

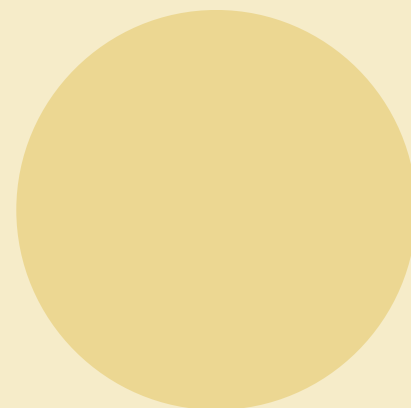
THE ULTIMATE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL SURVIVAL KIT



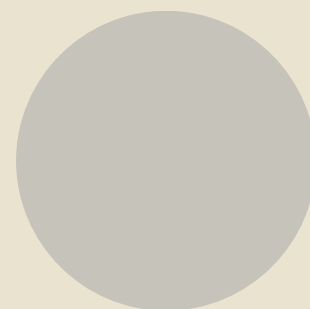
Everything Teachers Need for a
Smooth, Organized, Stress-Free Start

by Melba Ande

Teacher to CEO Blueprint



**You Can Do
Hard Things**



How to Use This Survival Kit

Welcome, Teacher! This kit is your go-to resource for conquering the first week of school with confidence. Whether you're a first-year teacher or a seasoned pro, use these tools, checklists, and scripts to create a welcoming, organized, and purposeful classroom from day one.

This Kit Includes:

- A 5-day pacing guide with daily focus areas
- Room setup & supply checklists
- Community-building activities & icebreakers
- Classroom management scripts (what to say and when)
- Procedures & routines launch sequence
- Parent communication templates
- Self-care reminders for YOU

Pro Tip: Print and laminate the checklists so you can reuse them every year!

5-Day First Week Pacing Guide

Use this at-a-glance schedule to plan your instruction, relationship-building, and procedures across the week.

DAY 1 Monday	DAY 2 Tuesday	DAY 3 Wednesday	DAY 4 Thursday	DAY 5 Friday
Welcome & First Impressions	Classroom Norms & Expectations	Academic Routines Begin	Community Building	Review & Celebrate!
Intro yourself	Co-create rules	Materials intro	Team challenge	Fun norms quiz
Room tour	Morning routine	Notebook setup	Read-aloud	Reflection
Assign seats	Pencil procedure	Head a paper	Kindness norms	Letter home
Bathroom rules	Icebreaker	First task	Goal-setting	Friday Freewrite
Name tags	Partner intros	Exit ticket	Share out	Shout-outs

Remember: The first week is about RELATIONSHIPS and ROUTINES — not curriculum. Go slow to go fast!

Room Setup Checklist

Complete these tasks BEFORE students arrive. Check each item as you go.

PHYSICAL SETUP	ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP
☐ Desks/tables arranged & labeled	☐ Welcome sign on door
☐ Teacher desk organized	☐ Student name tags/cubbies
☐ Supply station set up	☐ Class schedule posted
☐ Pencil sharpener accessible	☐ Rules/norms chart posted
☐ Library/book corner ready	☐ Classroom jobs chart
☐ Morning work bin placed	☐ Technology charged & tested
☐ Turn-in tray labeled	☐ Parent contact sheet ready
☐ Calendar & anchor charts up	☐ First-day activity on desks
☐ Word wall started	☐ Seating chart printed
☐ Emergency info posted	☐ 'About Me' display area

Teacher Supply Checklist

Stock your cart or supply station before the first day.

CLASSROOM SUPPLIES	PERSONAL MUST-HAVES
☐ Sticky notes (multiple sizes)	☐ Tissues (2+ boxes)
☐ Fine-tip dry erase markers	☐ Hand sanitizer
☐ Red pens for quick marking	☐ Bandages & first aid basics
☐ Tape (scotch, masking, packing)	☐ Extra pencils (student stash)
☐ Scissors	☐ Whiteboard eraser
☐ Stapler + extra staples	☐ Positive stickers/stamps

Teacher Supply Checklist (continued)

CLASSROOM SUPPLIES	PERSONAL MUST-HAVES
■ Paper clips & binder clips	■ Index cards
■ Timer (classroom & personal)	■ File folders (labeled)
■ Printer paper (500 sheets min.)	■ Clipboard
■ Laminator pouches	■ Personal snacks & water bottle

Pro Tip: Keep a labeled "go bin" of these essentials packed at home so you're never caught short on a busy morning.

Community Building Activities

Use these activities to help students feel safe, seen, and excited about your class. Choose 2–3 to spread throughout the first week.

1. Two Truths and a Lie (10 min)	Students write 3 statements about themselves — 2 true, 1 false. Partners guess the lie. Perfect for Day 1 or 2.
2. Classroom Treaty (20 min)	Students brainstorm the classroom they WANT to be in. Teacher facilitates, synthesizes into a shared agreement, and every student signs. Hang it prominently all year.
3. 'I Am From' Poem (30 min)	Using a template, students write a poem about where they come from — food, music, family, neighborhood. Share with the group and display.
4. Marshmallow Tower Challenge (30 min)	Groups of 4 compete to build the tallest freestanding structure using spaghetti, tape, string, and a marshmallow on top. Teaches teamwork and growth mindset.

5. Morning Meeting Format (Daily, 10–15 min)

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
Greeting	Students greet each other by name — builds safety and recognition daily.
Sharing	1–2 students share something from home; classmates ask questions.
Activity	Quick game or brain challenge — energizes the group for learning.
Morning Message	Teacher writes a daily message; students read and respond together.

Procedures & Routines Launch Sequence

Teach one or two procedures per day using the **I DO – WE DO – YOU DO** model. Practice makes permanent!

Week 1 Procedures to Teach (in order):

- How to enter the classroom & begin morning work
- Bathroom/water break signals
- How to sharpen a pencil
- When and how to get supplies
- Lining up and hallway expectations
- How to submit/turn in work
- Group work norms and signal for attention
- Dismissal routine

Teaching Procedure Framework:

I DO	Teacher models the procedure completely, narrating each step out loud.
WE DO	Whole class practices together. Teacher gives real-time feedback.
YOU DO	Students practice independently. Retrain immediately if off-track.
REVIEW	Revisit the procedure the next day before students need it again.

Key Insight: Never assume a procedure is obvious. Every routine must be explicitly taught, practiced, and celebrated.

Classroom Management Scripts

When you don't know what to say, use these scripts. Say them calmly, clearly, and with confidence.

Getting Attention	"Eyes on me in 3... 2... 1. Thank you for your focus." Pause and wait for full attention before continuing.
Redirecting Behavior	"I notice you're having a hard time right now. I believe you can make a better choice. What do you need to be successful?"
Positive Narration	"I love how table 3 is showing me they're ready. Pencils down, eyes up. That's exactly what it looks like."
Private Redirect	"I'm going to stop by in a moment. Let's talk quietly." Crouch to eye level, low voice, no audience.
Resetting After Difficulty	"We're going to try that again. Take a breath. You've got this. I am on your team."
Transition Signal	"You have 2 minutes to wrap up. In 2 minutes I'll need pencils down and eyes up."
Celebrating the Class	"The way this class showed up today? That's exactly who we are. I'm proud of every one of you."

Parent Communication Templates

Send these communications home during the first week to build trust with families from the very start.

Welcome Letter — Send Home Day 1

Dear Families,

It is my absolute honor to welcome your child to our classroom this year! I am thrilled to be their teacher and fully committed to making this a year filled with growth, joy, and meaningful learning.

In our classroom, every child is known, valued, and challenged. I believe all students can succeed when they feel safe and supported — and that starts with us: teachers and families working together.

Here's what to expect this first week: We will be learning routines, building relationships, and setting the tone for an incredible year. Curriculum will ramp up gradually so students have space to feel comfortable first.

The best way to reach me is: [YOUR EMAIL / CLASS APP]. I look forward to partnering with you!

Warmly, [YOUR NAME]

End-of-Week Family Update — Send Home Day 5

Week 1 Family Update

What a first week! Here's a quick peek at what your child experienced:

We learned: [2-3 routines/procedures you introduced]

We built community by: [name the activity]

Something wonderful I noticed: [positive observation]

COMING UP NEXT WEEK: [brief preview]

With gratitude, [Your Name]

Self-Care Survival Guide for Teachers

The first week is a marathon, not a sprint. Take care of yourself so you can pour into your students. **You matter too.**

DO THIS	AND THIS
Sleep 7-8 hours. Non-negotiable.	Keep a 'wins' journal — daily entry.
Prep your lunch the night before.	Text a teacher friend your highlight.
Leave school by your set time at least 3 days.	Have a decompression ritual after school.
Say NO to extra commitments this week.	Celebrate small victories out loud.
Ask a colleague for help — always.	Separate work phone time from home time.
Walk outside for 10 minutes each day.	Prep Sunday to free up your evenings.
Eat a real breakfast.	Remind yourself: You are enough.

"You can't pour from an empty cup. Take care of yourself first."

My First Week Notes & Reflections

Use this space to capture observations, wins, things to adjust, and ideas for next year.

Day 1

Wins:

What to Adjust:

Day 2

Wins:

What to Adjust:

Day 3

Wins:

What to Adjust:

Day 4

Wins:

What to Adjust:

Day 5

Wins:

What to Adjust:

Things to Do Differently Next Year

Capture the lessons learned while they're fresh — future you will thank you.

YOU WERE MADE FOR THIS.

Every child in your room is lucky to have a teacher who shows up this prepared,
this intentional, and this caring.

Go make it a great first week.

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