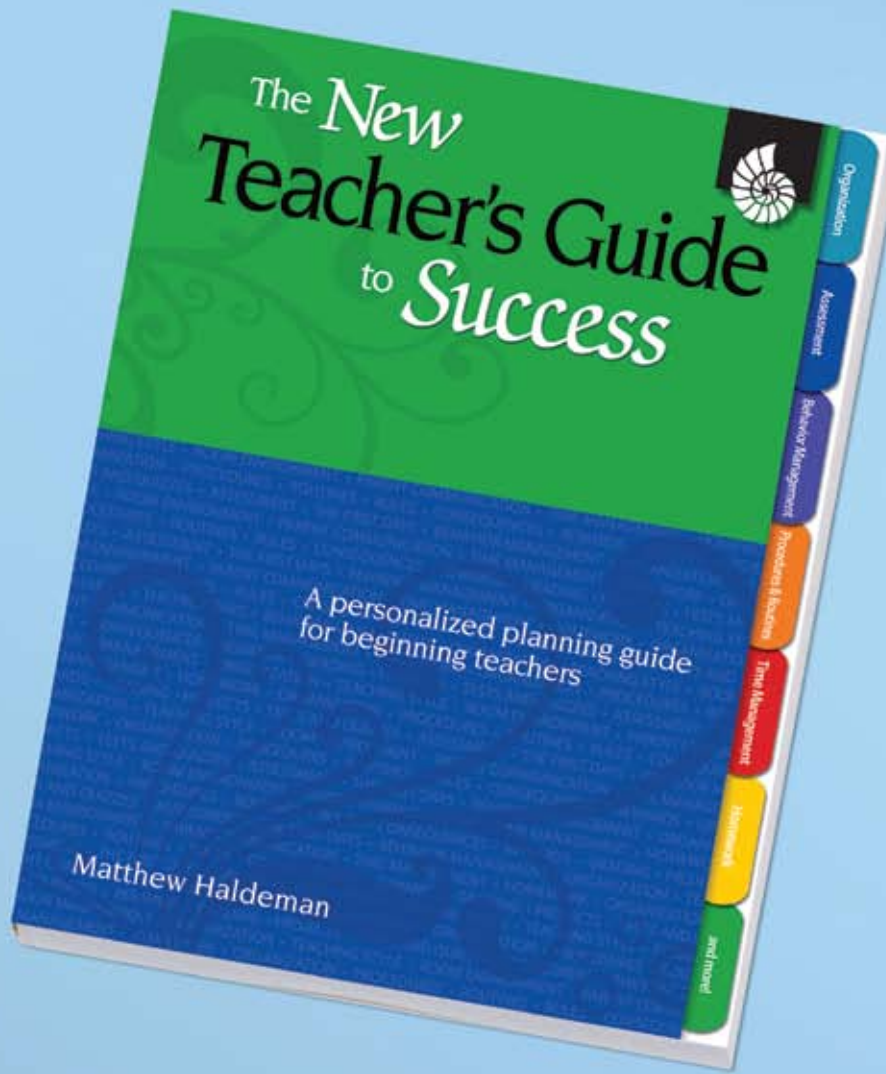




# Book Study Guide *for*



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# Introduction

Being a teacher requires much more preparation than being a student, and there will undoubtedly be situations and questions that arise for which you are unprepared. While there is no way to foresee every possible classroom event, this planning guide will help you give thoughtful consideration to some of the decisions and issues that are bound to come up in your first year of teaching. Teaching is complex and requires more than just simple solutions. While observing other teachers and reading books on education are helpful and worthwhile, you will need to consider your own style as you approach some of the many decisions you will face. Finally, by writing down your ideas before the school year begins, you will have a reference which can serve as a framework for your decision-making process all year.

## Overview of Book Study Guide

In *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, teachers can actively engage in planning their first year of teaching. This guide supplements and extends the work completed in the professional book as a professional development tool. Additional activities explore the topics described in the book in more depth. Teachers can discuss the questions and issues raised in the book with their professional learning community or with a mentor. Each chapter provides a practical application, as well as a suggestion for how to use the activity as evidence of demonstrated learning for new teacher induction programs or for documenting professional development hours. Finally, there are thought-provoking reflections to help teachers prepare for a successful teaching career.

## Overview of Core Book

*The New Teacher's Guide to Success* is designed to provide the tools necessary to prepare teachers for their first year in the classroom. Each of the 10 chapters addresses a specific area of teaching, including teaching style, room environment, routines and procedures, behavior management, time management, parent communication, homework, assessment, organization, and the first days of school. *The New Teacher's Guide to Success* is valuable for incoming teachers of all backgrounds and skill levels. This book helps teachers think beyond *what* to teach to the business of *how* to teach.

*The New Teacher's Guide to Success* is structured like a workbook to help beginning teachers inquire about and reflect on their desired teaching experiences. These exercises will likely result in a more positive classroom



# Chapter 1

## Teaching Style



### Preview Activity

Think about the teachers you have known in the past. Which ones stand out in your mind, and why? What made them especially effective? What were their teaching styles? Write your answers below or in a journal or blog, or consider discussing your responses with your professional learning community.

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### Read and Reply

Read the descriptions of different teaching styles in Chapter 1 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 13–15. Reply to the question prompts. You may write in the book or in your own journal.



### Apply It: Group

Propose the following scenario: A student did not complete her science project. Ask each person in the group to role-play one teaching style. Using that teaching style, how would the teacher respond to this student's situation? Spend time discussing the different styles and how each teacher reacted.

# Teaching Style *(cont.)*



## Apply It: Individual

Think about the following scenario: A student did not complete her science project. On a separate sheet of paper, write a short script about how teachers with different teaching styles would handle the situation.



## Documentation and Evidence

**Recommendation:** Your personal teaching philosophy can serve as evidence of your understanding of and compliance with the school's mission statement, demonstrating your promotion of common school goals.



## Reflection

Which styles work for you? Which style best fits your personality? How do you want to be perceived by students and parents?

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# Chapter 2

## Room Environment



### Preview Activity

Make a list of all the supplies you will need to have in your new classroom. Include books, art supplies, paper, pencils, furniture, bulletin boards, charts, and anything else you think you may need. Your task will be to determine how to organize all of these supplies and create simple procedures for easy access.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



### Read and Reply

Read the information about room setup and seating arrangements in Chapter 2 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 17–26. Reply to the question prompts in your book or on a separate sheet of paper. Use another blank sheet to experiment with different arrangements for your classroom.



### Apply It: Group

Visit other teachers' classrooms. Note the placement of supplies, furniture, and other features of the room. Take notes or snap photos of the room. Talk with colleagues in your professional learning community about what you observed and/or review the photos you took of the classrooms.



### Apply It: Individual

Note what works and what doesn't work in the rooms you visit. Ask teachers why they made certain choices when arranging their classrooms. Discuss your feelings and ask advice on how you might arrange your own room. Once your room is arranged, invite your colleagues to visit. Take note of their feedback and suggestions.





# Routines and Procedures *(cont.)*



## Apply It: Individual

Think about organizations that have procedure manuals, such as law enforcement, large businesses, and military units. What is the purpose of these manuals? What do they contain?

Create a procedure manual for your classroom using all the procedures you developed in the course of reading Chapter 3. Add any that may be specific to your situation. Consider taking photos of the procedures in action, or create a video of students enacting the procedures and show it during the first week of class. Post illustrations or photos with written descriptions of each procedure. (For younger students, attaching a picture of a cupboard's contents to the outside of the cupboard door can help with clean up.) Update your procedure manual throughout the year.



## Documentation and Evidence

**Recommendation:** Your procedure manual can serve as evidence of an action plan for creating and maintaining effective learning environments for all students. Remember to modify and update procedures as you discover ways to streamline your systems.



## Reflection

What challenges do you anticipate facing with the procedures you developed? How do you think procedures will help you manage your classroom?

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# Chapter 4

## Behavior Management



### Preview Activity

Think about your personal philosophy regarding rules. What is your current attitude about rules in general? How important are rules in a classroom setting? Write some of your thoughts, concerns, or attitudes about rules below.

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### Read and Reply

Read the information about behavior management in Chapter 4 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 41–53. Reply to the question prompts. You may write in the book or in your own journal.



### Apply It: Group

Use a separate sheet of paper to brainstorm a list of behavior expectations. Discuss the list with your professional learning community. Talk about which behaviors are relevant and realistic for the age group you are teaching. Isolate these behavior expectations and record them. Generate your own list of classroom rules based on the discussion. Create a poster or other visual to display the rules and post it in your room.



# Chapter 5

## Time Management



### Preview Activity

On a separate sheet of paper, create a pie chart of your typical day represented by 24 equal slices (one for each hour). Color in slices for each activity you do on a typical day. For example, color seven spaces for each hour of sleep, one space for exercising, two spaces for preparing and eating dinner with your family, and so on. Label each activity.



### Read and Reply

Read the information about time management in Chapter 5 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 55–62. Reply to the question prompts. You may write in the book or in your own journal.



### Apply It: Group

Share your responses to the time management questions on pages 56–57 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*. After determining how much time you have, talk about priorities. Discuss the list of priorities you developed while reading the rest of the chapter. Ask others to provide feedback on your list. Finally, work together to prepare a weekly schedule. If you don't want to use a paper and pencil planner, use your PDA, *Apple iCal*®, *Microsoft Outlook*®, or other computer program to help you organize your schedule.



### Apply It: Individual

Review your responses to the questions in Chapter 5 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*. Consult with a veteran teacher about his or her priorities. It is always useful to have a voice of experience. Investigate personal planning devices that can help you organize your weekly schedule. If you don't want to use a paper and pencil planner, your PDA, *Apple iCal*®, *Microsoft Outlook*®, or other computer programs offer a variety of scheduling options.



# Chapter 6

## Parent Communication



### Preview Activity

List situations that would require you to contact a student's parent or guardian. Then brainstorm the most appropriate method of communication for each situation (e.g., email, telephone, or home visit), based on immediacy and level of importance. Does the school have guidelines or set dates for communicating student progress?

Situation	Most Appropriate Way to Contact



### Read and Reply

Read the information about parent communication in Chapter 6 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 63–67. Reply to the question prompts. You may write in the book or in your own journal.



### Apply It: Group

With your professional learning community, brainstorm situations in which a teacher might be faced with an angry parent (e.g., unacceptable grade or bad behavior). Pair off and role-play one of these situations with one teacher playing the parent while the other plays the teacher. Then switch roles. Perform the skit for the entire group. Consider jotting down notes or key phrases to remember for later in case you are ever faced with diffusing a volatile situation.

# Parent Communication *(cont.)*



## Apply It: Individual

On a separate sheet of paper, brainstorm possible situations in which you might be faced with an angry parent. Prepare a short list of standard responses you could use to help diffuse the parent's anger. Transfer your favorite responses to note cards or keep them in a notebook and review them frequently. These catch phrases might come in handy when you are caught off guard or can't think of anything productive to say to an angry parent.



## Documentation and Evidence

**Recommendation:** Prepare a parent letter introducing yourself and your policies and procedures, including instructions on how to contact you and how you will notify parents about their student's progress. This letter provides a record of how you establish and communicate learning goals for all students, as well as how you communicate with families, students, and other audiences about student progress.



## Reflection

Think back to a time when a situation caught you off guard. Write down a response you could use if that situation occurred again. For example, if a parent once stormed up to you on the playground and demanded to know why his or her child was given a low grade on a project, you could have said: "I would be happy to make an appointment with you to discuss this after class. That way, I can devote my full attention to you, show you my grade book, and go over the requirements for the project. At the moment, I am responsible for the safety of all the children on this playground. What time would you like to return?"

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# Chapter 7

## Homework



### Preview Activity

What is your personal opinion about homework? What is the purpose of homework?

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### Read and Reply

Read the information about homework in Chapter 7 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 69–72. Reply to the question prompts. You may write in the book or in your own journal.



### Apply It: Group

Prepare or acquire a homework planner for students. Many schools provide a planner that contains school rules and procedures, a calendar, and space to write assignments for all subject areas. If your school does not provide one, work with your professional learning community to create one for your grade level using a calendar-creation program or *Microsoft Excel*®.



### Apply It: Individual

Develop a personal, written homework policy. Be sure to include the following:

- The amount of homework you think is appropriate
- The purpose for the homework
- Your grading policy for homework
- Your procedure for collecting homework

While this exercise is an extremely valuable way to personally clarify your policy and procedures, also consider publishing this policy, as well, to give clear expectations for your students and their parents.



# Chapter 8

## Assessment



### Preview Activity

What is your personal opinion on grades? Does student behavior or tardiness affect grades? Does that complement or contradict your school's policy?

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### Read and Reply

Read the information about assessment in Chapter 8 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 73–80. Reply to the question prompts. You may write in the book or in your own journal.



### Apply It: Group

With your grade-level team, compile information about all the assessments required by the school or district. Then, gather all the dates when benchmarks and assessments will be given. Create a timeline or calendar of these dates and note them in your school planner. This will make it easier for you to remember when assessments are approaching and also help you plan your curriculum accordingly.

Ask three veteran teachers to each provide a copy of their grading scales or grading plans. Create a Venn diagram of the three policies. Analyze the diagram and select the parts that appeal to you. Incorporate these elements into your own grading policy.

# Assessment *(cont.)*



## Documentation and Evidence

**Recommendation:** Post your grading policy in your classroom and offer a summary of your policy to your administrator or mentor teacher as evidence of how you collect and use multiple sources of information to assess student learning and to demonstrate how the results of your assessments guide your instruction. Assist students with their own goal-setting to show how you can help guide them to be responsible for their own learning.



## Reflection

Grading is another complicated issue in education. A teacher's philosophy on grades may not align with the school's policy. If your opinion on grading is different from what is required, how can you forge a fair and effective compromise? List one way your policies are in line with the school plan and one way your policies are different. Articulate the rationale for your grading practices below.

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# Chapter 9

## Organization



### Preview Activity

Rank yourself on the organization scale by checking the description below that most closely matches your personality.

\_\_\_\_ I am extremely organized. I know exactly where everything goes. Everything has a place, and everything is in its place. I can lay my hands on the phone bill from three months ago in under five seconds.

\_\_\_\_ I am somewhat organized. Most things make it into an assigned place. There are no teetering stacks of paper on my desk. I can find my phone bill from three months ago if given enough time.

\_\_\_\_ I want to be better organized. I try to put things away in their assigned place, but it is easier to put it down and find a place for it later. I can get the phone bill from three months ago by calling the phone company.

\_\_\_\_ I am not at all organized. I put things down wherever I am and can't find them later. There are towering stacks of paper on my desk. Who needs the phone bill from three months ago anyway?

What are the benefits of your organizational style? What are the drawbacks?

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### Read and Reply

Read the information about organization in Chapter 9 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 81–87. Reply to the question prompts. You may write in the book or in your own journal.

# Organization *(cont.)*



## Apply It: Individual

Interview a teacher with an extremely organized room. Take photos and notes. Ask about the process involved in developing a system of organization, why it works, and any other tips this teacher could offer.

Share your findings with your professional learning community, or write your observations in your own journal. Notice what other teachers are doing and how they organize things. Focus on what might work in your classroom and how you could improve upon what you've seen.



## Documentation and Evidence

**Recommendation:** Outline some of your organizational systems as if you were instructing a substitute teacher about where to find things in your room. Keep your list to reference how you established and maintained standards for student behavior and of how you used materials, resources, and technologies to make subject matter accessible to students. This can be an invaluable tool in case you are reassigned to another room.



## Reflection

What are my strengths and weaknesses concerning organization? What are some ideas for improving my organization skills?

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# Chapter 10

## The First Days



### Preview Activity

Think back to Chapter 1. How do you want your students and their parents to perceive you? The first days of school are the only opportunity to make a first impression. What impression do you want to give?

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### Read and Reply

Read the information about the first days of school in Chapter 10 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*, pages 89–100. Reply to the question prompts. You may write in the book or in your own journal.



### Apply It: Group

Review the work you have completed in this book. Visualize how you want your school year to go. Make a plan with your professional learning community for the first days of school. Write a schedule as directed on page 96 of *The New Teacher's Guide to Success*. Be as specific as you can. Review the schedule with your professional learning community or a veteran teacher. Get as much feedback as possible. Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression.

