



Hints & Suggestions

for substitute teachers

Tips courtesy of the Substitute Teaching Institute at Utah State University. Additional tips available in the Substitute Teacher Handbooks or by visiting www.stedi.org

It's a good idea to...

1. Be neat in your appearance.
2. Establish your rules and expectations very clearly at the beginning of the day.
3. Follow the lesson plans the teacher has left. Incorporate your own ideas if there is extra time.
4. Know the teacher next door. Introduce yourself so you can call on someone to answer questions about schedules or material for the class throughout the day.
5. Make a seating chart if the teacher has not left one. It is much easier to maintain discipline when you can call students by name.
6. Have a couple of extra pens or pencils with you for students who have “forgotten.” Be sure to collect a student identification card, etc. for collateral.
7. Send only one student at a time when students need to go to the restroom or the library. When the first one returns, a second one may go.
8. Remind students that it is best that you have their correct names so the wrong student doesn't get in trouble and written about to the permanent teacher if a student doesn't respond when you call him/her by name.
9. Never let a class go early for lunch or the next class unless the teacher for whom you are substituting or the teacher next door says it is okay. Some schools have very strict rules about the number of students in the cafeteria/hallways at a time.
10. Be assertive to show your authority. Use statements such as:
 - “I need you to start reading now.”
 - “I want everyone to pass their papers forward.”
 - “I don't need...”
 - “I don't want...”
11. Not let students manipulate you by protesting or saying, “We never do that!” Calmly tell them, “I understand, but today we will read aloud instead of silently.”
12. Walk around the room. Don't just sit by the desk, especially during independent work, or a test. Students will be less likely to talk or cheat when you are close by them.
13. Have all classroom sets returned before the entire class leaves.



Being **A** Prepared

and professional substitute teacher

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Prior to Entering the Classroom

- If possible, arrive at least 20 minutes prior to the beginning of class.
- Report to the principal or office to let them know you have arrived.

In the Classroom Before School

- Put your name on the board, then familiarize yourself with the room.
- Read through lesson plans left by the permanent teacher and identify books, handouts, and papers.

Throughout the Day

- Do your best to follow the lesson plans and carry out the assigned duties left by the permanent teacher.
- You may enter a classroom where you are unable to locate the lesson plans or necessary materials. In such a case, act quickly, calmly, and confidently. By utilizing materials and ideas in your SubPack, you can still have a productive day.

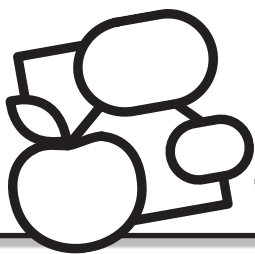
Before the Students Leave

- If the teacher has classroom sets (calculators, scissors, books, etc.), be sure to have them all returned before the students leave the room.
- Challenge students to recall, and list on the board, projects and topics they have studied that day.

The “I understand” Technique

There are two words that can stop most protests from any student and let you take control of the situation. These words are, “I understand.”

- If a student says, “But that’s not fair!” you can say, “I understand, however, that’s the way it is.”
- If a student says, “I hate you!” you can say, “I understand, however, I am the teacher today and you are expected to follow my directions.”
- If a student says, “This assignment is stupid,” you can say, “I understand, nevertheless you will need to have it completed for class tomorrow.”
- I understand: Two simple words that no one can argue with.

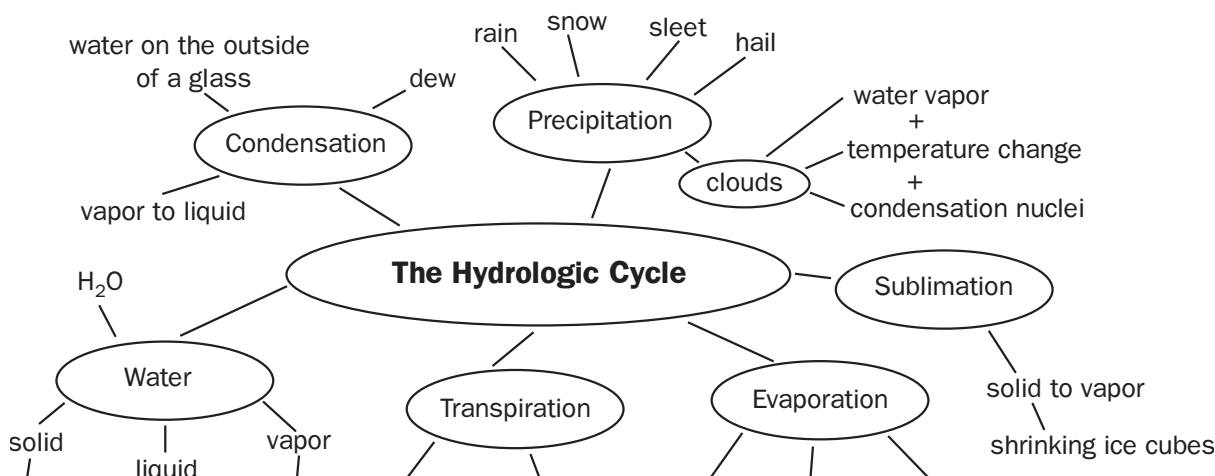


Teaching with Concept Mapping

Concept mapping can be used to introduce a topic. It can also be used to evaluate what students have learned at the conclusion of a lesson.

As an introductory exercise, concept mapping provides you with information regarding what the students already know. You won't waste time covering the material they are already familiar with and can concentrate your efforts on presenting new information.

Example of a Concept Map:



Concept mapping usually involves placing a word or idea in the middle of the board or on a piece of paper. Students then share what they know or associate with this concept. The information volunteered by the students is recorded with lines drawn to show how different concepts are related to one another. Concept maps can either be developed by the entire class, in small groups, or on an individual basis.



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