

# SUBSTITUTE TEACHER GUIDE

## Checklist

### AT HOME

- \_\_\_ Keep a notebook and pencil by the phone you will be using to answer early morning calls.
- \_\_\_ Assemble a *Super Sub Pack*. Keep it well stocked and ready.
- \_\_\_ Leave early enough to arrive at school at least 20 minutes prior to the beginning of school.

### PRIOR TO ENTERING THE CLASSROOM

- \_\_\_ Report to the office.
- \_\_\_ Ask about special procedures.
- \_\_\_ Find the location of restrooms and the teacher's lounge. You will need to know where the gym, music, and art room are if you are in an elementary building.
- \_\_\_ Ask the names of the teachers on both sides of your classroom if possible. Introduce yourself to them.

### IN THE CLASSROOM

- \_\_\_ Enter the classroom with confidence and your *Super Sub Pack*.
- \_\_\_ Put your name on the board.
- \_\_\_ Review the expectations or rules if any are posted.

- \_\_\_ Locate the school evacuation map. It should be posted by the door.
- \_\_\_ Read through the lesson plans left by the permanent teacher.
- \_\_\_ Locate the books, papers, and materials that will be needed throughout the day.
- \_\_\_ Study the seating chart.
- \_\_\_ When the bell rings, go to the outside door and let the children in at the elementary. At the Jr. High and High School monitor hallways.
- \_\_\_ Greet the students at the door and get them involved in a learning activity immediately.
- \_\_\_ Introduce yourself briefly.
- \_\_\_ Take attendance and send it to the office.
- \_\_\_ Get students working right away.
- \_\_\_ Carry out the lesson plans and assigned duties to the best of your ability.
- \_\_\_ Improvise using the materials in your *Super Sub Pack* to fill extra time, enhance activities, or supplement sketchy lesson plans as needed.
- \_\_\_ Ask questions of other teachers and of responsible students. Don't hesitate to ask for help when needed.
- \_\_\_ Be fair and carry out the rewards and consequences you establish.
- \_\_\_ Be positive and respectful in your interactions with students and school personnel.

## AT THE END OF THE CLASS DAY OR PERIOD

- \_\_\_ Challenge students to recall projects and topics they studied that day.
- \_\_\_ Remind students of homework.
- \_\_\_ Have students straighten and clean the area around their desks.
- \_\_\_ Correct all papers the students did during the day, unless otherwise instructed.
- \_\_\_ Be sure the students leave the room in an orderly fashion.
- \_\_\_ Write a note to the teacher about the lessons you accomplished, the names of students who were helpful, the names of the students who may have been a particular challenge, and notes about how the day went. Neatly organize papers turned in by the students.
- \_\_\_ Close windows, turn off lights and equipment, and make sure the room is in good order before you shut the door.
- \_\_\_ Return to the school office to report that you are finished with your assignment.
- \_\_\_ Check to see if you will be needed again the next day.
- \_\_\_ Contemplate ways you can improve as a substitute teacher.
- \_\_\_ Pat yourself on the back - you did a great service!

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## Classroom Management

### **Expectancies:**

- Assure students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Positive behavior is greatly enhanced when the teacher has instructed the students in what is expected of them. Students need to become familiar with the expectations of the teacher as quickly as possible. Getting students to engage in desired behavior is greatly enhanced when they know what is expected of them.
- Expectations should be kept to a minimum of four or five.
- Expectations should be stated in a positive and in instructional terms.
- Particularly younger elementary students need to be reminded of the expectations within the context of each situation. Remind them of proper behavior when waiting in line, going from one location to another, bathroom behavior, and working and on task behavior.

### **Importance of Task:**

- Getting student on task as quickly as possible makes it much easier to get and to keep students engaged in learning. When students are actively involved with learning, they will seldom have the time to get into trouble. The more free time students have the greater the likelihood that they will create classroom disruptions.

### **Determining the Difference Between Minor and Major Student Behavior Misbehavior:**

- Teachers need to distinguish between minor and major disruptive student behavior. If the student's behavior is just merely annoying or irritating, it is usually minor misbehavior. Minor misbehavior can be best dealt with by ignoring it and recognizing other students' positive behavior. Teachers should use caution in bringing attention to minor classroom behavior, since strengthening the unwanted behavior.
- Major disruptive behavior occurs when a student or student interfere(s) with student learning. This cannot be permitted. Even with major disruptive behavior, correction should be done quickly and privately, whenever possible. Stopping the behavior quickly and getting student to repeat what is expected of them is essential in

getting students to be cooperative and to minimize classroom disruptions.

**Extinction:**

- Purposely ignoring minor and insignificant student misbehavior and then recognizing positive student behavior is an essential tool in creating and maintaining a positive classroom environment.

**Management by Wandering Around Proximity:**

- Walking around the classroom and being in close proximity to students is a good way to manage a positive classroom.

**Teacher Behavior Maturity:**

- Teachers should remain professional, model positive behavior even when under stress, and maintain a calm and serene demeanor.

**Maintaining a High Rate of Positive Interaction:**

- Research shows that 90% of the positive things that students do in the classroom go unrecognized.
- Maintain a high rate of positive interactions with students. This will greatly enhance the probability of a positive classroom environment.

**Acknowledge Positive Behavior at Irregular and Unexpected Intervals:**

- Acknowledge positive student behavior when it is not expected.
- Verbal praise should be done in a casual manner.
- Students should praise the value as well as the behavior. Values such as hard work, kindness, dependability should be recognized.

**Continual Teacher Reflection:**

- Highly effective teachers reflect upon lessons, student learning, and classroom environment on a continual basis. Teachers carefully analyze situations and devise strategies in which the instruction can become more effective in the future.

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## Suggestions for Managing Behavior in the Classroom

- **\*\*\*The Key to effective behavior management is to acknowledge and reinforce positive behavior.**
- If possible, **ignore an unacceptable behavior**. You often reinforce and therefore increasing the undesirable behavior by calling attention to it. For some children a negative reaction is better than no reaction.
- If you must take action to stop a behavior, try **signal interference**. Let that child know s/he is doing something unacceptable by a **raised eyebrow, a frown, or a shake of your head**.
- Try **proximity control**. *Move closer to the child who is misbehaving (often effective) or the child closer to you (not as effective).*
- **Avoid confrontation** because the ensuing actions are usually negative.
- **To reduce attention getting behaviors**, move around the classroom. *Acknowledging children who are behaving appropriately to situations.*
- **Use "modeling" techniques**. Give attention to one child who is performing as expected so that others can hear you and ignore those who are not.
- **Try behavior "shaping"**. Reinforce behavior that is close to desirable behavior; then raise your criterion for reinforcement in slight steps so performance will move toward you desired goal.
- **Tell a misbehaving child that you want him or her to change and why. Tell him/her exactly what you expect.** Tell them what will happen if they do it rather than what will happen if they don't do it. *Be sure to reinforce acceptable behavior.*

- Some children respond well to **keeping track of their behavior** (check a sheet to show frequency of desired behavior). This makes them responsible for their behavior.
- To increase the quality of work done, **place the students in competition with time**. For example, ask, "How many problems can you get done in "X" minutes?" Then time them or let them time themselves.
- **Adjust assignments for children who do not finish on time**. For example, cut arithmetic problems in strips and reinforce children for completion of each strip.
- **Keep workload short and the time limit short**. Some children operate best with short-range goals, so make them quick and easy to attain. Reinforce as soon as possible.
- **Plan activities they like less before activities they enjoy**.
- **When grading, mark correct answers rather than incorrect ones**. It is better to make any negative marking as unobtrusive as possible. No one likes to have their paper defaced, especially with the errors boldly pointed out with red pen.
- **Help the class judge their own behavior**. Discuss how they think they are behaving according to the classroom rules. If they feel they can improve, ask them how?
- **Follow through on consequences**. Idle threats weaken your position and credibility.
- **Reprimand privately to avoid humiliating the child**. **Avoid exacting confessions**. You probably know who's guilty or what happened. It is better to tell the child you know what she/he did and that you don't want him/her to do it again. If it is a serious problem have them tell you how they can fix the situation.

- **Avoid challenges**, too. If you dare a child to misbehave she/he will more likely take you up on it.
- **Beware of mass punishment**. If a child misbehaves, she/he should bear the responsibility, not the entire class or the whole group/row. If you don't know who did it, it is better to drop it than accuse the whole class.
- If you resort to punishment, do so only if you intend to reinforce acceptable behavior immediately afterwards.

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## Responsibilities of Substitute Teachers

**Leaving Students Unattended:** Teachers should not leave students in classrooms unattended without certified supervision. Teachers are responsible for all students under their charge and are legally responsible for the welfare of these students.

**Reporting Dangerous Situations:** If an employee at the school observes the existence of a dangerous situation, it is imperative that it be reported to school officials as soon as possible so preventative and/or corrective measures can be taken. Dangerous situations can include unsafe equipment, physical obstacles, unknown objects, potential and actual student confrontation, etc.

**Missing Students:** Missing students should be reported to the school office immediately.

**Injuries to Students:** If any doubt exists in the mind of a teacher about moving an injured student, don't move the student. The school office should be notified immediately for medical assistance. An observing student may need to be sent to the office while you attend the injured student.

**Release of Students:** Students should not be released directly to anyone other than school personnel without the written permission from the office or parents. If you are unsure, check with the office about a situation.

**Students are prohibited from taking medication in school without a written note from a doctor. The school nurse is the only person allowed to distribute that medication.** Students who bring medication to the office should be referred to the nurse's office immediately.

**School Visitors:** Visitors are required to check in at the office and wear a volunteer or visitor pin. If you see someone who does not have a visitor badge, please direct them to the office to check in. If you feel this person is an intruder contact the principal immediately.

### **Use of Force is Prohibited**

#### **Mandated Reporting Laws**

State law requires that all individuals involved in the care, treatment, or education of a child are classified as mandated reporters.

Report any suspicion that a child may have been, or is being abused, or neglected physically, emotionally, or sexually to the principal.

#### **Confidentiality/Data Privacy Laws**

Do not share information with parents, regarding students other than their own child.

It is both unprofessional and unethical to discuss the needs of students outside or inside the school.

Do not share papers and other information about students.

Discussions regarding a specific student's behavior, academic, health, or related concerns must be conducted in a private area. Only personnel with a "need to know" should participate in this discussion.

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## Do's and Don'ts

<b>Do's</b>	<b>Don'ts</b>
Do speak in a whisper for attention. Students have to be quiet to hear what you are saying.	Don't raise your voice. Kids are used to being yelled at, and it doesn't faze them at all.
Do correct papers for assignments you issued. The teacher doesn't want to return to a stack of unmarked papers.	Don't send papers home without letting the classroom teacher see them first.
Do arrange an audible signal (such as a whistle) before you take them out on the playground. You may have to recall them in a hurry.	Don't release students outside without reinforcing rules (time-out spot, boundaries, etc).
Do familiarize yourself with school and classroom rules before class convenes.	Don't expect the students to interpret the classroom and school rules accurately for you. ("We're allowed to sit on the floor for math"; "Tuesday is extra recess day"; "Ms. Smith said we have until tomorrow to study for the quiz.")
Do be sure to obtain accurate directions to the school before starting out in the morning.	Don't be the last to arrive and the first to leave.
Do notify the teacher next door if an emergency occurs.	Don't leave students unattended. If you must leave the classroom, ask another staff person to assist you.

Do's	Don'ts
Do develop motivating rewards (five extra minutes of recess, a quick game, etc.) to elicit desired behavior.	Don't dwell on negative behaviors
Do attempt to sit in faculty room during lunch.	Don't isolate yourself in the classroom. Try to get to know other staff members.
Do walk your students to specialist classes (music, PE, art, lunch, etc.).	Don't allow students to move throughout the school unattended or allow students not on your class roll to enter your classroom.

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## Helpful Hints

Behavior and motivation are important parts of the classroom climate. Here are some suggestions to help make the classroom experience a pleasant one for you and the students.

- To begin the day and get the students settled quickly, write a message in code on the board or overhead before the students arrive. Using the code 1=A, 2=B, 3=C, and so on, let the students decipher your opening welcome.
- Compose a simple letter introducing yourself to the class. Tell about your family, pets, hobbies, and so on. Then ask the class members to write back, telling a bit about himself or herself. (This activity will show the students that you are interested in them individually.)
- Use a variety of ways to get students to line up for music, lunch, PE or other activities outside the classroom. For instance, use birthday months, color of clothing, beginning letters of names, likes and so on.
- Let students work together on a math sheet, language paper, or other assignment having one student do the even numbers and another doing the odd. Then partners can swap papers and check each other's work.
- When trying to quiet the class for a certain activity, explain the directions and then have the students close their eyes and imagine what the project will be like. Have the student describe what they see, how they feel and what the outcome will be.
- Set up a "time-out" area in a quiet corner of the classroom. When two students disagree, send them there. The two must face each other,

and each tells his or her side of the story, without interruptions. Neither student can leave the area until the matter is solved.

- At the beginning of the day, allow students to brainstorm motivating rewards for the class that do not require money (playing a learning game, listening to music, have a few minutes more of recess, etc.). Write all the ideas on slips of paper. Then, if the class behaves appropriately for the entire day, allow one person to draw a slip at the end of the day. Be sure to include only the ideas you are willing to do. As an alternative, you can come with rewards on a slip of paper and just discuss them with the students.
- Keep track of class behavior on the board in the room, awarding a plus star each time the entire class is working, or erase when a problem arises. In the morning, establish with the class a reward for earning five stars or pluses. Set aside the last fifteen minutes of the day to give the reward.
- Play bingo with the class as a filler, reward, or as a lesson plan in itself. Give students a blank bingo card. Then read off or write a list of words on the board. Students choose any space in which to write the word. You can use their spelling words or words that might go along with their science, or social studies lesson.
- Design a report card on the board and fill it in as the day goes on.
- Bring a sealed mystery box to class. Possible contents include foods, flowers, herbs, spices. Let the students hold it, shake it, smell it, and so on. Ask them to write down what they think is in the box. At the end of the day, reveal the contents and see if anyone correctly guessed it. To make it easier, you might give clues every hour to help solve the mystery.
- Place a clean transparency over the class seating chart. Then place a plus on each student's name when the student is helpful, hardworking, or positive toward other students. Use a minus to subtract points from unruly students. Three pluses can result in privileges or prize (stickers, stamps on hand, etc.) Three minuses could mean a time-out

or a behavior mark in the school discipline program. An alternative could be keeping points for groups or rows.

- On index cards (one for every class member), write each of the chores you would like completed before the end of the day, such as cleaning up the floor, erasing the white board, stacking the chairs, etc. On the remaining cards write silent reading. Shuffle the cards and have each student draw one. Clean up can be fun when a drawing starts it off.
- Bring a fun music tape to class. (Disney tapes work well.) If students have a good day, let them listen to the tape during the last half-hour of the day. You can also play calming music while students do quiet work.

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## STUDENT DISCIPLINARY SCENARIOS

**REMEMBER:** It is important for substitute teachers to establish their classroom expectations and consequences as early as possible in the day.

### **Scenario 1: Students Who Interrupt Learning; i.e., Minor Misbehavior**

- Use extinction (refuse to recognize the student) until they raise their hand.
- Praise other students for raising their hands.
- Make eye contact with the student(s) and send a nonverbal message not to interrupt.
- Stand near the student.
- Privately, inform the student that you expect them to raise their hand and be recognized before they speak.
- Write student's name on the board.

### **Scenario 2: Dealing With Students Who Refuse To Do Work**

- Check with individual students to ensure they understand the assigned work, be prepared to re-teach and to adjust the level of difficulty of the work as necessary.
- Find out from the student if something is bothering them and if you can help them in some way.
- Contact other teachers who are familiar with this student to determine if this is the student's normal behavior pattern. Try various strategies that might be effective in getting this student to work.
- Withhold a special activity or privilege if the student persists in not doing their work.
- The principal should handle discipline issues requiring a parent to be notified, not the substitute.

### **Scenario 3: Students Who Won't Follow Instructions**

- Make certain to repeat and clarify the instructions and then check with the student(s) for understanding.
- Have students repeat that they need to follow instructions.
- Communicate with students regarding possible consequences if they don't follow instructions.
- Withhold a special activity or privileges if the behavior persists.
- Contact the campus administration or a teacher nearby your classroom to enlist their support.

### **Scenario 4: The Class That Refuses To Be Quiet, Pay Attention, Or Be Cooperative**

- Remember the students who are doing what they are supposed to do.
- If the students just arrived at class, and they still refuse to be quiet, cooperative or to pay attention, determine why the class is reacting in that manner. If there has been an incident which is upsetting the class, the teacher may need to discuss the incident with the class before academic instruction begins. If the incident has been particularly upsetting, the teacher may consider having students write about their feelings and then discussing those feelings with the entire class (without identifying individual students' concerns).
- Clearly and firmly (not in a hostile manner) state your expectations and the consequences students face if they choose not to comply with your need for quiet, cooperation, and your need for them to pay attention.
- Turning the lights off and on is often effective in getting attention of the class.
- With elementary and middle school students, the teacher may consider counting orally to ten or marking ten separate marks on the chalkboard to communicate that you expect the class to give you their attention now.
- If an elementary or middle school class has a quiet signal, such as all students raising their hand, the teacher may initiate the class signal for quiet. The substitute teacher may want to establish a signal for class quiet early in the day, if the regular classroom teacher does not have a signal.

- With primary students, the teacher may require students to lay their heads on the desk and observe five minutes of quiet time to compose themselves.
- Writing individual student name on the chalkboard who refuse to be quiet or cooperative is often effective (provided there is an appropriate sequence of consequences for each failure to comply).

### **Scenario 5: Student Activity Transitions**

- Teachers should be very precise about the directions they give students. Examples of precise directions include: "Stop what you are doing; put away your English book; take out your math book and turn to page 356; take out a pencil and paper and write your first and last name in the top right hand corner of your paper now," etc.
- Teachers should have educationally beneficial "sponge activities" for students who complete their work before other students are ready to transition to another educational activity.
- Student movement creates increased opportunities for students to become disruptive. Unless the educational activity dictates student movement, it is normally better for the teacher to move to the students.

### **Scenario 6: Strategies for Working with Problem Student(s)**

- If you expect students to misbehave, they will usually live up to your expectation. Every student should be able to start each day with a "clean slate". However, when a student has been identified as a problem, the substitute teacher may ask other teachers who have worked with this student about educational strategies which have been effective in the past.
- Enlist a problem student's support by asking for their help or by assigning them a classroom responsibility.
- Individual praise, recognition, or granting of an educational privilege often is effective in encouraging problem students to be more cooperative.
- Short-term rewards are usually more effective than long-term rewards when working with problem students. Usually, the younger the student, the shorter the time recognition needs to be.
- Have the problem student restate what is expected of them.

- If a student has a difficult time cooperating, moving the student closer to the teacher and/or isolating that student from the group may be appropriate (remember, students should remain in full view of the teacher so proper supervision can be provided).

### **Scenario 7: Students Switching Seats**

- The regular classroom teacher generally will leave a student-seating chart. If there is no seating chart, the substitute teacher may want to consider making one.
- If the substitute teacher suspects that students are not sitting in their assigned seats, the teacher should explain to the students that for safety reasons they must be seated in their assigned seats.
- Students need to understand that if they are sitting in the wrong seats, they may also be wrongfully blamed for something they didn't do.
- Giving students the opportunity to sit in their assigned seats, immediately after sharing the expectation that students are to sit in their assigned seats, without disciplinary consequences, will usually solve the problem.
- If students still refuse to sit in their assigned seats, and appropriate disciplinary consequence should follow.

### **Scenario 8: Student Use of Profanity and "Put-Downs"**

- Substitute teachers should have established their expectations and consequences at the beginning of the day which deal with these issues. "Put-downs" of other students are not to be tolerated.
- Students need to immediately stop that behavior, a private correction needs to be given, and the student needs to repeat the expectancy.

### **Scenario 9: Fights, Threats, Weapons, & Drugs**

- Texas has zero tolerance laws with regard to weapons and drugs. Students in possession of weapons or drugs or who are suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs should be referred to school administrators immediately.
- Schools must provide a safe and secure environment for students to learn, and threats and fighting are not acceptable. Students who are involved in fighting should be referred to school administrators

immediately. Threats should be considered as legitimate threats to the welfare of others and should also be dealt with immediately. If threats appear to be serious in nature, then the school administrators need to be notified immediately.

**Scenario 10: Sexual Harassment**

- Student-to-student sexual harassment is not to be tolerated. Students who subject other students to a pattern of unwelcome sexual jokes or comments are engaging in illegal sexual harassment and should be referred to school administrators. Whenever this type of behavior is observed or brought to the attention of the teacher, the teacher needs to intervene and stop the behavior from reoccurring. Students who touch other students in a sexual manner are also guilty of sexual harassment and need to be immediately referred to school administrators.

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## Working with Students with Special Needs

### Students with Special Needs:

- Substitute teachers should carefully read instructions left by the regular classroom teacher that pertain to students in their classrooms with special needs. Schools will normally have learning resource teachers and teachers with special education backgrounds who can be consulted with regarding learning strategies for students with special needs. Some schools have established "safe harbor" areas at the school where students with special behavioral needs can be sent if they are experiencing difficulty in adjusting to a regular education classroom environment. Substitute teachers should check with the office staff at the beginning of the day regarding special need student procedures.
- Students with special needs often require shorter learning assignments and frequently demonstrate a need to be positively reinforced within short periods of time. Depending upon the age of the students, the nature of the learning disability, and the student's behavioral progress, positive teacher reinforcement may be required every five to ten minutes or less.
- Students with special needs (depending on the nature of the disability) often require more frequent learning assistance from the teacher. The teacher's instructions need to be simple, precise and clear when working with these students. It is advisable to have students repeat the instructions frequently, so the teacher can monitor the student's level of understanding.
- Many students with special needs have been subject to negative and physical events in their personal lives. As a result, some students may

react with violent outbursts when touched, threatened, or interacted with in a negative manner. Students with special needs normally need to have positive behaviors strengthened rather than negative behaviors weakened. Extinction, "time-out" areas, and positive recognition are useful classroom management tools when working with this student population.

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## SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL) STUDENTS

### 1. Language Support

- Instruct in native language whenever possible
- Let students discuss in their first language, to help clarify and process information
- Invite bilingual tutors to assist with performance packages
- Change the language of the product-but:
  1. must have teacher or adult who can read the product, and
  2. student must be able to explain in English what she/he did (otherwise it's a modification)
- have bilingual dictionaries available

### 2. Reinforce Instruction

- say things many ways, and repeat them
- post directions so students can refer back to them
- have students read, interpret, and put in their own words

### 3. Apply the Four S's

- slower - extend the time line
- shorter - divide into shorter steps (use shorter paragraphs and sentences)
- simpler - change to more common words and sentence structures; no confusing idioms
- support - use groups to support independent work

### 4. Change the Topic

- to something familiar, from student's background or life experience.

### 5. Change the Product

- from unfamiliar to familiar
- from impersonal to personal
- from written to oral or visual

### 6. Reduce Distractions

- from noise, other students, activity and clutter in the room

### 7. Change the Scheduling

- time of day
- length of time on task
- amount and timing of rest breaks

**8. Change the Setting**

- Small group, or alone, or with more space
- Away from distracting stimuli
- Have interpreter during oral instruction
- Let student select best place to work

**9. Include Progress Indicators for Students - i.e., have students:**

- Use checklists to designate whether tasks done independently (I) or assisted (A)
- Chart their progress by recording dates work is accomplished.

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## Teaching Strategies

### **Brainstorming:**

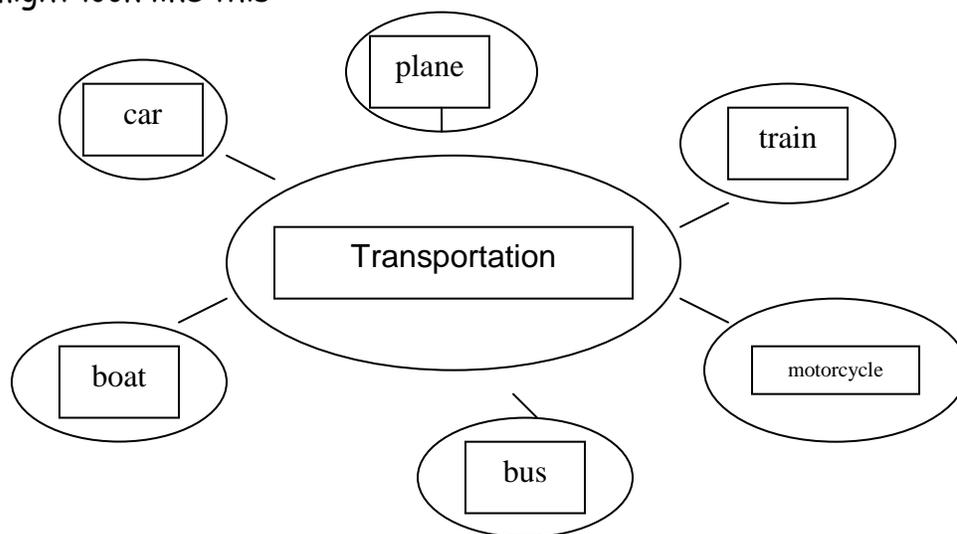
This is an educational activity which generates as many ideas as possible within a short time frame from students regarding almost any educational topic. Students can generate ideas in large groups, small groups, or individually. An example of a classroom brainstorming activity includes having students list as many things as possible that exist in a perfect school within three (3) minutes. Student ideas then could be listed and discussed and prioritized in groups or in a large class setting. Various educational activities can also evolve from this teaching strategy.

### **Basic Rules of Brainstorming:**

- Students will not be allowed to judge other students' ideas.
- Student ideas must be original.
- Generate as many different ideas as possible.
- Every student must participate

### **Concept Mapping:**

This educational strategy is used to introduce ideas or to evaluate various educational concepts. Teachers begin by listing main concepts and by branching related items to the main concept. A concept Mapping example might look like this:



**K-W-L (Knowledge - What students want to know - What students have learned):**

This activity calls for students to first list what they know about a particular topic, students then list what they want to know about a topic, and then students list what they have learned about the topic after the instruction has been presented.

**Questioning Strategies:**

It's important for teachers to ask questions which encourage student thinking and problem solving. Bloom's Taxonomy provides a questioning structure which addresses various levels of students' intellectual abilities.