

# 10 Quick & Easy Teacher Time Saver Ideas

What does being a teacher really mean? For starters, being a teacher means wearing a large number of very different hats, and juggling a myriad of different responsibilities all at once. If you cannot find ways to balance out your priorities and responsibilities, you may quickly find yourself backlogged and unable to stay afloat. Here are ten quick and easy time saver ideas for teachers who need help staying on schedule and completing tasks with timeliness. You will still encounter situations that are beyond your control, but if you implement some of these time saver ideas, your job effectiveness will be a whole lot better.

## Organization --

**1 - Organize your classroom for better efficiency.** Make sure that your classroom is always accessible when it comes to providing the supplies and materials that you will need. In the end, you will feel like you are in greater control if you can easily and quickly find whatever materials and supplies you need. This may require that you take a day to sit down and get organized, or you can take small steps throughout the week to reduce clutter, add organization and make your room and supplies much more accessible.

**2 - Organize your students.** Some teachers like to try out different options when it comes to seating children for various reasons, including making it easier for names to be remembered. For instance, you may consider arranging the students in your classroom by their last names in alphabetical order. This will make it easier for you to call on a student correctly. Later you may let the children sit anywhere they like, but when getting to know them, having them seated in a prescribed order can be a real lifesaver.

**3 - Organize the operations in your classroom.** Make a point to plan all of your lessons ahead of time, rather than trying to get everything together when the lesson is ready to begin. A great time to get a jumpstart on the lesson plans for the following year is during your summer vacation. Make sure that complete lesson plans are ready to go, and that you have all of the supplies that you are going to need.

Another great way to organize the operations in your classroom is to create charts and lists for daily procedures. This will save time because your students will not be asking you consistently about what is for lunch, what duties must be accomplished in the classroom, or what will be studied or learned in each day of the week. Keep these charts and lists posted so that you are not constantly digging around trying to find the information that your students are looking for. The best way to save time as a teacher is to run a tight ship operation in your classroom by optimizing and organizing your classroom operations.

## Activities --

**4 - Ball Trivia** - A great way to quiz your students in your free time before class ends, while still engaging them, is to toss a rubber ball to a student

while asking them a question about a past lesson. If the student then goes on to answer correctly, he or she will turn around and toss the ball to another student. Let the students ask the questions, as this will both allow them to ask lesson related questions, and answer them, while having fun in the process. This activity works especially well when the students are in a circle on the floor.

**5 - Flashcards** - Create flashcards for various lessons, with review questions on one side, and answers on the other. You can hold up a flashcard and allow your students to answer the questions aloud, or you can play a game show style game with teams and one student serving as the host.

**6 - Tic Tac Toe** - Draw a tic-tac-toe grid on a large sheet of paper, and split your class into an 'X' team and an 'O' team, then toss a coin to decide who will play first. You can ask questions to determine whether or not a team can place an X or an O on the board, and this is a great way to quiz your students while engaging them at the same time. Play until one team wins, by answering enough questions correctly that they may place three X's or three O's in a row on the board.

#### **Other Time Saving Tips -**

**7 - Encourage reading in class.** Utilize class time for grading and reading papers and homework assignments by allowing students to read silently, or to popcorn read or tag read if you are reading a specific book in class. Popcorn reading allows students to call on other students for reading, and will allow you to get some grading done since you do not have to direct students to read, or read out loud yourself.

**8 - Use printable worksheets.** There are thousands of free printable teacher worksheets available online, and finding worksheets that relate to your lesson plan should be easy. Assigning worksheets will save time, because you do not have to plan out specific homework assignments, you only have to run off a few dozen copies of a worksheet that someone else created.

**9 - When it is appropriate, allow your students to do peer grading.** This is especially useful when it comes to vocabulary and spelling tests. Look at your assessment strategy long and hard, is it efficient for you and good for the children in your class? If your system is working for every involved party, stick with it. If changes are necessary, make them until everyone is happy.

**10 - If you are tired, avoid trying to accomplish any important work tasks.** When you are working while exhausted, you will be much more likely to make a number of mistakes, which will force you to backtrack. Mistakes can be fixed easily, but at the cost of unnecessary time spent. Get some rest and start up again in the morning, and everybody wins.