

Top Tips for Relief Teachers

Relief
Teaching
Ideas



Be Ready!
Be Organised!
Be Professional!
Be Friendly!
Be Flexible!

*Compiled with help from
our Facebook followers*

<https://www.facebook.com/ReliefTeachingIdeas>

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Booking Work

- If you receive a call in the morning but are already booked, or simply unavailable for work that day, offer your apologies but then ask if there are any other days you can help the casual caller out with that week. It shows you are enthusiastic and keen for work .
- If you can't answer your phone when the school rings return the call ASAP, even if you're not available. Relief teachers who give prompt responses to calls always get another chance!

Packing Your Bag

- Lunch, drink bottle, hat, whistle, stopwatch (or use your phone), stickers/stamps, fun time fillers & games, a couple of class sets of pre-photocopied worksheets, picture books, folder of lesson ideas that require little to no resources, a small craft bag, pencil case, notebook, diary, feedback forms.

Arrival

- If it's the first time at a new school make sure you know how long it will take you to get there in the morning. Be early so that you can sign in & familiarise yourself with the office, classroom, bell times & procedures.
- Always be early (to school, for yard duty, back to class at the end of recess and lunch). The other staff will notice!
- Always go to the office first to sign in, collect keys & any information you may need.
- Check at the start of the day with nearby teachers to see if there are any children in the class with specific medical, learning or behavioural needs....and most importantly what routines and strategies are in place to help make the day run peacefully!

Lesson Prep

- Follow any lesson plans the classroom teacher has left.
- If notes are not left, ask other teachers in the year level/unit what they are currently working on. Also take cues from classroom displays. Think on your feet!
- Have a kit of fun time filler type things such as a small ball (silent ball is nice and quiet and kids love it), some fun/silly impromptu speaking topics, stopwatch for race against the clock style games, random objects to kick start creative writing lessons, class set of dice & a list of [Quick Games & Brain Break](#) activities.
- Have a few [picture books](#) in your bag with writing, craft & reading activities or ideas to go with them. Bring any resources needed for these activities in your bag too.
- Try to avoid copying/using a lot of worksheets, unless the teacher has left them for you. Never assume that you can use the photocopier! If you need to, always ask first! Different schools have different policies/photocopying budgets. Instead be prepared with lessons that can be achieved with little resources or ones that you bring with you.
- Don't use the teacher's art resources unless you've been specifically directed to.

During the Day

- Make sure you greet parents as they come into the room with your name and let them know you are in the room that day/week to fill in for their child's teacher, particularly for kinder parents. It's nice for them to know there will be a new face and they are likely to let the regular teacher know that you were helpful and polite
- Always be honest with the kids up front (especially with the creatures of habit in prep and grade 1) and tell the kids that you will try your best to do things the exact way their teacher does but sometimes you might do things a little differently because you're a different person. Tell the kids how much you're looking forward to having a great fun day with them and that you hope they are too.
- It is important to have your own classroom management strategies & system. Outline your expectations to students. Go through consequences and rewards. Be consistent & follow through with what you say!

- Classroom Management Idea - Start the class in the morning with 5 stars on the board. Let the kids know that their job is to keep the 5 stars until the end of the day and they get to do sport or a game or some other reward. If they muck up and lose a star they can earn it back if they try really hard.
- Try to go into the staffroom for some of the break times & chat to other staff.
- Display pleasure at having been invited to the school (to admin staff, other teachers & parents).
- Take a lunch that does not require you to sit down or use two hands to eat, as you are not likely to get much time with marking, organising for the next lessons and yard duties.
- Expect to have a yard duty and if for some amazing reason you don't get one, offer to fill in for someone. Big brownie points!

After School

- Mark all the work that the students did that day. Where possible, during the day try to coordinate peer student marking, for things such as maths worksheets or maths mental, to lessen the marking load for yourself.
- Leave feedback notes for the class teacher. (a personalised sheet like [this](#) helps)
 - How the day went
 - Any behaviour issues
 - A list of helpful/exceptionally well behaved students
 - Work completed/not completed
 - Any notes that were sent home
 - Any parent communication
- Leave the classroom tidy and ordered. A good rule to follow is to try to leave it tidier than you found it!
- Make sure the bins are emptied, the blinds are closed, air/heat is off and that you lock the doors.
- Sign out of the office, return your keys & thank the office staff.

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For more helpful tips, activities & lesson ideas look for Relief Teaching Ideas on [Facebook](#) & [Wordpress](#).