

5 WAYS TO BE A GREAT MENTOR TEACHER

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2023

Congratulations! Being chosen to mentor a teaching intern is a big deal! You get to share what you love about the best profession in the world and you also get another set of hands and eyes in your classroom. Win-win!

So now what? You have this wonderful gift that may seem like just one more thing on your already full plate. Here are the simple steps for you to hit the ground running.

1. Discuss professional expectations with your intern.

Everything from text messaging for sick days to confidentiality. Let them know the importance of attendance and punctuality, opportunities for extra-curricular programs, and all technology policies and procedures. Cover all the bases with your new intern so you both know that these expectations were communicated before they ever become a situation.

2. Intern Observation of You

Have your intern spend a few days observing your class. They can take notes and ask questions about methods and strategies you use, materials and texts, lesson plan format, classroom management, and student interaction. This will immerse them in your class culture and through your discussions you will be able to notice their areas of strengths and weaknesses.

3. Co-planning & Co-teaching

Spending planning time together can help your intern learn the flow of instruction and where the students should be at the end of a lesson. This time allows you to focus on the questioning the intern will use with students and their ability to plan for differentiation. Your planning should include who is doing what during the lesson as you co-teach. There are so many methods of co-teaching, all ways to benefit students, so learn a lot of them and revisit the ones that work best for your dynamic duo and are most productive for your students.

4. Intern Observation

Make a point to pre-conference with your intern before you observe their lead-teaching session. Have them set a goal for specifics they want to improve. This gives both of you a focus for the observation. Write a vignette of their teaching and have them go over it to reflect on their own methods with their pre-conference goal in mind. After they have determined the highlights and potholes in the lesson, then the two of you can have a conference on their observation, discussing if the pre-conference goals were attained and how, and even setting some new goals for next time.

5. Other Stakeholders

Be sure to communicate with your intern about their program's requirements. You should be aware of any professor's specific expectations, as well as the needs and expectations of their

supervisors. Stay in touch with your own school administration too, including any colleagues that may be involved with the professional development program for your interns. Keeping a positive relationship ongoing during the semester makes it easier should any problems arise, and can be a bonus should the internship result in a job interview – the ultimate goal!

Being a great mentor teacher is easy as following these simple guidelines. When it starts to feel like this is too much, pause and reflect on the area that is soaking up your time, and then re-evaluate how you could approach that part in a different way. I address each of these areas in more depth [here](#), so stop by and grab some new ideas.

Together we can make teaching teachers one more thing you ROCK!