



educational
knowledge
educational
learning
teaching

The
PRACTICE
of **TEACHING:**
A handbook for
new teachers
and TTOCs



BCTF Mission Statement

The BCTF is a union of professionals that represents and advocates for social, professional, and economic goals of teachers and promotes a quality pluralistic public school system through leadership and advocacy, professional development, and collective bargaining.

Teaching is a planned process based on standards of professional practice which incorporate principles of pedagogy, social responsibility, ethical practice, and collaborative relationships.

—Adapted from BCTF Policy 31.A.02



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleague,

On behalf of the 41,000 public school teachers across the province, welcome to the British Columbia Teachers' Federation. Congratulations on becoming a teacher and a member of our union!

You most likely chose to become a teacher because you know that working with children and youth is a creative, fun, and rewarding experience. Teaching is the most important work in any society; we work with kids to help them develop the knowledge and skills to better understand themselves, and to participate in the world they live in. Through us, they learn the basics and much more. Many teachers are also drawn to the profession because of its crucial role in addressing inequities and discrimination in our society.

The BCTF is one of the most recognizable acronyms in BC—that is because we are not shy about advocating for public education. Our work exists in a political environment where policy and funding decisions are made by cabinet ministers and school trustees who are often far away from what is actually happening in classrooms. That is why, as a union, we work together to advocate publicly for our rights and the quality of our students' education. Being part of a union means that you are not alone!

As a member of the BCTF, you are now part of one of British Columbia's oldest organizations. The Federation was created in 1917 and throughout our rich history we have often described ourselves as a union of professionals. Our membership includes all teachers in the public system, various specialists, and adult education teachers who work in public school districts as well as some speech language pathologists, school psychologists, and associated professionals.

Whether it is within the Federation as a whole, your local teachers' association, or one of our Provincial Specialist Associations, there are many ways you can be involved and access support. We have many programs and services that strengthen professional development, Social Justice, Health and Wellness, International Solidarity, and Teacher Autonomy.

Professionally, we encourage and help each other to enhance our practices and to become better at what we do. We aim for a more just and democratic society by working to eliminate all forms of discrimination, notably sexism, racism, transphobia, and homophobia from our schools. We also work with Aboriginal teachers, students, and communities to further the work of reconciliation and to help mitigate the legacy of Indian Residential Schools. We work tirelessly with other unions and citizens' groups to advocate for strong, stable, and properly funded public education as well as other public services.

That work carries over to the national and international levels as well. We work with other teacher organizations in Canada and abroad through the Canadian Teachers' Federation on issues common to all of us across provincial and national borders.

We are proud of our Federation, not only because of our extensive service to teachers and our ongoing advocacy for public education, but also because of our reputation as a highly democratic and member-driven organization. Remember to look through *The Practice of Teaching: A handbook for new teachers and TTOCs* and become familiar with the work we do, think about participating on a BCTF committee, or a committee of your local teacher union. Join one of the Provincial Specialist Associations. Get involved in your local's decision-making processes and the many events it organizes. Attend the BCTF's annual New Teachers' Conference; it's a great opportunity to learn about issues relevant to early career teachers and meet some of your newest colleagues, too.

At the BCTF, we are also very proud to be an active part of the broader labour movement in BC and across Canada. Through your membership in our union, you are also a member of the BCFederation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress, with whom we work to improve working conditions for all workers—and for a more fair and just Canada for everyone!

One of the most important things for you to read is your collective agreement. It sets out the salaries, benefits, and working conditions for employees and is agreed to by the union and the employer. This means that both the union and the employer have the responsibility to ensure the language in the agreement is followed. The BCTF has worked hard in successive rounds of collective bargaining to improve the working conditions of new and young teachers, including TTOCs. If you ever have a concern about your working conditions, get a hold of your local association.

I wish you a fulfilling and rewarding career and invite you to become involved in your union and the future of your profession. Together, we can continue as a strong, united voice for all BC teachers, our students, and for public education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Hansman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Glen Hansman
President

This handbook can also be found on the BCTF website at:

bctf.ca/NewTeachersHandbook/

Pour la version française, Manuel pour le nouveau personnel enseignant et les enseignants suppléants, visitez le site de la FECS à:

bctf.ca/NewTeachersHandbookFR/

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Distribution: New teachers, teachers teaching on call (TTOCs), local presidents, BCTF Executive Committee, Provincial Specialist Association Council, Professional Issues Advisory Committee, Professional and Social Issues Administrative Staff, Canadian teacher organizations.

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Introduction

The BC Teachers' Federation offers you assistance, support, and encouragement through its many services, programs, and publications. Your colleagues in the union are willing and eager to help. Ask!

Please call your local teachers' association or the BCTF for information and advice about any professional, personnel, or welfare issue.

Visit the BCTF online at bctf.ca/contacts.cfm?page=presidents for a list of the BCTF locals.

Setting the BC context

The BCTF: A union of professionals with a proud history

The BCTF has a long history of representing teachers, public schools and the profession. Formed in 1917 and soon to be celebrating its 100th Anniversary, the Federation has steadfastly remained a proud union of professionals.

Decade 1: 1916–17 to 1926–27

Imagine the first Annual General Meeting of the BC Teachers' Federation, held on January 4, 1917 at King Edward High School in Vancouver.

The following objectives were adopted:

-  To foster and promote the cause of education.
-  To raise the status of the teaching profession.
-  To promote the welfare of teachers in BC.

BCTF offices were soon established, in Victoria (1919) and later moved to Vancouver. A publication for members, *The Educator*, was launched, later to become *Teacher Newsmagazine*, as it remains today. Courage, commitment and collective action were hallmarks of the profession in the early days, just as they are now. In Victoria, the first teacher strike in what was then the British Empire took place in 1919, over salaries and resulted in an arbitration process for salary matters. In 1921, New Westminster teachers went on strike when their board refused to implement an arbitration award. But, salaries weren't the only concerns. Throughout this decade, the BCTF worked with government on pensions and tenure issues, and promoted the first major examination of education by the province in 1925.

Decade 2: 1927–28 to 1936–37

A determination to secure adequate compensation and pensions marked the next decade and continued for decades to come. In 1929, the Teachers' Pension Act established years of service and contribution level as the basis for pensions. In addition, that year, Vancouver teachers

achieved a salary scale based on years of certification and experience. The Public Schools Act of 1937 allowed for either party to demand binding arbitration in salary disputes.

Decade 3: 1937–38 to 1946–47

Collective action won the day. In 1938, continuing contracts were established for teachers. But, in 1939 the Langley School Board refused to implement a salary arbitration award, firing its teachers instead. Ultimately, the strong Langley local backed by the BCTF, had the teachers reinstated and the board fired, instead.

In 1939 and 1940, BCTF created its own Sick Benefit Fund, which later became the Salary Indemnity Fund, adding to the services for members.

The context is always important. In 1943, teachers voted for a provincial strike on salaries, but the BCTF did not act on the vote because the Federal government instituted a wartime wage-control program. Also in 1943, the BCTF joined the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress, later to become the Canadian Labour Congress, after a membership vote.

The Code of Ethics was adopted in 1943 and compulsory membership in the BCTF granted by government in 1947. The BCTF participated in the government's Cameron Commission in 1947, making clear the relationship between teaching the whole child and class size.

Decade 4: 1947–48 to 1956–57

The 1950s saw the end to the discrimination against women in salary scales, with qualifications and years of experience deemed the only two criteria. In 1954–55, Hilda Cryderman from Vernon became the first woman BCTF president.

In 1956 the AGM narrowly turned down a recommendation to join the new Canadian Labour Congress.

In this decade, the BCTF began to actively promote the creation of Provincial Specialist Associations, of which 32 exist and provide support to members, today.

Decade 5: 1957–58 to 1966–67

The year 1961 brought significant advances in teacher pensions with the current basic formula being put in place.

The BCTF launched its International Program in 1961 leading to new connections and new learning with colleagues in other countries. Also in 1961, the BCTF was very actively represented on the government's curriculum committees which shaped elementary and secondary education in BC for the next decade.

During the early 1960s, the BCTF overhauled its own governance structures and established the Working and Learning Conditions program. The "Over 40 Campaign" was launched, aimed at eliminating classes with over 40 students.

Decade 6: 1966–67 to 1976–77

The BCTF has long been a leader in social justice; in the early 1970s, the BCTF established the Status of Women and the antiracism programs to address sexism and racism.

On March 19, 1971, BC teachers participated in their first province-wide withdrawal of services, protesting the government's refusal to improve pensions for retirees. When the government ended compulsory BCTF membership that year, all but 69 of the 22,000 members signed up. Compulsory membership was restored again in 1973.

In the 1972 election, the BCTF launched its first major political action campaign, after the government imposed limits on salary arbitration awards and restricted school districts' ability to raise revenue. In 1974, Surrey teachers held a one-day walkout and went en masse to Victoria in protest over class sizes and, as result, the Federation was able to negotiate a major addition of teachers, to dramatically reduce the pupil/teacher ratio.

Decade 7: 1977–78 to 1986–87

The BCTF really focused on building networks and increasing capacity during this period. It expanded its training programs adding PD Associates, School Staff Rep Training, Internal Mediation, the Program for Quality Teaching, and established the Bargaining Division.

These years are marked by struggle for bargaining rights and fair treatment, and a concerted defense of public education and public services. The BCTF launched a major campaign to expand the scope of bargaining to include all terms and conditions of work and brought a challenge under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. A six-day strike in Terrace in 1981 achieved the inclusion of personnel items in an agreement, and a number of locals were able to secure provisions beyond salary and benefits.

However, the government made major cuts in education funding in 1982 and, in 1983 introduced a package of 26 pieces of legislation that constituted a major assault on the social safety net for working people in BC. Operation Solidarity and the Solidarity Coalition were formed, and the BCTF was a key participant. Teachers joined with other unions in protest and played an important role in Operation Solidarity escalating province-wide withdrawal of services.

In 1987, the government passed legislation that removed principals from the teacher bargaining unit, removed statutory BCTF membership, established a College of Teachers, and gave teachers full bargaining rights. That wasn't all in 1987; the government brought in more antiunion legislation and teachers joined the BC Federation of Labour in a one-day general strike.

Decade 8: 1987–88 to 1996–1997

The BCTF began the 1987–88 school year with a major sign up campaign in which 99% of all public school teachers joined the BCTF and all 76 locals chose the "union model." But, the bargaining climate was still very challenging. The government imposed provincial bargaining in 1994, undermining locals' bargaining rights and forcing a more centralized system. To teachers'

credit, when the first round of provincial bargaining (1996) was concluded, it was agreed that locally negotiated terms and conditions would stay in place.

Even in these challenging times, the BCTF continued to expand services to members, creating French Programs and Services, establishing a Research Division and piloting a rehab program which became part of the Salary Indemnity Plan. In addition, the BCTF increased its outreach work, initiating the Coalition for Public Education and conducting a major political action campaign.

The Federation and its members were very involved in the Sullivan Royal Commission on Education and the resulting new student centered primary program.

Decade 9: 1997–98 to 2006–07

Good news first; the Federation established the Health and Safety program (1997), Aboriginal Education program (2000), and the Peer Support program (2000). It developed a Public Education Advocacy Plan and created a province-wide discussion about education through the Charter for Public Education and focused public attention on funding cuts in every district through the Caravan Against the Cuts campaign.

In 2001, members took their first provincial strike vote; in January 2002, the government imposed a settlement on teachers, ripping class size, class composition, staffing ratios, and related provisions from the collective agreement and made it illegal to negotiate these items. It was devastating to see so many hard won provisions being stolen from the collective agreements. Teachers held a one-day protest on January 28 that year and have marked the year since that time. Twelve years later, a generation of kids has passed through the system without the class size and special education support they should have had.

In 2005, when the government once again imposed a contract, BC teachers engaged in a two-week strike, deemed illegal by the courts. The resulting settlement broke through government's 0% mandate and, in 2006, a five-year collective agreement with salary improvements was negotiated.

This was also the decade when BCTF members voted to affiliate with the BC Federation of Labour and, when the government dismissed the teacher-elected members of the BC College of Teachers, members withheld their BCCT fees until the government re-established a democratic college.

In 2004–05, the BCTF conducted an extensive campaign to bring the issues in public education to the public during the lead up to the provincial election, focusing on the government's record on school closures, support for students with special needs, and class sizes.

During this decade as well, the BCTF stepped up efforts to oppose the privatization of public education and public services.

The next decade is underway: 2007–08 to the present

The BCTF has continued to expand programs and services for members, supporting Teacher Inquiry projects, creating the Living with Balance program and greatly expanding the use of technology and social media. TeachBC, a professional learning portal, will be in place very soon.

Acting for members, the BCTF has had to be ever more vigilant in protecting teachers' freedom of expression rights, taking up grievances and cases, and encouraging grassroots support. Similarly, the Federation has consistently asserted that teachers, the front-line professionals, need to be respected and included in education policy and curriculum development. The BCTF continues to lobby for the resources, support, and conditions teachers need in order to support every student.

The Federation's court challenge to Bills 27 and 28, the legislation that stripped class size, class composition, staffing ratios, and related clauses from the collective agreement in 2002, resulted in a victory in 2010 as the legislation was declared unconstitutional. The government was given a year to address the situation, however, at the end of the year's time, replaced the unconstitutional legislation with Bill 22, a Bill which further undermined teacher rights.

In 2011–12, with mounting pressures and demands on teachers, members undertook a "Year of joyful teaching," and later, in the face of Bill 22, undertook a three-day strike. Faced with even more contract stripping and forced to work with the government's unilateral appointee, the BCTF was able to both resist concessions and make gains in the process.

At the time of writing, the Federation is back at the bargaining table, striving once again for a fair deal for teachers and better support for students.

The BCTF history is rich with examples of teachers taking action and speaking out in the best interest of students, schools, and communities. Thanks to the contributions that new teachers will be making to their union of professionals, this will continue to be the case.

School Act and Regulations and Ministerial Orders

The school system is governed by the School Act and Regulations and Ministerial Orders. The School Act and Regulations outlines the roles, responsibilities, and rights of teachers, administrators, parents, and students. Current policy changes are found in the Ministerial Orders. For example, the School Act and Regulations requires that teachers write report cards for their students while the Ministerial Orders detail the specifics about which letter grade can be used and how often the reports must be sent.

Where to find: This information is available at your school, at/through the local union office or the school board office, or go to

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/e/ministerialorders_toc.pdf.

Collective agreement

Your collective agreement is an important source of information, and you should have your own copy. Ask your school staff rep and/or your local president for clarification should you require it. The collective agreement documents your rights, responsibilities, and benefits as an employee.

Where to find: Ask your staff rep or local president for a copy, or find it online at bctf.ca/BargainingAndContracts.aspx.

Glossary of terms

Integrated resource package (IRP)

An IRP is the official curriculum that all teachers in the province must teach. The IRP format is the same for all subjects. Column one details the “Intended Learning Outcomes,” (ILOs) the only required component of the IRP. As a teacher, you must teach the ILOs. The second column lists a number of “suggested instructional strategies,” the third column offers a variety of “suggested assessment strategies,” and the fourth column offers a number of recommended “learning resources.” Columns two through four are suggestions, only. Using your professional judgment, you may choose to use the ideas or to develop your own. As a teacher, you have the professional autonomy to choose the “how,” “when,” and “where” of the curriculum. Only the “what” is mandated.

Copies of all IRPs can be downloaded at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/welcome.php.

The proposed changes in curriculum are currently in draft. The IRPs remain in effect.

Adaptations

Adaptations retain the learning outcomes of the prescribed curriculum, but they are adapted to accommodate different abilities or learning needs. Adaptations may include adjustments to instruction, assessment, or the amount of time allocated for specific studies to help the student achieve success. Students with adaptations are assessed using the standards for the course or program, and they can receive credit toward a Dogwood Diploma. In today’s inclusive classroom settings, there are many adaptations provided universally.

Modifications

Modifications to learning outcomes are substantially different from the prescribed curriculum. Modifying involves changing or deleting significant numbers of the learning outcomes in the provincial curriculum so that all students can achieve success. Courses heavily modified at the school level are not counted as credit toward a Dogwood Diploma.

Individual education plan (IEP)

When students with special needs are unable to meet the learning outcomes of a course and it is necessary to make modifications to the learning outcomes, an individual education plan (IEP) outlining goals and objectives for each student must be developed.

In these cases, the use of letter grades and percentages on reports is inappropriate. Structured, written reports are used to describe how well students have succeeded in meeting the modified goals and objectives of their IEPs.

Letter grades and percentages may be assigned only when students with special needs are able to meet the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum.

Assessment/ evaluation/ reporting

Teachers gather information and data on student achievement on an ongoing basis (assessment), make judgments about student growth (evaluation), and then share the information with students and parents (through reporting). (see also Student Assessment and Evaluation section, page 50.)

Jobs and professional responsibilities

The job search

Many teachers begin their careers as teachers teaching on call. You can do several things to prepare for this prospect.

-  update your résumé
-  learn more about job interviews and practice those skills
-  find out about teacher supply and demand around the province: enrollment increases, grade and/ or subject demand, TTOC shortages
-  check online for the latest information:
bctf.ca/publications.aspx?id=5630
bctf.ca/OpportunitiesForMembers.aspx?id=5504
OpportunitiesForMembers.aspx?id=5494.

Job postings

School districts use the Make a Future website to advertise teaching positions. There is also an option to be notified when new positions are posted: www.makeafuture.ca/.

School districts, superintendents

Few school districts accept résumés without reference to a specific job posting. Check makeafuture.ca or the school district website.

The superintendent's list is on the BCTF website: bctf.ca/contacts.cfm?page=superintendents or the Ministry of Education website: www.gov.bc.ca/bced/.

Job interviews

Visit the school district or school homepage prior to the interview to gather as much information as possible.

What do they ask?

Following are some questions that might be asked in an interview for a teaching position:

- From your observations and experience, what particular instructional strategies appeal to you?
- How do you feel about working in a collaborative setting?
- How do you think you would go about helping a student who is having more difficulty than the other students?
- How might you make use of the school library? The services of a teacher librarian? The learning assistance teacher?
- How would you describe an effective teacher?
- Tell us about a lesson that went really well during your practicum or as a teacher teaching on call.
- Tell us about a student who presented you with a discipline challenge, and describe how you handled it.
- What are some of your priorities in establishing a positive learning environment in your classroom?
- What are some specific evaluation methods that appeal to you?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What do you think are the major educational issues facing schools today?
- What classroom themes might you use?
- What other work and community experiences have you had?
- What professional development activities have you undertaken?
- What protocol do you follow for ongoing discipline problems?
- Why did you decide to become a teacher?
- Why would you like to teach in this district?
- What age group do you think you will be most comfortable with as you begin your teaching? Why?
- How will you include a student with special needs in your classroom?
- How do you use technology in the classroom?

Note: When you are interviewed at a school for a particular position, subject-specific questions are often asked. Be prepared to answer questions in your areas of expertise.

What should not be asked?

- What are your family plans?
- What are your personal values?

- What are your religious beliefs/affiliation?
- What extra-curricular work will you undertake?

What should you ask?

If invited to ask a question in an interview, try one or two of these:

- What professional development opportunities exist in the district?
- Is there a mentoring program for new teachers to the district?
- Is there an orientation program for new teachers to the district?
- Is a statement of the school/ district philosophy (mission statement) available to study?

(If you did not find the information online.)

If you are in an interview for a job in a remote or rural district, you might want to ask questions about: housing, community activities, transportation, district resources, and out-of-district professional development opportunities.

Always have a question ready to ask. Most interviews now provide for this.

Professional Responsibility and Code of Ethics

As a teacher in the public school system, you are bound by a code of ethics and by professional practice, rights and standards. Details of the professional rights and standards of practice can be found in the Members' Guide to the BCTF, bctf.ca/MembersGuide. In all of your dealings with your students, their parents, your colleagues and other school personnel, be guided by the BCTF Code of Ethics.

BCTF Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics states general rules for all members of the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) for maintaining high standards of professional service and conduct toward students, colleagues, and the professional union. Members are advised to contact local union officers or appropriate BCTF staff for advice on how to proceed with issues related to the BCTF Code of Ethics.

1. The member speaks and acts toward students with respect and dignity, and deals judiciously with them, always mindful of their individual rights and sensibilities.
2. The member respects the confidential nature of information concerning students and may give it only to authorized persons or agencies directly concerned with their welfare. The member follows legal requirements in reporting child protection issues.
3. A privileged relationship exists between members and students. The member refrains from exploiting that relationship for material, ideological, or other advantage.
4. The member is willing to review with colleagues, students, and their parents/ guardians the practices employed in discharging the member's professional duties.
5. The member directs any criticism of the teaching performance and related work of a colleague to that colleague in private. If the member believes that the issue(s) has not been addressed, they may, after privately informing the colleague in writing of their intent to do so, direct the criticism in confidence to appropriate individuals who can offer advice and assistance. * It shall not be considered a breach of the Code of Ethics for a member to follow the legal requirements for reporting child protection issues.
6. The member acknowledges the authority and responsibilities of the BCTF and its locals and fulfills obligations arising from membership in her or his professional union.
7. The member adheres to the provisions of the collective agreement.
8. The member acts in a manner not prejudicial to job actions or other collective strategies of her or his professional union.
9. The member neither applies for nor accepts a position which is included in a Federation in-dispute declaration.
10. The member, as an individual or as a member of a group of members, does not make unauthorized representations to outside bodies in the name of the Federation or its locals.

* See 31.B.12 of the Members' Guide to the BCTF bctf.ca/MembersGuide.

Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of

Educators in BC <http://www.bcteacherregulation.ca/Standards/Standardsdevelopment.aspx>

Established by the British Columbia Teachers Council ([bcteacherregulation.ca/AboutUs/Council.aspx](http://www.bcteacherregulation.ca/AboutUs/Council.aspx)) for individuals who hold a certificate of qualification.

1. Educators value and care for all students and act in their best interests.
Educators are responsible for fostering the emotional, esthetic, intellectual, physical, social and vocational development of students. They are responsible for the emotional and physical safety of students. Educators treat students with respect and dignity. Educators respect the diversity in their classrooms, schools and communities. Educators have a privileged position of power and trust. They respect confidentiality unless disclosure is required by law. Educators do not abuse or exploit students or minors for personal, sexual, ideological, material or other advantage.
2. Educators are role models who act ethically and honestly.
Educators act with integrity, maintaining the dignity and credibility of the profession. They understand that their individual conduct contributes to the perception of the profession as a whole. Educators are accountable for their conduct while on duty, as well as off duty, where that conduct has an effect on the education system. Educators have an understanding of the education system in BC and the law as it relates to their duties.
3. Educators understand and apply knowledge of student growth and development.
Educators are knowledgeable about how children develop as learners and as social beings, and demonstrate an understanding of individual learning differences and special needs. This knowledge is used to assist educators in making decisions about curriculum, instruction, assessment and classroom management.
4. Educators value the involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.
Educators understand, respect and support the role of parents and the community in the education of students. Educators communicate effectively and in a timely manner with parents and consider their advice on matters pertaining to their children.
5. Educators implement effective practices in areas of planning, instruction, assessment, evaluation and reporting.
Educators have the knowledge and skills to facilitate learning for all students and know when to seek additional support for their practice. Educators thoughtfully consider all aspects of teaching, from planning through reporting, and understand the relationships among them. Educators employ a variety of instructional and assessment strategies.
6. Educators have a broad knowledge base and understand the subject areas they teach.
Educators understand the curricular, conceptual and methodological foundations of education and of the subject areas they teach. Educators must be able to communicate effectively in English or French. Educators teach students to understand relevant curricula in a Canadian, Aboriginal, and global context. Educators convey the values, beliefs and knowledge of our democratic society.
7. Educators engage in career-long learning.
Educators engage in professional development and reflective practice, understanding that a hallmark of professionalism is the concept of professional growth over time. Educators develop and refine personal philosophies of education, teaching and learning that are informed by theory and practice. Educators identify their professional needs and work to meet those needs individually and collaboratively.
8. Educators contribute to the profession.
Educators support, mentor or encourage other educators and those preparing to enter the profession. Educators contribute their expertise to activities offered by their schools, districts, professional organizations, post-secondary institutions or contribute in other ways.



Beginning
your career
as a TTOC



Beginning your career as a TTOC

Many teachers are beginning their careers in British Columbia as teachers teaching on call (TTOCs). As a TTOC, you are a very important component of the school system.

Few explorers have set out to conquer the unknown with more uncertainty than teachers teaching on call. You may be called at a moment's notice regarding your teaching assignment: where you will teach, what you will teach, and whom you will teach. All this can be overwhelming unless you keep in mind that, first and foremost, you are a teacher.

As a professional teacher doing the job of a teacher teaching on call, you are vital to the effective operation of the school system. No school can run without you! Fortunately you are available to take on this often difficult job.

Who are teachers teaching on call?

TTOCs are certificated and qualified teachers who replace a contract classroom teacher for the purpose of continuing the instructional program, maintaining discipline, and generally promoting the educational welfare of the students.

There are also more blunt descriptions, descriptions that indicate a great deal about how TTOCs and others perceive their role and their importance to the educational process.

The stereotypes

TTOCs are often viewed as:

- baby sitters—implying that they aren't expected to do any "real teaching."
- expendable—like lambs to the slaughter, thrown to the lions (the students) as some sort of sacrificial offering.
- stand-ins—replacing the "star" performers when they are unable to perform.
- spare tires—sitting in the trunk until needed in an emergency.
- outsiders—"alien beings" from some strange planet, unable to fit into our world.
- chameleons—old lizards with the uncanny ability to alter their appearance. Thus, when encountered, they are usually addressed as "just a sub"—implying that the TTOC has no training or authority in the classroom.

The reality

- In the classroom, TTOCs are as legally responsible as any other teacher.
- TTOCs are not trainees. They are equal in training to many contract teachers.
- Stress is added to TTOC work by the multitude of unknowns.
- TTOCs are always eager to hone their management skills as discipline can be the biggest challenge of the day.
- TTOCs face daily challenges of implementing another teacher's plan and strategy.

The following information is based on a BCTF Research Department Survey on TTOCs conducted in 2008. A new TTOC working and learning conditions survey will be done in the 2013–14 school year.

The “typical” teacher teaching on call in BC today

- is female—76% of TTOCs are female
- 41% are under 35 years of age, 28% are 55 years or older
- most TTOCs teach in urban (42%) or suburban (28%) districts
- about one-third (30%) of TTOCs teach in rural/remote districts
- 20% of TTOCs are retired
- retired TTOCs are more likely to be male (38%) compared to female (15%)
- 19% of TTOCs have less than one year teaching experience
- about half (49%) of TTOCs have one to three years teaching experience
- 70% work as a TTOC only—23% also work in a term teaching position
- about half (54%) of TTOCs want a permanent teaching position
- on average, TTOCs worked 70 days in 2007–08
- about half (54%) of TTOCs assignments were full-day
- 28% of assignments were four days in a row
- 41% of TTOCs had less work than they would like
- 45% supplemented TTOCs earnings with non-TTOC work
- about one-third (36%) of TTOCs earned less than \$10,000 from TTOCs assignments
- most (79%) TTOCs earned less than \$30,000 from TTOC assignments
- 27% of TTOCs owed student loans with about half of them owing \$20,000 or more.

The six most important issues for TTOCs were

- hiring procedures: TTOCs feel district hiring is unfairly handled
- amount of work
- daily rate and no benefits
- call out fairness
- TTOC status among non-TTOC teachers: TTOCs want more recognition and support from the local teachers’ association and contract teachers
- opportunities to participate in the local.

The advantages of being a TTOC

- You are able to observe a variety of classroom and school environments.
- It’s often the route to a full-time position.
- It “opens the door,” and lets administrators see what you can do.
- On-call teaching provides flexibility in your working schedule.
- On-call teaching is interesting and challenging work, offering the chance to exercise knowledge and creativity.
- On-call teaching provides the opportunity to experiment with different teaching strategies and to become familiar with a variety of resources.
- You get daily professional development.

Teachers teaching on call: Networking in the local

It is important for you as a TTOC to develop a strong support system to tap into for any number of issues/situations and to offset the potential isolation in your job. Find out who your local president is and who the staff reps in the various schools are. They can answer your questions and concerns immediately and provide necessary assistance. Find out if your local has a TTOC committee; if not, consider starting one. Get involved. Your local president can help.

Ideas for a local teacher teaching on call committee to pursue

- Set up a local phone answering machine with messages, and update regularly.
- Establish a TTOC phone tree, with a co-ordinator to manage it and initiate messages.
- Have the local association email materials to teachers teaching on call (newsletters, notices, etc.).
- Provide teachers teaching on call with mailboxes or bulletin boards in staff rooms.
- Provide a local teachers teaching on call newsletter or a column in the local association newsletter.
- Set up a local email listserv, Twitter account, or other social media networking system.
- Set up a TTOC link on the local website.
- Write a local newsletter.
- When items like a bargaining survey are distributed, see that all teachers teaching on call members receive a copy.
- Arrange for the local association to set up a board for TTOCs at its office for notices related to professional development and curriculum implementation.
- Provide an orientation session for teachers teaching on call.
- Establish a teachers teaching on call host teacher in each school to welcome teachers teaching on call and provide any current information the local wishes to pass on to teachers teaching on call.
- Encourage school staffs to invite teachers teaching on call to school staff functions.
- Ensure that teachers teaching on call are included in staff representative training.
- Inform teachers teaching on call of PD opportunities and social activities.
- Invite TTOCs to induction ceremonies.
- Encourage the local to provide professional development dollars for TTOC use.
- Plan TTOC socials and resource swapping events.
- Plan TTOC workshops through the BCTF Training Department.

Sources of support and opportunities for involvement in the BCTF and/ or local

- The BCTF has a web page for TTOCs. It is bctf.ca/TeachersOnCall.aspx?id=5022.
- BCTF meetings—be aware of, and become informed about, the provincial Teachers Teaching On Call Advisory Committee (TTOCAC)
- BCTF website bctf.ca
- BCTF Social Justice newsmagazine
- BCTF workshops—have your local book through the BCTF PSI Division Training Department
- New teacher and TTOC SURT—have your local book through the BCTF PSI/ SURT Training Department

- Local association meetings—volunteer to serve on, or to develop, a local TTOC committee
- Teacher newsmagazine
- BCTF New Teachers', new TTOCs', and Student Teachers' Conference. Annual conference held in the spring.
- TTOC standing committees at the local level
- BCTF zone meetings
- BCTF Annual General Meeting (AGM).

School Act requirements to hire certificated TTOCs

In British Columbia, the School Act requires school boards to hire teachers who:

- hold certificates of qualification
- are members of the Teacher Regulation Branch.

The only exception to this requirement exists when no teacher holding a certificate is available and the assignment is for 20 or fewer consecutive teaching days. In such instances, a non-certificated teacher may be employed.

Section 19 of the School Act covers this requirement. It reads as follows:

Teacher and administrative officer qualifications

19. (1) Subject to subsection (2), a board shall not employ a person as a teacher, administrative officer, superintendent of schools, or assistant superintendent of schools unless that person is:
- (a) a member of the college and holds a certificate of qualification as a teacher, or
 - (b) holds a letter of permission to teach issued under section 25(3) of the Teaching Profession Act.
- (2) A board may employ a person who possesses qualifications approved by the board but does not meet the requirements of subsection (1), if that person is:
- (a) employed for 20 or fewer consecutive teaching days and teaching a particular class or classes where no teacher holding a certificate of qualification is available, or
 - (b) instructing a general interest course that is not leading to school graduation.

Your assignment as a teacher teaching on call

Duties and responsibilities

Arrive well in advance of the first bell. You will need at least 30 minutes when posted to a new situation. Advise the school if you will be late due to a last minute notification of assignment.

Upon arriving at the school

- Check in at the office for information and keys.
- Orient yourself to the building and introduce yourself to staff. If time permits, find the medical room, staff room, gym, and fire exits. Ask for a safe place to store your valuables (purse, wallet).
- Some teachers are able to prepare clear instructions for a TTOC for a planned absence. Others may not, due to an unexpected absence. If the teacher has not provided information

regarding the absentee procedure, check with the office. Ask if there is supervision in the school.

- Locate the teacher's daybook and go over the day's lesson plans.
- Verify the absentee procedure, materials, and seating plan.
- Find the copy machine code, teacher supply room, and supervision schedule.
- Run off any material needed.
- Write your name on the board (and a special message/greeting if you wish).
- Put up any board work assignments.
- If audiovisual material is to be used during a lesson, double check to make sure the necessary equipment has been signed out at the school and that it works.
- Plan your introduction. Check on class opening exercises. If there are uncertainties about directions or you have questions about materials, ask a neighbouring teacher.
- Ask about attending meetings (staff, committee).
- Ask about medical alerts, custody orders, medical orders, safety plans, or anything that might impact health and safety of a student and staff.

Teachers teaching on call and health and safety

The Workers' Compensation Act and the occupational health and safety Regulation (OH&SR) are designed to protect workers by preventing workplace injury and disease. Teachers teaching on call are entitled to the full protection of the act and the OH&SR. However, such rights are hollow unless they are fully exercised.

Here are some tips to help you get the most from your health and safety rights:

- When you arrive at a school, ask for the names of the BCTF representatives on the school's joint health and safety committee. If you have any health and safety questions or concerns, speak with one of the representatives.
- Find out who is the designated first aid attendant.
- Ensure that you have been provided with a copy of the school's emergency plan, including routes for evacuation and assembly areas.
- Ask if any of the students in your class have a history of violence. If there is such a student, ask for and become familiar with the student's behaviour plan and a safety plan for teachers and staff.
- Do not leave any food or drink unattended where it could be tampered with.
- If you suffer an injury at work, no matter how minor, advise the principal, vice-principal, or first aid attendant immediately. Fill out a WorkSafeBC Form 6A and make two copies. Keep one copy for yourself, send one to the local union office, and give the original to the principal or vice-principal. Call 1-888-WORKERS to report your incident to WorkSafeBC. See your doctor and be sure to tell the doctor that the injury happened at work.
- If you want advice about your claim, or if you receive a letter from WorkSafeBC denying your claim, immediately contact Sarb Lalli, WCB Advocate, at 1-800-663-9163 local 1890, or 604-871-1890.

- ☐ Report any incidents of violence or threats of violence to the principal or vice-principal. If the incident of violence or threat of violence is directed at you, treat the incident in the same way as you treat an injury at work.
- ☐ Know that you have the right to refuse unsafe work. If you find yourself in any situation that you believe presents a risk of injury to yourself or any other person, remove students from the risk and advise the principal that you are refusing unsafe work. You should then contact the staff representative or a BCTF health and safety representative for advice and support.
- ☐ Ask your local union to arrange for a presentation of the BCTF workshop “Raising Health and Safety Awareness,” which can be presented at TTOC meetings, after school staff meetings, teacher orientation meetings, etc.

If you would like more information, please contact: Mike Wisla, Health and Safety Officer, email mwisla@bctf.ca, toll-free 1-800-663-9163 (local 1891), direct 604-871-1891.

Health and safety for new and young workers

With so many issues facing a new or young teacher, one of the last things on your mind is whether your workplace is healthy and will keep you safe. You will be comforted to know that there are processes and people in place if you have any questions or concerns, or are faced with an unhealthy or unsafe situation.

You have four rights according to the Workers' Compensation Act

1. the right to know the dangers in the workplace
2. the right to participate in workplace health and safety activities
3. the right to refuse unsafe work
4. the right to no discrimination—you cannot be fired or disciplined for participating in health and safety activities.

The first person to contact whenever you have any health and safety questions is the staff rep at your school who will refer you to the health and safety rep. If you are injured or suffer from an occupational disease or are threatened in a violent incident, you need to:

1. report to the First Aid attendant.
2. report to the administrator and complete the WorkSafeBC 6A form.
3. contact your staff and/or health and safety rep.
4. report to WorkSafeBC via teleclaim at 1-888-WORKERS.
5. send a copy of any correspondence from WorkSafeBC to the BCTF WCB advocate who will help you through the process.

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation part 3 which deals with rights and responsibilities says that “An employer must ensure that before a young or new worker begins work in a workplace, the young or new worker is given health and safety orientation and training specific to that young or new worker’s workplace.” This means that in every new school or class you teach, the employer must orient you to the risks and procedures to mitigate these risks before you start work.

BCTF Health and Safety officer
Mike Wisla
604-871-1891
1-800-663-9163 (ext 1891)

BCTF WCB Advocate
Sarb Lalli
604-871-1890
1-800-663-9163 (ext 1890)

Long-term assignments

Some TTOCs will be offered the opportunity to be employed in longer-term/temporary assignments. If you find yourself in this position, more extensive planning and student reporting is required. (Refer to Student Reporting, page 50.)

Collective agreement provisions can be found in your local agreement available from your local union office. Provisions covering pay and benefits are provincial and can be found at bctf.ca/bargainingandcontracts.aspx.

Should there be no lesson plan for the day

There will be times (rarely, it is hoped) when there is no daybook or lesson plans. Sometimes, the proposed material may be too difficult to cover adequately with no prior preparation, or the plan may be too sketchy to be understood. Here are some suggestions:

- Check with the office; the contract teacher may have phoned in instructions, or asked for you to call her/him for direction.
- Consult with the principal and/or another teacher teaching the same subject.
- Refer to the last completed day in the daybook, if available, and then do a reasonable follow-up to the previous lessons. Student notebooks may be checked if the day book is not available.
- Accumulate a set of your own prepared materials—a “survival kit.” Include math reinforcement worksheets, creative-writing stencils, educational puzzles and games, books to read aloud, art ideas, thinking skills, etc. Materials for the subject and grade levels assigned to you can usually be reproduced quickly at the office.
- Younger students often become disturbed by a departure from the routine. Explain to them that some things will be done differently that day. Ask students for their patience and co-operation.
- A teacher teaching on call’s visit is often enjoyed by the students—they are glad for the break from their normal routine. Capitalize on this by providing activities that have an element of fun.

When the students arrive

- Welcome the students as they enter.
- Introduce yourself to the class.
- Explain to the class that you are the teacher who has been called in, that the contract teacher has left lessons that would normally have been taught, and that you will teach them. Follow lesson plans as closely as you can.

-  Don't expect to cover everything. It is better to go for quality rather than quantity. Remember, your pace will be different, as will the students' responses.
-  Record absentees and late arrivals. Check the seating plan. If there is no seating plan quickly draw one up. Attempt to match names to faces.
-  Try to keep seating arrangements as shown in the seating plan.
-  Collect or check any pertinent notes such as absentee notes, permission forms for field trips, etc. If there is a need to collect money, turn it in to the office for safekeeping, with the division number, the student's name, and the amount indicated. If you are giving out supplies such as pencils, notebooks, and erasers, record which students are receiving what items.
-  Go over the classroom rules and your expectations (keep them brief—three or four rules) and the consequences (ones you can enforce) you will use for inappropriate behaviour.

If you encountered a difficult situation, don't try to cover up the difficulty. The administration appreciates your directing problems to the office for assistance. That is preferable to leaving behind a note describing a near-disastrous day.

The first few minutes of attending to a class are crucial in clarifying values and setting the stage for the general routine of the day. Getting pupils down to work quickly is one of the best methods of good classroom management. Act upon the first sign of sustained unco-operativeness. Students from Primary to Grade 12 must learn that some behaviour will not be tolerated under any circumstances. It is important not to make a scene in front of the class, so take a student aside and discuss the matter one on one.

In the secondary schools, attendance (backed up with a head count) must be taken at the beginning of each period or block. If possible, check the class roll call with the school's list of absentees, note any students not on the list who are missing from your class, and report those names to the teacher and the office.

In the primary grades particularly, try to learn names as quickly as possible—use name tags if they are available.

Medical situations

Familiarize yourself with students that you will be responsible for who have medical issues, e.g., those students who you are supervising that use epi-pens, are diabetic, have mental health issues, etc.

Report medical emergencies to the office immediately.

Under no circumstances should you attempt to move a seriously ill or injured student. The class should not be left unattended. Know where your students are at all times. Send a student to the office for assistance.

Rules and consequences

Be aware of already established consequences and procedures. Make children aware of any new classroom rule that you will use for the day. Refer to pages 43–50 for tips on rules, classroom management, and establishing a positive environment.

Other responsibilities

Make sure you know the following procedures prior to starting your day. In a crisis, you will not have the time to familiarize yourself with the procedures.

- Any injuries to yourself or to students or medical emergencies must be reported to the administrator immediately.
- If a student appears to be seriously injured, do not move her or him.
- Students who indicate they are ill and wish to go home during the day must get approval from the office.
- Follow up on any student sent to the office.
- Ensure that you are familiar with any safety plans that have been developed for students.

Drills or emergencies

- Check the drill regulations for the classroom.
- Remember to carry the class list with you during an alarm.
- You are responsible for taking your class outside.
- When outside, account for all students and keep them together.
- Remain outside until the all-clear signal is given.
- Familiarize yourself with emergency procedures.

Classroom routines/ procedures checklist

Every school has policies and procedures for the following:

- behaviour during PA announcements
- dismissing the class
- distributing supplies and materials
- fire drills, earthquakes, and emergencies
- format for assignments
- hall movement
- lining up
- lunch
- make-up work
- playground
- putting away supplies and equipment
- roll call, absentees, students who leave early
- tardy students
- washroom routines
- what students do when they are finished.

Try to familiarize yourself as much as possible with these policies and procedures.

Reporting to the contract teacher

Reporting absences

- Leave a dated slip of paper for lates and absences (morning and afternoon).
- Check the roll call with the school's absentee list, at the end of the day.

Finishing off your day

- Allow things to wind down a few minutes early, to tidy up and put things away.
- You may wish to play a game or other fun activity to finish off the day.
- Thank the students for their co-operation—you'll tell their teacher how co-operative they were.

Reporting on the day

- Follow as closely as possible the work planned by the contract teacher.
- Make note of any deviations from or extensions to the regular day plan.
- Indicate in the daybook what work has been completed.
- Mark written work, particularly if it is objective.
- If you feel some marking can't be done because of its complexity or subjectivity, leave it for the teacher with an accompanying note.
- Include any specific items of concern or interest. Include the names of students who were co-operative or unco-operative. Single out students for praise.
- Whenever possible, prepare a daybook for the next day's work, unless directed otherwise by the teacher.
- Include comments or suggestions on following up from the day's work and feedback for the contract teacher on class and individual progress.
- Leave your phone number or email so that the classroom teacher can contact you.
- Keep a copy for your records.

You and the classroom teacher could use the following form to facilitate communication.

TTOC Report to Teacher

TTOC's name _____

Phone number/ email _____ Date: _____

In for _____

At _____ Grade _____

It was a _____

Work completed

All work was assigned and completed as requested. Any exceptions are noted below:

Observations/ marking _____

Student behaviour _____

Student's name _____

Behaviour _____

Action taken _____

Other comments _____

Tips for success

Survival kit

Should you need a little more time to read through the teacher's lesson plan, you can engage the students with one of the following activities.

Problem-solving activities for teams of students

These activities should:

- be fun.
- require minimal explanation.
- take between 20–30 minutes to complete.
- be something that the whole class can share briefly when completed.
- challenge and engage students' minds and imagination.

Here are some examples:

Thinking activities

- think of all the things that come in pairs.
- think of all the things with:
 - buttons
 - handles
 - zippers.
- think of what you could eat if there were only:
 - purple things for dinner
 - yellow things for dinner.
- draw the dashboard of your parent's car.
- think of all the things that are:
 - pointed
 - red and hard
 - cold and soft.
- what are some things to smile about?

Discovery activities

Assign the following questions for discussion and online research if computers are available in the classroom. Advise students that there will be a sharing of creative responses.

- Are there two kinds of rainbows?
- Where do wood knots come from?
- Can a fish drown?
- Why are furs warm?
- Can seaweed predict the weather?
- Why do aging things turn yellow?

Do plants sleep?

Why do stars twinkle?

Does oil calm troubled waters? Why does a glowworm glow?

What do blind people dream about?

Why does an egg harden when it is boiled? What is 24-carat gold?

Why does salt make us thirsty? What is Fool's Gold?

Why does tea run up through a lump of sugar? What is the origin of blue jeans?

Why doesn't the sea freeze? What makes fabric shrink? Why is the sky blue?

What makes the holes in Swiss cheese? Why will a rotten egg float?

Ideas for forming groups

The following ideas will help you divide the class into groups of different sizes. Ideas for random grouping are followed by strategies to form assigned groups with a balance of skills and skill levels.

Ask students to become partners with the first person they see who:

- enjoys the same sport as you do.
- gets up on the same side of the bed as you.
- rolls out of bed on a different side than you do.
- has a birthday in the same month as you.
- has a birthday in a different month than you.
- has a different favorite TV show than you.
- has a different hobby than you.
- has on the same colour socks as you.
- has on different coloured socks from yours.
- has the same favorite colour as you.
- has a different favorite colour than you.
- has the same first vowel in their first name as you.
- has a different first vowel in their first name than you.
- has the same last digit in their home phone number as you.
- has a different last digit in their home phone number than you.
- has the same number of brothers and sisters as you.
- has a different number of brothers and sisters than you.
- has the same number of letters in their first name as you.
- has a different number of letters in their first name than you.
- puts their shoes on in the same order as you.
- puts their shoes on in the opposite order as you.
- was born in a different province than you.
- was born in the same province as you.

Ideas for forming pairs

Have students find the other half of a pair. To prepare, write paired items on slips of paper. To accelerate pairing, one half of the slips should be one colour and the other half a second colour. In other words, part one of a pair is one colour and part two of the same pair is another colour. (Save the slips to use again. You might laminate them.) Have each player draw a slip from the container and find the person with the matching half.

Here are some ideas:

-  Capital and small letters—A and a, B and b, C and c.
-  Famous couples—Bert and Ernie, Hansel and Gretel, Simon and Garfunkel.
-  Fairy tales—Split the title in two: Snow/White, Sleeping/Beauty.
-  Opposites—Hot and cold, tall and short, quiet and noisy, neat and messy, smooth and rough, easy and difficult, wide and narrow, north and south, morning and evening, big and little, up and down.
-  Pictures and words—A picture of an apple and the word apple.

Dividing into teams randomly

Counting off

Have players count off by:

-  Arm positions—Example: For two teams, players count off by alternately raising both arms up high or holding them close to the sides. Arms up high are one team; arms close to the sides, another.
-  Colours—Example: For three teams, count off with red, white, and blue. Reds are one team; blues, another; and whites, a third. Select familiar groups of colours, such as school colours or province colours, or those in a country's flag.
-  Days of the week—Example: For seven teams, count off by the days of the week.
-  Exclamations—Example: For five teams, count off with Oh no!, Ahhh, Wow!, Hmmmm, and Huh?
-  Motions—Example: For six teams, count off by motions, such as clap hands, snap fingers, pat thighs, wiggle fingers, circle arms, raise elbows.

Word groups

Choose a word with the same number of letters as the number of groups you need. If you need four groups, you could use the word team. (All the letters have to be different.) The class counts off by saying the letters. All the Ts are one group, the Es another, and so on.

You can write the letters or words in large print on separate pieces of paper. As each student says her or his letter, she or he holds up the letter so that the same letters can find one another quickly.

Create a calendar

Divide the class into 12 groups, and have each group create one month of a calendar on a sheet of newsprint. Each group member will write a significant day or event on the group's calendar. Post the months so classmates can add important dates and family celebrations to one another's calendars and share events in their lives.

Question box

Set up a question box, and call it “Dear Funny-Bones,” or another humorous name. Encourage students to write humorous questions and jokes and put them in the box. At various moments during the day, invite a student to read a question from the box and invite the class to answer it.

Food favourites

Students count off with food combinations, such as the ingredients for a great pizza. For example, “sausage,” “pepperoni,” “cheese,” “mushrooms,” and “onions.” All “sausages” then come together as a group. Do the same using ingredients for a favorite ice-cream sundae or for trail mix.

Card games

A number of books are available on educational card games that show how to use a deck of cards as an educational tool through games that develop memory, number skills, visual/spatial concepts, and problem-solving.

Creativity and problem-solving

Students can benefit from problem-solving activities which act as a break from subject-oriented lessons and activities. A number of “mental exercises and warm-ups,” such as brainstorming and synectics, can take up those difficult 15 or 20 minutes of “dead time” at the end of a period.

Trivia games

The huge popularity of Trivial Pursuit and similar games can be exploited easily in the classroom. Regular classroom teachers use homemade trivia games to liven up Friday afternoons and to lessen the agony of reviewing course content.

Facts versus opinions

The following is a variation on a theme used most often by History and English teachers. Students are given a number of sentences and asked to identify which are fact and which are opinion.

Social science and mass media teachers use similar exercises, in which the students examine a short newspaper or magazine article/editorial and separate the facts from the opinions.

Directions: If the following statement is fact, circle the F. If, on the other hand, the statement is an opinion, an inference, or a judgment, circle the O.

- F O She goes to church only to show off her new clothes.
- F O It was a wonderful car.
- F O She really thinks a lot of herself.
- F O Jerry was convicted of theft and served two years in prison.
- F O Look at that drunken driver.
- F O For sale: 1995 two-door Ford Mustang.

- F O A man was killed and two teenagers injured in an auto accident.
F O The performance began at 8:30 sharp.
F O He is un-Canadian.

Communications

There are several types of writing assignments including the use of social media. Students can write letters, emails, or a “Tweet,” as an exercise in many different subjects. Specify the length required. Also consider the evaluation to be used.

-  History—Students write to a world leader they admire (past or present).
-  Geography—Students write describing another country or region.
-  Languages—Students write to a pen pal in the language they are studying.
-  Art—Students write to their favorite artist, asking questions about the artist’s style, subjects, etc.
-  English—Students write to their parents or to their future child.

Using newspapers and magazine articles

An interesting article from the morning’s newspaper or downloaded from the internet can be put to good use in the classroom, so can a short article from a magazine. Students can analyze, dissect, and criticize the article. They can debate a controversial topic raised by the article. They can write their own letter to the editor in reply to an article.

