

Overview of Opening and Closing Routines

Routines at the beginning and end of class set a welcoming tone, allow students to connect in social and academic ways, and encourage goal setting. Choose from the following community-building routines when designing your lessons so that students know what to expect when they enter the learning environment.

Opening Routines

Title	Objective	Face-to-Face Routine	Remote Learning Routine
Mood Meter	Helps students recognize how they are feeling and learn strategies for regulating their emotions.	Students identify and plot how they are feeling on a Mood Meter and then reflect in journals. Debrief in a Wraparound activity and come up with strategies for improving one's energy and mood.	Students identify how they are feeling on a Mood Meter and share in the chat. Debrief in breakout groups and come up with strategies for improving one's energy and mood.
Emoji Emotions	Helps students name and communicate what they are feeling, as well as build empathy by listening to others share their emotions.	Students choose an emoji that represents their emotions and reflect in journals. Then they share strategies or words of encouragement to help peers who are not feeling positive emotions.	Students choose an emoji that represents their emotions and share in the chat or by uploading an image. Then they share strategies or encouragement to help peers who are not feeling positive emotions.
Picture This	Encourages close viewing, inferring, and analysis of an intriguing image.	In groups, students do a verbal See, Think, Wonder activity for an image that they also title. They debrief as a class and learn the context for the image.	Students complete a See, Think, Wonder activity through a communal document and then title the image in breakout groups. They share their titles in the chat before learning details about the image.
Three Good Things	Helps students practice gratitude, an important component of well-being.	Students sit in silence to reflect on positive things in their lives, communities, or world. Then they list three good things in their journals and reflect on the one that feels most significant. Students share one of their good things and explain why they chose it.	Students use their personal devices to scroll through <i>#threegoodthings</i> and then record their three good things in their journals and reflect on the one that feels most significant. Students share one idea in the chat, through a remote Wraparound , or in a collaborative document.

Title	Objective	Face-to-Face Routine	Remote Learning Routine
Notable Quotable	Invites students to consider a meaningful, inspirational, or thought-provoking quotation.	Using sentence starters, students explore an interesting quotation in their journals and share ideas in small groups or as a class.	Using sentence starters, students respond to an interesting quotation on a virtual whiteboard or collaborative document. Then they add comments and questions to each other's ideas.
Slow Down with The Slowdown	Uses poetry to spark personal reflection and to open doors for discussion about what's happening in students' lives and the world.	Students listen to an episode of Tracy K. Smith's daily poetry podcast and reflect on the day's poem, choosing something worth talking about to discuss with their classmates in pairs or small groups.	Students listen to an episode of Tracy K. Smith's daily poetry podcast and reflect on the day's poem, choosing something worth talking about to discuss in breakout groups.
Rose, Thorn, Bud	Develops self-awareness and encourages responsible decision-making by asking students to consider recent successes, challenges, and opportunities.	Students identify a success, challenge, and opportunity and reflect on each one on a handout. Then they share their ideas in pairs, small groups, or as a class.	Students identify a success, challenge, and opportunity and reflect on each one on a handout or Padlet. Students share one idea in the chat or by (virtually) raising their hand to speak.
Fist to Five	Helps students assess and communicate how they are feeling.	Students respond to a question that asks how they are feeling about something by holding up a fist or 1–5 fingers. Then they focus on strategies to help everyone move from the low to high end of the scale.	Students respond to a question that asks how they are feeling about something by holding up a fist or 1–5 fingers on camera or by writing a number in the chat. In breakout groups, they focus on strategies to help everyone improve how they are feeling.
Take a Stand	Encourages debate, active listening, and perspective-taking by asking students to take a stand on one or more controversial statements.	Students take a side on controversial statements and explain their reasoning. Then they discuss their responses in small groups or as a class.	Students use an online polling tool to respond to controversial statements. They discuss a few responses in the chat or by unmuting themselves to speak.
First-Chapter Fridays	Fosters empathy, perspective-taking, and active listening as you build community around stories and storytelling.	Students listen to their teacher read aloud from the first chapter of a high-interest book. Then they determine what's worth talking about with their peers in small groups or as a class.	Students listen to their teacher read aloud from the first chapter of a high-interest book. They determine what's worth talking about and share in the chat or in breakout groups.

Closing Routines

Title	Objective	Face-to-Face Routine	Remote Learning Routine
Maintain and Modify	This routine helps students develop self-awareness by identifying their strengths and limitations.	Students reflect in journals on their engagement and participation in class. Then they debrief in a Wraparound , in pairs, or in small groups, setting individual and/or communal goals.	Students reflect on their engagement and participation on a collaborative document or exit cards . Then they notice patterns and help each other set goals.
Compass Points	This routine provides a structure for students to give positive feedback about the class, offer suggestions to support their learning, and communicate their needs and worries.	Students complete the Compass Points handout and then debrief in small groups or as a class. They submit their handouts so the teacher can look for patterns of needs and worries and strategize about solutions with the class.	Students reflect on the Compass Points handout. Then they share ideas on a communal version of the handout or virtual whiteboard. They submit their handouts so the teacher can look for patterns of needs and worries and strategize about solutions with the class.
Appreciation, Apology, Aha¹	This routine helps students nurture their classroom community by sharing <i>appreciation</i> for their peers, <i>apologies</i> when they may have hurt others' feelings, and <i>"aha"</i> moments they experienced in understanding themselves, the class, or the world.	Students reflect on the lesson and then share an appreciation, apology, or "aha" moment and debrief in a Wraparound activity	Students reflect on the lesson and share an appreciation, apology, or "aha" moment verbally, in the chat, or on an "Appreciation, Apology, Aha" Padlet or Flipgrid.
Closing Challenge	This routine helps develop students' self-efficacy and decision-making by supporting them in setting personal and academic goals.	As a class, students brainstorm possible personal and academic goals. Then they choose one to focus on and strategies to help them meet it. They verbally commit to their goals in a Wraparound .	Using a virtual whiteboard, students brainstorm personal and academic goals. Then they choose one to focus on and strategies to help them meet it. They verbally commit to their goals in the chat.
Exit Cards	This routine provides an opportunity for students to share how they are feeling, reflect on their performance in class, communicate their needs, and set academic and personal goals.	Students respond to 1–3 prompts that help them reflect on their experience in class or communicate how they are feeling. It is important that students' ideas are valued and heard. Teachers should use the exit card responses to inform future planning and communication with their students.	Students respond to 1–3 prompts that help them reflect on their experience in class or communicate how they are feeling. It is important that students' ideas are valued and heard. Teachers should use the exit card responses to inform future planning and communication with their students.

1 60-Second Strategy: Appreciation, Apology, Aha!, Edutopia.