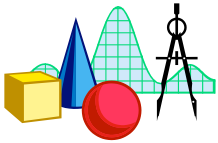


# **OMNISM**

## **OISE/UT Mentoring of New Instructors in Science and Mathematics**

**A Pilot Project with the  
Toronto District School Board**



**Tips to Survive your First Year of  
Teaching  
Secondary Mathematics and Science**



**Written by  
First Year Teachers for First Year  
Teachers**

# Tips to Survive your First Year of Teaching Secondary Mathematics and Science

## Purpose of Pilot Project

During the academic year 2004-2005 a pilot project between OISE/UT and TDSB was designed and delivered by Judith Burt and Silvana Simone to support new teachers of TDSB who graduated from the Faculty of Education.

The program aimed to:

- support and address needs of new teachers;
- continue programming beyond a pre-service year of education;
- provide critical data that could help shape effective induction projects, inform our practice at the Faculty;
- offer an on-line conference where teachers can post questions, ideas, concerns to the rest of the group and
- offer new teachers the opportunity to become reflective practitioners and set a path for their professional growth.

One of the goals of this year's project was also to amalgamate strategies and ideas from the session to share with other new teachers joining the profession.

Our vision for this project is that this beginning will lay the groundwork to have new teachers become involved in work with new teachers, becoming mentors themselves and eventually role model associate teachers. We hope that this will pave the course for further professional development and leadership training.

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## HOW TO PREPARE FOR WHEN ABSENT FROM SCHOOL What to Leave for a Supply Teacher

### Paperwork to leave:

- Map of school.
- Emergency Instructions
- Room numbers and Timing of Classes
- Attendance instructions, seating plan,
- Clear instructions for Activities and Sign in/out Sheet (if system is usually used)
- Notes about specific students if necessary
- Handouts "photocopied" if possible, textbook
- Name of person to contact if necessary (e.g. department head, teacher "next door")

### Lesson Ideas:

- Keep it relatively simple – easy to do at their seats
- If library is OK, prepare research questions or guiding worksheet
- Work should be meaningful and timely
- Design it to be finished & collected within period
- Video with handout is a good idea
- Leave extra puzzles or mini activities in case
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### Other Preparations

- Warn students about your absence or what will be expected of them the next day
- Warn other teacher such as CL or ACL
- Choose best supply available

**\*Have emergency lesson plan tucked away in case planning is impossible.**

## Managing the Classroom Environment

- Use a washroom sign-out sheet instead of each student asking for permission.
- To minimize chronic chatting, alter seating plan.
- To address inappropriate reoccurring behaviour, establish a 'contract' detailing what is appropriate with some 'reward' for good behaviour.
- Late comers must sign in and give a reason for being late. If a student is late 3 times, a phone call home will be expected.
- Deal with discipline issues away from the rest of the class.
- Re-arrange students seating as needed but move entire class as to not centre out individuals.
- Never yell or let them get to you.
- To minimize disruption during class, have both a "sign-in" binder and a "notes" binder close to the door. That way late arriving students can quietly join the class without interrupting.
- Have a In/Out log book with the following headings: Date, Period, Last Name, First Name, Reason, Time (In/Out), Note Received (x)
- Use a seating plan to learn names, rearrange and organize activities.
- Try various groupings – you will never know how it works, until you try it!
- Charging students for cursing (then give money to charity).
- Talk to teachers who have had problematic students in previous years.
- Make sure you have everyone's attention before starting.
- Notice when the kids are bored and change what you are doing.
- Use boy/girl or strong/weak seating plans.

## Building an Inclusive Classroom

- **Community Circle**
  - to build inclusion
  - reinforce mutual agreements
  - forum for discussion
- In a chart format generate ideas of what the Ideal Classroom would look like, sound like and feel like.
- Use a t-table to collaboratively establish the Mutual Agreements for:
  - attentive listening
  - appreciation and no put downs
  - mutual respect
  - right to pass/participation

Reference the chart when needed.  
Model the mutual agreement yourself

- Speak one-on-one with students.
- Let students have input i.e. take responsibility.
- Learn student names ASAP!!! Address each student by name as they enter the classroom.
- Parental involvement.
- Develop good relationship with students.
- Be genuinely interested in topic.
- Talk to the students. Ask their advice. Give choices.
- Warm – up puzzles provides time to take attendance / organize.

## Making Sense of things I learned at the Faculty:

## Teaching & Assessing

- Use coloured handouts – students find them more interesting and speeds up search time.
- Wait for students to stop talking before starting lesson.
- Use overhead and handouts for notes that contain blanks especially when more material needs to be covered in one lesson. More material can be covered than using the blackboard.
- To increase student productivity, do a 10 minute brain teaser during the class as a break.
- Use review games every Friday.
- Never allow students to talk over you. Use "wait time".
- Technology usage to teach concepts (if they use it properly).
- Send a problem

## Assessment Strategies

- Pre-assign homework questions that will be written up next day. This gets them started and provides an introduction for class each day.
- For applied-level students, provide bonus marks for finishing specific tasks within a given time.
- Update the marks regularly. Students will realize the importance of submitting assignments on time or submitting them at all.
- Student accountability for learning (groups, pair share, class share).
- Individual student conferences (shows them you care).
- Student homework take-up.
- Homework quiz every week (open notebook).

### **Advice from someone who knows...**

#### **Preparing for your first Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA)**

- This process may vary in different schools.
  - The best advice is to tap into supportive assistance by speaking about the process to another teacher, particularly one who has done the assessment with the same administrator, about her/his experience.
  - Find out what you need to do before, during and after the appraisal. This will make the task more manageable!
  - For more information, guidelines and forms, please visit <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/appraise.html>
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### **Websites to definitely add to your Favourites!**

**Our teachers suggested the following web sites as ones they often used during their first year teaching:**

#### **Ontario Association of Mathematics Education**

[www.oame.on.ca](http://www.oame.on.ca)

The website contains resources and other important useful links for Mathematics teachers, conference listings and other important releases in the area of Mathematics. Be sure to check it periodically.

#### **Science Teachers' Association of Ontario**

[www.stao.ca](http://www.stao.ca)

The website contains resources and other important useful links for Science teachers. Consult this site periodically for upcoming events of the association.

#### **Ask Jeeves**

[www.ask.ca](http://www.ask.ca)

This website addresses questions or searches for key words and phrases. The question "*What is the quadratic formula?*" will result in a variety of sites dealing with the quadratic formula.

#### **RubiStar**

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>

The website offers teachers a free tool to help make quality rubrics for various types of project-based learning activities.