

# **BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS**

**5 Steps to Ensure a Strength-Based Start to  
the School Year**



# 5 Steps to Ensure a Strength-Based Start to the School Year

## **STEP 1:**

Identify Each Child's Strengths

## **STEP 2:**

Plan Strength-Based Activities

## **STEP 3:**

Foster a Strength-Based Classroom

## **STEP 4:**

Discuss the Importance of Strengths

## **STEP 5:**

Check-In Regularly

# STEP 1:

## Identify Each Child's Strengths

Recognizing the unique strengths in each student is the foundational step to creating an environment where every child feels valued and capable. By focusing on what they can do well, you build their confidence and enthusiasm for learning.

## STRENGTH STRATEGIES IN ACTION

### STRENGTH SURVEY

Distribute a simple survey for students to fill out during the first week. Ask them about their favorite subjects, hobbies, and what they believe they excel at.

### STRENGTH STAR

Create a classroom display with each child's name, and have them add a star for every strength or skill they're proud of.

### ONE-ON-ONE CONVOS

Spend a few minutes with each student in the first couple of weeks to discuss what they believe are their strengths. Make a note of these.

# STEP 2:

## Plan Strength-Based Activities

Tailoring activities around student strengths ensures increased participation and confidence. It also fosters an environment where students are eager to showcase their abilities and feel motivated to learn.

## STRENGTH STRATEGIES IN ACTION

### SKILL SHOWCASES

Once a month, dedicate time for students to share or teach something they excel at.

### PERSONALIZED PROJECTS

Allow students to showcase their knowledge and meet learning objectives by choosing project topics related to their strengths.

### STRENGTH STATIONS

Create stations around the classroom based on various skills (e.g., art, math puzzles, storytelling) and allow students to gravitate toward preferred stations.

# STEP 3:

## Foster a Strength-Based Classroom

Set up a space that encourages children to use their strengths. This isn't just about acknowledging individual strengths but creating an ecosystem where everyone celebrates and supports the strengths of their peers.

## STRENGTH STRATEGIES IN ACTION

### STRENGTH SPOTLIGHT

Dedicate a portion of your bulletin board to highlight different student strengths each week.

### PEER COMPLIMENTS

Encourage students to write anonymous notes to their peers, pointing out something they did well that week.

### GROUP ACTIVITIES

Facilitate collaboration among students with different strengths. For example, strong writers might be tasked with developing a story while strong artists illustrate it.

# STEP 4:

## Discuss the Importance of Strengths

Regularly addressing and reinforcing strengths keeps the momentum going throughout the school year and ensures it's not just a beginning-of-the-year initiative. Encourage students to use their strengths and praise them when they do.

## STRENGTH STRATEGIES IN ACTION

### MORNING MEETING

Start the day with a short discussion where students share something they did well the previous day.

### STRENGTH JOURNAL

Provide students with journals to regularly jot down what they felt good about during the week.

### REFLECTION TIME

Once a month, have a session where students discuss what they learned about their strengths and how they used them.

# STEP 5:

## Check-In Regularly

Consistent check-ins help in understanding the evolving strengths of a student. They also allow opportunities to offer encouragement and adjust approaches based on student feedback.

## STRENGTH STRATEGIES IN ACTION

### STRENGTH REVIEW

Every few months, review the initial strength survey and see if students want to add or modify any strengths.

### FEEDBACK FORMS

Provide a platform or simple form where students can share how they feel about the strength-based approach and offer suggestions.

### STUDENT CONFERENCES

Regularly sit down with each student to discuss how they feel about their progress, ensuring they recognize their growth in their areas of strength.

# CONCLUSION

Remember, a strength-based approach isn't about ignoring areas of weakness but rather leveraging what students do best to help them overcome challenges. With these steps, you'll be well on your way to ensuring a positive, strength-based start to the school year!

Want to learn more about strength-based practices?  
Visit [www.strengthbasedcollective.com](http://www.strengthbasedcollective.com)