

Survival tip: expect the unexpected.

Having a substitute teacher “kit” ready will help your class run smoothly in your absence.

Checklist

- o Give complete information about materials.
- o Try to include meaningful assignments.
- o Keep an up-to-date seating chart.
- o Prepare your students for a substitute.
- o Post the names of students who assist you.
- o Create a substitute emergency kit.
- o Say thank you.

Preparing for a substitute

Maybe you are feeling good today, and you’re not expecting to be served a subpoena, and you’ve been very careful not to walk under any ladders.

In fact, looking over the situation, you can’t conceive of anything that would cause you to turn your class over to a substitute teacher for one or more days. But something might just happen—and at a time when you least expect it. So the smart thing to do is to be prepared for a substitute.

Here are some tips for keeping your class running smoothly during your absence. Forms to duplicate are on the next two pages.

Give complete information about materials. In stating assignments, give titles and authors of texts and laboratory manuals, as well as numbers of pages, problems, and experiments. Be sure to leave copies of texts, answer books, and laboratory manuals for the substitute. Don’t just say, “The kids know where everything is.”

Try to include meaningful assignments in your plan book. Busywork often results in a wasted period for the students and the substitute.

Keep an up-to-date seating chart that gives the full name and grade of each student. Insist that students always occupy their assigned seats.

Prepare your students for a substitute by instilling good work habits and a code of conduct that is conducive to order and accomplishment. Talk about your absence with your students ahead of time if it is planned. Younger students need to be reassured that you will return. Older ones need to know that you will be updated about their behavior and progress.

Post the names of students who assist you as the attendance secretary, monitors, and clean-up crew.

Create a substitute teacher kit. Do you have the following prepared for your substitute?

- o Seating charts
 - o Who to phone for help
 - o Names of teachers next door
 - o Basic daily/weekly schedule
 - o Supervision schedule (yard duty, bus duty, hall duty, etc.)
 - o Building floor plan including emergency drill routes and procedures
 - o Lesson plan/generic plan for the “unexpected”
 - o Materials and activities students enjoy (crossword puzzles, etc.)
 - o Student helpers assigned
 - o Class rules and expectations
 - o Individual student schedules such as special education or other pull-out programs
 - o Names and schedules of education support personnel and/or volunteers.
 - o Procedures for regular and early dismissal.
- Say thank you.** Substitutes are professionals, just like you, and have the same goals for students. Let your principal know when your substitute does a good job.

Substitute Information for Elementary Students

Teacher	Grade	Subject(s)	Room
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Principal	Vice Principal
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Counselor	Nurse
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For further information on school procedures ask _____ in room _____

or _____ in room _____

These students will be able to answer basic questions on classroom policies:

Schedule

Time	Day 1 _____	Day 2 _____

Duty times and station:

Children who need special attention:

Children who come or go at special times:

Additional information:

Substitute Information for Secondary Students

Teacher _____ Grade _____ Subject(s) _____ Room _____

Principal _____ Vice Principal _____

Counselor _____ Nurse _____

For further information on school procedures ask _____ in room _____

or _____ in room _____

These students will be able to answer basic questions on classroom policies:

Schedule

Period/Time	Day 1 _____	Day 2 _____
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

Lunch time and location:

Duty times and station:

Children who need special attention:

Additional information:
