5. Let’s start with your right arm and hand.
6. Talk to the muscles in your arm and hand and tell them to grow tighter and tighter.
7. Imagine that you have a whole lemon in your right hand.
8. Tell your hand to squeeze it hard. Tell it to squeeze all the juice out and not leave a single drop. (5 seconds)
9. Now tell your hand to relax and let go of the lemon.
10. Tell your hand and arm to go completely limp.
11. Notice how it feels as your hand and arm muscles loosen. (5 seconds)
12. Repeat with the left arm and hand.
13. Now we’re going to tighten and relax the muscles in the shoulders and neck.
14. Shrug your shoulders... tell them to raise up and touch your ears.
15. Feel your shoulder muscles tighten... keep them tight.
16. Tell your neck to tighten even more. (5 seconds)
17. Tell your shoulders to drop down and relax.
18. Tell your neck to relax too...to go loose and limp.
19. Notice how good it feels as the tightness goes. (10 seconds)
20. Tell the muscles of your chest and the middle part of your body to tighten up.
21. Tell all the muscles to draw in and tighten.
22. Tell them to get tighter still... feel the tension.
23. Notice how uncomfortable it feels. (5 seconds)
24. Now tell the muscles to let go.
25. Let the feeling of relaxation flow through your body.
26. Let your chest and middle part of your body feel limp and loose.
27. Feel the relaxation spread... notice how good it feels to be relaxed. (10 seconds)
28. Now let’s go to your right leg and foot.
29. Talk to the muscles in your leg and tell them to stiffen up.
30. Tell your right knee to lock... tell your foot to tighten up.
31. Tell your whole right leg and foot to get as tight as it can. (5 seconds)
32. Now tell your leg and foot muscles to let go.
33. Tell them to go completely loose and limp.
34. Notice the pleasant feeling as your leg and foot muscles relax. (10 seconds)
35. Repeat with the left leg and foot.
36. Finally talk to the muscles in your jaw. Tell your jaw to tighten.
37. Tell your teeth to clench... press your tongue against the roof of your mouth.
38. Feel the tension. (5 seconds)
39. Now tell your jaw to relax... to go completely loose.
40. Let your lips be slightly apart. Feel how good it feels to have your jaw loose and relaxed.
41. Now I’d like you to take a deep breath. Hold it and then let it out. (The teacher will demonstrate by making the audible sounds that occur when taking a deep breath.)
42. When you breathe out, try to get your whole body relaxed from hand to toe.
43. Just breathe out any tightness in your body.
44. Try to imagine someone slowly waving a magic wand in front of you... starting at your head and slowly going down to your toes.
45. Tell each muscle group in your body to relax as the wand passes each part.
46. Let’s do this two more times.
47. I’d like you to breathe deeply again, but this time, as you breathe, I’d like you to tell your body to relax by saying the word “relax” to yourself.
48. Drag it out slowly so that, as you reach the “X”, you are down to your toes.
50. When you are ready, take a big stretch and open your eyes. Try to hang on to the good feeling in your body.
51. We’re going to try a different type of relaxation activity. Jump in place for a minute. Wiggle your arms and legs and get some tension back in those muscles so we can try something new. Think about homework!
52. First of all, I’d like you to get really comfortable in your chair.
53. Put both feet flat on the floor and put your hands in your lap, but not touching each other.
54. Just rest them comfortably on your legs.
55. One good way to relax is to imagine certain things or make a “movie” in our heads.
56. When we do this, it’s really important to keep our eyes closed so we’re not distracted and we can see really clearly the movie we’re going to make in our heads.
57. So now I’d like you all to close your eyes. Don’t squeeze them shut. Just let your eyelids fall down like really heavy curtains. Let your eyelids feel as if they were too heavy to lift up.

58. Now imagine that it’s a warm, sunny day and you’re outside watching the clouds go by.

59. As they float by, pick out one that you especially like.

60. Pause.

61. Now imagine that you are sitting back on that beautiful, fluffy cloud.

62. Feel yourself sinking into its softness as you slowly float along.

63. Notice that your body is getting light. Feel your arms becoming light and limp.

64. Now notice your legs feeling light and limp. Your legs feel as if they sink into the cloud.

65. Now notice how light and limp your whole body feels as you sink back into the cloud.

66. Notice how good it feels to have the cloud totally support you.

67. Let your head just relax. Notice how good it feels to just let your whole body relax and sink into the cloud.

68. Take a big, deep breath, hold it, and let it out. (The teacher will make audible sounds you would make taking a deep breath.)

69. Notice how you feel more relaxed each time you take a deep breath and let it out.

70. Feel yourself drift along easily, slowly and relaxed.

71. Feeling completely safe and secure on your cloud, look around.

72. What things do you see? What things do you hear? (Allow time for students to create their own visualization.)

73. When you’re ready to come back to the room, take a deep breath and slowly open your eyes.

Closure: Discuss with students what they saw or heard from their cloud. Students will describe any differences they feel now compared to before they relaxed. Point out that they have been able to make different muscle groups tense, then relaxed. Explain that the goal is for them to learn to check out their body often to see if any parts are tense or tight and, if so, to tell the muscles to loosen up.
Weekly Jobs

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.2.1 Explain that people are citizens of their community, state, and nation and explain the importance of good citizenship.

Purpose: To allow students to feel as if they are active citizens within the classroom community.

Materials:
- Pictures of a mail deliverer, the president, UPS employee, military officer, etc.
- Index cards with the students’ names on the top

Motivation: Hold up a picture of a mail deliverer, the president, UPS employee, military officer, and a common person. Ask if the students know what the pictures have in common. They are all members in a larger community. Discuss the different job descriptions of each.

Body:
1. Today I am going to share the different jobs in our classroom.
2. Listen carefully to each job and I will then pull name cards to decide who will do the jobs for this week.
3. I will read the job title and description. See chart below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Job title</th>
<th>Job description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Girl President</td>
<td>• Leads girls’ line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Boy President</td>
<td>• Leads boys’ line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Secretaries</td>
<td>• Collects assignments (papers) for absent students&lt;br&gt;• Counts lunch/attendance sticks (records the lunch numbers and absences on a sticky note and places it on computer keyboard for teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Officer</td>
<td>• Leads class in the pledge of allegiance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Distribute Managers</td>
<td>• Passes out papers&lt;br&gt;• Delivers newsletters etc. to students’ mailboxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>UPS Drivers</td>
<td>• Makes out of class errands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Environmentalists</td>
<td>Makes recycling runs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Classroom Inspectors</td>
<td>Dismisses learning clubs in the afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Checks the floor for paper and trash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hallway Inspectors</td>
<td>Checks coat racks and hallway floor for trash or personal belongings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining students</td>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Use lifeskills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Help teacher when a job comes along</td>
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</table>

4. Select the name cards and assign jobs for the week.

**Closure:** Discuss any questions the students have. Review each job description quickly.
Interview Me

State Standards:
(Math) 3.1.13 Interpret data displayed in a circle graph and answer questions about the situation.
(Math) 3.6.1 Analyze problems by identifying relationships, telling relevant from irrelevant information, sequencing and prioritizing information, and observing patterns.
(English) 3.7.1 Retell, paraphrase, and explain what a speaker has said.
(English) 3.7.3 Answer questions completely and appropriately.

Purpose: To get to know one another and find the similarities between us all.

Materials:
- Pencils
- Paper
- Grid for graphing
- Crayons
- Marker to label graph
- Chalkboard and chalk
- Taped interview with principal

Motivation: Before the lesson, I will interview the principal using the questions below. I will tape the interview, and let students listen as each question is answered. After students have listened to the principal’s responses, I will let them know that they are going to interview a partner to get to know more about him/her.

Body:
1. Students will be placed into partners. They will take turns asking each other the following questions. Responses will be recorded on a piece of paper.
   a. What are your favorite school subjects?
   b. What is your favorite sport to play?
   c. What makes you happy?
   d. How many pets do you have?
   e. What is your favorite movie? Why?
   f. What kinds of food do you like to eat?
   g. What is something you have never done before?
   h. What countries have you visited?
   i. What do you like most about your school? Why?
   j. What do you like to do after school?
2. Pairs will circle any responses that are alike.
3. Once all groups have finished interviewing, the class will come back together to make a graph.
4. We will begin by listing all of our responses for each question on the board.
5. We will not graph every question, only the ones that have multiple responses that are the same. (We will most likely graph questions a, b, d, f, j.)
6. We will make a bar graph. A grid will be pre-prepared. The number of students will be on the y-axis. Responses will be on the x-axis. For example, in response to the question that asks about favorite school subjects, math, social studies, science, English, etc. will be placed on the x-axis. Squares will be colored in according to the number of students that like that particular subject. The bars will be vertical.

7. Each student will be responsible for contributing his/her partner's information to the graph.

8. As a class, we will work together to label and title the graph.

9. When the graph is complete, we will look at the similarities and differences between us. We will read the graph and make observations. For example, the subject that is most liked is math.

10. The graph will be posted in the classroom to remind students that although we are all different, we are also alike.

Closure: As a closing activity, I will ask students to discuss the ways that our class is all alike. Why are similarities important? Why are differences just as important?
A Walk In Your Shoes

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.5.1 Give examples of how the local community is made up of many individuals, as well as many different groups.
(English) 3.7.2 Connect and relate experiences and ideas to those of a speaker.

Purpose: The child will see how when we all work together, the results are much more interesting and colorful. At the same time, the students will be learning about themselves as well. This lesson will strengthen intercultural competence and community building.

Materials:
• Crayon pattern
• People color crayons
• Regular color crayons
• Scissors
• Large construction paper crayon box
• Poem- A Crayon Box
• Mirrors

Motivation:
1. We will begin by sitting as a whole class on the floor. I will start a discussion in which the students will talk about the many different colors they see around the classroom. I will ask them what if "everything was blue or red?" As a class we will discuss how boring the room would be if everything was one color. I will tell them to think about the whole world being one color and how boring it would be. I will then introduce to them the idea of how boring it would be if we all looked the same and were the same color. I will read them the poem A Crayon Box. As a class we will discuss the meaning of the poem, making sure that we discuss how all the colors worked together to make the world more beautiful. I will then discuss with the students how this applies to people. We all work together to make the world a beautiful place. I will show them the example of the crayon that I made and tell them that this is what they are going to be doing when they go to their seats.
2. On their tables, the students will find a handout with a large crayon picture on it. In the center of the table will be two boxes of multicultural crayons, scissors and mirrors. I will instruct the students to draw a portrait of themselves. They will need to be sure that they are finding the correct skin color, hair color and eye color. If they have difficulties they can look in the mirror and ask me for assistance. Once they have made their portraits, they will cut out the crayon and bring it to me. I will be walking around, monitoring the students to see if any of them need extra assistance. As the students turn in their crayons, I will place them in a large construction paper crayon box. Once all the crayons are in the box, I will put the box of crayons on the wall.
Body:

1. The students will return to the large group setting where we will discuss what we saw and found out. We will talk about the poem and how it relates to our classroom crayon box.

2. Next, we will discuss how we are all a team. Our crayon box is one unit, just like our classroom. As a team, we must work together so that everyone is successful. Sometimes members of a team get left out. We will hold a classroom discussion on the following questions.
   a. How would it feel if a team member came by and refused to hold your hand or made a rude noise or a face at you?
   b. What could you say to let that person know that your feelings were hurt?
   c. What problems would your team experience if team members were not tolerant of each other?

3. After students have answered the questions thoroughly, I will prompt them with the following: “Have you ever had a pair of shoes that didn’t fit right? Did your feet hurt? Did you get blisters? Did it feel good to have some extra room? Sometimes we try out actions or behaviors that don’t quite fit right, either. Have you ever tried to make friends or impress people by acting in a way that didn’t really fit you? Did it work? What happened?” We will discuss how in this classroom the most important thing of all is to be ourselves. We just talked about how boring the world would be if everything were one color and we were all alike. We must celebrate our differences by being ourselves! It is important that as a class, we let each team member be themselves without fearing that they will be made fun of.

Closure: Sometimes we need to put ourselves into other’s places. We need to think about what it would be like if we were walking in someone else’s shoes. It might change our attitude or outlook. As a closure, students will discuss in partners how the lesson can help them relate to or change their town, state, country, and the world.

Crayon Poem

While walking in a toy store
the day before today,
I overheard a Crayon box
with many things to say

"I don't like Red!" said Yellow.
and Green said, "nor do I"
and no one here likes Orange,
but no one knows quite why.

We are a Box of Crayons
that really doesn't get along"
said Blue to all the others.
"Something must be wrong!"

Well, I bought that
Box of Crayons,
and took them home with me,
and laid out all the Crayons
so the Crayons could all see.

They watched me as I colored
with Red and Blue and Green.
And Black and White and Orange, and every color in between.

They watched as Green became the grass,
and Blue became the sky.
The Yellow sun was shining bright on White clouds drifting by.

Colors changing as they touched,
Becoming something new
they watched me as I colored.
They watched me 'til I was through.

And when I'd finished,
I began to walk away.
and as I did the Crayon Box
had something more to say . . .

"I do like Red!" said Yellow and Green said,
"So do I, and Blue you are terrific, so high up
in the sky!"

"We are a Box of Crayons
Each of us unique,
But when we get together,
the picture is complete!"
Go There

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.4.4 Define interdependence and give examples of how people in the local community depend on each other for goods and services.

Purpose: To demonstrate what happens when each member of a group insists on having his/her own way. Also to allow the class to experience working together and the importance of trust.

Materials:
- Blindfolds (12)

Motivation:
1. The entire class will form a circle, including the teacher.
2. Tell the class to look around the room carefully.
3. Now tell them to shut their eyes and think of a place in the room they would like to go.
4. Ask them to open their eyes and hold hands.
5. Tell them they are each to move toward their chosen place without letting go of hands.
6. After a few seconds, tell the group to freeze and to notice where they are.

Body:
1. We will quickly discuss the above activity by answering the following questions.
   a. Did anyone get where he/she wanted to go?
   b. How many here like to have things their own way?
   c. Some group members get their own way often. What can we do to encourage them to cooperate?
2. Now that we have shown the importance of working together and cooperating, we will do an activity to show the importance of trust. It is impossible to work together and cooperate when you don't trust one of your group members.
3. The class will be divided into partners.
4. Each group of partners will decide who goes first.
5. The person to go first will be given the blindfold to put on.
6. The class will be told that they are to take their partners on a “Blind Man’s” Cooperative Walk around the room. Their responsibility is to protect their Blind Man from any danger. Ready? Go! They will have just a few minutes to complete the activity.
7. Reverse the roles for the next walk.
8. A quick discussion will follow.
   a. What did it feel to be blind? What was the hardest part of this activity?
   b. Did you learn anything in this activity that could help you with the rest of the school year?
Closure: Students will discuss in partners how this activity relates to the Walk In Your Shoes/ crayon activity. We will come back whole class and share our partner discussions.
Yarn Activity

State Standards:

3.4.4 Define interdependence* and give examples of how people in the local community depend on each other for goods and services.

3.5.2 Identify connections that the local community has with other communities, including cultural exchanges of several types, and ways that technology links communities in other places.

Purpose: To show students that they are all alike in some way; they are interconnected; no one should be left out.

Materials:
- Ball of yarn

Motivation: The teacher will have a spider web on display. She will tell the students that this item is like her class. She will ask students to take a few minutes to think about her assertion. She will tell the children that they will do an activity and then try to answer the question.

Body:

1. Students and the teacher will form a circle in the middle of the room.
2. The teacher will have a large ball of yarn. She will begin by saying something that she likes. For example, she may say that she loves to read.
3. Anyone else in the circle that loves to read will raise their hands. The speaker will keep hold of the yarn and then throw it to each of the people that agree with her/him. Each person maintains a bit of the yarn so that a web begins to form.
4. The next speaker is the person who ends up with the ball of yarn. This speaker says something new that he/she likes to do. For example, I like to ride my bike.
5. All of the people that like to ride bikes will receive the yarn at some point. They must keep an end before they throw it on to the next person.
6. The game will continue until each person has had the yarn at least once.
7. The circle will look at the web of yarn and make observations about it. Students will see that they are all connected. In some way, each person is like another person. We are all unique, but there’s a part of us that’s similar to everyone else in the room. The web will also show us that because we are all interconnected, each person affects all of the others.

Closure: Students will receive time to think again about the question posed in the motivation. How is the class like a spider web? The class will conduct a short discussion in order to answer the question.

Source: http://www.naeycsea.org/yarnactivities5.pdf
Warm Fuzzy

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.2.1 Explain that people are citizens of their community, state, and nation and explain the importance of good citizenship.

Purpose: To introduce the effects of compliments and put-downs. Also, to model the appropriate behavior within the classroom community.

Materials:
- Warm fuzzy story
- Decorative fringe
- Craft store eyes
- Yarn
- Warm fuzzy slips

Motivation: Read the Warm Fuzzy story to students.

Body:
1. Discuss the meaning of a “Warm Fuzzy”.
2. Explain that Warm Fuzzies can be small, soft little creatures that we give to others when:
   - We want them to feel good
   - We want to show that we like them
   - We want to show that we appreciate something
   - We think someone may need cheering up for one reason or another
3. Discuss the meaning of a “Cold Prickly”.
4. Explain that a “Cold Prickly” is like a put-down. It is something we do or say to someone that doesn’t make him or her feel good.
5. Discuss these questions:
   - How do Warm Fuzzies make you feel?
   - When do you give Warm Fuzzies?
   - How would you teach someone about Warm Fuzzies if that person didn’t seem to know about them?
   - Why is it important to give Warm Fuzzies?
   - Are more Warm Fuzzies or Cold Pricklies given in our class?
6. We will then be making Warm Fuzzies.
7. Students can select from the following ways to make their own Warm Fuzzies:
   - They can use decorative fringe found in craft or sewing supply stores by simply cutting the balls off the fringe and gluing tiny craft shop eyes on them. Students can easily make a large quantity of Fuzzies. Cotton balls can also be used.
   - Students can cut yarn into 1 ½” strips and tie one of the lengths around the middle of the rest, and then fluff.
• A flat Fuzzy can be made by cutting furry carpeting into little circles or strips and attaching eyes.
• Students can cut circles out of construction paper and draw Fuzzies on them.
• Students can cut up the strips of Fuzzies using the handouts that are attached.

Closure: Discuss with students how they can develop a system of Warm Fuzzy exchange within the class. For example, whenever a student does a favor for another student, a Warm Fuzzy can be given to him. When a student has a special feeling of liking someone, he can give that person a Warm Fuzzy. When a student sees someone who looks discouraged, he can give a Warm Fuzzy.
Once upon a time there was a village in a beautiful valley that was impossible for outsiders to reach. It wasn’t on the map, so nobody knew about it. The people who lived in the valley were very happy. They went about with smiles on their faces and cheerful greetings for everyone. They liked each other and enjoyed talking to each other. They would go out of their way to do each other favors. One of their favorite things to do for each other was to give each other Warm Fuzzies. Warm Fuzzies were sort of like little puffs of warm, soft fur. Everyone in the valley carried over his or her shoulder a bag that was filled with Warm Fuzzies. It was a way of saying...I like you. You’re special.” And of course, it was also nice to get a Warm Fuzzy. People would take it, feel its warmth and softness, rub it against their cheeks and then gently place it in their fuzzy bag with all their others. It made people feel liked and appreciated when they received a Warm Fuzzy, and it was hard for them to keep from smiling.

Every young child was given their own Warm Fuzzy bag so that they could give each other Fuzzles whenever they wanted to. They looked forward to meeting other people so they could share their Fuzzles. So, people in the village enjoyed their lives and a little thing like exchanging Fuzzles kept them very happy.

Outside the village up on the side of a mountain, in a cold, dark cave, lived a wicked witch. She didn’t really enjoy living by herself and was often very lonely. But she couldn’t get along with anyone. The witch knew about Warm Fuzzies, but thought that they were a lot of nonsense. She mostly stayed in her cave looking down on the village, feeling very ugly and alone.

One day the witch decided to walk down into the village and was met by a very kindly villager. “Hasn’t this been a fine day?” said the villager. “Here, have this nice, pink, Warm Fuzzy. I want you to have it because I don’t see you in town very often.” The witch looked around to see that nobody else was listening. Then she put her bony hand on the villager’s shoulder and said, “How many Fuzzies do you have left there?” The villager replied, with a shrug, “Oh, I don’t know. Why?” “Well,” the witch answered, “you better find out! If you give all your Fuzzies away, you’re going to run out of them!” The villager didn’t seem worried, so the witch grabbed his Warm Fuzzy bag and with her long, skinny fingers started counting his Fuzzies. “Right now I’d say you’ve only got about fifty-two Fuzzies left here,” the witch sneered. “Better go easy on handing ‘em out!” With that she shuffled away, leaving a rather confused villager standing there.

Now, the old witch knew that she had told a lie, and she knew that none of the villagers would ever run out of Warm Fuzzies because, even though they gave some away, other people would always keep giving Fuzzies to them. Nevertheless, the witch kept going up to villagers and spreading the evil rumor that there would be a shortage of Warm Fuzzies. Well, before long the villagers actually did start to worry that they would run out of Fuzzies. They started keeping their Fuzzies instead of giving them away. They would only give them to their very best friends, or on very special occasions. If they saw someone coming down the street, they would cross to the other side, so they wouldn’t
have to give them a Fuzzy. The villagers began to stay up at night to count their Warm Fuzzies and then hide them under their beds for protection. There were even some robberies of Warm Fuzzies. But worst of all, since the villagers weren’t giving and receiving Warm Fuzzies anymore, they were unhappy and often didn’t feel well. Some of the people were so lonely and sad they even began to die.

When the witch saw what was happening, she got worried. She didn’t want all the people to die and be left with no one to talk and be mean to. She wondered what to do and then had an idea. Deep in her cave she had discovered some funny, cold, hard little balls, that she called “Cold Pricklies”. She had spent many years digging them out, because she liked their cold, rough feel. The witch decided to share them with the villagers, thinking that this would be a good way to keep them alive, but still sort of unhappy. She filled many bags with them, took them into town, and started giving them away.

When the people saw the bags of Cold Pricklies they were glad to get them. Now they had something to give each other that they didn’t mind losing. The only trouble was that it was just not as much fun to give a Cold Prickly as a Warm Fuzzy. Giving a Cold Prickly seemed to be a way of doing something for another person but it wasn’t really a very friendly gift. Getting a Cold Prickly gave one a funny feeling, too. You weren’t sure what the giver meant, for, after all, Cold Pricklies were cold and prickly. It was nice to get something from another person, but Cold Pricklies were sort of ugly.

Some of the people went back to giving Warm Fuzzies, and, of course, each time a Warm Fuzzy was given, it made the giver and the receiver feel very happy. Perhaps it was that it was so unusual to actually get a Warm Fuzzy from someone when there was so many of Cold Pricklies being given instead.

But giving Warm Fuzzies never really was done as much as it had been before. Suspicion was still in the minds of the people. You could hear them say things like:

“Warm Fuzzy, eh? Wonder what’s behind it.”
“I never know if my Warm Fuzzies are really appreciated.”
“I gave a Warm Fuzzy and got a Cold Prickly in return. Just see if I do that again.”
“You never know about Mabel. A Warm Fuzzy one minute, a Cold Prickly the next.”
“If you won’t give me a Warm Fuzzy, I won’t give you one.”
“I want to give my boy a Warm Fuzzy, but he just doesn’t deserve it.”
“I wonder what life would have been like if there hadn’t been a shortage of Fuzzies?”

Then one day a grandmother was telling her grandchildren about the good old days when everybody was happy and everybody gave away “Warm Fuzzies” and how good it felt to get one. The children got so excited that they all started looking for the Warm Fuzzies that had been hidden away, and they began giving them to each other. The children began to be much happier than they had been before and the adults all noticed this. They realized how silly and selfish it was to not share Warm Fuzzies. Gradually, more and
more people in the village were seen giving Warm Fuzzies to one another and as a result, more and more smiles and happy faces were seen.

Adapted from the following stories:
Fuzzies by Richard Lessor, Swabedoo-dahs, author unknown, The Original Warm Fuzzy Tale by Claude H. Steiner
Planting A Seed

State Standards:
(English) 3.1.3 Read aloud grade-level-appropriate narrative text (stories) and expository text (information) fluently and accurately with appropriate timing, change in voice, and expression.
(Science) 3.1.2 Participate in different types of guided scientific investigations, such as observing objects and events and collecting specimens for analysis.
(Science) 3.6.4 Take, record, and display counts and simple measurements of things over time, such as plant or student growth.

Purpose: To show the children that even plants need love and care to grow. Thus, all of the students in the room deserve love and care so they can succeed!

Materials:
* Plastic cups (26)
* Sunflower seeds (26)
* Potting soil
* Water
* Sunlight
* Max Loves Sunflowers by Ken Wilson

Motivation: I will read Max Loves Sunflowers to the children. Next, we will read how sunflowers grow and what uses there are for sunflowers.

Body:
1. Each student will receive a plastic cup.
2. The cup will be filled about ¾ full of potting soil.
3. The child will put the seed on top of the soil.
4. He/she will cover the seed with a bit more soil. (Not a lot, just so it’s covered!)
5. Each child will water his/her plant so that it may have the needed nutrients to grow.
6. The children may then choose a spot by the window for the plant to grow. It needs to be close to the window so that it gets some sunlight.
7. Over the next few weeks, each child will be responsible for taking care of a plant. They will give it the needed water and sunlight, and watch as a flower begins to grow!

Closure: The students will discuss how the plants are like the children in the classroom. We will talk about what we both need to grow and succeed. Students will discuss how we all need to support each other with love and caring so that our classroom will be successful.
Sunflowers are a fast growing plant. It’s amazing to watch such a large flower grow from such a small seed! And at harvest time, your family or the birds can enjoy a crunchy snack.

**How to Grow Sunflowers**

Prepare the soil: Sunflowers need a lot of food and sunlight to grow tall. Spread several inches of compost on the soil and dig it in well before planting. Remember sunflowers grow very tall, so make sure they are planted in a spot that won’t shade your garden later. Plant the Seeds: The seeds should be planted about a foot apart at a depth of 1/2 inch. Water the area thoroughly.

Care for Your Plants: The seeds should sprout in a week or two. At that time, pull out every other seedling (so the plants are two feet apart) to allow room for growth. Water the seedlings often because they get very thirsty! Pull weeds occasionally or mulch the soil so your sunflowers don’t have to compete with the weeds.

Watch Them Grow: Your sunflowers will grow quickly. You might want to make a growth chart by measuring the same plant every week and graphing its progress. After a flower forms, compare their height to that of the tall bloom. Which is taller? Paint a life-size picture of your sunflower.

Harvest Time: When the petals have dropped off and the birds begin to peck at the seeds, cut off the heads with a foot of stalk. Hang them upside down in a dry and airy place. When the seeds are dried, rub them off with your hand and store them in an airtight container.

**Under the Sunflowers**

Did you know that sunflowers are cousins to the daisy? It’s easy to see their resemblance. However, a daisy stands as tall as your knee or hip, while a sunflower towers over you like a giant! Pretend that your sunflowers are regular daisies and that you are half their size.

Draw a picture of yourself as a "tiny" person under the sunflowers. Include other common objects, nearby plants, and insects as they would appear from this new perspective. Prepare a picnic to be eaten near the sunflowers. As you eat, use your imaginations and exchange stories about how different things would be as tiny people.

**Seed Snacks**

To Toast Sunflower Seeds: Spread shelled seeds in a single layer on baking sheet and bake in a 350 degree oven for five minutes. Shake the pan once or twice and watch them carefully (they can burn easily). Sunflower seeds can also be roasted in a skillet on top of the stove over moderate heat.
"No Bake" Seed Candy: Mix together 1 cup of sunflower nuts, 1 cup honey, 1 cup peanut butter, and 1 cup cocoa powder. Shape into one inch balls. Spread 1 cup of toasted sesame seeds on a plate. Roll each piece of candy in the sesame seeds. Chill before serving if desired.

Source: http://www.jeannepasero.com/sunflowers.html
Put Downs/Compliments

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.2.1 Explain that people are citizens of their community, state, and
nation and explain the importance of good citizenship.

Purpose: To show the impact put-downs and compliments have on people. Also, to
practice distinguishing between a put-down and a compliment. Students feel how
powerful a compliment can be.

Materials:
• Strips of paper with examples of compliments and put-downs
• Strips of yellow paper
• Pencil
• Bowl or bag to place strips in
• Tin with classmates’ names in it
• Paper plates, for each student, that have been painted yellow before hand with a
child’s name on each
• Tape

Motivation: Have the class sit on the floor in front of the chalkboard. Give three
compliments to three different students. Give three put-downs to another three students
(talk to the students before hand). Discuss the meaning of a compliment and a put-down.
Ask the children how they felt when they received the compliments. Discuss how the
children felt when they received the put-downs.

Body:
1. Have a bag with strips of paper in it. There will be compliments and put-downs on
these strips.
2. Place a two-column chart on the board and label the columns “put-downs” and
“compliments”.
3. Pull out three strips that have been marked with a compliment or put-down and read it
aloud.
4. Have a volunteer help you place it in the appropriate column.
5. Have each child draw a strip and help place it in the appropriate column.
6. Discuss the effects of compliments and put-downs.
7. Once all of the strips have been placed into the correct place, have the students help
change the put-downs into compliments.
8. Hand out three yellow strips to each child.
9. Pull out the tin that has all the students’ names in it.
10. Have the students draw a name and instruct them to write a compliment to that
person.
11. As the children finish their first compliment assign them two more compliments (be
sure to plan ahead so that all students will receive three compliments).
12. Collect all the compliments.
13. Place the yellow plates on a wall or bulletin board and place the compliments given to each child around the appropriate plate. (These will be suns and the compliment strips will be the rays)

14. Add rays throughout the next few weeks.

**Closure:** Have each child share the first compliment he/she wrote (this way everyone will receive one compliment). Discuss the reactions of receiving and giving the compliments.
Helping Hand

State Standards:
(Social Studies) 3.2.1 Explain that people are citizens of their community, state, and nation and explain the importance of good citizenship.

Purpose: To get the children thinking about the outside community, which influences the success of the classroom community.

Materials:
• Drawing paper
• Pencils
• Scissors
• Colored pencils/crayons

Motivation: Discuss and brainstorm the different people that are involved in making the school a success (principal, students, teachers, lunch ladies, janitors, bus drivers, etc.).

Body:
1. Brainstorm ideas about ways that we can help others.
2. Make a web on the board. Sample ideas that can be added:
   • Helping in the cafeteria
   • Cleaning the erasers
   • Watering the plants
   • Stapling papers together during recess time
   • Feeding the fish or animals
   • Teaching another student
   • Helping the librarian re-rack books
   • Helping students in lower grade levels during recess time
   • Volunteering time somewhere (school or outside community)
3. Hand out drawing paper.
4. Have children trace their hand and cut it out.
5. Have students select five things (from the board or their own ideas) that they would like to do the next week to help someone else in our school (secretary, principal, lunch ladies, etc.)
6. Have students place one goal on each finger.
7. Place hands on a wall for students to see.
8. Next week we will try to reach out to other people in our school community.
9. Hands will be the students’ reminders the following week.

Closure: Have each child share one of his or her goals for helping someone else.

Extension: Next week the students will be reminded of their goals. I will give them stickers to place on the fingers of the paper hands when they have finished their goals.
Friday Forum (Week Two)

State Standards:
(Writing) 3.4.2 Discuss ideas for writing, use diagrams and charts to develop ideas, and make a list or notebook of ideas.
(Writing) 3.4.3 Create single paragraphs with topic sentences and simple supporting facts and details.
(Writing) 3.5.5 Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or person.

Purpose: Students will reflect upon the past week and respond to select questions.

Materials:
- Journal
- Pencil

Motivation: Discuss the highlights of the week. Make a web on the board.

Body:
1. Choose a few questions from the list below (use some different questions than the first week) and place them on the board.
   - The best thing about this week was...
   - I didn’t like it when...
   - I was disappointed when...
   - I improved in...
   - I’m having trouble in...
   - The way I felt about being part of this class was...
   - I wish...
   - I wish our class could...
   - I want to know why...
   - I wish I had...
   - Compared to last week, this week was...
   - Next week would be better if...

2. Have students open their journals.
3. Instruct students to write about the given prompts just like they did the first week.
4. Remind the students that their ideas and opinions might be beneficial to the class and that, while you will not reveal who wrote a certain response, you would like to share some responses with the class.
5. Remind students to place a star next to any response they don’t want shared with the group.
6. Encourage students to use paragraphs in their writing. They should use a topic sentence and supporting details.
7. Give students time to respond to the given prompts.

Closure: Have about five students share their responses. Try to select five new students.
Student Input (Class Survey)

State Standards:
(Writing) 3.4.3 Create single paragraphs with topic sentences and simple supporting facts and details.
(Writing) 3.5.5 Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or purpose.

Purpose: To give each student an opportunity to give the teacher feedback on how he/she feels within the classroom. In order for the students to help run the classroom community, they must be given opportunities to voice their opinion about issues within the classroom.

Materials:
- “Students Input Survey”
- Pencil

Motivation: Share the following scenario with the students: “Imagine you are in a classroom with no books, posters, or computers. You are a visual and/or active learner. Your teacher only lectures to your class. You are not picking up on anything. Your grades are low and your parents are upset. How do you feel? (Discuss) Do you wish you were given the chance to ask the teacher to change a few things? (Discuss)”

Body:
1. Today you will be given the opportunity to do just that.
2. I want to know what you feel about our first two weeks of school.
3. Pass out the survey.
4. Read the three questions on the survey.
5. Model an example response for each question.
6. Give the students time to answer the questions.
7. Turn on some background music.
8. Collect the papers.

Closure: Discuss with the students what the results of the survey will do. The surveys might prevent a potential problem. The results will form a trusting relationship with the students and teacher. Finally, the survey will help the teacher form a positive classroom community by making changes that students need made.
Student Input (Class Survey)

Remember, no names!

1. What are the things you enjoy most about this school year?

2. What are the things you would like the teacher to stop doing?

3. What new things would you like to see happen in this class?
List of Life Skills
(These skills will be placed throughout the room for the students to see)

Respect: Value the worth of another person.

Integrity: Do the right thing.

Initiative: Do something because it needs to be done.

Flexibility: Be able to change plans when necessary.

Perseverance: Keep trying, no matter what.

Organization: Plan ahead to keep things in order.

Sense of Humor: Laugh and be playful without hurting others.

Effort: Try your hardest.

Common Sense: Use good judgment.

Problem-solving: Solve problems, even when it is very difficult.

Responsibility: Do what you are supposed to do, when you are supposed to do it.

Patience: Wait calmly for someone or something.

Friendship: Make and keep a friend, so that you care for and trust each other.

Curiosity: Want to learn or know about one’s world.

Cooperation: Work together toward a common goal or purpose.

Caring: Feel concern for others.

Courage: Act according to one’s beliefs.
Friendly Awards

This friendship award goes to _______________________________ for _______________________________

_____________________________________________________

Student’s name to truly a friend

_____________________________________________________

Student’s name

Teacher’s signature

Smile Award!

__________________________ showed _______________________

Smile Award!

Student’s name

friendship when _______________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

CONGRATULATIONS!

__________________________ Date ___________________________

Teacher’s signature
I APPRECIATE YOU BECAUSE:

JUST A NOTE TO SAY:

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT:

YOU'RE SPECIAL BECAUSE:

TO:
FROM:

YOU'RE NICE BECAUSE:

DEAR __________:
INVITATION

You are cordially invited to the

Awards Banquet where we will recognize the outstanding
accomplishments of our students in completing TEAMWORK,
an interactive team building unit focusing on communication,
conflict resolution and goal setting skills.

Date: ________________________________

Time: ________________________________

Location: ________________________________

R.S.V.P. to __________________________ on or before __________

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worked like a dog today to finish the work.

THANK YOU:

Your efforts at improving ___________________________ have been greatly appreciated.

Keep up the good work!

Teacher
Dear Parents,

Today __________________ did a fantastic job of __________________________

You should be very proud of how well __________ is doing.

__________________________
Teacher

REPORT CARD

__________________________ had a fantastic day with:

__ Getting along with others
__ Working hard
__ Being helpful
__ Cooperating
__ Finishing work
__ ______________________

__ English
__ Arithmetic
__ Science
__ Handwriting
__ Reading
__ _____________
__ _____________

Date ______________

__________________________
Teacher
I Thought Today
Happy Gram

You: ____________________
______________________
______________________
______________________

Signature: ____________

I Thought Today
Was

[Diagram with checkmark: wonderful, good, terrible]

because: ____________________
______________________
______________________

Good News

I Am Proud
To Say -
You

You: ____________________
______________________
______________________
______________________

Signature: ____________
Good For You

Because you learn from your mistakes

Signature: _______________________

ATTENTION!

________________________________________
has been caught helping a friend in need.

Date: __________________________

Signed: _________________________

Fantastic Effort

To: ____________________________

Good Friend Award

For __________________________________________

To: _______________________________________
Purpose:
The thesis is based on our research and our knowledge of best practices. This paper serves as a response to the work that we did, and is an explanation of our ideas.

Introduction:
As professional educators, we have learned that it is essential to set high expectations early in the year. Students that are expected to achieve will work to meet those goals. The goals, lessons, and expectations that we set in the thesis are ones that we believe the children can use to succeed. Helping students to succeed is the key element of our profession.

Classroom Management:
Classroom management was approached numerous times within our thesis. Rules, consequences, and procedures are the main elements that help our classroom to stay motivated and managed. In our plans, the children help to set the rules. Because they are a part of the rule making process, they feel more empowered, and more a part of the classroom. They were also asked to sign the rules indicating that they understood them and agreed to follow them. This "contract" will put the responsibility back into the students' hands, which helps the teacher maintain a safe and warm learning environment.

Classroom management plays a large role in the rest of the lessons that we wrote. Each lesson was written to make the students feel that they were a part of the community. They were written with the intentions that students would not only build relationships with others, but that they would also come to know themselves a bit more. Each lesson includes classroom management. In order to facilitate relationships and self examination,
the students need to feel safe and comfortable. By setting a positive tone and an inviting atmosphere, we believe that classroom management will essentially take care of itself.

**Physical Factors:**
In order for students to succeed in their learning, the room must be arranged to evoke warmth and motivation. Our ideal classroom will include many different areas. We intend to have a reading center with books, pillows, a carpet, and lamps. Each table will have a plant in the center along with supplies. Posters that we have included will hang on the walls. These posters are motivating quotes, the rules, and consequences. Student work will be a large focus of the room. We believe that it is important to showcase the students’ learning. This will help them to feel that the classroom is also theirs. There will be lots of light, and the temperature of the room will stay warm without being hot (perhaps 70 degrees). Desks will be arranged so that students are sitting and working in groups. All students will be facing the teacher; it is essential that students can see the teacher and the teacher can see her students at all times. The purpose of our arrangement is to make the students feel that they are part of a caring community of learners.

**Routines and Procedures:**
The routines and procedures are lessons that have been written for the thesis. We included only the things that we deemed the most important. Students will practice these routines and procedures within the lessons that we have written. We will teach them the procedures that we expect them to complete daily. These routines and procedures will help the classroom to run smoothly and students to feel successful.

**Community Circles:**
Community circles are a part of our classroom meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to allow students to voice their concerns and work out any problems that have occurred throughout the week. We decided to have the class meetings on a weekly basis.
each Thursday. This will allow any problems to be resolved before the weekend, so that students may have a fresh Friday and weekend. Students may reflect upon the week and its learning activities during this time. The students' concerns are the priority. If students have nothing that they want to address, then the teachers will bring up their concerns or items to be discussed. This is a time meant to bring all members of the classroom together and to make sure that each person is feeling valued and appreciated.

**Character Education:**

Character education is displayed within many of our lessons. Building a caring community of learners is parallel to teaching students values. Both require that students care about themselves and others. The “Shoebox Self” lesson allows students to realize their self worth. Any child who understands and values himself/herself is more likely to be kind and caring towards others. The “Human Knot” lesson teaches students that they must work together to achieve goals. “A Walk In Your Shoes” asks students to think about how others feel and respond accordingly. Sometimes we take things for granted, when we really don’t understand the situation. This lesson helps students develop compassion. Finally, the “Warm Fuzzy” lesson helps students realize that complimenting and caring about others makes life more positive. It also allows one to feel better about himself. We believe that character education has a strong correlation with building a classroom community.

**Miscellaneous**

We were not able to look at all of the research on building classroom communities because it was so extensive. We chose instead, to focus on what we thought would be the most important and helpful information. Many of our lessons were written from the research that we conducted, but some were our own ideas and creations. The thesis is
based upon ideals. Everything written in our plans may not be able to occur for practical reasons. Any part of it that can happen will allow students to feel safe and cared for in a community of learners.

This “plan” will change from year to year, as the students and their needs change. It will also be adapted as we continue to learn and try new things. Some of the things we have written may not work for a particular class, but will be enormously successful with another class. This is simply a “plan.” It will change and grow as we change and grow in our profession.

We cut math, English, and science times within our thesis. These were cut only to allow us time to build the type of background that we believe is essential for students to succeed. These subject areas will be cut for only the first two weeks. A normal schedule, which is included, will resume the third week. Students will receive a 10-15 minute snack/restroom/water break daily. The time will vary slightly each day, according to the day’s lessons and student needs.

We wrote plans and based our thesis upon a group of 25 third graders. We decided that because third grade is right in the middle, it would be a good choice that would allow us to adapt lessons up or down depending on our placement. The thesis focuses on building classroom community, but there are many other communities that can be formed once the foundation is in place. We expect to broaden the community to include school once students have built a solid classroom community. We may also further expand to encompass the city and its members.
**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, building a community of learners is essential for children to be successful. We believe that we have demonstrated and planned ways to meet this goal within our thesis.
Works consulted for review of literature


We liked this book because it provided us with a collection of different educational theories on building discipline in the classroom. Many well-known theorists and their ideas are explained in this informative text.


This book provided us with a definition and ideas on learning circles. It also emphasized building a community. Other elements in this resource include constructive knowledge, ideas on supporting the learners, how to document reflections, assessing expectations, and the changing cultures.


This source provided us a definition of character discipline, which is one of our focal points in the thesis. Several tips on how to communicate with parents were also included in this text. There are a few additional topics covered in this book. First of all, negative, emotional, and positive behaviors are looked at along with their consequences. The final section of this book includes an appendix, which spells out the rights of students and educators.


This book was very concise and short. We used the research and recommendations on furniture, aesthetics, comfort, instructional, and professional items that should be incorporated into a successful classroom. This book discusses how the décor of a room should have a purpose and should create an inviting environment. Finally, this book includes a study about perceptions of the environment.


This book offered us ideas on intrinsic motivation. Glasser stresses "choices" in the classroom. Also, we used the team model on learning from this text. This book also includes ways of getting learning teams started, examples of discipline problems and how to solve them, needs that drive us all, and shows how the teacher is a modern manager.

This resource was very beneficial for our segment on character education. Specifically this book covers the core values: respecting human dignity, demonstrating responsibility for welfare of others, integrating individual interest in social responsibilities, demonstrating integrity, applying moral principles when making choices and judgements, and seeking peaceful resolution of conflict. Other topics covered in this resource are parent education and the act of communication. Also, ideas for getting a classroom started including strategies for designing a curriculum are highlighted in this text.


This was an extremely useful source that we used in our thesis. We were able to get a strong grasp of how to create a community, what is needed in creating a community, what a false community is, why it is important to create a community, and the classroom as a community. Also, we used the ideas of incorporating classroom meetings and why to place a stress on giving the children a classroom of their choosing. This book also gave information on the nature of children, why blaming children is not effective, why punishment and threats are not effective, and how to solve problems together.


This is a textbook that took research and turned it into ways to help in the classroom. Classroom management, the classroom curriculum, instructional strategies, and motivation were the highlights in this text. Ways to implement the above elements was also included in this resource.


The main piece of information we pulled from this book was the importance of seeing the challenging students as having something to teach. This stressed the importance of making all the students part of the community. Also, this source contributed strategies for developing personal, academic, and social connections. Finally, it gave advice on how to identify disconnected students.

We used this resource as support for our emphasis on family communication. It also contributed ideas on setting up a reading/writing/language arts program, which includes goals and assessments. An emphasis was put on creating tutoring programs and pre-K/K programs. Finally, the book discussed the importance of adding social studies, science, and mathematics to the curriculum.


This text provided information for the importance of creating a learning community within the classroom. It also gave us ideas on how to establish a climate for supporting the learning teams within the classroom. Stein also included ideas on managing conflict within the classroom, team evaluation, articles and resources for dealing with teamwork, and group exercises geared toward older children.


Wells contributed many ideas to our thesis. His book supported our ideas on class meetings. The source provided us information on how and why to incorporate classroom meetings in the classroom. He highlights on using discussion (student led), science inquiry, and leadership skills in each class meeting. The last portion of the book includes a case study and reflection on class meetings.


This book provided us with a definition of character education. It also gave us examples of ways to assess character education (portfolios, diaries, journals, etc.). Finally, this source gave us additional research on the moral climate within the classroom, which included safe environment, room décor, sound, and interaction between teacher and students. The other information covered in this book were ideas on class management, moral leadership, and class projects involving the community.

We used this book as research for intrinsic motivation. It offered us background ideas from many well-known educational theorists. We also used the idea that the teacher plays the role of motivator and manager in the classroom. In addition, this book includes general information on motivation in the classroom, best practices for teaching motivation, responding to student motivation and behavior problems, and case studies on motivation.


This source provided us with more support for our classroom management section of our thesis. It also stressed positive expectations that should be incorporated into the classroom. Finally, the source offered information on how to teach for success, how a future teacher can be happy and successful, and the definition of an effective teacher and how to be one.
Works consulted for lesson plans


This resource provided us with valuable information about the first year of teaching. Our thesis focuses on the first two weeks of school; thus, the resource was helpful because it gave crucial suggestions on beginning procedures. We used the jigsaw puzzle nametag idea and a get-to-know-you interview in which the class's data is collected in a large graph. The book also provided classroom management strategies, suggestions on how to work with parents, saving time, and ending the school year.


This source was geared for older students but provided a lot of affective communication skills. Also, a section of conflicts and resolutions was included. There was a nice teacher handbook to assist the student pamphlets. Finally, this source provided a section on goal achievements.


This text was nicely written in an activity lesson format. There were many icebreakers and energizers that were geared towards establishing management within the classroom.


This extremely useful source was written in a lesson plan format. Activities, handouts, and overhead transparencies are all easily accessible from this book. Highlights in this text are warm-up activities, climate building activities, classroom management procedures, praise and rewards, an individual improvement plan, and “magic” trips. We used the “warm fuzzy” lesson and the “relaxation” lesson for ideas in our thesis.


This is another great resource written by Huggins. The source consists of nine lessons that focus on different aspects of friendship.

This book was set up in an interesting format. Each section had a heading followed by an inspirational quote. Then there are multiple subheadings with activity ideas. The goal of this book is to get each student to know his/her self and then to get to know his/her classmates. Life-skills are also included with each activity. Finally, valuable reproducibles are incorporated throughout the book.


This text was written in activity format. The book is separated into chapters. Each chapter is focused around a different element of character education. The elements covered are responsibility, honesty, accountability, being well-mannered, hard working, being courteous, being tolerant.


This resource was written in an activity format. There were many icebreakers and energizers that could be incorporated into different times of the day and year.


This book used literature as a foundation in setting up lesson ideas and handouts about friendship. The activities were geared for Charlotte's Web and Bridge to Terabithia. The lessons are geared across the curriculum and incorporate reading, mathematics, social studies, music, and creative writing.


Written in activity format, this resource stresses cooperation. The book’s highlights are as follows: cooperation builds group cohesiveness, cooperation is working together, cooperation is builds a positive environment, cooperation is helpful to everyone, and cooperation is powerful.

This book was written in a lesson format. The main focus of this resource was to explore the self. Excellent lesson ideas and reproducibles are included. We used several ideas from this book and placed them within our lessons.