

Facilitator's Manual

This manual accompanies *The First-Year Teacher's Survival Guide, Fourth Edition*, by Julia G. Thompson (Wiley, 2018, ISBN 978-1-119-47036-6).

Professional development leaders often find that new teachers need confidence-building inspiration and assistance in establishing professional priorities as well as practical advice and guidance. The goal of this facilitator's manual is to help professional development leaders and new teachers work through the material in *The First-Year Teacher's Survival Guide* in a thoughtful and systematic approach. In addition, you will find suggestions for managing different types of professional development activities and for creating a yearlong system of support for the first-year teachers you work with.

The information in this manual is designed to be a working resource that is as flexible as possible—allowing professional development leaders to adjust the way they use it to meet the needs of their new teachers. For example, teacher trainers may choose to have participants work through different sections on an individual basis or to have large groups read various sections before breaking into smaller discussion groups. The discussion questions can be used as shared brainstorming or individual reflections in a yearlong professional development program as well as during beginning-of-the-year meetings.

The information in this manual is divided into four sections. In “Part I: Information, Strategies, and Activities for Professional Development Leaders,” you will find advice on how to create effective teacher workshops. In the second section, “Part II: Workshop Discussion Questions,” you will find questions designed to help participants master the material in each of the fourteen sections of *The First-Year Teacher's Survival Guide* as well as suggestions for helping participants work through those questions. In the third section, “Part III: Scenarios for Role-Play and Discussion,” you will find fifty classroom scenarios for new teachers to role-play or discuss. In “Part IV: Creating Collegial Cohorts for Yearlong Support,” you will find suggestions for creating informal cohorts or study groups so that the novice teachers you work with can have the support they need all year long.

Part I: Information, Strategies, and Activities for Professional Development Leaders

General Tips for Conducting Beneficial Workshop Presentations

Planning workshop presentations that are enjoyable and beneficial learning experiences for everyone in attendance is not as difficult as it may seem. In this list, you will find some general advice to help you plan and conduct workshop presentations:

- Model professionalism and efficiency. Prepare all handouts in advance and make sure all equipment is in good working order. Handouts that are hole-punched make it easier for participants to store in a binder for future reference.
- Plan to be available before and after a workshop to greet participants, answer questions, and network with new colleagues.
- Start on time and end on time. Nothing frustrates participants more than feeling as if they are wasting time.
- Post an agenda with topics, as well as starting, ending, and break times, and be sure to stick to it.
- Make sure participants know your expectations for workshops—cell phones and other devices on silent, laptops closed, no side talking, and so forth.
- Begin a workshop right away with a team-building activity for participants to complete as everyone gets settled. This will make it easier for first-year teachers to connect and network with the other new teachers in their school or district.
- Offer a variety of activities to keep participants engaged. Provide activities that encourage individual, small-group, and large-group interactions.
- Although it is entirely appropriate to group participants according to grade level or content area, consider mixing groups so that participants can gather perspectives from a variety of colleagues.
- Steer discussions to cover both big-picture or theoretical ideas as well as practical strategies and activities.

- If you find that one table or group is more talkative than necessary, find a tactful way to move all the participants around to allow them to work with other (less distracting) participants.
- Consider providing mints or small candies, silly rewards, and other cheer-building items that can make the time together more pleasant for everyone.
- End the workshop with an activity designed to lift everyone's spirits. You can provide an inspirational quotation or humorous story, or you can ask participants to share their ideas.
- Just as excellent classroom teachers do, pace the workshop by breaking instruction into small segments of about fifteen minutes. This will allow you to change the pace frequently enough to keep everyone engaged.

Tips for Constructive After-School Workshops

Once the school year begins, many workshop leaders find that holding sessions after school is a good way to connect with new teachers in a positive and productive way. Of course, the drawback of this type of session is that by the end of a school day, many new teachers are exhausted and not as willing to participate as they would otherwise be. Here are some quick tips for making after-school meetings ones that first-year teachers will look forward to attending:

- Try to keep the meeting place and time as consistent and convenient as possible to make it easy for participants to arrive on time.
- When you are meeting after school, combat fatigue by scheduling efficiently managed meetings that last no more than forty-five minutes. Longer meetings will just not be as effective in reaching weary teachers who have managed a classroom all day long.
- Announce the workshop agenda in advance of the meeting date. Send a friendly note the day before the meeting to remind busy teachers of what they will need to bring, any preparation they should do, and the meeting place and time. On the day of the workshop itself, send out a brief, upbeat, friendly reminder one more time.
- Provide a sign-in sheet and invite other school or district personnel to attend when appropriate.
- Some workshop leaders have found that opening a workshop with a brief question-and-answer period to discuss any problematic issues that may have arisen since a previous session allows participants to clear their minds before focusing on the day's topic. One efficient way to manage this is to ask participants to submit their concerns in advance so that you can prepare responses.

- If you think that assigning homework between sessions would be appropriate for your participants, be respectful of their time and stress levels. At the start of the school year, an assignment should not take more than thirty minutes of their time.
- A homework assignment that many new teachers have found useful is not only to answer a discussion question themselves but also to ask an experienced colleague to answer it. When participants convene, they can then share not only their ideas but also those of the veteran teachers they consulted.
- Take advantage of the technological resources available to you through your school district. Set up an e-mail group or discussion board for participants to share useful websites and other resources as well as to communicate with one another and with you between sessions.
- Try to end every workshop meeting with a five-minute recap of the day's information.

Icebreaker Activities Adapted for Teacher Workshops

To encourage collaborative sharing throughout their time together, participants need to learn a bit about one another as they begin to build professional relationships. Effective icebreakers result in a more relaxed atmosphere, lively interactions, and the beginnings of collegial sharing. Although the Internet abounds with great ideas for icebreakers and team-building activities, not all of them would work well for teacher workshops. The ideal icebreakers for new teacher professional development workshops are those that are brief, designed to elicit friendly interactions, introduce participants to one another, and focused on teaching.

Although icebreakers are an entertaining way to kick off a day of professional development, they are also useful as energizers throughout a long workshop session or after-school meeting. In this list, you will find icebreakers that are designed to help teachers get to know one another in relation to their new roles as teachers:

Name Tent for Educators

- **Step One:** Fold a sheet of paper so that it makes a tent that can stand alone. If you are not sure of the best way to do this, look around to see what everyone else is doing. Offer advice and take advice.

- **Step Two:** Put your first name in big, bold letters on the front so that everyone near your table can see it.
- **Step Three:** Here is a table of character traits that may describe you. Please select one from each column and write them in each corner.
- **Step Four:** On the back of your tent, list one trait from anywhere on the chart that is a particular strength that you have as an educator.
- **Step Five:** How would you adapt this exercise so that you could use it with students? (Hint: Students need positive labels for themselves if they are going to succeed.)

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
dependable	forgiving	compassionate	curious
flexible	humorous	resourceful	enthusiastic
positive	honorable	dedicated	friendly
tolerant	sympathetic	confident	sensible
cooperative	courteous	organized	self-controlled

Two Truths and a Lie

Participants write two truths about their teaching goals, beliefs, previous experience, or other topic related to education on a note card. They also write one statement that is not true. Group members then confer to decide which statements are true and which are not.

Ten Years Ago/Ten Years in the Future

Ask participants to take a walk down memory lane to generate a list of words or phrases to describe the way schools were ten years ago. Then ask them to work together to predict the changes that will happen in schools in the next ten years. After groups share with the whole group, workshop leaders can use these predictions to talk about how teachers can prepare for the changes ahead of them.

Best Teacher Ever

Ask participants to share stories about the best teacher they ever had. As a group, they can then list the common characteristics that the teachers they described share.

Three-Minute Commonalities

Ask participants to list as many commonalities in regard to teaching (preparation, goals, past experiences, mistakes, favorite moments, etc.) that they can in three minutes. They then share their commonalities with the larger group.

Ideal Teachers/ Ideal Students

Assign the task of generating a list of the characteristics of ideal teachers to half the groups in the workshop. Assign the task of generating a list of the characteristics of ideal students to the other half. Each small group will then select

the two most important characteristics of each and have a representative share them with the whole group.

Words of Wisdom

Have participants write the two best pieces of advice about teaching that they have ever been given. They should share with the other participants in their group and then select the best one to share with the entire group.

From Student to Teacher

Allow two minutes for participants to list all the ways that their experiences as students can help them become better teachers. What did they experience then that they can use now? Participants can then share with group members.

Part II: Workshop Discussion Questions

Tips for Managing Workshop Discussion Questions Productively

The questions in the “Questions to Discuss with Colleagues” segment at the end of each of the book’s fourteen sections have been designed to enhance the information presented in each section as readers share ideas with colleagues. Geared to help readers carefully work through the most important aspects of the material to determine how to incorporate it into their own classroom practice, these questions can be answered in small- or whole-group discussions as well as assigned for additional preparation at home.

During the workshop itself, allowing participants to work cooperatively to discuss questions and generate answers will enrich their knowledge of the subject matter. To facilitate this process, there are many different ways to encourage participants to work together productively. As you plan your workshop presentations, consider the needs of your participants, the size of the group, and the available time for discussion as you make your plans.

Even though there are several questions for each section, it is preferable to cover a few discussion questions in depth and to have participants share their thoughts with others rather than try to cover too much material for participants to absorb with ease. You could even assign specific questions in advance so that participants can be prepared or assign various questions for further consideration after the workshop.

In the following list, you will find activities designed to stimulate lively discourse as participants work together in response to the questions posed for discussion:

Round-Robin Responses

One participant in each group writes a response to a discussion question. That participant then passes the sheet to the next and so on as quickly as possible in a specified time limit. They then share the ideas on the sheet with other groups.

Two-Minute Questions

Participants have two minutes to write responses to a discussion question before sharing with partners, small-group members, or the whole group.

Anticipation Brainstorms

Participants generate a list of words associated with the topic of each section of the book. They then share their lists with group members. During discussion, participants can check off words that they anticipated as associated with the topic.

Sticky Note Notes

Participants write brief notes on sticky notes as they discuss. At the end of a discussion session, groups combine their notes and categorize them into large topics.

Sharing Shapes

As a group, have participants write four points from a topic under discussion on the corners of a square, one thing they liked inside a heart, three questions they still have on the three points of a triangle, and one thing they can apply immediately inside a circle.

Table-to-Table Sharing

After participants have discussed one of the topics in the questions, have them join another table or group to further share ideas.

Write-Pair-Share

Participants write their responses to a discussion question within a set time limit. They then join a partner to share ideas, adding new information to their original responses. Each pair then shares their combined ideas with another pair.

Idea Splash

Participants brainstorm their possible answers by jotting down as many ideas related to the discussion topic as possible. They then work with group members to select the best ones to include in their answers.

Three Words

Participants silently read a question and write three words associated with the topic. They then share their three words before formulating a group response to the question.

I think _____. What about you?

Participants read a question and decide on a brief response. They then mill around the room sharing their response with other participants and listening to various points of view.

Card Trade-Off

Participants write a response to a question on a note card. Once everyone has completed this, each one finds a partner and, after reading the other's card, trades. This continues until participants have had the opportunity to read several cards.

Response Collection

Participants share ideas about a question verbally while a table leader records their ideas on a large sheet of paper that can then be posted for the entire group to see and comment on. A helpful twist on this idea is for one participant to serve as a docent to explain the group's responses as others come by.

Group Survey

Participants write individual responses to a question and then leave their groups to survey other participants about their reactions to their responses.

Give One, Get One

Participants write three ideas about a possible response to a discussion across the top of a sheet of paper. They then mill about recording new responses while sharing their own.

Questions to Discuss with Colleagues

Section One: Begin Your Professional Growth

1. You have had a stressful day at school in which nothing seemed to go as you had planned. What can you do to remain confident while learning from the events of this tough day?
2. You just received an e-mail from your principal telling you that she will visit your classroom later in the day. Your lesson is not a very exciting one, nor is it particularly well structured. What should you do? Who can offer advice?
3. You and your mentor do not have a common planning period. How can you find the time to work together?
4. Although you are sure that you want to create a supportive network of colleagues to share ideas with, you are not sure about how to begin. How can you and your colleagues near and far form your own professional learning network?
5. What are some of the problems you can anticipate that you will have as a first-year teacher? Where can you find help for them?

Section Two: Develop Professional Productivity Skills

1. You need to maximize how efficiently you use your planning period each day. What can you do to ensure that you don't waste valuable time?
2. You are spending long hours each weekend trying to get caught up on grading papers, even though you know this is not the best way to manage them. How can you become more efficient at how you manage grading paperwork?
3. You must share classrooms with other teachers. You have no private place to work because you share an office with other teachers. Their personal conversations make it difficult for you to use your planning period efficiently. To whom can you turn for help? What should you do?
4. What keeps teachers from being productive at school? How can you overcome these problems so that you don't have to take as much paperwork home?
5. What are your five most important daily tasks at school? Are you managing them as efficiently as possible? If not, what can you do to improve the way that you manage them?

Section Three: Collaborate with Colleagues in Your School Community

1. Your school has a strict policy on the instructional materials that can be photocopied and distributed to students. Your supervisor keeps rejecting your handouts. How can you solve this problem?
2. A supervisor assigns you an extracurricular task that you can't possibly do well. You want to be regarded as a team player at your new school, but you know you can't adequately fulfill this responsibility. What should you do?
3. You've been assigned to work closely with a teacher whose philosophy of education is very different from yours. In fact, you are uncomfortable working with this colleague. How can you handle this situation in a productive and diplomatic way?
4. You are having such a busy day that you forget to attend your assigned afternoon bus duty. Your duty partners are clearly not pleased about this. What should you do to manage this situation successfully?
5. You find that you must miss a day of school. What can you do to make the day a productive one for the substitute teacher as well as for your students?

Section Four: Become a Capable Classroom Leader

1. Your students continue to talk while you are talking. You have warned them several times but to no avail. What can you do to get their attention focused on you instead of on chatting with one another?
2. Your students are not as accepting of one another's mistakes as you would like for them to be. What can you do to keep them from snickering when a classmate makes a mistake in front of the others?
3. You've noticed that once students finish an assignment or test, they all seem to ask to be excused. What can you do to stop this parade so that only those students who really need to leave class are excused?
4. You have several students who are not motivated by the prospect of making good grades. What should you do to motivate these students to fulfill their academic potential? Who can help you with this? How can you learn more about how to motivate each student?
5. Even though you know the first ten minutes of class are crucial in setting the tone for the rest of it, your students are slow to settle down. They chat and walk around the room and are obviously not in a hurry to get to work. What can you do to make the first ten minutes of your class productive?

Section Five: Start the School Year Productively

1. Several teachers have stopped by to tell you about the new students you will have this year. Unfortunately, some of these teachers have told you stories that emphasize the negative sides of your new students. How can you deal with this information now, and how can you avoid this uncomfortable situation in the future?
2. Because there is so much paperwork at the start of the school term, it's difficult to keep up with it all. How can this responsibility be managed efficiently?
3. It's all too easy to feel exhausted and overwhelmed at the start of school. How can you cope with this stress so that you can enjoy being with your students?
4. Which strategies make it easier for you to get to know your new students? How can you find out about their interests and abilities so that you can begin to differentiate instruction?
5. What seating arrangements do the other teachers at your school use that would also work well in your classroom? What do you need to consider before moving students into new seating configurations?

Section Six: Cultivate Positive Classroom Relationships

1. A parent objects to a book that you have assigned for your entire class to read, even though you obtained administrative approval to use this particular work. How should you handle this situation?
2. During a conference, the parents of an unruly student blame you for their child's misbehavior. What are some of the mistakes you should avoid as you attempt to solve this problem? Who can offer assistance with this issue? What should you do?
3. Some of your students are from nonnuclear families. You want to make sure that you treat their families courteously. What are some of the steps you can take to guarantee that your relationship is positive, beneficial, and respectful?
4. At the beginning of the school year, you gather a great deal of information about your students and their families. How can you organize this information so that you have ready access to it all year?
5. Your students leave the class a mess every day—candy wrappers, trash, and personal materials have been thrown around the room. How can you encourage them to clean up after themselves and to take responsibility for leaving the classroom tidy?

Section Seven: Meet the Needs of All Students

1. Several of your students require preferential seating. How can you arrange the furniture in your classroom so that the needs of all your students can be met?
2. You believe that one of your students is hyperactive and has an attention deficit disorder, but her parents refuse to consider the possibility. What can you do to help this student be a successful learner?
3. You have a student who turns in poorly done work on a regular basis, even though you have made your standards clear. What is your goal? What do you do?
4. You suspect that one of your students is falling through the cracks. What can you do to help this student keep from failing? How do you gather data? Who can help you with this?
5. You have bilingual students who refuse to speak the language required by your school. How do you encourage them to use the language of the school? What do you do?

Section Eight: Adapt Instruction through Differentiated Instruction

1. You want to provide your students with constructive feedback on formative assessments. What are some of the most effective ways that you can provide encouraging feedback to your students? How can you provide this type of feedback without spending hours writing comments on student papers?
2. You want to assess your students' preferred learning styles but are not sure which assessment instrument you should use. How can you find an assessment that will be effective with your students? Who can help you with this?
3. As you begin a new unit of study, you become aware that your students have various levels of background knowledge about the new unit. What can you do to increase the background knowledge of all students in your class?
4. You have a class with severely mixed ability levels—from very bright to those who struggle to succeed academically. What can you do to meet the needs of the individual learners in your class?
5. Although you want to use formative assessments in your classroom, you are not always sure that the ones you have chosen are producing the most helpful data. What can you do to improve the way you use formative assessments?

Section Nine: Design and Deliver Effective Instruction

1. You have a class filled with students who have very short attention spans. They easily become restless and bored. How should you adjust instruction to help them succeed?
2. You notice that your students lose interest in the day's lesson before the end of class. What activities can you use to engage their interest and help them master the content at the same time? Who can help you with this?
3. Your school's curriculum is clearly too advanced for many of your students. You know you should cover all the material in the curriculum guide, but you don't believe it is possible. What should you do? To whom can you turn for help?
4. It's not always easy to balance the amount of talking that you need to do with the amount of independent work that students should do. How can you decide what the right amount of each type of instruction will be for your students?
5. You want to integrate technology resources into an upcoming lesson.

How can you plan this so that the implementation goes smoothly and helps students learn?

Section Ten: Measure Student Progress with Summative Assessments

1. You have a student who usually does very well on tests. This student failed a recent assessment and has accused you of making an unfair test. What is your goal in this situation? What should you do?
2. Your students do not seem to perform well on traditional tests, even though you spend class time reviewing with them. You feel that they know the material. Which types of assessments would be effective ways to evaluate your students' progress? How can you use a variety of assessments in your class?
3. One of your students has an accommodation allowing him to have extra time on tests and quizzes. How can you provide this accommodation without compromising the security of the assessment? Who can help you with this?
4. As an alternative assessment, you have assigned a creative project. After students turn it in, however, you realize that the point values that you have assigned for it are not appropriate for the difficulty of the project. How should you handle this?
5. You want to offer alternative assessments but are not sure of the ones that would be most appropriate and manageable. How should you proceed? Who at your school can help you with this dilemma?

Section Eleven: Policies, Procedures, and Rules: The Framework of Classroom Management

1. You have carefully planned rules and you want to enforce them, yet you are not sure when to be lenient and when to be strict. How can you determine the best course of action to take when enforcing class rules?
2. A couple of teachers at your school seem to abide by their own rules instead of the ones for the entire school. This has created problems for you and your students because you enforce school rules. How can you handle this tactfully and effectively?
3. One of your students repeatedly breaks a classroom rule. The consequences that you have in place are not effective. What should you do?
4. Some of the policies at your school are outdated and not effective any longer. How can you change these policies?
5. What procedures do your colleagues have in place that you think would

be effective in your classroom? How can you share ideas about these procedures and how to implement them?

Section Twelve: Prevent or Minimize Discipline Problems

1. You observe a pattern of misbehavior among your students day after day. How can you discover the reasons for your students' misbehavior, and what can you do with this knowledge? What can you do to prevent or minimize this poor behavior? How can you replace it with more positive behaviors?
2. A student has accused you of being unfair. Although you do not think that you have acted unfairly, the accusation is distressing. How can you handle this situation so that the potential for damaging relationships with students is minimized? Who can help you with this?
3. Which teachers in your school seem to have a highly developed sense of withitness? What can you learn from them to improve your own teaching practice?
4. Sometimes when students are working independently, you notice that too many of them are off task, even though you are monitoring as carefully as you can. What solutions can you generate to solve this problem?
5. What suggestions do your colleagues have for interventions that can prevent or minimize misbehaviors? Which techniques have already been successful for you and your students?

Section Thirteen: Handle Discipline Problems Effectively

1. Several of your students are often off task and have made it clear that they are not interested in the subject matter that you are teaching. How can you intervene and redirect while treating each one with respect and dignity? What is your goal in this situation? How can you prevent this behavior from occurring in the future?
2. What are some of the most common misbehaviors that you observe among your students? How do the other teachers at your school handle them? What advice do they have for you as you work to establish an orderly classroom environment?
3. You would like to learn more about restorative justice and how it could be used in your school. How can you and your colleagues learn more about this movement and how to integrate it into your school? Who can help you with this?
4. When students misbehave, it is often hard to manage the stress that a discipline problem brings with it. How can you manage your stress

related to discipline problems? What suggestions do your colleagues have to help you with this?

5. Although you accept that the discipline issues in your classroom are your responsibility, it is apparent that some of them are caused by the poor discipline climate at your school. What can you and your colleagues do to improve the overall discipline climate?

Section Fourteen: How-to Quick Reference Guide to Common Classroom Discipline Problems

1. One of your students is chronically late to school because a parent drops him off late many mornings. You have tried talking over the situation with the parent, but the child is still late. What should you do?
2. Two of your students turn in homework papers that are very similar. You believe that one of the students copied the other's work. However, you do not have any proof. What are your school's policies about how you are to handle this? What mistakes should you avoid? To whom can you turn for help?
3. You have a class right after lunch that is very hard to settle down. How can you help them focus and get to work quickly without raising your voice or feeling frustrated? To whom can you turn for help?
4. You notice that one of your brightest and most cooperative students has something hidden in a book bag. You suspect that it could be an illegal drug. To whom can you turn for help? What should you do?
5. You suspect that some of your students appear to be harassing another student, but you have not actually caught them, and the harassed student denies any trouble. What should you do? Who can help you with this?

Part III: Scenarios for Role-Play and Discussion

1. You suspect that one of your students has a weapon hidden in a book bag.
2. Your principal asks you to coach a sports team. Although you enjoy the sport, you don't have enough time to add coaching to your other school responsibilities.
3. Your students want to talk while you are talking. You have warned them and warned them but to no avail.
4. Two of your favorite students have fallen in love with each other and

- demonstrate their affection in embarrassing and inappropriate ways in the hallway near your classroom door.
5. Many of the students in your class have finished an assignment earlier than you expected them to. There is about fifteen minutes left in the period.
 6. You want to end class each day with an activity or routine that is a positive review of the day's instruction.
 7. Almost all the students in your class fail an important test. They assured you that they studied. You have a room full of students who think the test was unfair and that you probably graded it incorrectly.
 8. One of your students has a crush on you.
 9. You notice that a student is constantly distracted and off task no matter how often you try to redirect.
 10. You notice that one of your students has no one to sit with at lunch.
 11. One of your students seems to be picking on another student in sneaky and subtle ways. The victim claims that he is okay, but you are not comfortable with the situation.
 12. It is three weeks into the school term and a new student arrives. This student does not know any of the other students in your class.
 13. One of your students begs to use the restroom during a test. This happens during every test.
 14. A student asks to talk to you privately about a missing assignment but is obviously lying.
 15. It is three weeks into the school term and a new student has been added to your class. Your students are delighted because the newcomer is a popular and disruptive class clown.
 16. You return from an absence to learn that your best-behaved class has treated the substitute with outrageous disrespect.
 17. You return from a two-day absence to find that the substitute disregarded your lesson plans completely.
 18. You suspect that one of your students is throwing small bits of paper when your back is turned.
 19. One of your classes is proud of their reputation for making life difficult for new teachers.
 20. When you correct a student, he responds by telling his classmates that you are picking on him simply because you do not like him.
 21. A student in your class has serious emotional issues resulting in out-of-control temper tantrums. You worry about the safety of the other students as well as the negative effect the tantrums are having on the learning environment.
 22. A student is often late to school because a parent drops her off late every day.
 23. For the third day in a row, a student is ten minutes late to your class

- with a note from another teacher asking you to excuse the tardiness.
24. Your students swear around you. When you correct them, they respond with “My bad” and continue to swear.
 25. You have a class that is simply too talkative. Their talking gets in the way of their learning.
 26. A student is late to class and makes an angry scene that completely disrupts your carefully planned instruction.
 27. You believe that one of your students is being abused.
 28. You suspect that some of your students do not have warm clothing, and cold weather is coming.
 29. You’ve been assigned to work closely with a teacher whose approach to discipline is very different from yours.
 30. You’ve just learned that a colleague you know only slightly has been saying unkind things about how you manage your classroom behind your back.
 31. A teacher down the hall from you has an out-of-control classroom. It is so loud that you and your students are negatively affected.
 32. Every day another class moves past your doorway on their way to lunch. They are loud and rowdy, but their teacher does not quiet them.
 33. You forgot that you had lunch duty—again.
 34. Some of your students read above grade level and some read well below grade level.
 35. It is the day grades are due, and you just discovered that you’ve made a big mistake in entering an important test grade. You’ve already passed the papers back to students.
 36. A student writes a rude comment about you on the bottom of a test paper and then erases it—slightly.
 37. An angry parent demands a conference with you. During the conference, you suspect that the parent is inebriated.
 38. You catch a student copying another student’s homework paper for another class.
 39. One of your students confided in you that she is considering being sexually active and wants your advice about birth control.
 40. You have a student who constantly asks to leave the room. Every time it is an emergency that lasts for at least ten minutes.
 41. One of your students is so anxious about tests that she begs for more extra time than is reasonable.
 42. You place the key to a unit test in a desk drawer. At the end of class, you notice that it is missing.
 43. You leave your wallet on your desk because you were in a rush at the start of class. You notice that it is missing about halfway through the period.
 44. You have a student who texts her mother during class about a pair of

- shoes she suspects that a classmate has stolen. Her furious mother arrives at the end of class ready to confront the suspected thief.
45. Many of your students come to class without paper and pencils. They tend to borrow supplies from the same classmates day after day.
 46. One of your students seems to have a thousand good excuses for not completing homework on time.
 47. You have carefully assigned students to groups for a special project. One of your students loudly objects to where you have placed her and refuses to join her assigned group.
 48. Your students enter the classroom excited about a fight they had witnessed at the bus stop.
 49. Other teachers at your school allow students to spend the last ten minutes of class just chatting with one another. Your students want you to allow this also.
 50. A special needs student grabs one of your students in the hallway and touches him inappropriately.

Part IV: Creating Collegial Cohorts for Yearlong Support

After the first few weeks of school, it can be tempting for professional development leaders and mentors to assume that new teachers no longer need continuing support. Although it is true that new teachers likely require less intensive support than they had at the start of the term, the need for different types of ongoing support is still present as teachers grapple with developing lesson plans, long-term positive relationships, and other aspects of their new careers.

One of the most successful and satisfying ways to provide first-year teachers with ongoing assistance is to create an opportunity for them to meet regularly with other new teachers to discuss the issues that are most important to them. These meetings can take place after school or during common planning time if the teachers in your building are fortunate enough to have common planning.

Scheduling a routine meeting that lasts no more than thirty to forty-five minutes once a week will make it easy for participants to plan and prepare. Keeping to a predictable agenda during the meeting will also make it easier for new teachers to gain the maximum benefit from working together with their colleagues.

Although there are different ways to conduct a collegial cohort meeting, many professional development leaders find that a simple approach works well. In advance of the meeting each week, ask participants to be prepared to share with

the group something that they learned as well as a success that they experienced during the week. They can also ask the group for advice in handling a problem that they may have encountered.

As the professional development leader for this cohort, you could also arrange for staff members with special expertise to join the group from time to time. For example, if one of your colleagues is especially efficient at managing paperwork, new teachers would benefit from listening to productivity tips from that person. Or you could ask a counselor to share stress management advice, or a testing coordinator may want to share tips about standardized test administration. New teachers don't always have the opportunity to work firsthand with support personnel or even with teachers in other departments or grade levels, and informal guest speakers can address many first-year concerns.

Another activity that can be immensely helpful for new teachers is to make a snapshot observation of a more experienced teacher and then to share the information from that observation with the group. As the leader of this group, it will be easier for you to contact the more capable teachers in your building who are also willing to be observed than it would be for a first-year teacher to try to do this. Once you have created a master list of the teachers in your building who are willing to have new teachers drop by for brief visits, first-year teachers will find it relatively easy to consult the list of available teachers so that they can observe a more experienced colleague at work.

However you decide to manage the group, it's important to emphasize that it is a time for first-year teachers to share ideas that can help them increase their teaching skills and develop their confidence. A collegial cohort works best if the meeting time is scheduled at a convenient time, if participants know how to prepare for it, and if the agenda is focused on sharing ideas and learning together in a supportive, nonjudgmental, and friendly environment.

For more information on how you can have a successful first year, visit www.juliagthompson.com, juliagthompson.blogspot.com, or Twitter @TeacherAdvice.