



How can we leverage getting to know you activities to build the culture and foundation for future literacy work?

First Month of School Edition, 2024

Listening to Our Students

The following are questions we might ask of students to understand how they connect with the school, adults, and the community.

- **Name:** Do my teachers know my name?
- **Trusted Adult:** Do I have an adult in the building I can talk to? Who?
- **Friend:** Do I have a friend in school I can talk to? Who?
- **About Me:** Do my teachers know something about my personality, interests, or culture? What do they know? What do they not know?
- **Collaboration:** How frequently am I collaborating with peers? Multiple times every period, Every period, daily, weekly?
- **Structures:** Do I understand how to enter each class? What happens first?

Get Support

At MagnifyED we would love to help you support your staff and students. Reach out to us to explore if partnering might make sense.

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Questions to Discuss as a Team

■ What do we value most for week 1?

- **Relationships**
 - Relationships between students
 - Relationships between student and teacher
- **Participation Expectations**
 - Common classroom routines
 - Expectations for participating in speaking, writing, listening, and reading
 - Norms for collaborating
- **Syllabus**
 - Homework and grading
 - Unit topics
- **Foundational content skills**
 - Analyzing graphs, maps, diagrams, cartoons, characters, and perspectives
- **Foundational computer skills**
 - AI use, email, technology platforms

■ How do our activities show what we value?

- **Anticipation:** If you drew a pie chart of how you plan to spend your time during the first month, what story does it tell?
- **Reflection:** Count the last week. How many minutes were we explicitly addressing these values? How many minutes were we addressing these values implicitly?

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Questions for Teacher Planning

■ Repeated Classroom Structures

- **Routines:** What priority routines will you use every unit to support students with learning?
- **Language Functions:** What language will students need across units to work together (e.g. agree, disagree or feedback on strengths and growth areas? How can students practice these words in a low-stakes, fun way?
- **Warm ups:** What is your warm up structure? Does each day of the week have a set structure? How do you create repeatable systems that allow you to set expectations once, but cover multiple structures?
- **Rubrics:** What rubrics will you use and how can you introduce these in a simple way?

■ Identifying Baseline Skills

- **Writing skill:** How can I get a sample of what students are able to do in writing without requiring specific content?
- **Reading skill:** Have I heard each student read aloud to get a sense of fluency and identify students who might need more support?
- **Speaking skill:** Have I heard each student respond verbally to a partner or group?
- **Analysis skill:** What simplistic graphs and charts can I use to explore what students are able to process?
- **Content Knowledge:** How can I have students reflect on the content they do and do not yet know?

■ Building Peer Relationships

- **Discourse Types:** What structures will you use repeatedly throughout the year to help students engage in discourse? For example, will you engage in debates, agree and disagree statements, or consensus snowballs?
- **Structures:** What structures will you use for collaboration? How will you use station activities, gallery walks, peer editing, and structured conversations?
- **Roles:** What roles will students have as they work together, read together, and brainstorm together?

Topics to Prioritize

- **Advocacy and Independence:** How can students learn about and practice advocating for themselves and getting support?
- **Relationships:** What can you learn about how students build and maintain friendships? What can you learn about what students value from their teachers and adult relationships?
- **Learning:** What can students learn about their own learning and communication styles?
- **Collaboration:** What can students learn about how to work with peers?
- **Revision vs Failure:** How can we help students understand the value of drafts and growth over time? How do we help students frame revision as an exciting learning opportunity not a failure?
- **Goals:** What types of long-term goals do students have and how are those connected to the classroom learning goals?
- **Organization:** How do students set up and organize their digital folders, email,
- **Technology:** What AI prompts do you want to share with students to help them throughout the year? What virtual platforms might they learn to engage with?