

Warm Welcomes establish safety and predictability, support contribution by all voices, set norms for respectful listening, allow people to connect with one another, and create a sense of belonging. To be successful they must be: carefully chosen, connected to the content/work of the day, engagingly facilitated, and thoughtfully debriefed.

**\*Disclaimer: One must consider student needs, classroom culture, relationships, etc. prior to the introduction on these and any activity. Modify accordingly and, with thoughtful intention and a culturally responsive lens.**

## Teacher Trait Wish List/ Recipe for a Great Teacher

- At the beginning of the school year, ask students to create their top 5 (or 10) teacher traits wish list or have them create a recipe for a great teacher (1 cup respect, 1 cup empathy, 2 cups honesty, 1 cup support, ½ c humor, ½ c inspiration, etc). The amounts will help you know how important the different ingredients are to your students.
- Ask students for clarification for what it looks like, sounds like and feels like for a teacher to demonstrate the different traits.
- Keep their lists/recipes to refer to throughout the year or offer chances for students to update quarterly.

**SEL Targets:** Self Awareness, Relationship skills.

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## Fun Facts/Trivia

Supplies: Index cards/paper and pens, copies of trivia answer sheet

Purpose: Get to know each other in a fun way, practice collaboration skills

Process:

- Day one: Ask everyone to write down a fun/interesting fact about themselves on a piece of paper or index card. Let them know that this fun/interesting fact will be shared with the class.
- Create a trivia game, using the fun facts.
- Play trivia where small teams work together to try to identify the person who shared that fun/interesting fact.

*Modifications:*

- *Share 1-2 fun facts each day asking students to try to guess who shared each fun/interesting fact.*
- *Partner up with another class to give students a chance to get to know more students- make teams with two students from each class, use fun facts from both classes.*

**SEL Targets:** Relationship skills, self-awareness, social awareness.

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## Top Ten

Have students create a list of the top ten traits they hope their teacher demonstrates (could be respect, patience, understanding, kindness, equity, etc.)

Offer them fun choices in how to create and present their lists:

- Similar to a late-night show top ten list
- Create a visual with the traits clearly shown
- Work in pairs or small groups- student choice

*Modification: Have them create a top ten list for student traits of being a good classmate or content related topics*

**SEL Targets:** Self Awareness, Relationship skills.

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## Chat Café

Meet with students routinely or in groups to discuss various topics. Use tablecloths and other diner style décor. Print questions as a menu for students to look over and choose. Creating a safe space by creating shared agreements and culturally responsive questions before you start. You may want to put questions into menu types, such as:

- Appetizers - being light & easy
- Entree - being deep & reflective
- Dessert- being fun & silly

### Directions:

Put students in small groups for discussion. You can use these questions any way you would like.

### Possible Questions:

- Name a movie, book or song that describes how you felt yesterday.
- If you were a weather report, what would you be today?
- Finish the sentence: The best news I've had in the past week is...
- Finish the sentence: When I was little, I thought I wanted to be...
- Name one skill you have that others may not know about.
- What is one thing that you would like to accomplish before your next birthday?
- If you could relive one event, what would it be?
- What are you likely to daydream about today?
- How would your next-door neighbor describe you in two words?
- If you were going on vacation today, where would you go and why?
- What did you like to do as a child? How or with what did you play?
- When was a time you had to push yourself to do something courageous? What fueled the courage?
- Excluding a family member or loved one, who is one person who you have not met that you would like to have dinner and a conversation with? What would you want to talk about?
- Include current events for students to reflect on. For example, what conversations were had in your household during the rise of the current Racial Justice movement?

*Alternatives:* Put these questions in a jar to be pulled daily as a welcoming ritual, used during lunch bunch sessions with students or as journal prompts. Encourage students to develop and submit their own questions.

**SEL Targets:** Relationship skills, self-awareness, social awareness.