

Class Meetings



Grade: works best for grades 3 to 6

Time: Classroom meetings are best done after a break i.e. recess or lunch and should be something that is built into your class's weekly schedule. Meetings can vary in length but as a general rule allot about 40 minutes for each meeting.

Materials: secretary binder, class meeting box, meeting agenda

Introduction to class meetings:

Class meetings can take many different shapes. Some teachers use class meetings for time to share information with students, discuss a new unit or as a tool to solve problems that come up in class. The meetings can be formal or informal, scheduled or spontaneous, teacher or student led.

Objectives:

1. assist students in personal growth
2. help students to resolve conflict
3. allow students to make suggestions and plan activities
4. help improve academics, raising self esteem and confidence
5. unify the class
6. serve as a classroom management tool
7. offer a forum for recognizing and celebrating achievements
8. provide an occasion for enjoying each other's company

Social Interaction Skills

- ✓ listening skills
- ✓ responding skills
- ✓ public speaking skills
- ✓ leadership skills
- ✓ organizational skills
- ✓ thinking skills
- ✓ problem-solving skills

Class Meeting Agenda

While everyone is getting settled into the circle formation, the teacher empties out the class meeting box and reads each piece of paper. Separate the papers into two piles: problems and suggestions. Do not read any that are not signed.

1. Call the meeting to order:

The student of the week or the teacher may do this

2. Encouragement circle:

- "Today, you will be encouraging me"
- Give a minute to think

- A student may pass but then will be expected to respond the second time around. Comments about physical appearance and material possessions are not appropriate.
3. **Old Business:**
 - The teacher now reports on our old business
 - The student then thanks the teacher and starts new business
 4. **New business**
 - Student empties out the suggestion box
 - Student reads out problems
 - The class uses “Steps in Solving Problems”
 - After problems read out the first suggestion is then read and the class uses the “Steps in Discussing Suggestions” to see if the suggestion is possible.
 5. **Thank- you’s and compliments:**
 - Student asks the teacher if there is time for Thank you’s and compliments today. If there is, begin with the person next to you and go around the circle.
 6. **Close Meeting**
 - Student thanks everyone for listening and participating and asks class to return their seats to the regular seating plan quietly.

Problem Solving Model:

1. Identify the problem
2. Brainstorm possible solutions as a class
3. Discuss solutions
4. Choose a solution
5. Make a plan

Discussing Suggestions Model:

1. Read out suggestion
2. Ask the person(s) to tell us more about the suggestion
3. Ask the teacher to comment on whether or not this is an idea that we can go ahead and discuss.
4. If it is, ask the students for their opinions
5. Summarize: “It sounds like . . .”
6. Ask for a show of hands of people who would like to do this.
7. Make a plan of action: “How will we go about doing this?”

Extensions:

Have the whole school take part in classroom meetings.

(All class meeting information was developed by Donna Styles, Armstrong, BC.)

Reference:

Styles, D (2001). *Class Meetings*. Markham, ON: Pembroke Publishers.