

16 Top Tips for Student Teaching

1. Let your mentor teacher know YOUR expectations upfront. Most student teachers feel that they don't have a say in what goes on, but you do.
2. Remind him/her (nicely) that you are there to learn a variety of teaching methods and that you are trying to develop your own teaching style not necessarily just take on his/hers.
3. Go with your mentor teacher everywhere! Sit in on parent/teacher conferences and see if it's okay to observe a child study team in action. This is all part of teaching and you should have experience with this also!
4. Stay in contact with your professor or advisor on a regular basis. If you only see him/her on days they are there to observe, you will be more nervous.
5. Always try your best! I know it's scary to have people constantly observing you but if you are doing your best whether or not they are there it won't be as scary!
6. Don't be afraid to integrate some of your own teaching techniques or classroom management skills. Your cooperating teacher might just learn a new technique from you!
7. Try to get student input about your lessons. If you aren't sure how your lesson went, ask one or two students what they thought. Sometimes they have wonderful suggestions!
8. Always plan too much. Since we don't have much experience organizing lessons according to class time, it's better to have too much planned then to have the students sitting there with nothing to do.
9. Be On Time

10. Dress Appropriately

11. Follow the School Rules

12. Befriend the Office Staff (This is especially important if you believe that you will be staying in the area and possibly trying for a job at the school where you are teaching. These people's opinions of you will have an impact on whether or not you are hired. They can also make your time during student teaching much easier to handle. Don't underestimate their worth.)

13. Maintain Confidentiality (Remember that if you are taking notes about students or classroom experiences to turn in for grades, you should either not use their names or change them to protect their identities. You never know who you are teaching or what their relationship might be to your instructors and coordinators.)

14. Don't Gossip (It might be tempting to hang out in the teacher lounge and indulge in gossip about fellow teachers. However, as a student teacher this would be a very risky choice. You might say something you could regret later. You might find out information that is untrue and clouds your judgement. You might even offend someone without realizing it. Remember, these are teachers you could be working with again some day in the future.)

15. Be Professional With Fellow Teachers (Do not interrupt other teachers' classes without an absolutely good reason. When you are speaking with your mentor teacher or other teachers on campus, treat them with respect. You can learn a lot from these teachers, and they will be much more likely to share with you if they feel that you are genuinely interested in them and their experiences.)

16. Don't Wait to the Last Minute to Call in Sick (You will probably get sick at some point during your student teaching and will need stay home for the day. You must remember that the regular teacher will have to take over the class during your absence. If you wait until the last minute to call in, this could leave them in an awkward bind making them look bad to the students. Call as soon as you believe you will not be able to make it to class.)