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First day worksheets for 2nd grade

Returning to school is the worst of times. It's so stressful and exhausting (seriously it's so tiring!). But it's also the best of moments! The feeling of a new beginning is absolutely exhilarating. I love that new beginning, where anything is possible and I didn't make a case... Still! I might be in the minority (ok, I'm definitely in the minority!), but one of my favorite parts of the new school year is teaching procedures. Really! I love that feeling of taking a room full of little strangers and shaping them into an effective and efficient class. In Harry Wong's The First Days of School he says, effective teachers have a script ready for the first day of school. Football coaches enter a game with a script of their first 15-20 games played. Meeting and wedding coordinators have a script of what needs to be done. And effective teachers have a script that helps them organize their first days of school. After 12 years in second grade, I designed my first day of school plans in a well-oiled machine. And today I will share these plans with you! Much of what we do on the 1st day of school is decided in advance, as you decide how to establish classroom procedures and routines, plan the guided discovery of school tools, and plan your efficient morning routine. These three posts will provide additional useful information for those planning their first day of school writing. What I do: Regardless of whether or not my class has a theme that year (sometimes I do, sometimes I don't), I put student names on the door. Why: A big fear at the beginning of the school year is: Am I in the right place? When students can find their names before they even enter the door, it helps them feel more settled. In addition, identifiable door decorations help the little ones get back into the room during those first days! What I do: I organize desks in tables of 4 or 5. I turn the desks backwards so that nothing can be stored inside. Students have a box of plastic pencils to store crayons, scissors and glue sticks (all labeled). Books and materials are stored in plastic drawers on the counter or in milk crates next to each table. Why: Nothing can get lost inside the desks if they can't stick stuff in there! This also reduces WAY to playing during class times. And we must never waste class time cleaning up desks. TIP: To attach name tags to desk tops, I swear on these adhesive strips of Really Good Stuff. They make quite well (they come a little bit into the corners), but generally last until May, they don't leave much residue when you pull them up and are much easier to use than the contact card. I know people use clips, Velcro, plastic... but I prefer something more durable. Although, when it's time to rearrange the seating, it means moving the entire desk and not just the name tag! What I do: In the center of each table, I unload a stack of pattern blocks. Not cute, but very effective! Why: Students need to be engaged in an activity as soon as they arrive. This is a huge takeaway from Harry Wong's The First Days of School! But what are you doing on that first morning?? My first year of teaching, I published an article all about me... And I had students in tears. They were so nervous and sure they couldn't read the activity (although they could!), they just broke up. And when you start crying, you start the others! So the lesson learned: nothing academic to begin with! After that I kept it simple: only crayons and coloring. But when I read The First 6 Weeks of School from Responsive Classroom, I decided I didn't want to give them access to crayons before discussing our classroom procedures. That's when I switched to pattern blocks. True, I have not yet established procedures for model blocks, but these are less important than the rules of crayons since we will use crayons every day. And there's not too much they can go wrong with a block of models! In addition, pattern blocks have the added advantage of being opened. Students tend to show up VERY early on the first day, but I am busy greeting parents, showing children where to put their things, calming nerves... There's no time to explain an activity! Pattern blocks don't require any direction, and there's no need for a quick finisher — kids stay engaged until the bell rings! What I do: After the announcements, the lunch count, the participation and the commitment, the first thing I do is teach the bathroom procedures. Why: There's nothing more terrifying than having a nervous belly and not knowing where/when/how to get to the bathroom! What I do: After the bathroom discussion, I teach any silent signal I want to use that year. When I had a pirate livavi classroom, my silent signal was All Hands on deck! Then the children had to say hello and say: Yes, yes cap'n! It's the little things! Why: It doesn't make sense to give directions if you don't have everyone's attention. If you start talking before the kids listen, you can also give each child individual instructions because that's what you'll pretty much end up doing! I use Harry Wong's 3-step approach to teach any procedure in class (which we refer to telling, trying, counting): explain (say): status, explain, model, and demonstrate the procedure. Test (test): test and practice the procedure with supervision and correction. Strengthen (counting): retry, try, practice and strengthen the procedure until it becomes a habit. You can read a lot (a lot!) more about creating procedures and procedures in the classroom in this post. What I do: we clean the blocks and teach them how to go down, how to choose a place and how to sit. Why: This is a procedure that we'll do several times a day all year round, so I'll have them practice until everyone can do it! Once I'm knocked down, I introduce myself and then read a relaxing book. Sometimes the book has to do with the theme of the year (Edward and the Pirates is a favorite) or a book back to school (First Day Jitters, Froggy Goes to School, etc.). What I do: after the I teach procedures to queue and walk in the hall. I teach them my hand signals to stop (palm up), turn around and go back (index fingers make circles), try again (advance them like a policeman directing traffic). Why: After ringing the copier, having the noisy class in the hallway is the best way to create animosity among your colleagues! In Teaching Tools, Fred Jones breaks down exactly how to teach this procedure. You know you're a teacher when you read a chapter on how to walk into a room and you're thinking, this is really good stuff! It's on page 126, if you're interested in taking a look. I have the class in two lines. This keeps me more children close, keeps stragglers to a minimum and limits opportunities for any evil. Once they know my signals, they're ready to practice. I literally accompany the kids around the school and the moment I hear a whisper we turn around, go back a bit (I don't get them back to class), and try again. The first time I see a child touch a wall or annoy a neighbor, we turn around, get up a little bit, and try again. Do they get tired of it? Yes. But it's important that they know what I mean business. As Fred Jones says: —Teaching tools, page 128 I use this corridor practice to show children how to get from our class to the office, where the dining room is located and other important places around the school. Sometimes I put out clues to treasure hunt and we end up in the library for a story, but it didn't always happen. What I do: My school has a morning break. On the first day or two of school, I take my class 15 minutes in advance for our break. I made the kids swing over the bathroom during our training in the hallway and then I'll straight out. Why: I want to make sure everyone is clear about playground expectations before freeing them with 200 other kids. I teach them where and how to line up when the bell rings, review the safety rules, and then let them play. This is also a critical moment of observation. It gives me the opportunity to see who has a lot of friends, who seems lost, who needs some reminders about the appropriate behavior of the playground. I try to crush as many problems as possible before they start! What I do: Before school starts, I sent home a letter. I introduce myself and ask the students to bring 3 things from home to help us get to know them. After the first year, I learned to specify that the items had to be inside a backpack! Why: This helps me get to know the students and helps them feel like an integral part of the group. After the break (and swinging again near the bathroom!), we learn to sit in a circle on the mat. So half the class has the opportunity to share. When I first did it, I crammed the 25 students in 1 sharing session. In the end, no one was listening and they were getting very restless. Doing half in the morning and half the afternoon makes it much more manageable. What I do: I show students where crayons are kept, how to get them, and what to do with broken crayons. Then they practice with a coloring page (copied double-sided so that fast coloring machines have something else to keep them busy). When most of the children finished with the front, we gather down to discuss how well they followed the guidelines. (Here's a whole blog post about how I used Guided Discovery.) Why: I don't want to explain the procedures for crayons until May. I've been doing a lot to slowly and intentionally introduce classroom materials since the 10th. This eliminates so many problems! Responsive Classroom's first 6 weeks of school are the gold standard in using this approach! What I do: Every student who buys school lunch has to enter a 5-digit code. Look away the card keys and each student's number. It doesn't matter if they have lunch at home, even though they know they're going to have lunch at home all year round... EVERYONE practices their number. Why: It's just easier! If they were in the district last year, they have the same number, but there's always panic that they forgot. I printed the numbers on cardboard and collected them to redistribute them the next day. However, it is much easier to print 5 or 6 sets (enough to exceed the Monday of the second week) on paper. Each child (even children with lunch at home) brings their number to lunch. If they don't need it? Great! Do they need it? I'm glad they have it! And then it's thrown away. That way I don't have to worry about that guy who really needs it by losing him and not having him for the next day! After lunch, the children go out to play. I suppose if I was really dedicated, I'd go out for that break too, but honestly at this point, I need a break! I try to get out a few minutes before the bell so the kids can remember when and where to line up. What I do: After halftime, they swing them near the bathroom (again!) and then we get together for a story. Every year I read the same thing: Morris goes to school. It's the right level of humor for second graders and I replaced my name with the teacher's name and they always get a kick out of it! Why: Normally, the second grader has specialty classes right after lunch. However, with budget constraints, our specialist teachers do not work in the first weeks or weeks of school. Disappointment! So reading is a nice transition back from the break. What I do: I go from sitting on the carpet in line to sitting in a circle. Movement is a good way to wake them up! Kids who haven't shared yet get their 3 things from their backpack to show us. Why: This sharing activity helps children feel like valued class members and gives me information about my new students. It also helps to introduce the speaking and listening skills that we will need all year round. of the behaviors of a good audience: how to sit, how to listen, how to ask appropriate follow-up questions. When the speakers have finished sharing, they end with Now I'm ready for questions or comments. This is the same phrase they will use to end sharing the morning meeting in a few days. Then then choose 2 students to ask a question about what they shared. All this requires some directions at first, but they will be professionals in a few weeks! What I do: Similar to what I did with crayons, I present pencils. This time students practice with a maze (with another activity copied on the back for a quick finisher). Why: We will use all-day mattis for 180 days. I want to make sure we get off on the right foot and minimize any future problems. BONUS: Click here to download a FREE matite guided discovery What I do: I teach kids a kind of tag game. Then, after another visit to the bathroom, we go out and play. Why: Normally we won't take an afternoon break, but at this point on the first day the kids are getting restless. This gives us a chance to stretch our legs. Instead of being a free choice like the morning break, the whole class plays the same game. Two of the main causes of withdrawal problems are a) children who get bored and b) quarrel over the rules. This eliminates both headaches. Love tag for second graders. By teaching them how to play, I'm giving them another withdrawal choice and setting clear rules so everyone understands how to play. Prevent all problems! What I do: After our break tag (and another ride near the bathroom), I introduce Morning Work. Let's complete the first page as a class and check out the page for day 2. I'm going to get an answer to all the questions they have about tomorrow's work. Why: I want students to be able to be as independent as possible in the morning so I can tackle all the small tasks on my plate. Then I prepare them in advance on what to do when they first arrive tomorrow (and every day after). What I do: Line leaders have already been introduced to their work, but this is where I teach kids with a job their other responsibilities. I rotate children through weekly jobs and not all children have a job every week. Why: Most class jobs have end-of-day responsibilities: recovering lunch tote with all lunch boxes, picking up mattresses, sharpening knives, unreading cards, stacking chairs, restoring lunch count, cleaning boards, etc. I explain the work and keep the kids going. Children without work are assigned the task of monitoring those who do. He is asked to show me a thumbs up if the work has been completed in the way I specified. Hard to do a whole class practice on this procedure! What I do: Once the end-of-day work is complete, we gather to read aloud. This is when I read from a chapter book. For the first 2 or 3 days, I read Judy Blume's Freckle Juice. Because: our normal routine will be for children with jobs to complete them while the rest of the class listens to the book. I start with Freckle Juice because it's short and fun. And I have freckles, so it's a good way to connect with kids by sharing some of my experiences when I was their age. In addition, our first mathematical unit (which we will start the second week of school) deals with graphics. We graph our hair colors, eye colors, eyes, whether or not we have freckles. This is a good following in that unit. What I do: Normally, I leave the last 5 minutes to pack before the bell. But on the first day, we need about 15 minutes! I explain their homework folders and where to put the documents. Then they get their backpacks and stand near their desks. For the first few days, I have to assign the kids to the right bus. Each bus cyclist is given a form of building paper that corresponds to one of the buses. This is where it gets a little hairy. For children who will be picked up by an older brother (or not sure if they are picked up by an older brother!), I have them outside the classroom against the wall and I make them promise not to move until a brother or sister gets them. For the children on the bus, I take them outside and have them quickly arranged on the right bus. The office staff are out to help direct (bless them!). Then I hasten to wait with the remaining students. When the bell rings, I help the students get to the right places and then run outside to help with the bus lines. Once the last baby is safe and sound on his way home, I practically fall to the ground. I'm exhausted only after typing all this - I can't believe I lived it!! And then I remember I have to do all this again the next day! We have a free download for you of our first day of school script to help you get started with yours. Click below to send the script to your inbox right now! Whether you're an experienced veteran or a brand new teacher, I hope you've found something here to support you on your way back to school (regardless of whether you teach second grade or not)! If you're looking for additional resources to help you with your first day of school, check out (some affiliate links): check out a recent FB Live where I'll take you through our first day of school in second grade! Can't

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