

Mr. Batten's 5th Grade Class
Chesterfield County, VA 23999

Type of class

Considering the physical location of the school in the rapidly expanding Chesterfield County area, I expect the students in my class to likely be rather homogenous from an economic standpoint. The demographics of many schools in this area indicate that it will be likely that the number of minority students in my class will be low. Admittedly, these factors could make it easier to appeal to the learning styles of the group; however, since I intend to deliver a culturally and economically diverse curriculum plan, students will not be permitted to approach learning from a homogenous point of view.

Subject

Required subjects: While teachers in some elementary schools teach all subjects to their homeroom students, many teachers are involved in team teaching to cover the subject matter. To best prepare myself for my first year of teaching, I have chosen to hold the expectation that I will *not* be involved in team teaching; in other words, I expect that I will be teaching all the required subjects to my students. This mindset will allow me to develop a curriculum plan that is multidisciplinary in nature and comprehensive in scope.

Additional subjects: A large part of my desire to teach 5th grade in Chesterfield County is the district's focus on world studies, a unique approach for this grade in the Richmond area. While world studies are not an SOL-tested topic, they provide a rich backdrop on which required topics such as math, science, and language arts can be explored. My experience in international business, as well as my world travels and educational background, will put me in the position of being a content expert in this area. Many of my lessons will undoubtedly take advantage of this

foundation, and the physical environment of my classroom will reflect a culturally diverse education.

School type

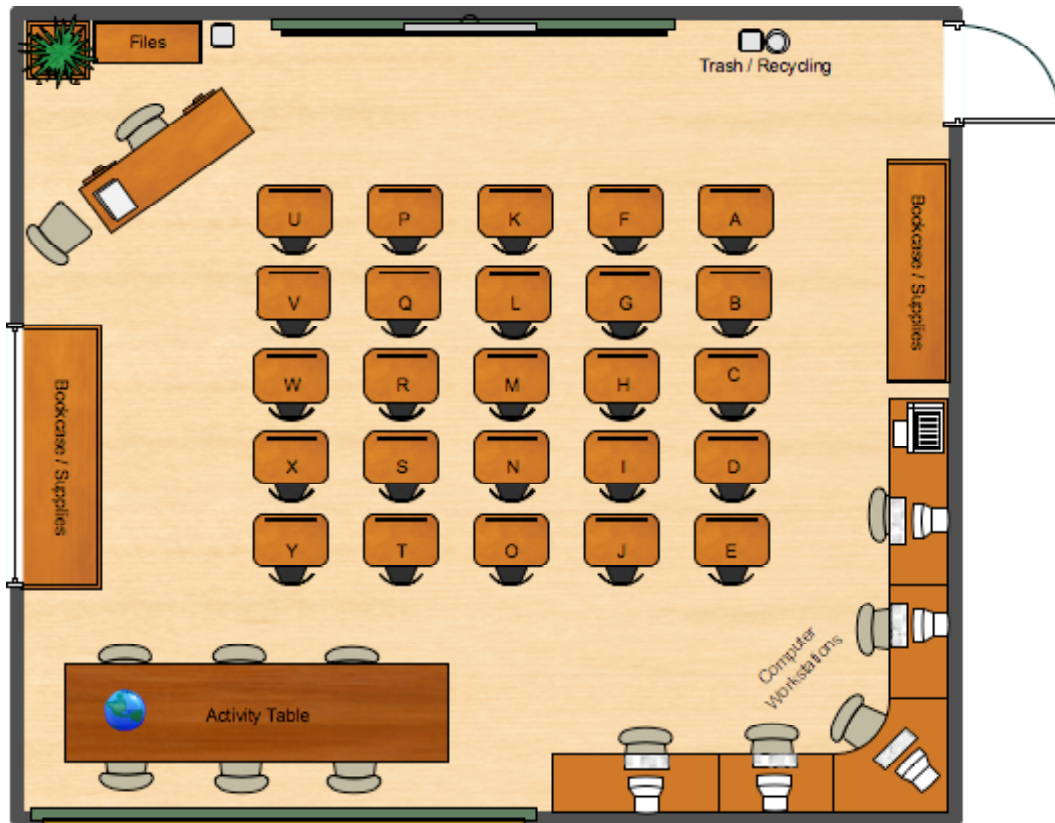
At the current time, many of the schools in the Chesterfield County district are new and/or reasonably well funded. Generally speaking, the district appears to have a vision for the ever-expanding future in the county's schools, and it is expected that individual schools' administrators embrace this vision with forward-thinking approaches to teacher management and school policies.

Technology is an important aspect to my teaching vision. The type of school in which I wish to teach will take advantage of as many appropriate technological support systems as possible. I'm not interested in using technology for technology's sake, but I recognize that it can be very beneficial in delivering instruction and it holds a high amount of appeal for many students in the 5th-grade age range.

The elementary school in which I expect to teach will be safe, clean, led by thoughtful administrators, staff, and teachers, and a high achiever in SOL tests. Returning students will be comfortable and full of anticipation upon their return from summer break.

Classroom Seating Plan

At the beginning of the school year, my class will be seated in traditional rows. Students will be arranged alphabetically, beginning with the students whose last names begin with letters at the beginning of the alphabet to my left (as I face the class). This organization will allow me to best learn the students' names quickly and will avoid problems that often arise when students are allowed to choose their own seats.



After I have learned the students' names (hopefully, by the first week of school), I will evaluate the effectiveness of the opening-day seating plan and make changes to accommodate specific learning needs, behavioral traits, and other situations that may arise. (I believe I will prefer to have students sit in "pods" of three or four, to facilitate smoother group work.) At the very least, I will rearrange the seating plan a couple times each year simply to keep the classroom environment fresh.

Opening-Day Activities

I will welcome my students at the door of our classroom at the start of every day. On the first day of school, I will introduce myself to each student as they enter the room and check to be sure each student is in the right place. I will also present each student with a card that indicates his or her assigned seat.

When students enter the room on the first day, their first assignment will be on their desks (and written on the board) when they enter the room and find their seat. This ungraded first assignment will be an age-appropriate personality quiz resembling the Myers-Briggs or “True Colors” tests. The main goal of this assignment is to establish the morning routine; I want to get students on task immediately after they enter the room each day. This particular assignment may also be helpful because the results could help me understand each student’s working preferences and may provide some insight on how students feel about themselves.

Day 1 agenda:

- 8:30 Classwork: First assignment
- 8:35 Morning announcements (from loudspeaker)
- 8:40 Lecture: Welcome/introduction; collect assignment
- 8:50 Small group work: Students work in assigned pairs to interview each other using questions provided by teacher
- 9:05 Presentation: Students introduce their interview partner to the class
- 9:35 Lecture/demonstration: Class procedures, rules, expectations, and positive and negative consequences
- 10:00 Small group work: Students work in assigned groups of four to discuss and write down four things they expect from the teacher and four questions they have for the teacher
- 10:20 Discussion: Students’ expectations of teacher
- 10:40 Discussion: Students’ questions for teacher

- 11:00 Lecture/demonstration/housekeeping: Describe and show the “take-home folder” that contains the materials that need to be sent home to parents; walk through any paperwork that needs attention; distribute textbooks; discuss necessary supplies
- 11:30 Lunch
- 12:10 Discussion: Get students refocused on the classroom and into “thinking mode” for the first time by asking a series of fun (yet educational) trivia questions
- 12:30 Art/Writing activity: Students draw pictures of something important to them and write a paragraph about themselves
- 1:05 Recess
- 1:25 Writing activity: Students write a “biopoem” (biographical poem) about themselves
- 2:00 Presentation: Students share their biopoems
- 2:30 Housekeeping: Review of the day’s important information; check that students have their “take-home folders”; prepare for dismissal
- 2:50 Dismissal

Day 2’s morning assignment will be a 20-question true/false quiz about the teacher.

Sample of Initial Correspondence to Students

AUGUST 28, 2008	VOL. 1, NO. 1									
	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Mr. Batten's Fifth Grade Class Newsletter</h2>									
<p style="color: #008080; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 0;">Welcome to 5th Grade!</p> <p>My name is Mr. Batten and I will be your teacher this year. This school year will bring many exciting adventures and new challenges. I hope that you come to school expecting 5th grade to be better than you could imagine. I am thrilled to meet all of you and learn about who you are. Together, we will have a fun and exciting year.</p> <p>As I'm sure you already know, 5th grade is a very important year. You are now the eldest in our building and everyone expects you to be the leaders in our school and community. This is a great responsibility and a gift that I know you will embrace with integrity and confidence. I hope you will come to our classroom with an open mind and a determined heart. I'm looking forward to all that is to come!</p> <p>Here are a couple things you might want to think about before school starts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On our first day of school, we will all spend a lot of time getting to know each other. As you enjoy the last days of summer, think about how you would interview a total stranger if you were a newspaper reporter or blogger. • New spelling words will be given on the first day of each school week. Tests will be held on Friday. There is no test the first week of school, but you can get a head start on your first test by learning about the words below. <p>See you in class very soon! Mr. Batten</p>	<p style="color: #008080; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 0;">A little bit about me</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <div style="font-size: small;"> <p>This is my first year teaching at <i>(School)</i>. I hope you will teach me a lot about <i>(School motto)</i>!</p> </div> </div> <p>I was born and raised in Minnesota and have lived in eight states all over the country. As you will see, I enjoy working with computers and I am passionate about protecting the environment. I am married and have a two-year-old daughter. I have traveled all over the world (including Africa - see the photo below) and will try to bring an awareness of the planet into our classroom.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p>If you have any questions for me, call me on my TeacherPhone at 123-4567 or send me an email at vwx@yz.com.</p>									
<p style="color: #008080; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Spelling Words for Week 2:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Nuncinterdum</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Innonarcu</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Fermentum</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Estibulum</td> <td>Fusceutortor</td> <td>Elementum</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sedlacus</td> <td>Mauris</td> <td>Ipsumaticulis</td> </tr> </table>		Nuncinterdum	Innonarcu	Fermentum	Estibulum	Fusceutortor	Elementum	Sedlacus	Mauris	Ipsumaticulis
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Sample of Initial Correspondence to Parents

(Note: most of my parent correspondence will be personalized using mail-merge software.)

Dear *(parent/guardian last names)*:

Welcome to an exciting year at *(School Name)* Elementary School! I look forward to having *(child's name)* in my 5th grade class. The enthusiasm and energy of children offer great challenges and benefits to me, and I intend to repay my students for these rewards by meeting their needs in a supportive environment that encourages optimum intellectual development.

I welcome the opportunity to work with you, as well. Communication and teamwork between teacher and parents is vital to the smooth workings of any classroom. Please don't hesitate to share any information or concerns about your child with me; my contact information can be found at the bottom of this letter. If you haven't already received a telephone call from me by the time you receive this letter, you can expect a call soon. In addition to scheduled parent conferences, I will also be in contact with you on several occasions during the school year to report on *(child's name)*'s progress and to solicit any feedback you may have on *(his/her)* work.

The following information will clear up some initial questions you may have:

1. Supplies - Each child will need several items for the school year. A list of required items is included on the attached sheet. When possible, please be sure that your child's items – including their articles of clothing – are labeled with his or her name.
2. Health - If *(child's name)* needs to take any medicine in school or has any notable allergies, please contact the school medical office as soon as possible.
3. Homework – I am a firm believer in establishing and maintaining routines. One of the most important routines in my class is the “red take-home folder.” Each student will receive a red folder on the first day of school; please look for it when *(child's name)* comes home that evening. This folder may contain any number of items, including homework assignments, required school forms, and correspondence to you. Students must bring this folder home every night, Monday through Thursday, and return it the next morning. Please review this folder each night with *(child's name)* and help *(him/her)* remember to bring the folder back to school the next day with all required work completed. I have found that this routine keeps confusion to a minimum and streamlines the “housekeeping” items that need to be conducted with parents.

I am looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,

Dan Batten
 Email: xxx@xxx.com
 Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx

Lesson Plan Exemplar

(Note: This lesson was originally created as part of a unit plan for EDUC310U, Curriculum Methods. For this assignment, the lesson has been significantly edited for brevity.)

Introduction

- Unit Topic: Currency and Exchange Rates

This unit will show students how to solve common mathematical problems using real-world scenarios with the exchange of foreign currencies. Students will gain a deeper understanding of money from a global perspective while acquiring experience with multiplication and division of numbers that include decimals through ten-thousandths.

Students will also learn how to track data over a period of time in graphical form. It is expected that the visual format will assist the students make conclusions and predictions about the data.

Lastly, students will gain insight on how business decisions are made on a daily basis in the U.S. economy in relation to foreign trade.

- Length of Unit: Five 90-minute class periods.
- Virginia Standards of Learning (*entire unit*):
Mathematics Standards 5.1a, 5.1b, 5.1c, 5.3, 5.4, 5.18, 5.19; History and Social Science Standards CE.9a, CE.9b, CD.9c, CE.10b; Computer/Technology Standard C/T 3-5.6

Learning Objectives

On day 1 of this unit, students will:

- Distinguish between the terms *money* and *currency*.
- Point out differences among various foreign currency types.
- Answer questions about how money is used around the world.
- Compute foreign currency trade value based upon exchange rates.
- Solve mathematical equations from real-world foreign trade scenarios.
- Practice multiplication and division using decimals to the ten-thousandths.
- Practice rounding of decimals.
- Complete homework and group work containing multiplication problems.
- Locate several countries on a world map.

Content

The following topics will be addressed during the course of day 1 of this unit:

- Financial vocabulary, such as *money*, *currency*, *foreign exchange*, and *exchange rate*. Comparison of *money* versus *currency*.
- The names of several foreign currencies (such as *Euro*, *yen*, *pound*, and *yuan*) and the symbols used to represent them.
- The appearance of several foreign currencies, represented by authentic samples, and the reasoning for designing currency in specific ways.
- The concept of exchange rates: why currency trading requires exchange rates, why rates change daily, and how currency is typically exchanged at the consumer level.
- Decimal rounding.
- Location of several foreign countries on a world map.

Materials and Advanced Preparation

- Materials needed for day 1:
 1. Printed list of current foreign currency exchange rates – one for each student for the first day of the week
 2. Various forms of foreign currency
 3. Chalkboard or whiteboard
 4. World map
 5. Exchange rate worksheet for day 1 homework
- Advance preparation for day 1:
Decide how to display samples of foreign currency; based upon the teacher’s knowledge of the class, how can the samples be used as a learning tool without becoming a temptation and/or distraction? Perhaps a formal “do not touch” display needs to be created if the teacher is not comfortable passing the samples around the class.

Teaching and Learning Sequence

- Introduction/Anticipatory Set:
 1. Begin the lesson by introducing the concept of money. Who knows what money is? Is the same money that is used in the United States used in other countries? Has anyone ever been to another country and used its money? Define the term *currency* and explain the differences among the currencies of the world. Clarify the difference between *money* and *currency*.
 2. Show some samples of actual foreign currency. Ask students to point out the many differences among the samples: currency names, denominations, colors, illustrations, anti-counterfeit measures, and so on. Discuss the obsolescence of some currencies, especially in Europe, where the Euro has entered the scene.
 3. Explain that even though currencies are different around the world, people from all countries spend their money in each other’s countries. Ask whether anyone knows how this is done – can we spend U.S. dollars in China? Or is there another way that an American can spend his or her money in China? Lead the class toward the concept of exchange rates, and set the class’s expectations for a week’s worth of activities in currency exchange.
- Lesson Development – **Day 1: Understanding Exchange Rates**
 1. Initiate a discussion regarding the questions above. Why can’t we spend dollars in China? If Americans can’t use dollars to pay for things when they visit China, how do they get Chinese money? Explain that when you travel to another country, you will need to trade the U.S. currency you have with you for that country’s money. (Perhaps it can also be mentioned that a lot of foreigners accept U.S. dollars anyway, but consider the level of sophistication of the students before introducing this concept.) Outline the basic process of how one exchanges money in a different country. (May also want to note that we can often use ATM cards to retrieve “pre-exchanged” money in foreign countries.)

2. Next, provide a scenario. Tell the class to imagine they've traveled to China and they want to exchange \$100 for Chinese currency. Ask the class whether they know how much yuan they will receive in exchange. Give students the opportunity to answer, and then explain that the number of yuan is greater than the number of dollars, but that they are equal in value. Explain why a 1-to-1 rate doesn't exist between most currencies.
3. Define the term *exchange rate*. Note that exchange rates are different among all the currencies in the world, and that the rates change nearly every day. Explain why rates are constantly fluctuating. Give examples of trends; demonstrate how the U.S. dollar can be considered "strong" or "weak" at a particular point in time.
4. Distribute the list of the day's current exchange rates. Explain that to determine how much of a nation's money you can get in exchange for U.S. dollars, you must multiply that country's exchange rate by the number of U.S. dollars you have. Provide some sample scenarios ("five U.S. dollars would equal how many Russian rubles?"), encouraging the students to refer to the exchange rate list and writing the equation on the board as you work through the scenario out loud with the class. Ask students to come to the board and complete the equations.
5. This may be an appropriate point to discuss/review decimals. Many currency exchanges result in figures with three or more numerals to the right of the decimal point. Explain why this is the case, and then discuss how rounding plays a role in currency exchange. If time permits, do some rounding exercises with the results from the previous exercise.
6. Next, ask the class to consider what happens when a foreign visitor comes to the United States and wants to exchange their currency for some U.S. dollars. Ask them how the visitor could figure out how much U.S. currency they would receive using the exchange rate list (which is, of course, based on one U.S. dollar).
7. Assign a specific country to each student in the class. The country must be shown on the exchange rate list; the student should circle the corresponding currency and exchange rate on the list.
8. For homework, give the exchange rate worksheet, which presents a number of scenarios in which the student must determine the amount of currency he or she would receive when trading money in specific countries. Also, instruct each student to learn the location of his or her assigned country on the world map.

Note: This ends the lesson for day 1. The topics covered in subsequent days include making purchasing decisions using exchange rates; data collection, organization, and presentation; understanding data; and graphing and analyzing exchange rate data.

References

Grade Five: Currency and Exchange Rates. (n.d.) Retrieved March 11, 2007, from [http:// www.takechargeamerica.org/Education/ElementaryLevelLessonPlans/](http://www.takechargeamerica.org/Education/ElementaryLevelLessonPlans/)

Behavior Management System / Expectations of Students

Each student deserves an equal opportunity to excel in the classroom. A positive classroom environment is essential for these opportunities. My behavior management policy focuses on positive and negative reinforcements to encourage students to exhibit appropriate behavior and strive to develop self-discipline and responsibility. I believe that this approach will promote a healthy and positive climate for learning in the classroom.

During the first day of school, my class will discuss this policy so each student has a clear understanding of my expectations. Part of this conversation will focus on five specific rules that I believe are most important for the smooth working of the classroom. As a new teacher, I feel it is important to establish clear and objective rules that leave no room for mistaken interpretation.

These rules are:

1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Raise your hand and wait for permission to speak.
3. Stay in your seat unless you have permission to do otherwise.
4. Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
5. Use respectful and inoffensive language.

Some behaviors that could constitute failure to heed these rules include: not paying attention in class, talking out of turn or to other classmates during a lesson, distracting other students, playing with items inside one's desk, and so on. More serious offenses (that is, the offenses that may lead immediately to the most weighty consequences) include aggressive behavior toward another person, destruction of property, and inappropriate language. Specific behaviors such as these will be noted during the discussion of the five rules.

Negative consequences for broken rules

In the case of inappropriate behavior, the following steps will be implemented to reinforce the importance of a positive classroom climate. It is important to note that these steps

are merely the typical hierarchy of consequences. Depending upon the offense, these consequences can be skipped entirely. Skipping steps can occur at my discretion or the discretion of an administrator.

This system is loosely based upon the process by which penalties are assessed in soccer. Students begin each day with a clean slate. If a student's behavior warrants disciplinary action, I will insert a colored card in a pocket chart next to the student's name. The hierarchy of consequences is as follows:

Step 1: Verbal warning to the student.

Step 2: Student receives a yellow card; he or she must walk around the track (or other designated area) for 10 minutes during the next recess period.

Step 3: Student receives a red card; he or she must complete a problem report. This form will require the student to explain the rule that was broken and describe their view on how they intend to make a better choice next time. The problem report must be signed and returned by a parent. In addition, the student must walk the track the entire time during the next recess period.

Step 4: If the student continues to be disruptive after previous warnings and consequences, the student will be sent to the principal's office and the parents will be called immediately.

Positive consequences for good behavior

My behavior management system extends to rewards for recognition of individual and group efforts that exceed my expectations.

Outstanding individual behavior will be rewarded with "High Flyer Tickets" that will be added to the ticket bag (a suitcase). These rewards are given for exceptional behavior such as helping another student in need, always using kind words, asking great questions, and using excellent listening skills. At the end of each week, I will draw a random ticket out of the bag. The student whose name is on the ticket will be allowed to choose a prize from the footlocker.

(Prizes will have some sort of travel-related flair to them.) The more High Flyer Tickets a student has earned, the better his or her chances to win a prize.

My group reward system is called Viking (or whatever the school mascot is called) Points. The class is eligible to receive 30 minutes of free time on Fridays when they have collected enough Viking Points as a class by me and by other adults at the school. This reward, which can be used to do any schoolwork the students choose, is given for exceptional behavior as a whole group, including in areas outside the classroom such as the library or cafeteria. As the points accumulate, the class can see how their positive actions and attitudes are adding up. These points will be reserved for exceptional behavior, and they give us something to look forward to when the weekly goal is reached.

Communication

Communication between school and home is essential to everyone's success. Parents will be contacted to discuss both positive and negative behavior. I will also encourage parents to review my penalty and reward systems with their children to ensure they are understood.

Substitute Teacher Packet for Mr. Batten's Class

Dear Substitute Teacher:

Thank you for taking on the responsibility of teaching my class today. I have a great deal of respect for your willingness and courage to work each day with a new set of students – many of whom probably think they have the day off when they see you! Hopefully, the rules, procedures, and routines that I have established with my class will help you have a successful day.

The following pages describe the basic guidelines for running this classroom. I believe everything you need to know about the class is located here. If you have questions, please refer to the *Helpful People* page for assistance from a member of the school staff.

Also located on my desk are the lesson plans for the day. My hope is that you can teach my class using the same instructional plan that I was following on the previous school day. I have done my best to include information in this plan that should allow you to move the lessons forward. Please do the best you can do with these lessons. I will certainly understand if you find it too difficult to pick things up from where I left them; if such a situation develops, feel free to resort to the *Additional Tasks* page in this packet. (Please note the first assignment of the day, which students should complete when they enter the classroom at the start of the day.)

Lastly, I would appreciate it if you would complete the feedback form in this packet at the end of the school day. Your comments will help me get back on track with the class tomorrow and will allow me to improve my preparations for the next time a substitute teacher is needed.

Once again, thank you for helping me out today. Have a great day!

Best regards,

Dan Batten

Contents of this packet:

1. Class roll/seating chart
2. List of students with special needs
3. List of student assistants
4. Class routines
5. Teacher's schedule
6. Emergency procedures
7. Helpful people
8. Classroom management techniques
9. School policies
10. Additional tasks
11. Substitute teacher feedback form

Summary of Items in the Substitute Teacher Packet

1. Class roll/seating chart

This section lists the students in the class, and includes a seating chart *with photos* of each student in their assigned seating location.

2. List of students with special needs

Any students who require special education or other assistance will be listed here, along with their individual schedules.

3. List of student assistants

The substitute teacher should not expect to take on all the roles that the students normally do when I am present in the classroom. This section will detail the current jobs (calendar keeper, office manager, librarian, doorman, etc.) for each student in the class, and will encourage the substitute to expect the students perform their tasks as usual.

4. Class routines

The substitute teacher will be encouraged to review the signs around the classroom that outline the various class routines. A detailed description of these routines will be included in this packet. Typical routines to describe would include restroom breaks; pencil sharpening; trips to the water fountain; recess; lunchtime; hallway/office/nurse passes; free time; transitions between activities; computer time; pre-dismissal; and transportation home.

5. Teacher's schedule

This section will list any special responsibilities (bus duty, hall monitoring, etc.) for which the substitute teacher may be responsible due to my absence. The tasks will be displayed in calendar format for easy reference.

6. Emergency procedures

The school's emergency drill and evacuation procedures (fire, tornado, security issues) are

located in this section. A map of the classroom's location in the school will also be included.

7. Helpful people

This section will list the contact information for the administrators and staff (such as the principal, assistant principals, secretaries, attendance officer, other teachers, medical staff, and custodian) with whom the substitute teacher may possibly need to contact for assistance. Included in this list will be the room number, phone extension, or intercom button needed to reach each person.

8. Classroom management techniques

This section will include the various techniques I use to maintain a positive and high-functioning classroom environment. In addition to my behavior management plan (including the problem report form), this section will describe the class's typical attention-grabbing techniques, such as the "quiet signal."

9. School policies

The school's policies and discipline plan will be included here.

10. Additional tasks

This section will include a list of various lesson plans and activities that I have stored up for substitute teachers. I expect these tasks to build upon topics that have previously been learned in class.

11. Substitute teacher's feedback form

(Included on next page.)

Substitute Teacher's Feedback Form

Mr. Batten's 5th Grade Class
 Sprawling Elementary School
 123 Levittown Lane
 Chesterfield County, VA 23999

Date Substituted _____ Substitute Teacher Name _____

Can I contact you if I have any questions? Yes No
 If you answer yes, please include your contact information (phone/email).

Was the substitute packet helpful? Yes No
 Is there anything else that should be included in the substitute packet?

Was the lesson plan clear and easy to teach? Yes No
 If you answer no, please explain.

Please name any student(s) that disrupted class.

Please name any student(s) that helped you during class.

What single experience (good/bad/neutral) stands out in your mind about today's class?

Would you be willing to substitute teach this class again? Yes No
 Please explain your response.

Do you have any suggestions for me that would make future substitution day(s) more effective?

Please turn in this form to the school secretary at the end of your substitute assignment. Thank you again for all your help!