



Remote Learning Guide for Teachers and School Administrators

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAINTAINING SUCCESS IN YOUR SCHOOL





INTRODUCTION

Unforeseen circumstances can cause quite the upheaval at your school or school district. Although remote learning has many benefits to your organization, it requires some major changes to your teaching. That lesson plan you had perfectly planned out for the remainder of the year had to be revised for one that works well with remote learning. Not only that, you now rely on parents to play a much larger role ensuring that children learned the material being taught.

While this may cause you to feel completely out of your element, just know that this is an issue that every single teacher, school administrator, and parent is dealing with. Just keep an open mind and a positive attitude and your student will do the same! Pause, take a nice deep breath, and let's walk through some ways to adjust to remote learning.

We put together this teacher's guide to help ensure that you have best practices in place to ensure your students learn effectively.

How You Can Help You

SETTING THE ENVIRONMENT

An important first step to ensure your new remote learning career starts off successful is to create a dedicated workspace within your home. Much like an artist needs a studio to create art, you need a workspace to ensure you stay focused. If you have a home office, then you already have a head start. If you do not, then setting aside any dedicated area of a room will help you switch on your teacher hat from home.

Some supplies to consider having in your workspace:

- Whiteboard & markers
- Surge protector/power strip
- Printer
- Snacks or gum

BUILD A ROUTINE FOR YOURSELF

Teachers were thrown from a structured school day to a much less structured home work environment. This change can be a difficult transition for anyone! One way to help combat this huge shift is to put structure in place for yourself. Whether that means creating a daily schedule, or setting specific tasks to certain days of the week. Structure will help ensure that you stay on top of your tasks, and don't feel like your work-life balance has spiraled out of control.

- 1) Make a list of important tasks and prioritize
- 2) Set regular times for specific tasks
- 3) Schedule breaks throughout the day
- 4) Rewarding yourself when finished

By taking this approach your days will feel less chaotic, and you'll settle into a new comforting routine. It will also maximize your productivity without getting burned out.

OUTLINE EXPECTATIONS & COMMUNICATE THEM

Since this is a new experience for all the stakeholders involved, it's important to set expectations for both students and parents. The most difficult part of this transition is not knowing what to expect, so let's make sure to setup your class for success. Communicate to your parents in advance what the weekly workload will look like for your students so that they can properly plan and accommodate. Keep in mind that while the students may not be in your classroom, they also still need guidance from you and their parents on what needs to be done and how to do it correctly.

Here are some ways to accomplish this:

- 1) Regular weekly email updates to both students and parents.
- 2) During your weekly class video call, review upcoming assignments.
- 3) Schedule one-on-one session with students to communicate expectations as well as answer any questions they have.
- 4) Provide a checklist of assignments in a handout format – this will make it easier for students to stay on top of their work.

By having multiple times that assignments are discussed, it will help students stay on top of their workload. Children are still learning the new routine, so providing them multiple ways to be reminded can be a huge help!

KEEP EXPECTATIONS REALISTIC

It is important that we don't set the bar too high for students. Although it is tempting to keep the bar as high as possible, let's be realistic about this situation. Scale back your expectations to what the focus should be -- the wellbeing of the student rather than their grade. Your students don't benefit from your teaching anymore, and now rely on their parents or even themselves to understand concepts. And let's be honest, neither of them are qualified educators with your level of experience that makes you the awesome educator you are.

Remote learning is not the same quality of learning experience as being taught in person, so keep your expectations realistic.

FLEXIBILITY & PATIENCE

Setting expectations to a realistic level is a great first step, but it's also important to be flexible and patient with this process. Your assignments may not hit the same sweet spot of understanding they used to hit before remote learning. Students may not be able to complete all the work that has been assigned to them. Parents may have difficulty fitting their new role as an educator into their daily routine while holding a job. It is important to be a source of understanding for both parties so they don't get discouraged. We never know what the home environment might be like for both students and parents. It is important to keep this in mind so you limit your frustration and focus on just providing the best experience you can for the families going through this adjustment period.

Adjusting to New Technology

Adjusting to change is difficult, especially if it means new technology you've never seen or used before. There was likely a whole pile of products thrown onto your lap to enable remote learning. Learning how to use new technology can be challenging to even tech-savvy teachers, so don't think you're alone. This is a common problem for anyone in any industry. Thankfully, we live in the Internet Age where there are many resources online to help you learn how to use these products.

We collected some great resources for a few of the major players in the area. For an even better list of products, refer to one of our recent blog posts “[20+ Online and Remote Tools for Teachers, Administrators, and Parents](#)”

Google Classroom

Google has an [entire website](#) to help you learn how to use their product. If you’re looking for tutorials on how to use Google Classroom effectively, they have included several videos for users.

[MakeTechEasier](#) has also provided a great tutorial that includes many pictures and a step by step walkthrough.

Schoology

Schoology has provided a very [comprehensive video support section](#) to help get you adjusted to their product. Not only do they have videos for specific tasks, but also for answering questions you may have.

Lynda.com has [many instructional videos](#) to review on how to effectively use Schoology. With more than 90 videos to choose from, there is surely no rock left unturned after you review the material available on their site.

Canvas

Canvas has created an excellent [Video Guide section](#) filled with tutorials for users to watch. The section is nicely divided into user roles, which makes browsing super easy. This resource can be shared with parents as well if they mention they are having difficulty with the app.

Cornell University has created a [great collection of instructional materials](#) for using Canvas that can help get you up to speed. These resources are divided into videos, quickstart guides and walkthroughs for easy browsing.

Office 365

Microsoft has a [comprehensive training section](#) for the whole Office 365 that will make getting up to speed much easier. If you’re looking for product-specific training, they also have [another section aimed at specific Microsoft products](#).

Lynda.com again is also a great resource for [tutorials on Office 365](#), with more than 150 courses and 5,000 videos to review. Although the selection may feel overwhelming, it provides a great selection that fits your learning style and product with which you need help.

Tips for Success in Your Role



PROVIDING FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS IN REMOTE LEARNING

In the new distance learning environment it is important to continue providing feedback to your students. We emphasize feedback since the follow up with your student is just as important as the assignment itself. Students will have a much easier time learning when there is an effective method for providing feedback. Whether it is a math, language, science or history assignment, people do best when they learn from their mistakes.

Note: *If you haven't yet found a product to markup assignments and provide feedback, give [Microsoft Office OneNote Class Notebook](#) a look.*

Keep in mind that the students may be more sensitive during distance learning than they would be otherwise. They are likely frustrated at the difference in learning, or possibly less engaged. If feedback is structured right, they will likely respond much better.

Here's some ways to make sure that your feedback is well received:

- 1) Provide feedback that is constructive
- 2) Provide timely feedback
- 3) Ensure feedback is balanced between praise and critique
- 4) Invite the students to provide you feedback as well

We felt the last point is so important that we have created a section for it. In office environments this is called [360-feedback](#) since it gives a complete view of your performance. It also will help you learn new things about yourself of which you may not be aware.

BE OPEN TO FEEDBACK

Feedback is always a key element to any person's professional success. In business the [360-feedback](#) is widely used in corporations to ensure that people get high quality feedback that can help them become a better employee. The advantage is that each stakeholder has different experiences with you due to having different concerns. We can all agree that a parent and student have different aspects of your teaching style that they may find enjoyable or frustrating.

If you really want to improve yourself from all stakeholders, reach out to your department head and see if they have any helpful feedback. We are all learning how to manage distance learning, and they may have some useful insight to provide. Since they manage several people, they may have suggestions based upon observing other teachers within your department.



GET CREATIVE!

Most distance learning assignments are made up of worksheets, worksheets, and more worksheets. It's easy to get in the rhythm of assigning worksheets to your students when education products are filled with them. When you used worksheets in class you were able to answer questions and provided one-on-one time. Without that special attention, students are going to be less engaged with the material you assign. One way to combat this is to get creative with the work you assign students. Use this unique situation to enable you to get creative with their work.

A few suggestions:

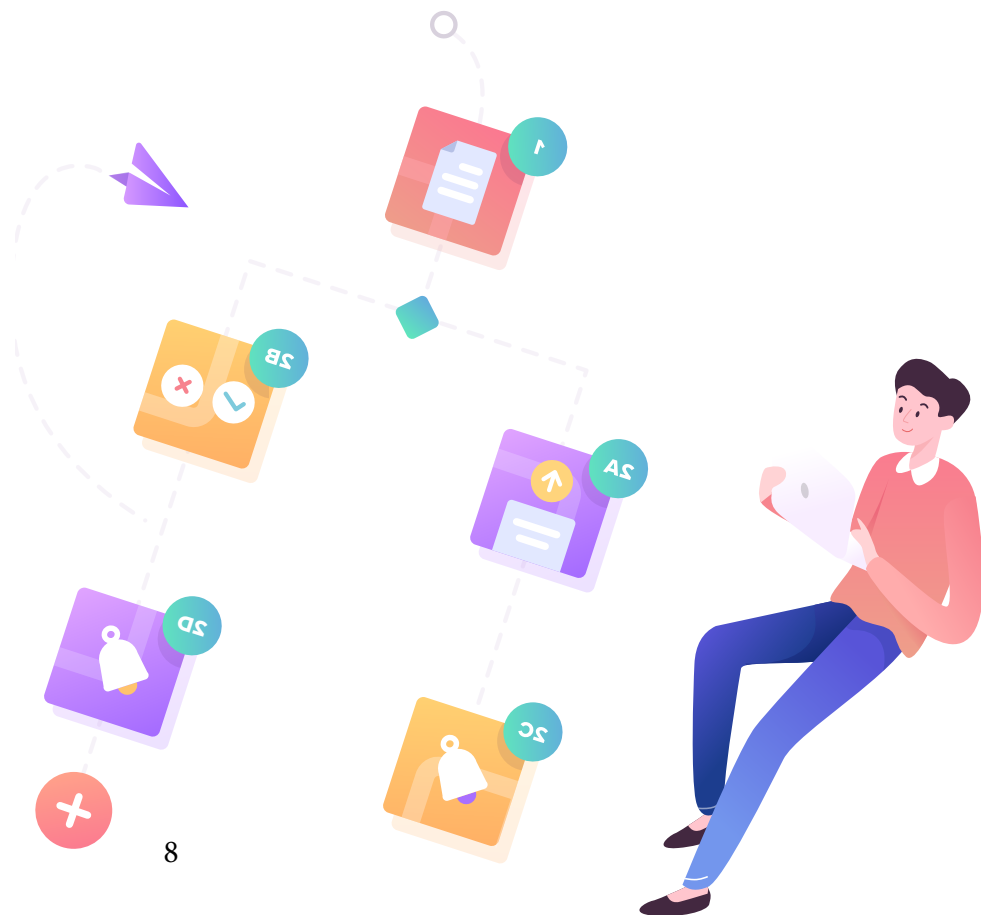
- 1) Find ways to include family in assignments
- 2) Speak from their experience with social distancing
- 3) Utilize their house and what's inside
- 4) Incorporate their favorite activities such as sports, video games, art, etc.

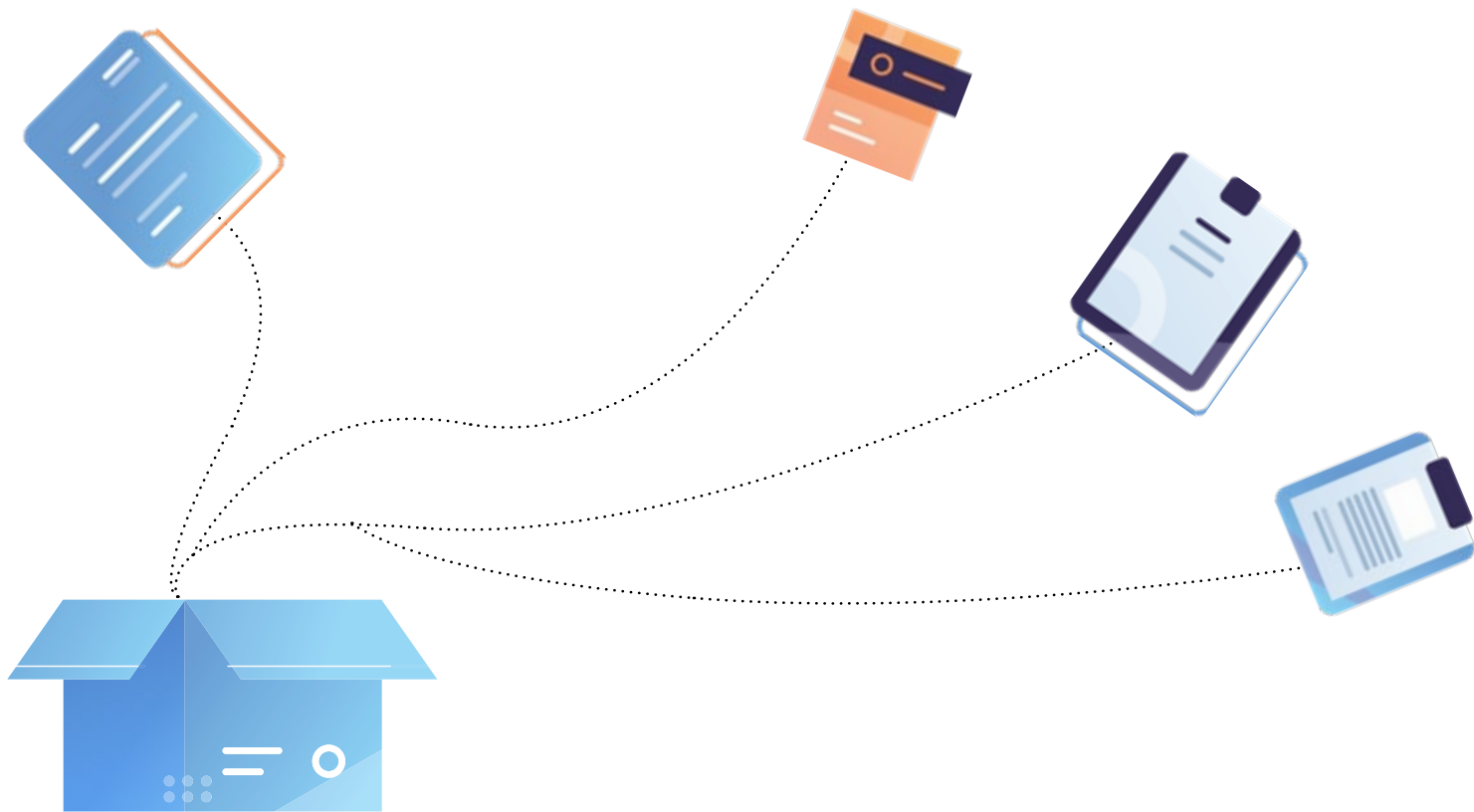
REMEMBER, WE ARE ALL HUMAN

There is one critical piece of information to keep in mind throughout all of this -- we are all human. We all make mistakes. We all have our strengths and weaknesses. We all take time to adjust and settle into a new situation. These facts are the same for everyone involved, and we should always keep that in mind as the nation shifts to distance learning.

If you are working from home alongside your student, check out "[Remote Working – How to Create a Work-Home Balance](#)".

- HAPPY LEARNING! -





Make Your Paperwork Fly!

With more than **50 free** electronic forms to choose from in our [School Forms Gallery](#), our online platform can be used to replace your paper-based processes. Don't see a form listed? Don't worry! Script can be used to import **any** existing form as a PDF, so your existing processes will work flawlessly. Not sure how Script could change your school? Check out our [Solutions Gallery](#) to learn all the ways we can help!

Not only does Script help replace your paper processes, but you also gain insights into how effective your processes are. Find out where bottlenecks exist, gain historical insights, and adjust your team accordingly.

Want to learn more? [Setup a demo with someone from our team](#) to give you a personalized tour!

