

Positive
Parent
Communication

Tools, Tips, and Forms



K. DUPRE TEACHERTRAP.COM

POSITIVE PARENT COMMUNICATION

.....Toolbox Table of Contents.....

RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Parent Surveys	A brief survey that invites parents to share a little bit about their child and family. *Plus a Mid-Year and End-of-Year Survey!
Back to School 20-Day Challenge	Set yourself up for a successful year of parent interactions with a positive phone call home for each and every student.
Phone Call Tips	Tips for keeping that first phone call short, sweet, and positive!
Parent Communication Log	A simple log to help you keep track of parent communication throughout the year. (Copy to the back of the survey and keep both together!)
Tips for Talking to Parents	Some basic strategies for how to speak in ways that invite cooperation and understanding.
Clear & Helpful Feedback	Tips for giving feedback in ways that parents will be open to hearing and able to understand.
Be Descriptive, Not Judgmental	Examples of how to share information without putting parents on the defensive.
Powerful Praise	Examples of clear and specific praise that can be applied to any child.
Positive Mini-Notes	Highlight great choices and behavior with these handy printable notes.
Ready-to-go Reminders	Ready-to-go printable reminders to help parents remember important events and classroom happenings.
Unfinished Work Notice	A handy note that can take the place of frustrating conversations with students and parents!
Grades Chart	A visual explanation of the meaning behind letter and number grades.
A Note About Grades	A simple letter that can be used to help students understand the meaning of number and letter grades.
Using Visual Guides	Samples and templates that can be used to give parents a visual representation of their child's progress.
Student Progress Summary	Two examples of a Student Progress Summary that parents will actually understand without confusing scores or unfamiliar language.
Parent Conference Guides	Detailed guides and scripts for positive parent conversations and conferences.
When a Parent is Angry	Tips on talking to parents when they are upset or angry.

Family Survey

Dear Family,

I am so excited to be your child's teacher this year! I am dedicated to the happiness, health, safety, and academic growth of your child and I look forward to our partnership. Please take a moment to share a little bit about your child and help me get to know your family. Thank you!

Child's Name: _____ Age: ____ Date of Birth: _____

Who lives in the home with your child? (Please list siblings, parents, grandparents, etc.)

What does your family like to do together for fun?

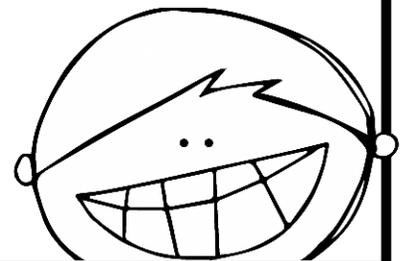
What traditions are most important in your family? (birthdays, celebrations, holidays, religious, etc.)

How would you describe your child's personality?

What are your child's strengths? What concerns do you have?

How would you describe your child's experiences in school so far? (positive, negative, challenging, etc.)

What are your goals for your child this school year?



Mid-Year Parent Survey

Dear Parents,

Please take a moment to fill out this survey and let me know how you feel about your child's school experience! This important information helps me make improvements and better serve all families and students. Your feedback is greatly appreciated!

Thank you!

Disagree *Somewhat Disagree* *Somewhat Agree* *Agree*

Read each statement and check the box of your choice.

		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>
1	My child is valued, respected, and cared about at school.				
2	My child is valued, respected, and cared about by the teacher.				
3	My child is receiving a high-quality, rigorous education.				
4	I am well informed about classroom and school events.				
5	I am well informed about my child's behavior at school.				
6	I am well informed about my child's academic progress.				
7	I am well informed about the areas in which my child is struggling, as well as ways to help at home.				
8	My child's teacher is positive and friendly.				
9	My child enjoys school and looks forward to learning.				
10	I am pleased with my child's school experience.				

What do you like most about your child's school, teacher, and/or educational experience?

What improvements would you like to see in your child's school, teacher, and/or educational experience?

End-of-Year Parent Survey

Dear Parents,

Please take a moment to fill out this survey and let me know how you feel about your child's school experience! This important information helps me make improvements and better serve all families and students. Your feedback is greatly appreciated!

Thank you!

Disagree *Somewhat Disagree* *Somewhat Agree* *Agree*

Read each statement and check the box of your choice.

		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>
1	My child was valued, respected, and cared about at school.				
2	My child was valued, respected, and cared about by the teacher.				
3	My child received a high-quality, rigorous education.				
4	I was well informed about classroom and school events.				
5	I was well informed about my child's behavior at school.				
6	I was well informed about my child's academic progress.				
7	I was well informed about the areas in which my child was struggling, as well as ways to help at home.				
8	My child's teacher was positive and friendly.				
9	My child enjoyed school and looked forward to learning.				
10	I was pleased with my child's school experience.				

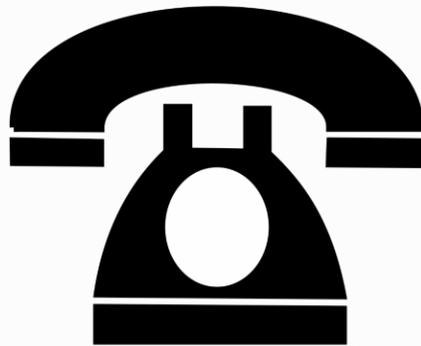
What did you most like about your child's school, teacher, and/or educational experience?

What improvements would you like to see in your child's school, teacher, and/or educational experience?

BACK TO SCHOOL 20-DAY CHALLENGE

The 20-day challenge is a simple and powerful way to set up positive parent relationships from the beginning of the school year. The idea came from my principal, who challenged all of us to make one positive phone call home for every single student in our class within the first 20 days of school.

It sounded easy but can be tricky when you're dealing with all the other thousands of to-do's those first few weeks of school. The best way to accomplish this goal is to commit to making 3 phone calls a day as soon as the school day ends. Before you know it, you've made a positive connection with every parent!

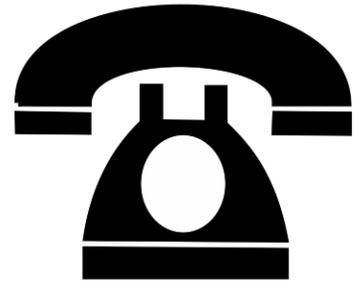


By making these calls, you insure that your first contact with parents is positive. When I first did this, I couldn't believe how many parents told me that this was the first positive phone call they'd ever received from a teacher about their child. Notes and emails are great, but there's something special about the phone call. And NO, leaving a message on the answering machine doesn't count!

Don't forget to record your calls on the Parent Communication Log!

PHONE CALL CHALLENGE TIPS

Because we're all tired at the end of the day, it's helpful to have a script to follow to make the phone calls EASY! Rewrite the script so it works for you! I've also added some ideas for positive statements.



It's important to BE HONEST, but also POSITIVE. Don't let yourself bring up concerns of any kind during this phone call, although it might be tempting.

“Good afternoon, this is (your name) from (your school). I’m (child’s name) teacher this year and I was just calling to introduce myself and tell you how happy I am to have (child) in my class this year.”

Positive Statement Ideas

Your child:

- “Is so enthusiastic about learning!”
- “Brings a great energy to the classroom.”
- “Is so helpful.”
- “Is such a hard-worker.”
- “Has such a great smile!”
- “Is so friendly with everyone.”
- “Gives such great effort!”
- “Keeps us all smiling!”
- “Is such a curious learner.”
- “Is a great reader.”
- “Has such a mathematical mind.”
- “Is so responsible and organized.”

Parent Communication Log

Don't forget to make note of your call on the “Parent Communication Log.” This is a great way to track your interactions across the school year. And why not start with that first positive phone call!

TIP: Copy the Parent Survey and Communication Log front-to-back so that you have all the handy info in one place. Plus, parents can fill out the top for you and you'll have their phone and email ready-to-go!

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

STUDENT: _____

Dear Family,
I will use this form to keep track of our communication throughout the school year. Please fill out the top portion of this page. Thank you!



	NAME	Relationship to Child	BEST PHONE	EMAIL
Contact 1				
Contact 2				

DATE	TOPIC / CONVERSATION	FOLLOW-UP
	  	
	  	
	  	
	  	
	  	
	  	
	  	
	  	
	  	
	  	

TIPS FOR TALKING TO PARENTS

Parents need to know that you think their child is lovable and capable. Before a parent can truly hear anything critical, they need to see that you value their child and truly want what's best for him or her.



"Do I really have to love every kid?" YES! If you want that child to learn and you want that child's parents to value your opinions then you have to LOVE them, even the tough parts. Sometimes you have to DIG DEEP, but in the end it's worth it.

<p>Start With the Positive (And Mean It!)</p>	<p>Even with the most difficult child, there is ALWAYS something positive. In any conversation, make sure to highlight these things FIRST to reassure parents that you love and care for their child.</p>
<p>Give Information (Not Judgments)</p>	<p>There is a big difference between "Your child is terrible at math," and "Your child scored a 60 on the last math test." I know that teachers would never say that a child is terrible at math, but we do say many other things that come across as judgmental.</p>
<p>Follow Information With Questions</p>	<p>Rather than saying "Sam never pays attention," try "During lessons, I noticed Sam is often looking around or distracted. Then afterwards, he asks to hear the directions again. Do you notice anything similar at home?" Now you've opened the door for parents to tell you about the potential problem instead of you making a judgment call.</p>
<p>Speak Like You're a TEAM</p>	<p>Parents need to know that you are in this together with them and that you have the same goals - to help their child. Use "we" rather than "you." Instead of "YOU need to read to your child more," try "Let's make a plan for how WE can help Soriah with her reading. I can work with her in a small group everyday. Can you read with her for fifteen minutes every evening?"</p>
<p>Value Parent's Ideas</p>	<p>For many parents, talking with a teacher is an uncomfortable experience. Some parents had bad school experiences of their own or they might just be overwhelmed with other challenges in their lives. Always validate their opinions and ideas. They need to feel like you trust their judgment as a parent (even if you really don't). Add on and offer suggestions, too, but never dismiss a parent's contribution.</p>

CLEAR LANGUAGE & HELPFUL FEEDBACK

Always have a “script” in mind when you are approaching a difficult conversation with a parent. Start with something positive, give information, ask a question (or two) and end by planning solutions as a team. Below are some examples of how this works. After a few conversations, it becomes a habit!

Instead of:	Try:
<p>Macy isn't good at math. She's really far behind. You need to work with her at home and maybe find a tutor.</p>	<p><u>Start Positive:</u> Macy has a great attitude about learning and works hard in math.</p> <p><u>Give Info:</u> She is struggling with the recent skills we've learned. She scored a 60 on our last test and a 50 on the test before.</p> <p><u>Ask a Question:</u> Have you noticed her struggling with the math homework at all?</p> <p><u>Be a Team:</u> I was thinking we could help her by giving her extra support at home and at school. At school, we can _____. And maybe at home you could _____.</p>
<p>Joe's writing is atrocious. His handwriting is so messy and he doesn't use any punctuation. You need to practice with him at home.</p>	<p><u>Start Positive:</u> Joe is so creative and tells such great stories, but he's having trouble getting them down on paper.</p> <p><u>Give Info:</u> Here is a sample of the kind of writing I'd like to see him work towards. Here are a few samples of his recent writing.</p> <p><u>Ask a Question:</u> Has he said anything about how he feels about writing?</p> <p><u>Be a Team:</u> I was thinking we could help him by giving him extra support at home and at school. At school, we can _____. And maybe at home you could _____.</p>
<p>Paul is lazy. You need to talk to him about putting in effort at school or he's going to fail this grade.</p>	<p><u>Start Positive:</u> Paul is such a bright boy. When I work with him in a small group he catches on so quickly. Even though he's so bright, his grades aren't reflecting his capabilities.</p> <p><u>Give Info:</u> For example, I know he's a good reader, but on our last reading test he turned it in after only 10 minutes. It had no name, the writing was hard to read, and the questions were only partially answered. He scored a 65 even though I know he could do much better.</p> <p><u>Ask a Question:</u> You know Paul better than anyone, what do you think is going on here?</p> <p><u>Be a Team:</u> I was thinking we could help him by giving him extra support at home and at school. At school, we can _____. And maybe at home you could _____.</p>

BE DESCRIPTIVE, NOT JUDGMENTAL

Especially when you are frustrated, it's difficult to come up with productive ways to express your thoughts to a parent. Always focus on giving examples of the behavior you've seen rather than sharing your opinion about the child's personality or traits.

Instead of a Judgment	Try Giving Information (And let parents make their own judgment call.)
Irresponsible	"Didn't turn in last 2 assignments or homework."
Hyperactive	"Always moving and making noises."
Rude	"Told another student "Just go away, idiot."
Bossy	"Upset her group by taking over the project."
Dishonest	"Said she lost the note but later we found it hidden in her desk."
Failing a subject	<u>Show</u> latest tests or test scores.
Never pays attention	"Asks me to repeat directions many times."
Doesn't want to learn	"Drew pictures during one lesson, played with pen in another."
Lazy	<u>Show</u> parents samples of incomplete or messy work.
Messy	<u>Show</u> parents examples of messy work.
Distracting	"Made a paper football and flicked it during math."
Slow	"Hasn't finished the last 3 assignments on time."
Uncooperative	"Turned her back to her small group and stayed that way."
Aggressive	"Hit another child for taking his pencil."
Disrespectful	"Told another teacher to 'shut up.'"

Whenever possible, SHOW examples (such as tests, journals, or recent work) or GIVE examples of specific incidents that will highlight the problem.

POWERFUL PRAISE

When you are struggling with a particular student, sometimes it's hard to come up with positive things to say. Here is a list of ideas to help get you thinking. Remember, always be sincere!

Category	Examples
Work Habits	Gives great effort
	Work is always neat and complete
	Follows directions well
Social Behaviors	Friendly to everyone
	Helpful or kind
	Cares about friends
	Always respectful
	Very cooperative
Academic	Shows great leadership in class
	Excels in math, reading, science, etc.
	Loves math, reading, science, etc.
General	Always turns in homework
	Creative thinker
	Artistic
	Positive attitude
	Always smiling
	Athletic
	Always on time
Organized	
Gives the best hugs!	

POSITIVE MINI-NOTES

The Mini-Notes are an important part of my classroom. I copy them onto brightly colored paper, chop them up, and store them in pockets on my whiteboard so that I can easily grab them.

I've found that if I don't have something like this ready to go, I forget to send home those incredibly important positive notes.

I've included Positive Behavior Notes for reinforcing good choices plus some handy Reminder Notes that can be used to give parents a heads up about upcoming parties, field trips, etc. Don't forget to sign your name! I do it before I run my copies so it's one less thing to remember.



How to Make the Most of Positive Behavior Notes

Use the notes for behaviors a child does not normally show. (Not for the behaviors that they always do.) I use these notes to HIGHLIGHT when a student is showing a behavior I've been wanting to see from that particular student. What is the trait or behavior you are trying to grow in that child? Look for it and celebrate it! When a student who is normally off-task shows great focus one day (or even during one lesson), I grab a "Hard-Worker" note! When a student who typically rushes through work takes their time, I grab a "Quality Work Alert!"

By focusing on traits and behaviors you are trying to grow, you help change the way the child sees him/herself. (And can help change the way parents see their child, too!) Of course, it's fine to celebrate a student who is always a hard-worker, but I find that these notes are most effective when used to recognize less common behaviors in a child.

NOTE: I've also included notes without clipart for older students.



POSITIVE ATTITUDE!

Cheers! Today, _____ had a great attitude even when things didn't go as planned! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by being happy and helpful!

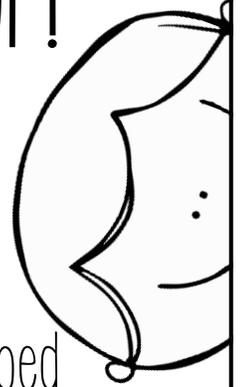
Just had to share!



DIDN'T GIVE UP!

Great News! Today, _____ kept trying even when things got tough! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by giving lots of effort and not giving up!

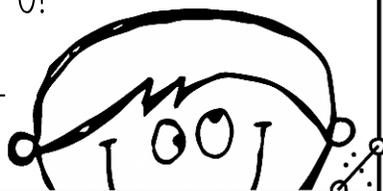
Just had to share!



HARD WORKER ALERT!

Whoa!! Today, _____ worked so hard! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by staying focused, finishing work, and doing his/her very best!

Just had to share!



GREAT PROBLEM-SOLVER!

Guess what?! Today, _____ was really thinking! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by noticing problems and solving them quickly and quietly!

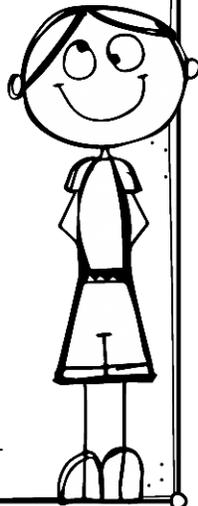
Just had to share!



QUALITY WORK ALERT!

Yes!! Today, _____ did amazing work! Your child set a great example for others by working hard, taking time, and producing outstanding work!

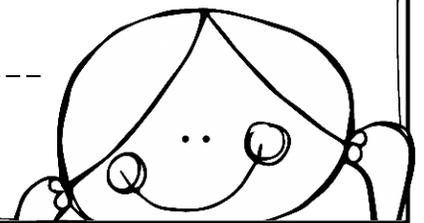
Just had to share!



GREAT FRIEND!

Nice!! Today, _____ was a great friend! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by being kind and helpful to everyone!

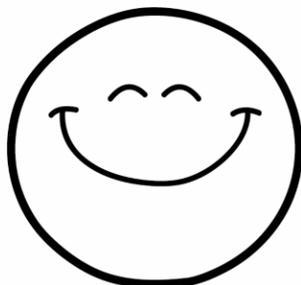
Just had to share!



GOAL CONQUERED!

Success!! Today, _____ reached a big goal!

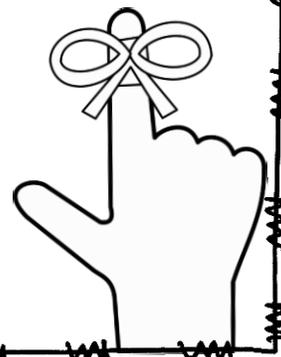
Just had to share!



REMINDER!

PLEASE BE SURE TO...

Thanks so much!



POSITIVE ATTITUDE!

Cheers! Today, _____ had a great attitude even when things didn't go as planned! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by being happy and helpful!

Just had to share!

DIDN'T GIVE UP!

Great News! Today, _____ kept trying even when things got tough! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by giving lots of effort and not giving up!

Just had to share!

HARD WORKER ALERT!

Whoa! Today, _____ worked so hard! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by staying focused, finishing work, and doing his/her very best!

Just had to share!

GREAT PROBLEM-SOLVER!

Guess what?! Today, _____ was really thinking! Your child helped make our classroom a great place to learn by noticing problems and solving them quickly and quietly!

Just had to share!

QUALITY WORK ALERT!

Yes!! Today, _____
did amazing work! Your child set
a great example for others by
working hard, taking time,
and producing outstanding
work!

Just had to share!

GREAT FRIEND!

Nice!! Today, _____ was a
great friend! Your child helped
make our classroom a great place
to learn by being kind and helpful to
everyone!

Just had to share!

GOAL CONQUERED!

Success!! Today, _____
reached a big goal!

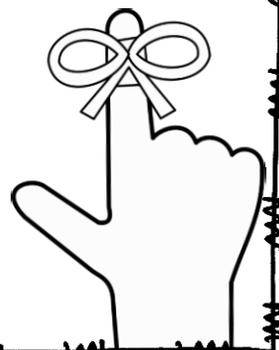
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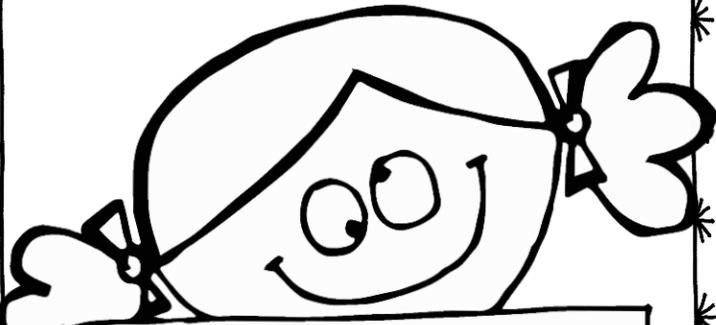
REMINDER!

Please be sure to...

Thanks so much!

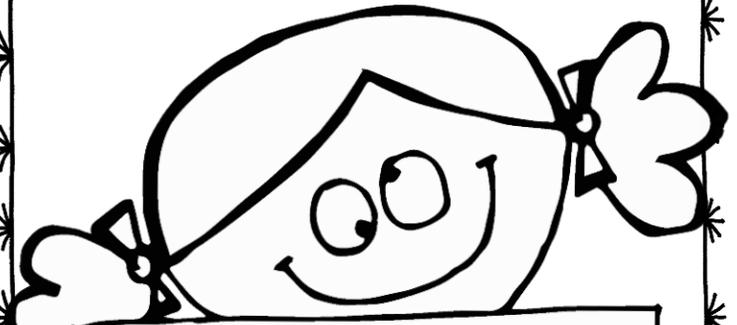


REMINDER!



FIELD TRIP
TOMORROW!

REMINDER!



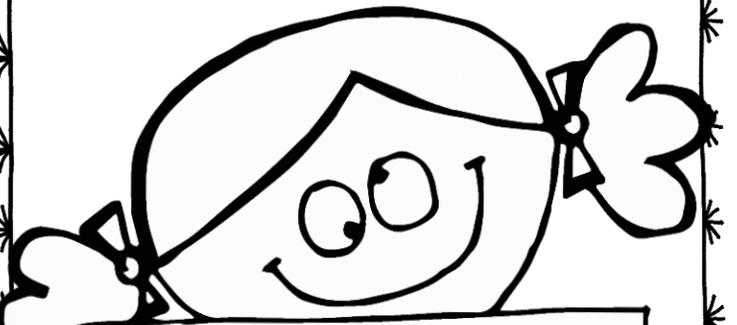
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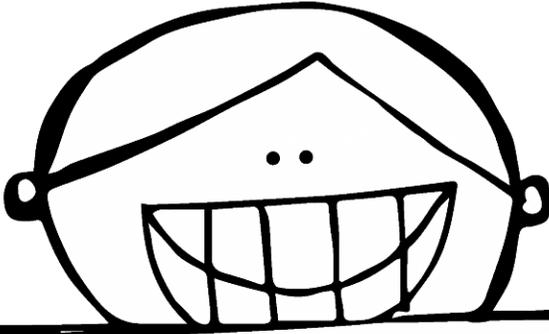
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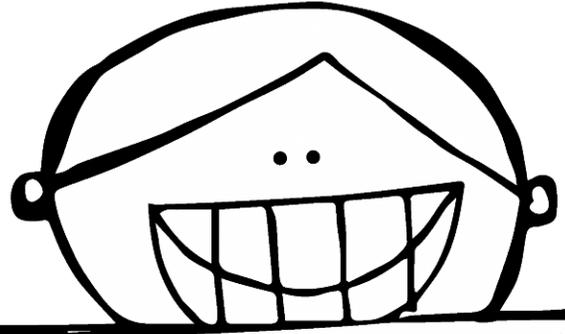
FIELD TRIP
TOMORROW!

REMINDER!



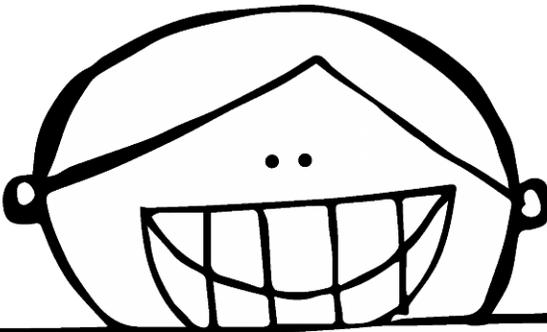
PICTURE DAY
TOMORROW!

REMINDER!



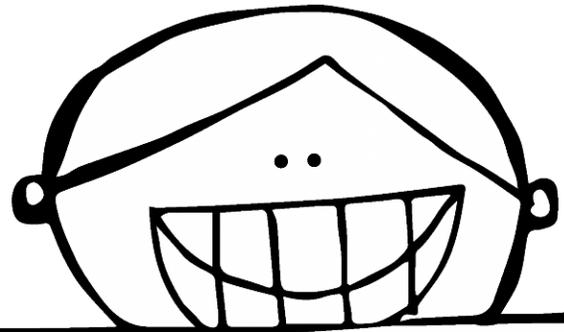
PICTURE DAY
TOMORROW!

REMINDER!



PICTURE DAY
TOMORROW!

REMINDER!



PICTURE DAY
TOMORROW!

REMINDER!

CLASS PARTY

TOMORROW!



REMINDER!

CLASS PARTY

TOMORROW!



REMINDER!

CLASS PARTY

TOMORROW!



REMINDER!

CLASS PARTY

TOMORROW!



UNFINISHED WORK NOTICE

This little note has been a SANITY-SAVER! I run these off on bright yellow paper and stash a bunch by my desk. Any time a student has unfinished work, I just staple this to the top of their work and send it home.

Here's the secret - these are a TEACHING tool. These are amazing for kids who waste time, kids who refuse to do work, and kids who refuse to try. Rather than using my time and energy on convincing students to get focused or put in effort, I calmly attach this handy note and send it home. No arguing, negotiating, or frustration (for me, at least).

After students have had one of these go home, most quickly learn that their choices at school have consequences.

For many kids, I only have to send this home once and it solves the problem.

When I give a student one of these, I make sure to do it with concern and even a bit of pity in my voice. This seems to help kids understand the connection between their choices and the consequence.

The second benefit of the note is that it alerts parents to what is going on at school without a negative phone call.

UNFINISHED WORK

Dear Parent,

Today, _____ was unable to complete this work because he/she:

- was absent or at nurse
- did not use time wisely
- did not follow directions
- refused to try

Please help your child complete this work and return it to school tomorrow.

Thank you!

Parent Signature: _____

UNFINISHED WORK

Dear Parent,

Today, _____ was unable to complete this work because he/she:

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- did not follow directions
- refused to try

Please help your child complete this work and return it to school tomorrow.

Thank you!

POSTER INSPIRATION

This is the chart I use with my students. I think it's important that the wording you use with your students matches and compliments the wording you use with parents.

MY GRADE!

A	90-100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand! • Neat & complete • Ready to move on
B	80-89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly understand • Mostly neat & complete • Need to practice a few things
C	70-79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand <u>some</u> • Need to ask questions • Still learning
Below 70		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't understand <u>YET</u> • I am still learning • I need more practice • I need to ask for help

NOTE:

I include "neat and complete" to help students understand the importance of doing quality work and showing strategies. My students often turn in work that is messy, incomplete, or rushed and I want them to connect this practice to how it impacts their grades.

You can change this by creating your own version using the editable template.

ABOUT GRADES

What Does the Grade MEAN?

A	100- 90	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* The learning goals were mastered.* Student can apply the skills.* Work was neat and complete.* Ready to move on!
B	89- 80	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* MOST goals were mastered.* Student understands most skills.* Mostly neat and complete.* Needs some practice.
C	79- 70	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* SOME goals were mastered.* Student understands some skills.* May not be neat and complete.* Re-teach and practice needed.
D	BELOW 70	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Goals NOT YET mastered.* Struggling with many skills.* May not be neat and complete.* Re-teach and practice needed.

ABOUT GRADES

What Does the Grade MEAN?

A Note About Grades

Dear Family,

I am honored to be your child's teacher this school year! I hope to help your child love learning, grow confidence, and make outstanding progress in all areas. Throughout the year, I will be communicating your child's mastery of skills in many ways including number grades on work sent home, progress reports, and report cards.

Below is a chart that will help you make sense of the meaning behind these number grades. If the grade on an assignment is not a good representation of the child's progress, I will always write a note on the paper such as "Did not complete full assignment" or "Rushed through work."

Thank you,

LETTER GRADE	NUMBER GRADE	MEANING
A	90-100	Excellent Progress. The learning goals were mastered.
B	80-89	Acceptable Progress. Many learning goals mastered.
C	70-79	Struggling. Reteach and extra practice needed.
D	BELOW 70	Severely Struggling. Even with extra support, learning goals are still not mastered. Intervention plan needed.

USING VISUAL GUIDES

Visual guides are especially helpful during tough conversations or when trying to give parents a clear representation of their child's progress. As teachers, it's easy to forget that our everyday lingo of reading levels, test scores, and various measures of student achievement may sound like a foreign language to parents.

Reading is a great example. Does your district use Guided Reading Levels, DRA Levels, Lexiles, A.R., or another form of progress measuring? Regardless, the system will be unfamiliar to most parents.

Another example is standardized testing or district benchmarks. These are often scored very differently from our classroom assessments. In Texas, the passing rate for one of the 3rd grade state tests was 51%. This meant that if students got only about half the questions correct, they passed! This is very confusing for parents (and kids and teachers)!



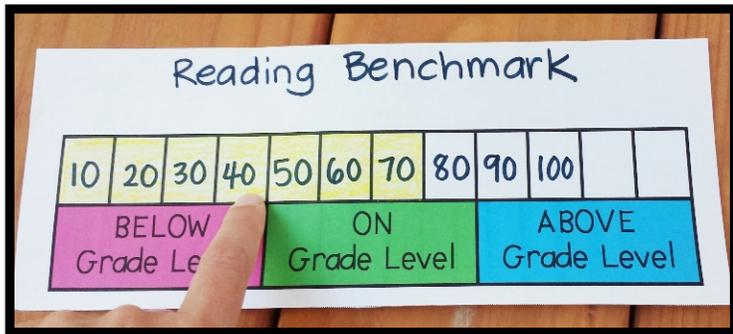
Here, and on the following page, are some examples of visual guides. I've included various templates that you can print and adjust to meet your needs or use them for inspiration to make your own. Create these for important assessments, reading levels, or other unclear measures of progress. Once you create the page, have it handy for parent conferences. You can reuse the same page or print a copy for parents to take.

In this example, I've shown the expectations for Guided Reading levels. In a parent conference, I'd have this visual handy and use it to demonstrate the student's progress.

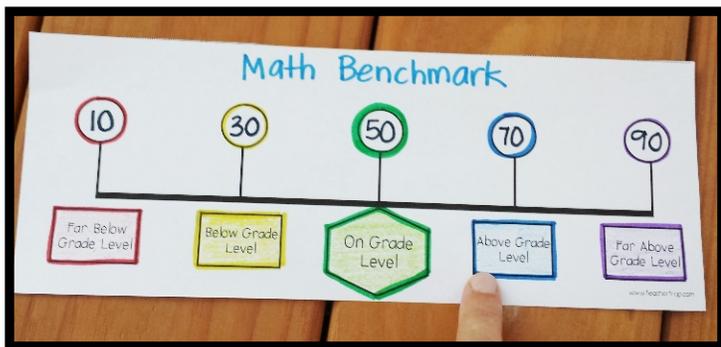
"Your child is currently reading at a Level K. You can see here that a Level K is on the high end of being 'on grade-level.' Since it's only the middle of the school year, your child is on track for success!"

The visual models also help you share information without using judgmental language. Rather than saying, "Alex isn't very good at math," or "Allie is behind in reading," you can show the model and let the data speak for itself. This will help parents understand their child's progress without becoming defensive or taking things personally.

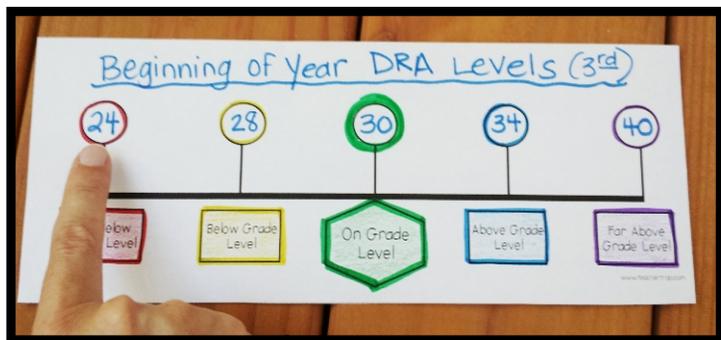
VISUAL GUIDE EXAMPLES



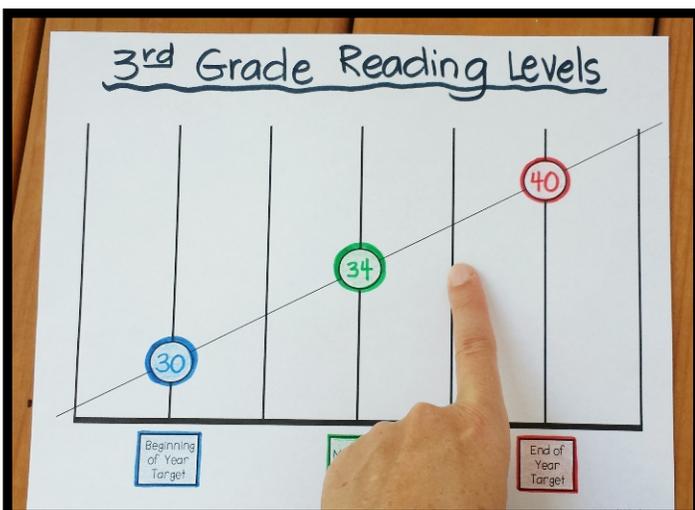
In this example, I've taken the scoring on a recent reading benchmark and filled in the model to show the meaning of the results. (I know! On-Grade-Level scores starting at 50 sounds crazy! But for this benchmark, this is truly representative of expectations.) This student scored a 70 so I colored in the boxes to show her score. Now I can explain to the parents that even though the child scored only a 70, she is actually performing on grade-level. For this assessment, only 40 or below would be a sign of concern.



For this visual model, I can easily show the parent that scoring a 70 means that their child is performing ABOVE grade level. (Again, the scoring for this benchmark was different than our normal grading scale.)



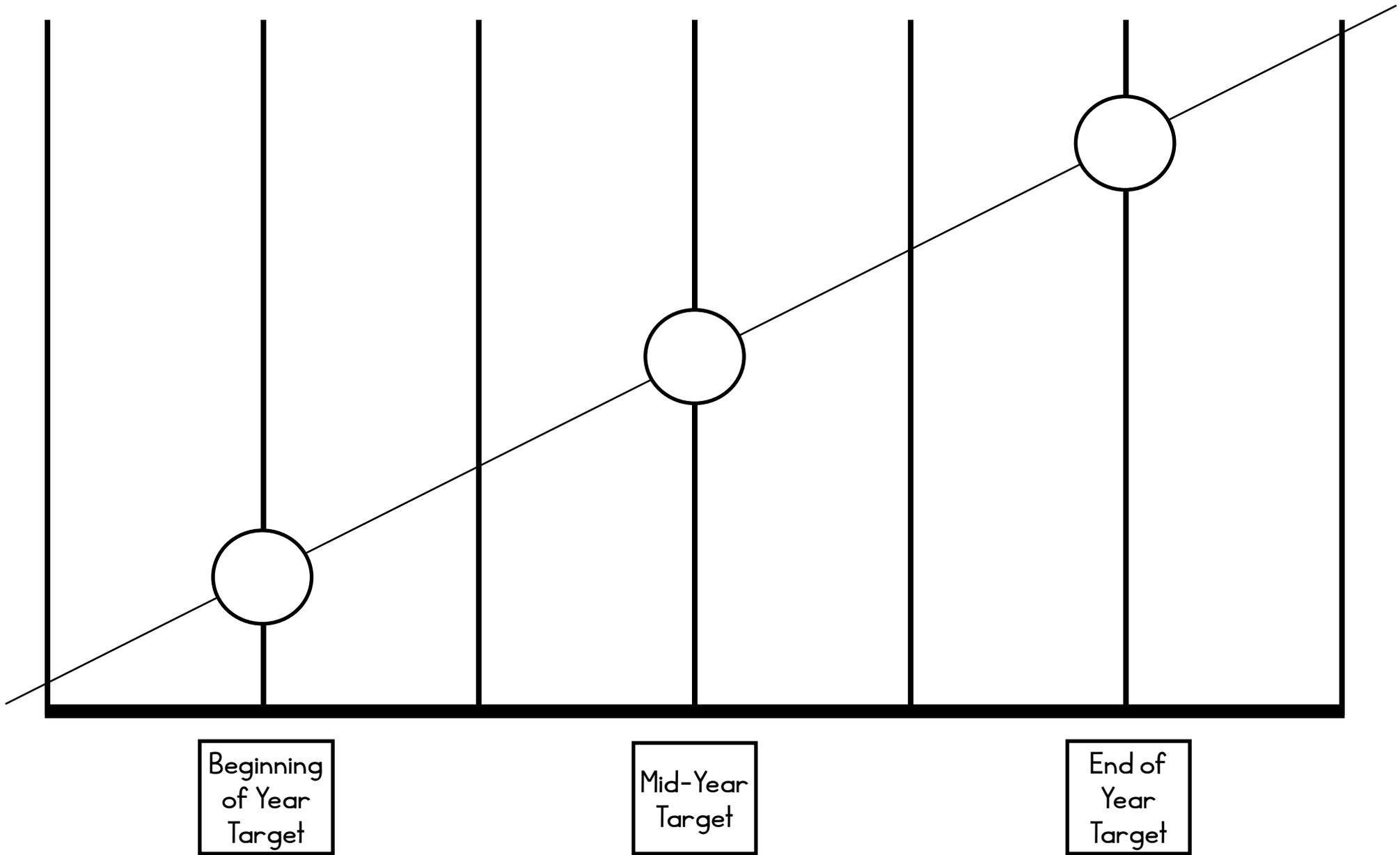
Here, I've mapped my DRA Reading Level expectations for my 3rd graders. This model is for the beginning of the school year. If I meet with parents mid-year or at the end of the year, this model will look very different. Here I might say, "Your child is currently reading at a DRA Level 24. As you can see, a 24 is 'Far Below Grade Level.' Since it's still the beginning of the school year, I think that we can get your daughter back on track with some hard work at school and at home. I'm going to be meeting with her in a small group for targeted reading instruction. I also think it would help to have her read aloud at home each night. I'll send home books each week that she can read to you."

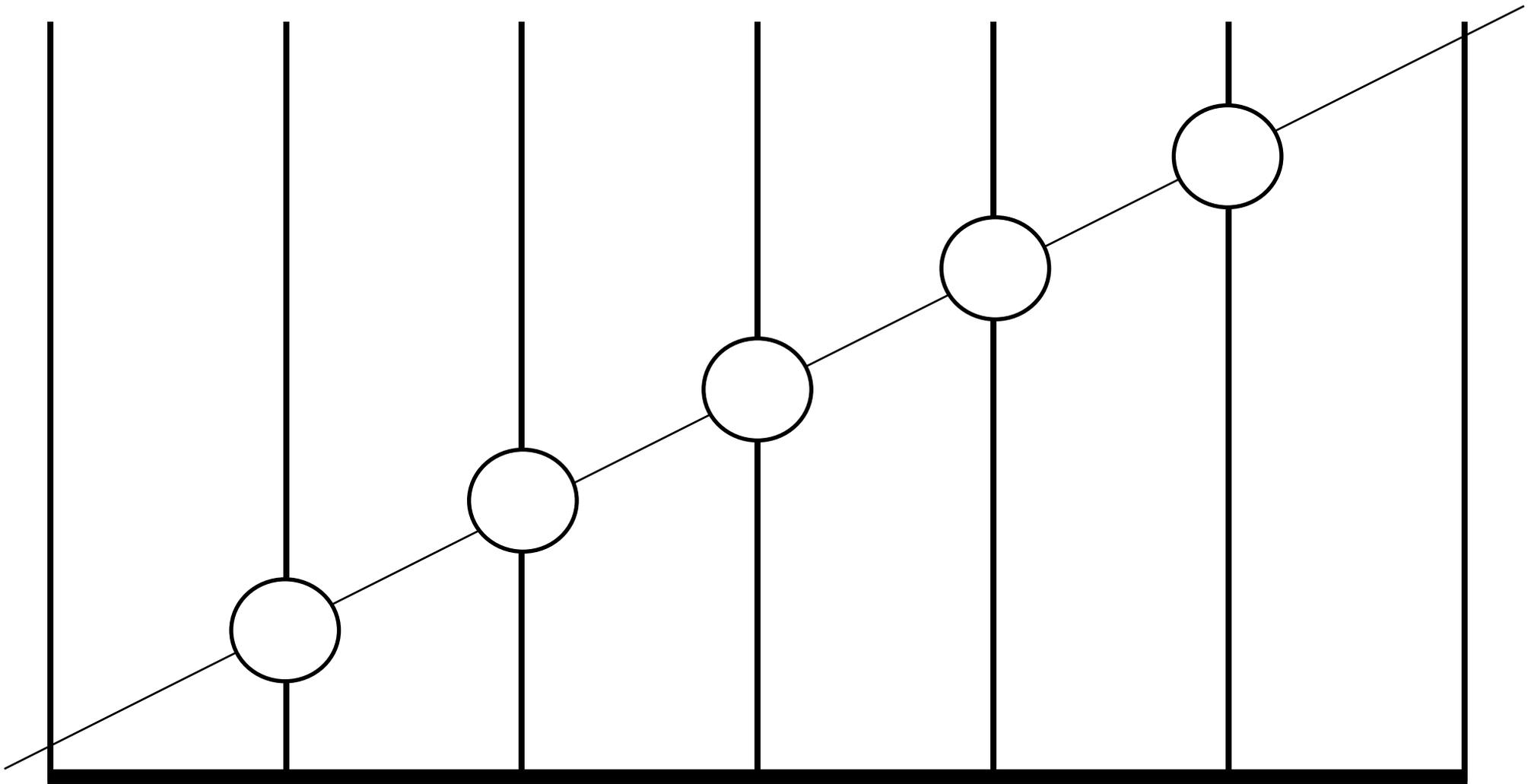


In this example, I've shown the reading levels as targets across the course of the year. This allows me to have clear and descriptive conversations with parents.

For example:

"As you can see, our goal is for 3rd graders to be reading at a Level 40 by the end of the school year. Your child is currently reading at a Level 34, but it's not quite the end of the year. We have a few months left to help Joe be on track for success in fourth grade."

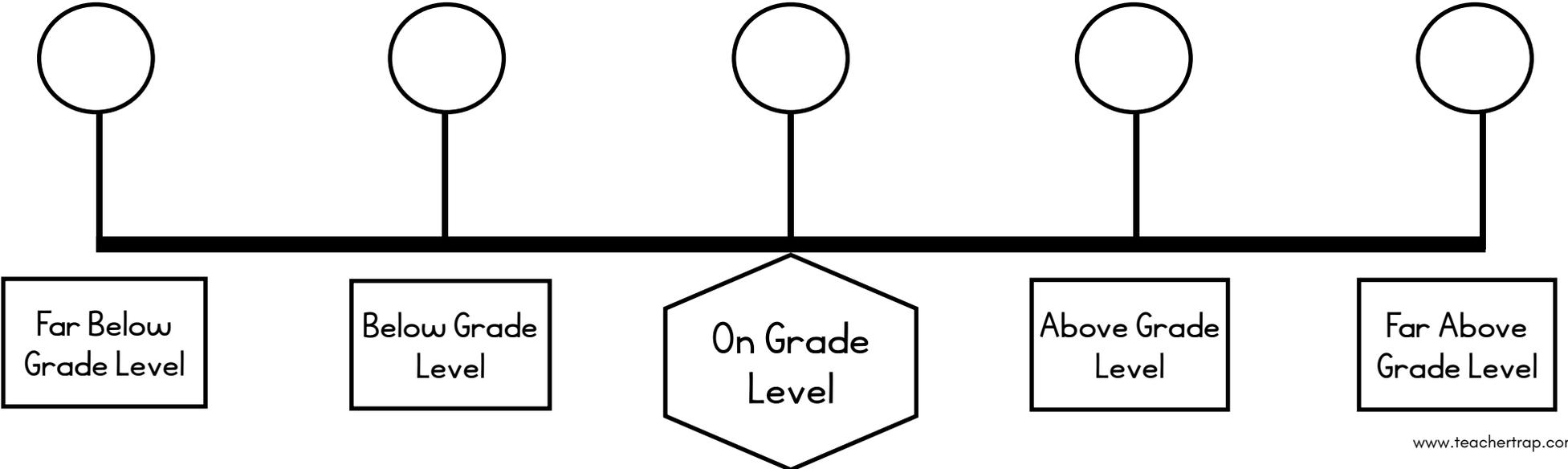
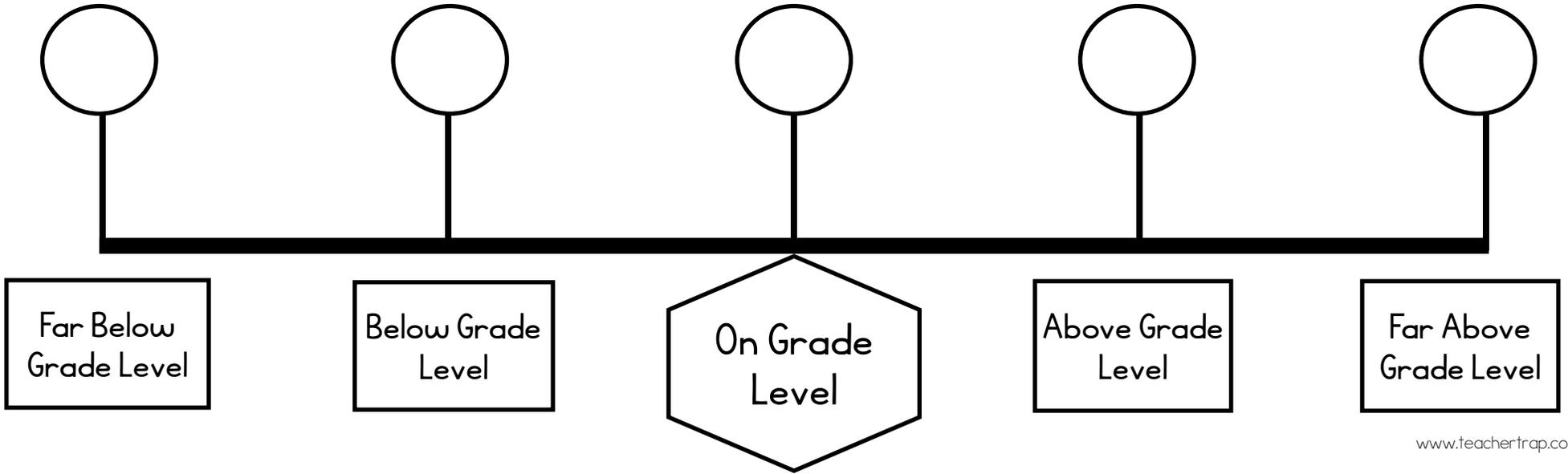


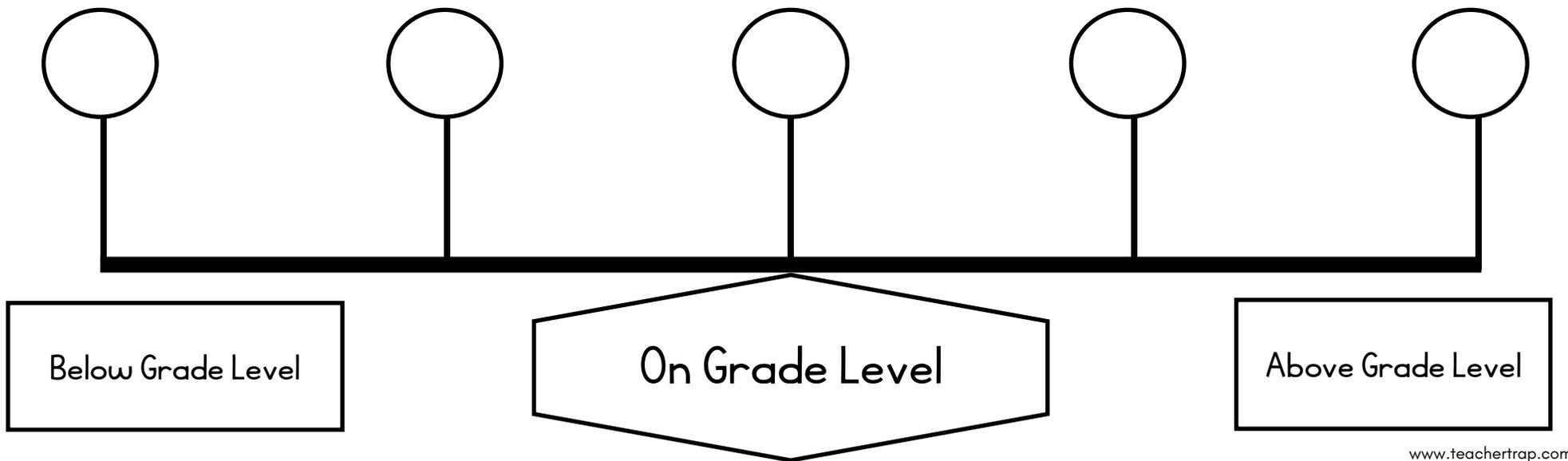
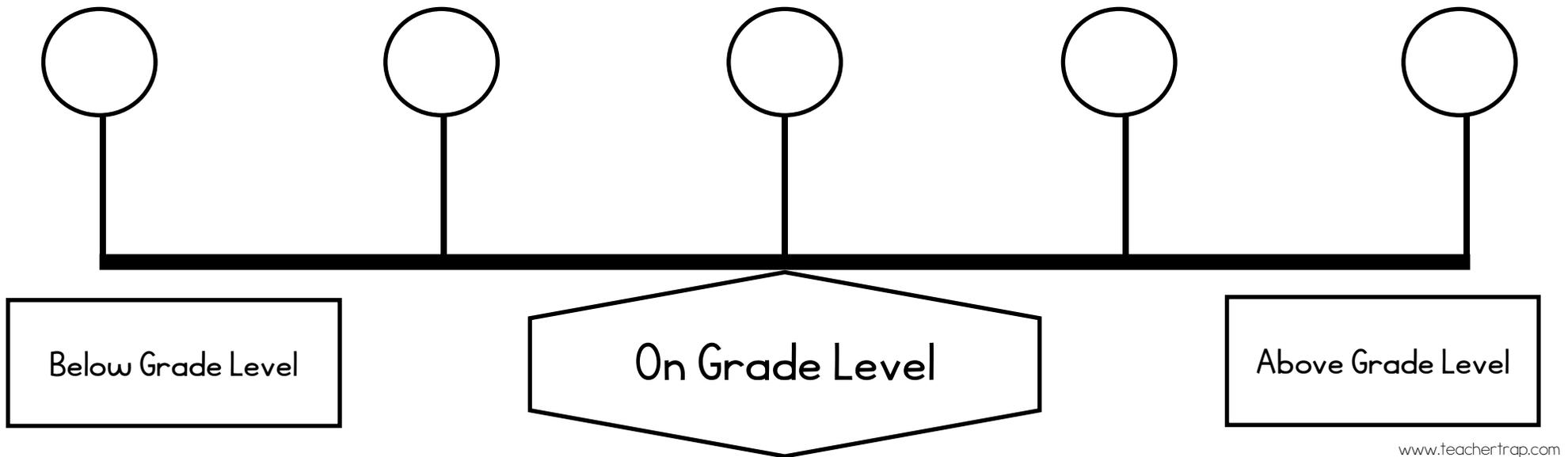


Beginning
of Year
Target

Mid-Year
Target

End of
Year
Target





BELOW Grade Level				ON Grade Level				ABOVE Grade Level			

BELOW Grade Level				ON Grade Level				ABOVE Grade Level			

BELOW Grade Level				ON Grade Level				ABOVE Grade Level			

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BELOW Grade Level				ON Grade Level				ABOVE Grade Level			

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STUDENT PROGRESS SUMMARY

Why a Student Progress Summary?

As teachers, we often forget that levels, benchmarks, and even grades may be unfamiliar to parents (and students)! Part of our job is helping the student and family understand the meaning behind the grade (or level or benchmark, etc.)

We also have a bad habit of using “teacher language” that is meaningless to parents (or anyone outside of the school world.) Telling a parent that their child is reading on a DRA 24, or Guided Reading Level H, or any level for that matter, isn't helpful unless we explain what it means.

The Student Progress Summary helps to provide parents with clear and meaningful feedback on their child's progress.

If you truly don't have the time to do something like this for every student, you might consider only sending the Summary with students who are struggling or only sending one home mid-year.

Shared Record of Progress

Another benefit of the Student Progress Summary is that you and the parents have a record of the child's progress to refer back to at any time. I like to keep these in the child's Take-Home Binder so that we both have access. Parents can no longer say "I was never told."

Grade Chart

I also create a poster of the meaning of grades to hang in my classroom, and send a letter like the one that follows. (“A Note About Grades”) Because school districts are all so different, you'll probably have to write a version specific to you and your school.

HANDY HINTS:

- * I've included a Summary with the Subject and Learning Habit categories filled in or blank, in case you'd rather write in your own.
- * In the “Additional Comments” section I always add a positive comment about the child and end with a happy face and my signature. Save details about concerns for the conversation.
- * It's also especially helpful to write in your phone number or email address at the bottom of the page before running off the copies so that parents can easily get in touch with you for questions.

NAME:

DATE:

STUDENT PROGRESS SUMMARY

ACADEMICS

	Far Below	Below	On Grade Level	Above	Notes
Math					
Reading					
Writing					
SCI/SS					

LEARNING HABITS

	Needs Improvement	On Track	Outstanding	Notes
Best effort				
Completes work on time				
Positive attitude				
Respect for self and others				
Responsibility and organization				

Notes:

NAME:

DATE:

STUDENT PROGRESS SUMMARY

ACADEMICS

	Far Below	Below	On Grade Level	Above	Notes

LEARNING HABITS

	Needs Improvement	On Track	Outstanding	Notes

Notes:

TEACHER-PARENT CONFERENCE

Guide and Script

1	<p>WELCOME Set Parents at Ease With a Friendly Connection</p>	<p>Meet parents at the door. Smile, shake hands, and welcome them into the room. Share a quick story about the child that has NOTHING to do with academics. Let them see that you know and care for their child as a unique person.</p> <p>Example: <i>Hi there! Thanks so much for coming up to meet with me today. I have so much to tell you about Alex. Before we get started, I have to tell you what he did yesterday! At recess, he made up a rap about zombies. It was the funniest thing! All the kids were cracking up. He's so creative!</i></p>
2	<p>INVITE Show That You Are There to Listen by Letting Parents Share FIRST</p>	<p>Once seated, let parents know that you have information to share, but start by inviting them to speak first.</p> <p>Example: <i>Well, I have so much to tell you about Alex, but I wanted to check in with you first. Do you have any concerns or is there anything you'd like to discuss today?</i></p> <p>Many parents will say they have no concerns, while others may be worried about a specific subject area or behavior. Listen and jot down anything they want to discuss and then RESTATE their concerns. If needed, ask follow-up questions.</p> <p>Example: <i>Hmm. So you're concerned about Alex's progress in math. I'll talk about that in a moment. Now I hadn't heard that Alex was feeling left out at recess. Did he say when this started? I'll make sure to check in with him and find out what's going on.</i></p>
3	<p>SHARE Give Clear and Descriptive Information</p>	<p>Use the Student Progress Summary or a form of your choice to organize the info. Provide parents with a copy and then briefly go through each section. Use descriptive language, rather than judgments.</p> <p>Example: <i>Alex scored A's on his last 3 reading tests and is performing above grade level. In math, Alex scored a C on the last 2 tests. Here are his make-up tests. You can see here that he did well on the computation problems but has struggled with the word problems.</i></p>
4	<p>CO-PLAN Work as a Team and Make a Plan</p>	<p>If you shared a concern, take a moment to plan with the parents. Discuss what you can do at school and what parents can do at home. Avoid placing blame or saying what should have been done. The focus here is on creating a plan to SOLVE the problem. Redirect the conversation to solutions, as needed.</p> <p>Example: <i>I'm going to continue working with Alex in a small group that focuses on word problems. At home, you might try having him read word problems in homework aloud and then explain his plan to you before working it on paper.</i></p>
5	<p>RESTATE & CHECK-IN Sum Up the Meeting</p>	<p>Briefly sum up the conversation. Restate the important ideas from the meeting, including the positives and the plans for improvements. Then check if the parents have any other questions or concerns.</p> <p>Example: <i>So as you can see, Alex is working hard this year. He's making great progress in reading and has a positive attitude. He's struggling with word problems and I'll be working with him in a small group. Plus, with the extra help at home, I think we can get him back on track. Do you have any other questions or concerns?</i></p>
6	<p>THANK PARENTS End With a Smile</p>	<p>Smile, shake hands, and walk parents to the classroom door. Say thank you! Don't forget that for some families, finding time for these meetings is quite difficult!</p> <p>Example: <i>Thank you so much for coming in today! It was great talking with you and I know we'll be able to help Alex make those gains in math. Have a great day!</i></p>

BEHAVIOR CONCERN PHONE CALL

Phone Call Guide and Script

1	<p>GREET & SHOW CONCERN</p> <p>Set the Tone for a Positive Conversation</p>	<p><i>Hello, Mrs. Jones. This is (your first & last name), (child)'s teacher. Are you free to talk for just a moment?</i></p> <p><i>I'm concerned about (child).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I've noticed a change in behavior.</i> • <i>I've noticed some new behaviors.</i>
2	<p>DESCRIBE</p> <p>Give Information Without Judgment</p>	<p>Describe what you have noticed without judgment, blame, or anger. Focus on your concern for <u>the child</u>, not your concern for yourself or other students.</p> <p><i>For the past few weeks, Brian has been easily frustrated. During math, he slammed down his book and yelled at another student. At P.E., he pushed another child. And yesterday, he refused to participate in Science.</i></p>
3	<p>ASK</p> <p>Ask for Parent's Perspective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have you noticed any changes at home?</i> • <i>Have you seen anything similar at home?</i> • <i>Can you think of any possible causes for this change in behavior?</i>
4	<p>CO-PLAN</p> <p>Enlist the Parent's Help in Creating a Plan</p>	<p>Ask the parent for ideas. Share your own ideas and ask for feedback. Come up with a plan of things to try.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have you found anything that works well in helping Brian stay calm?</i> • <i>What could we do that might set Brian up for a better day at school?</i> • <i>I was thinking I'd try... What do you think?</i>
5	<p>RESTATE & END POSITIVELY</p> <p>Summarize and Thank</p>	<p><i>Thank you so much for talking to me. So at home, you're going to... and at school I'm going to... This sounds like a good plan. I know that Brian (has a good heart, is such a bright boy, just needs a little support, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>How do you want to keep in touch about this?</i></p> <p><i>Great, we'll talk/email/text then.</i></p>

WHEN A PARENT IS ANGRY

Cheat Sheet

<p>Stay Calm</p>	<p>Take a deep breath and remember that the anger or frustration you see is being directed AT you but <u>is not about you</u>. Bring the energy down by staying calm, regardless of the parent's words or body language.</p>
<p>Validate First</p>	<p>Show the parent that you HEAR their concern and CARE about what happened.</p> <p>Restate their words and allow them to elaborate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>So you're concerned that Andre is getting picked on...</i> * <i>So you're worried that Sadie feels left out...</i> * <i>So you feel like Maya isn't getting the support she needs...</i>
<p>Ask Questions</p>	<p>Show the parent that you are interested in the problem.</p> <p>Get information that will help you better understand the issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>When is this happening? Where is this happening?</i> * <i>How often is this happening? When did this start?</i> * <i>How did you learn about this issue?</i>
<p>Give Reassurance</p>	<p>Demonstrate that you are on the parent's and the child's side.</p> <p>Let them know you are ready and capable of handling the issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>I know we can get to the bottom of this and fix things.</i> * <i>This should absolutely not be happening. Let me find out what's going on.</i> * <i>This sounds like something we should meet about right away.</i>
<p>Focus on Solutions</p>	<p>Once you've heard their concerns, redirect the conversation to solutions or a time to plan a solution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>When are you available to sit down with me to discuss this further?</i> * <i>I need to look into this. Let's plan to talk tomorrow afternoon.</i> * <i>I think I know what needs to happen. Here's what I'm going to do now... Let's check in (plan time).</i>



THANK YOU SO MUCH!

I hope this product is just what you needed! If you liked my work, please consider leaving **FEEDBACK** and **FOLLOWING** me for updates, ideas, & freebies!

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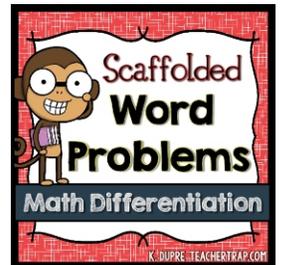
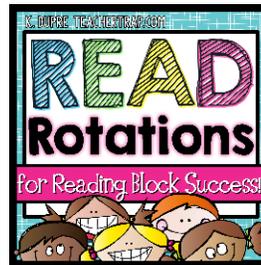
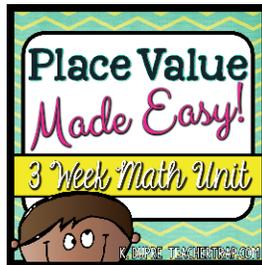
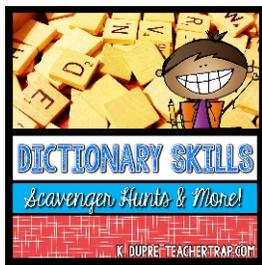
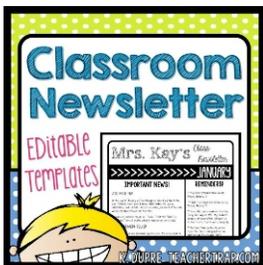
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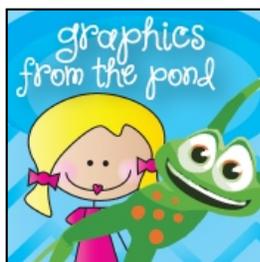
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