

Preparing for Service: Starting the School Year

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

BY SOPHIE ROSEN

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A time to prepare:

Before we can be of service to others,
we must prepare ourselves.

Basic Needs

Everyone has basic physical needs:

- food and water
- shelter
- clothing

Every human being also has four emotional needs...

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Freedom

Everyone wants to have choices.

What choices do you make in your life every day?

What choices can you make in school?

- how you treat others
- how you treat yourself and your belongings
- how you help create a respectful atmosphere
- how much you learn

Achievement

Everyone has a need to see that they have achieved, or accomplished, a task. A sense of identity is created from being accomplished at something.

What will you learn in school to create that sense of achievement?

- knowledge
- skills
- attitudes

Belonging

Everyone has a need to belong as part of a group. This is why family and friends are so important.

How can you belong within a larger community of people?

- Show that you are considerate to others.
- Be interested in other people.

Fun

Fun is doing - or seeing - something new.
So learning is fun for your brain.

What is something new you might learn this year?

- Language Arts and Social Studies
- Mathematics and Science
- Art and Music
- P.E. and ...

Balance

People tend to prefer one of the four over all the others.

But that leads to emotional unhealthiness.

So our goal, as human beings, to find balance
between all four emotional needs.

Reflect

1. Which of the four basic emotional needs do I emphasize?
2. What is the evidence for that?
3. What could I do differently to become more balanced?

Character Traits

Every person has character traits that are revealed by their behaviour.

You can judge a person's character more by their behaviour than by their words.

Green-light People

- are interested in other people
- are cheerful, positive and happy
- are fun to be around
- don't criticize
- show appreciation

Red-light People

- try to get you to do things they don't want to do themselves
- are bossy and manipulative
- make fun of you and other people

Orange-light People

- sneaky - don't tell the whole truth
- when in a bad mood, will say bad things
- are agreeable and fun only when you do what they want you to do
- they say that you're their only friend, and pressure you into staying with them

Reflect

1. What are my character traits?
2. What are my friends' traits?
3. Do I need to make some changes?
4. What is the most important thing for me to remember if I want to be healthy?

Service

Two small, but important, ways to be service in our world:

1. Encourage people by showing appreciation.
2. Humbly and sincerely apologize.

Show Appreciation

Different circumstances = different ways of showing appreciation

1. Say something to someone; *e.g. thank you.*
2. Help people with acts of service; *e.g. hold the door open.*
3. Spend time doing things for others; *e.g. pick up someone's books or assist in a charity drive.*
4. Give a hug or a high five or a smile.
5. Give little gifts to show thanks and appreciation.

Reflect

1. What are some ways people have shown appreciation to me?
2. What is my favourite way to experience appreciation?
3. How do I show appreciation to others?
4. How do others prefer to be appreciated?

Apologizing

Different circumstances = different ways of apologizing

1. Express regret; *e.g. "I'm sorry."*
2. Accept responsibility; *e.g. "I won't complain. It's my fault. I was wrong."*
3. Request forgiveness; *e.g. "Please forgive me."*
4. Demonstrate genuine repentance; *e.g. "I am not going to do that again. I'm going to change."*
5. Make restitution; *e.g. fix the problem, give a card, or pay for a damaged item.*

Accepting Apologies

What should you say when people apologize?

“Thank you for your apology.” or...

“Thank you. I accept your apology.” or simply...

“Thank you.”

Do not say, “*That's okay.*”...

because their behaviour was not okay and
that is why they are now apologizing to you!

Reflect

1. What way do I prefer people to apologize to me?
2. How do other people prefer apologies?
3. What are some ways I've apologized in the past?
4. What are some other ways I might more effectively apologize in the future?

Manners

Before you can be of service to others, you must show respect...

Follow the rules appropriate for each setting:

- home
- school
- gurdwara
- public society

During Lessons

- **Sit up straight.**
- **Smile.**
- **Look at the speaker.**
- **Nod appropriately.**
- **Ask and answer questions.**

Did your teacher make a mistake?

- ❖ *"Excuse me, could you explain how you got that answer?"*
- ❖ *"Excuse me, I'm confused. Could you show me again?"*

Did you teacher forget to give you some information?

- ❖ *"Excuse me, could you please tell me when that assignment is due?"*
- ❖ *"Excuse me, should we work on this independently or with a partner?"*
- ❖ *"Excuse me, should we finish this quickly or should we take the time to do it carefully?"*
- ❖ *"Excuse me, I don't understand the instructions. Could you please clarify them for me?"*

Respectful Manners

Babies and young children always are the priority. For example, when you are babysitting you must keep these young children safe.

Always defer to older people:

- • hold a door open
- offer to carry things
- listen to them

There are even guidelines in our society about the respectful order of going through a doorway!

1. Children 4 years old or younger
2. Children 5 to 10 years old
3. Highest ranking female or oldest woman
4. Highest ranking male or oldest man
5. All other women
6. Girls 11 to 18 years old
7. All other men
8. Boys 11 to 18 years old

Reflect

1. What can I do to show respect for people who are older than I am?
2. What is something new I will try this week?

Obedience

Sometimes, the best way to be of service is to obey rightful instructions from people who are in authority over you.

But it is wise to learn how to recognize instructions that are given to help you rather than harm you.

6 Reasons to Obey

- ❖ Force: *“If you don't obey me, I'll hurt you.”*
- ❖ Ability to Reward: *“If you do what I tell you, I will give you something you want.”*
- ❖ Acceptance: *“You believe it is proper that I am the one who gives instructions and you are the one who obeys.”*

❖ Superiority: *“I know more, so you should listen to me. I am much better at this than you are, so you should listen to me.”*

❖ Admiration: *“You want to be like me, so you will follow my advice.”*

❖ Information: *“You will consider the new information I have given you.”*

Reflect

*force, reward, acceptance,
superiority, admiration, information*

1. What are some situations I have seen that correspond to these reasons to obey?
2. What reason to obey seems to work best for me?
3. What reason to obey do I prefer at school?

Rules versus Empathy

There are two types of healthy relationships:

1. rule-based

- a. few responsibilities
- b. take care of yourself

2. empathy-based

- a. many responsibilities
- b. take care of others

Schools are set up as rule-based systems. But they try to teach you how to conduct yourself in empathy-based systems. A society cannot move to empathy-based systems until people are able to take care of their own responsibilities.

Reflect

1. What are 10 school rules?
2. Would people follow those rules if there were no negative consequences for breaking them?
3. What would happen if your friends started giving you rules to follow?
4. Think about one of your close friendships. What do you do to keep your friendship strong?
5. What could you do to help school become a more empathy-based environment?

Take responsibility for yourself.

❖ Don't know what to do?

- ✓ Look around to see what others are doing.
- ✓ Look for someone who is doing the right thing.
- ✓ Observe and copy good behaviour.

❖ Keep forgetting to stay on task?

- ✓ Ask a trusted classmate to coach you and remind you to stay focused.

❖ Refuse to do what is right?

- ✓ Accept the consequence without complaining.
- ✓ Don't make excuses after choosing to misbehave.

Your responsibility is to complete your work.

Are you worried?

- *Focus on getting your work done.*
- *Talk to a trusted person after class.*

Are you overtired or hungry?

- *Focus on getting your work done.*
- *Take care of your physical needs after class or at home.*

Are you feeling disorganized?

- *Follow the instructions for the assignment in front of you.*
- *Simply follow the instructions step by step.*
- *Organize your belongings after class or at home.*

Your responsibility is to learn.

Don't know how to do something?

- *Ask someone to show you how to do it.*

Can't figure out what you're doing incorrectly?

- *Ask someone to watch while you try to do it.*
- *They'll see your mistake and show you how to do it correctly.*

Don't know the correct answer?

- *Ask for help.*
- *Listen and then memorize the answer you need.*

Reflect

1. What tips will help me take responsibility for my own learning?
2. What can I do to help others take responsibility for their learning?
3. What do I think might be my biggest challenge?
4. What can I do to successfully address that challenge?

Review your Skills: Are you able to...

1. Regularly attend class on time?
2. Arrive with all needed supplies?
3. Observe others to determine what you should be doing?
4. Help keep the room tidy, especially at noon hour?
5. Get attention in appropriate ways
6. Voluntarily participate in lessons?
7. Set aside distracting thoughts and emotions in order to focus on the lesson?
8. Follow verbal directions from the teacher?

Are you able to...

- 9. Use class time wisely while working on assignments?
- 10. Work willingly and cheerfully with anyone who is seated beside you?
- 11. Use your initiative to request extra help when needed?
- 12. Be willing to stay after school for help when needed?
- 13. Keep up the energy to finish or improve assignments at home?
- 14. Complete assignments to the best of your ability?

Are you able to...

- 15. Put your name, date and division on every assignment?
- 16. Strive to go beyond the basic expectations to do work of exceptional quality?
- 17. Spend time reading to expand your background knowledge of subjects studied?
- 18. Spend time reading novels to let yourself experience life from different points of view?
- 19. Study for tests?
- 20. Keep your binder well-organized so you can quickly find needed papers?

Reflect

1. In previous years, which skills did you find most challenging?
2. What will you do to improve those skills this year?
3. Which skills are already improving this year?
4. What is one skill that you want your teacher to remind you to work on this year?

Keys to Successful Service

1. Discover the truth.
2. Accept the truth. (Immature people keep saying, "But I don't like that." and "But it shouldn't be like that.")
3. Plan.
4. Follow the plan. (Immature people keep saying, "But I don't feel like it." and "I'll do it later." and "It's not fair.")
5. Reap the benefits.

Keys to Successful Service

1. Discover your own responsibilities.
2. Take care of your own responsibilities.
3. Observe what is needed around you and make a realistic plan that ensures you take care of your own responsibilities and are still of help to others.
4. Follow your plan even when it isn't exciting. Even when you don't get a lot of praise from people.
5. Know that your service has not gone unnoticed.

Motivate Yourself

➤ “If it is my homework, I think to myself, I want to go to bed early...., it makes me happy to have accomplished something or made others happy. Or I put aside a reward like getting something new or taking a nap. If none of these work and I procrastinate, my motivation is that it’s due tomorrow and I don’t want to fail.”

Freedom Motivates

- “I say to myself that I will be happier when I get it done because I will not have to worry about it anymore.”
- “C’mon kid! Just get it over and done with. You’ll have to do it eventually, so better soon than later. “
- “Think of how good you’ll feel when you’ve completed it. Keep going.”
- “I say, ‘Think about all the free time you’ll have after you do this.’”

Achievement Motivates

- “I say if I get some work done, I will feel so good and I know my effort will pay off.”
- “Never give up on something you’re not really good at.”
- “How will you succeed if you don’t do your best?”
- “I know something good will come out of this.”
- “There will be great things ... at the end of my struggles.”
- “You have to start good habits when you're young so you can be successful when you're older.”

Belonging Motivates

- “God never gives you too much to handle.”
- “You can do this; you’ve done much harder.”
- “Sooner it’s done, the sooner you can go hang out with friends.”

Fun Motivates

- “I say to myself: once I finish, I can read.”
- “You can do this!...And when you’re done, have some chocolate! You deserve it! So get started! For the chocolate!”

Reflect

What emotional needs motivate you?

What can you say to yourself to help yourself be ready for service?

Step Up to a Good Life

Level 1

- ❖ where everyone starts in life
- ❖ ruled by emotions
- ❖ plays most of the time
- ❖ complains of boredom when time comes to work

Level 2

- ❖ people invite you to step up a level
- ❖ ruled by the mind: self-discipline
- ❖ works hard in school
- ❖ complains of boredom when ready to learn something new

Level 3

- ❖ you have self-discipline and so can explore to find your purpose in life
- ❖ ruled by the heart: wisdom
- ❖ work feels like play
- ❖ never bored again but instead full of joy

Your teachers and administrators are here to help you to become more...

- ✓ kind
- ✓ hard-working
- ✓ reliable and dependable
- ✓ knowledgeable and skillful
- ✓ independent and wise
- ✓ helpful in this world
- ✓ **full of the joy of life!**