



# Four Ways to Get To Know Your Students



The first few days of a new school year can be a mixed bag of emotions – from excitement to anxiety. Set the stage for a healthy classroom community by making sure that your students know right from day one that everyone is a special part of your class. Here are four ice-breakers that can help ease the first day jitters.

## The Most Important People Movie

On the first day of school, read aloud *The Important Book* by Margaret Wise Brown to your students. Point out the simple text pattern within the text. Ask students to think about the most important attributes about each of them. Encourage them to think about what makes them special or unique from the others in the class. Instruct the students to write an entry about themselves using the same pattern as the book. It may be helpful to create a text frame or outline on the board to guide them. When all of the students have completed their entries, provide time for each child to add their text and a digital photo to a PowerPoint slide. Make a looping slideshow of the PowerPoint that you can share with the parents on Open House or Meet the Teacher Night.

## Blue Ribbon Reader Bookmarks

Promote a love for reading and give students a chance to get to know a little bit about you with this simple activity. Download and print two copies of the Blue Ribbon Reader Bookmarks handout. Write your name in the circle of the ribbon and complete your “favorites” at the bottom of the bookmark. Fill one set of bookmarks out with your own information. Copy as many as you need to provide one for each student. Explain that throughout the year, the class will be reading a variety of books, but that we each have our own favorites. Then, provide each student with a blank bookmark to fill out about himself. Place the bookmarks in a basket by your classroom library and encourage students to take a bookmark when they borrow a book. When they return the book, they should place the bookmark on the bottom of the stack. They will enjoy learning about one another and this is an easy way to get them reading right from the start.

## The Name Game

Give students an opportunity to share a few things about themselves as well as learn about other students. The Name Game is an easy way to get parents engaged, too. Download and print The Name Game handout for each student. Ask the students to complete as much of the handout as they can and then take it home to share with their parents to complete the questions they are unsure of. When the students have returned the forms to you, select a few to read each day. See how many questions and answers you have to read before someone in the class can guess who it is.

## The Top Ten List

Celebrate student strengths by providing them with an opportunity to share reasons why they are awesome. The Top Ten List is a fun way to get them thinking and writing about what makes them unique and important members of your class. After students have completed the activity, be sure to give them an opportunity to share with their peers and display them in the room or hallway.