Novice Teacher Journal

**Directions:** As you read through the chapters in ***The First Years Matter,*** you will find yourself underlining, adding sticky notes to pages, and checking off ideas you will want to discuss with your mentor. The purpose of this guide is to offer you a space to type your ideas and notes. Being purposeful and attentive to what is useful to you will focus your mentoring conversations and support your development as an effective teacher. Because this is a resource book, you may not be using all of the pages, and you need a system for finding the information when you need it.

The REFLECT prompts, the Mentoring Dilemmas, and the SET GOALS pages will invite you to dig deeper and to reflect on the process as you are “being mentored” by an experienced teacher. You can review your thoughts and document your learning in this e-journal.

By taking the time to maintain this journal, you will have all of your notes and reflections in one place for easy access at any time of the year. If mentoring is required as part of the induction program in your school district, consider using it as evidence of your mentoring conversations. Plan to write in this document once a week and schedule that time in your calendar to make it a habit. You will be rewarded at the end of the year when you look back and read all of your notes and reflections. Enjoy the process!

# Table of Contents

This is a word document and it will get longer as you add your notes and reflections for each month. Use these hyperlinks to access the months more easily.

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[**September**](#_September_1)

[**October**](#_October)

[**November**](#_November)

[**December**](#_December)

[**January**](#_January)

[**February**](#_February)

[**March**](#_March)

[**April**](#_April)

[**May**](#_May)

[**June**](#_June)

[**July**](#_July)

Preface, Welcome Letter, and Part I

Respond to these guiding questions or simply record your own notes for this part of the book. Do what works best for you to capture the ideas you would like to refer to in the future. Consider using another color or font style and size so you can easily refer to your reflections.

1. List three key ideas that stood out for you in the Preface, Welcome Letter, and Part I and reflect on why they are important to becoming an effective teacher.

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2. One way to align your reflections and mentoring conversations to the teaching standards in your state is to color code *The First Years Matter.*How will you align the book to your district or state standards?

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3. The companion website offers additional resources and videos. How will you use it to support your development of effective teaching practices?

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Part II Month-By-Month Mentoring: Being Mentored in Action!

August

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. What do I bring to teaching, and how can my mentor help me?

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2. How will I learn about important school information?

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3. How can I prepare for the first weeks of school?

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Overview

What stands out as important to you this month?

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# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin this month.

Capture your thoughts as you begin this journal process for this month. Keep this journal all year, and at the end, you will have an opportunity to review your feelings to assess your growth over time. If you are a 2+ year teacher, notice how your responses may be different from your previous year(s) of teaching.

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## August Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

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I need some help . . .

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# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” section in *The First Years Matter* will you ask your mentor?

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# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use from this page. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

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2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

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3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

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4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

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# ACT 1: Preparing to Be Mentored

**Key Question:** How will you participate fully in mentoring?

**Directions:** Reflect on your previous experiences of being mentored or mentoring someone else. You may have mentored a student in school or a senior citizen as a volunteer. Or perhaps you had a mentor in a previous job because you are a career changer. Mentoring requires a commitment on your part. Your mentor can help you only if you are open to suggestions and willing to honestly share your needs.

1. What is your experience of mentoring others?

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2. What is your experience of “being mentored”?

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3. List several mentors in your life (they do not have to relate to education) who were helpful to you. Why?

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4. Is mentoring a requirement in your district? How do you feel about that?

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5. How will you approach being mentored? (i.e., What is your commitment to listening and taking suggestions?)

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6. How can a mentor support you?

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7. If you are using this book *without* a formal mentor, how will you “self-mentor” to get the most out of this curriculum?

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8. Based on previous mentoring experiences, what do you need to do to successfully participate in *The First Years Matter* curriculum?

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# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

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# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

I am frustrated by . . .

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I need to . . .

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I am excited about . . .

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I am nervous about . . .

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As a 2+ year teacher I learned . . .

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# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

Refer to the directions in the chapter and respond to the prompts below.

## Dilemma 1: Choosing to Be a Teacher

You decided to become a teacher because you love teaching. It has been your passion since elementary school. You are ready to begin in your first classroom, and you start to hear how challenging it is to teach in this school. You meet your mentor who is competent and helpful, and you are already feeling overwhelmed by all the things you need to learn. You are afraid you might be in over your head. You find out many novice teachers have left the district, and now you are getting nervous. Your parents and friends have questioned your decision to teach and said, “You are so smart, why are you going to be a teacher?” You are questioning your choice to teach. If you are a 2+ year teacher, how does this dilemma relate to you now? *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts below.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

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2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

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3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

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4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

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5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

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6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

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7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in her/his second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

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# Set Goals

Directions: Complete the goal-setting processes alone or with your mentor*.*

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Reflect on your teaching this month. What stood out as effective? What will you do differently next month?
* Agree on ONE goal with your mentor to reinforce your learning for next month.

### Goal

|  |
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## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

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# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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September

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do I create a community of learners in my classroom?

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2. How will I learn how to implement routines in my classroom?

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3. How will I learn ways to implement classroom and behavior management routines and look at student work systematically?

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4. How will I reach out to parents?

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# Overview

What stands out as important to you this month?

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# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin this month.

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## September Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

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I need some help . . .

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# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your mentor?

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# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use from this page. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

|  |
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2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

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3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

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4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. Would you like to focus on this month?

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# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

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# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

A compliment I have for my mentor . . .

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|  |

What I am learning about being a teacher . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Questions I need to ask my fellow new teachers . . .

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Something I would like to share is . . .

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As a 2+ year teacher, I learned . . .

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# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

Refer to the directions in the chapter and respond to the prompts below.

## Dilemma 2: Including All Students in the Community of Learners

You are beginning the school year on a good note, and your mentor has visited your classroom to see how you are organizing the space. You had several behavior problems this month, so you had to separate the most disruptive students from the rest of the class. Your mentor asked about this, and you didn’t know how to respond and felt that you might be doing something wrong. These students are from other cultures, and you wonder if because English is not their first language, they might be frustrated. Now that your mentor has seen this, you are wondering if this is the best way to handle their behavior. *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts below.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

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2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

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3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

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4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

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5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

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6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

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7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in his/her second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Reflect on your teaching this month. What stood out as effective? What will you do differently next month?
* Agree on ONE goal to focus on and reinforce for next month.

### Goal

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

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# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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October

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do you design effective lesson and unit plans?

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2. How will you include students in your mentoring conversations?

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3. Why is it important to reach out to parents?

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# Overview

What stands out as important to you this month?

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# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin this month.

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## October Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

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I need some help . . .

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# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your mentor?

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# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use from this page. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

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2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

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3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

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4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

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# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

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# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

My students . . .

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The parents . . .

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The principal . . .

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My family . . .

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As a 2+ teacher I learned . . .

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# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

Refer to the directions in the chapter and respond to the prompts below.

## Dilemma 3: Overwhelmed With So Many Suggestions From Your Mentor

Your mentor decides to pop in for an unannounced short observation (which you agreed she could do any time) and watch the opening of a lesson. You are having a bad day and several of your teaching practices are not working. Your mentor has given you many ideas, but you are finding it difficult to implement them all. Students are not paying attention, and you forgot to do your lesson plan last night, so you are “winging” your lesson. You have shared in your meetings with your mentor that you understand the importance of planning, but when you have to actually do it, you struggle with finding the time. You are already working late every night correcting papers and sometimes the planning gets missed. Now, you get so frustrated that you shout, “Heads down” just to get a moment to gain control. Your mentor had given you some strategies, but they just didn’t work. She is now leaving and says you will talk later. *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts below.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

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2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

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| --- |
|  |

3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

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4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

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5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed. Write that down in your journal.

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6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

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7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in her/his second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Acknowledge what you are doing well!
* Agree on ONE goal to focus on and reinforce for next month.

### Goal

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| --- |
|  |

## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

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# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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November

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do you plan lessons with assessment in mind?

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2. How will you learn about assessment tools?

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3. How will you use student perspectives and voice?

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4. What is important to review regarding parents this month?

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# Overview

What stood out in the chapter overview and introduction video that is useful to you?

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# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin this month.

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## November Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

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I need some help . . .

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# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your mentor?

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# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use from this page. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

|  |
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2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

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3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

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4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

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# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

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# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

Something that is really working is . . .

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I continue to be challenged by . . .

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I need help . . .

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My class is . . .

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As a 2+ teacher, I am learning . . .

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# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

Refer to the directions in the chapter and respond to the prompts below.

## Dilemma 4: Cheating

You have been successfully assessing students’ progress using both formal and informal assessments. You have reviewed the pages in the November chapter, and your mentor is pleased with your progress. You understand rubric design and are integrating informal assessment tools into your daily lesson plan. You are nervous about your test scores because that is what your district used to rehire you for next year. You are coaching your students to do well and telling them how important it is to you that they pass the tests. The students like you and want to do well. Your mentor asks you to bring your test papers to a looking-at-student-work conversation, and she points out that four students have exactly the same answers on their final tests! *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts below.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

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|  |

2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

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| --- |
|  |

3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

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4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

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5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

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6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

|  |
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|  |

7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in her/his second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

|  |
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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Agree on ONE goal to focus on and reinforce for next month.

### Goal

|  |
| --- |
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## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

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|  |

# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

# Other Notes for the Month

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December

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do you keep all learners engaged?

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2. What do you need to know about support?

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3. How will you keep students central to your teaching and mentoring conversations?

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4. What is a parent communication option for this month?

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# Overview

What stood out in the chapter overview and introduction video that is useful to you?

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# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin this month.

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## December Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

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I need some help . . .

|  |
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# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your mentor?

|  |
| --- |
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# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use from this page. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

|  |
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|  |

2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

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3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

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4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

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| --- |
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# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

|  |
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# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

I am frustrated by . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

I need to . . .

|  |
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I really love . . .

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The best way to describe this year so far is . . .

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|  |

As a 2+ teacher, I am learning . . .

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# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

## Dilemma 5: Took Your Advice and It Didn’t Work

You came to the district with high marks from your teacher preparation program. You graduated at the top of your class in education courses. You had a successful career as an engineer, and you chose teaching because you want to give back to society and were tired of corporate business. You are enthusiastic, and you want to be a great teacher but are having trouble relating to the students. You thought they would sit and listen and to care about learning. Your mentor has given you so many suggestions, and she is a terrific teacher. The students just listen to her. Why don’t they listen to me? You just taught a lesson using some of her ideas, and they just couldn’t stop talking. You got frustrated and said, “That’s it, we are not doing it! Open your books to page 20 and start answering the questions.” Your mentor was in the room. You know the advice she gave was good, but you just couldn’t implement it. *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

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2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

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3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

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4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

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5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

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6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

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7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in his/her second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Review the PLAN–CONNECT–ACT–REFLECT pages you completed in this chapter with your mentor. Look ahead to January ACTs to see what you may focus on to continue your development.
* Agree on ONE goal with your mentor to reinforce for next month.

### Goal

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

|  |
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|  |

# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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January

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do you systematically reflect on your teaching practice?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How do you continue to implement student voices?

|  |
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3. How can a formal agenda and meeting with parents help communication?

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# Overview

What stood out in the chapter overview and introduction video that is useful to you?

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|  |

# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin this month.

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## January Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

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|  |

I need some help . . .

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| --- |
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# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your mentor?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use from this page. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

|  |
| --- |
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3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

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4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

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# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

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# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

What I like about being mentored is . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

My mentor has helped me . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

One thing that would make a difference for the rest of the year is . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

I am really pleased with . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

I wish my mentor could . . .

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| --- |
|  |

I wish the district could . . .

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# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

Refer to the directions in the chapter and respond to the prompts below.

## Dilemma 6: Doesn’t Matter What the Students Think

It is January, and it is time to reflect back over the first months of the year and your progress. You have been wondering why so many teachers, including your mentor, care so much about what the students think. You are the one who went to college to become a teacher. It is the principal who will be evaluating you, and you are wondering why your mentor isn’t spending some time preparing you for that evaluation instead of what the students’ think about you. You are thinking, if they just stop talking and listen to me, I could teach; and then there wouldn’t be any issues in my classroom! You know that your state’s evaluation system is moving toward student feedback, and you have always included students’ perspectives in your teaching, but you are wondering how this is supposed to help you become a better teacher. Your mentor is really into this topic. *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

|  |
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|  |

4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

|  |
| --- |
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5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

|  |
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6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

|  |
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|  |

7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in her/his second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

|  |
| --- |
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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

|  |
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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Reflect on your teaching this month. What stood out as effective? What will you do differently next month?
* Agree on ONE goal with your mentor to reinforce for next month.

### Goal

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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February

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do I create a community of learners?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How will I reinforce students’ voices?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. Why is it important to tell parents what their students are learning in class?

|  |
| --- |
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# Overview

What stood out in the chapter overview and introduction video that is useful to you?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin the month.

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## February Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

|  |
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|  |

I need some help . . .

|  |
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|  |

# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your mentor?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use from this page. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

|  |
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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

I am still working on . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

My biggest challenge is . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

One thing I could do for fun . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

My students are . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

As a 2+ year teacher, I am learning . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

## Dilemma 7: Is This Content Accurate?

It is February, and it is time for state content tests. The focus on the content this year is very important at your school because the school is under performing. You are a bit uncertain about the history content, and your mentor is coming to observe. You check out the content with the department chair to be sure your information is correct before teaching the lesson. Your mentor is not a history major, so you can’t ask him to help you. Your mentor asks you about the content at the end of the lesson. *What do you say?*

Respond to these prompts.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

|  |
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|  |

4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

|  |
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|  |

6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in his/her second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

|  |
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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Compliment yourself for doing something well!
* Agree on ONE goal with your mentor to reinforce your learning for next month.

### Goal

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

|  |
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|  |

# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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March

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do I reflect and improve my teaching practices?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How will I keep students central to my mentoring conversations?

|  |
| --- |
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4. Why is it important to reach out to the community and business partners?

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# Overview

What stood out in the chapter overview and introduction video that is useful to you?

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|  |

# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin the month.

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## March Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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|  |

I am confident in the areas of . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

I need some help . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your Mentor?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use from this page. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

The best thing that happened this month is . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

The thing that has helped me the most this year is . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Something I would like to see my mentor teach is . . .

|  |
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|  |

I would like to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with my mentor . . .

|  |
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As a 2+ teacher, I am learning . . .

|  |
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# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

## Dilemma 8: Being Mentored and Evaluated

March’s topic is about collaboration and being observed by your mentor. You have built a wonderful trusting relationship with your mentor, and you willingly invite him to your classroom. At this time of year, the principal is also coming to observe and provide feedback to you. The principal is new to your school, and you heard through the grapevine that she has asked your mentor to share what she is seeing when she observes your teaching. You had a few issues in your classroom that you discussed with your mentor, and you don’t want the principal to hear about them. You need to keep your job, and you don’t want the principal looking for evidence that could be used to not renew your contract. You thought the mentor was supposed to be a confidential colleague, and that is why you opened up to her. If she shares this information, you feel that you cannot trust her with any other issues in the future. *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

|  |
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|  |

2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

|  |
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|  |

6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in her or his second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

|  |
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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

|  |
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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* What showed up in your observations as commendations?
* Agree on ONE goal with your mentor to reinforce for next month.

### Goal

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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April

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do I set realistic goals to improve my practice?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How can I use student observation as a way to improve my practice?

|  |
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3. How can I share the importance of good study skills with parents?

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# Overview

What stood out in the chapter overview and introduction video that is useful to you?

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|  |

# Plan

## Your thoughts as you begin the month.

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| --- |
|  |

## April Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

I need some help . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your mentor?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

I am frustrated by . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

One thing that would make a difference is . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Teaching is . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

I see myself teaching . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

As a 2+ year teacher, I am learning . . .

|  |
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|  |

# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

## Dilemma 9: Teaching to the Test

Your district needs higher scores to keep their funding. As a beginning teacher, you are having trouble covering all of the content in time to make sure the students have learned it before the test. You feel nervous about this and are struggling to engage the students and teach the content at the same time. You feel like you are doing all the right things, and you don’t want to just lecture to get through the content because the students will be bored. It just is taking you longer to teach everything. You are worried that all the content won’t be covered before the test date. *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in his or second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* List three things that are going well.
* What will you do differently next month?
* Agree on ONE goal with your mentor to reinforce for next month.

### Goal

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Other Notes for the Month

|  |
| --- |
|  |

May

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do I review my teaching practices?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How will I review assessments required by the district?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. How will I continue to include students’ perspectives?

|  |
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|  |

4. Why is it important to reach out to parents?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Overview

What stood out in the chapter overview and introduction video that is useful to you?

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| --- |
|  |

# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin this month.

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|  |

## May Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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| --- |
|  |

I am confident in the areas of . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

I need some help . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your novice teacher(s)?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# ACTs

Note ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

I have learned . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

My mentor has taught me . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

My students have taught me . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

I have changed my mind about . . .

|  |
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As a 2+ teacher, I am learning . . .

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

## Dilemma 10: Becoming an Effective Teacher

You have seen your growth in all teaching standards. Yet you still feel a bit uneasy about your progress. You are trying your best, but you still think that the context at your school is not helping you be the best teacher you can be. The principal is new and doesn’t really know how to give you feedback, and some of the students and parents are challenging you. You wanted to teach, but you have few resources, and you find yourself saying, “I never knew it would be like this!” You feel uncertain about your real progress, and perhaps you might not get rehired. Other teachers at the school feel the same thing, and in the teachers’ room, you are agreeing with them. Yet you feel uncertain, and your mentor has been so supportive. Your mentor says that all of your teaching skills are stellar. You do want to stay at the school and be rehired. The negative ideas in the teachers’ room seem to agree with what you are feeling, but your mentor is so positive. You have a meeting with your mentor coming up. *What do you say?*

Respond to these prompts.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

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2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

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3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

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4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

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5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

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6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

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7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in his/her second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Review the PLAN–CONNECT–ACT–REFLECT pages you completed in this chapter with your mentor. Look ahead to June ACTs to see what you may focus on to end the year.
* Agree on ONE goal with your mentor to reinforce for next month.

### Goal

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## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful?

### Goal for Next Month

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# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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June

These questions guide the content of the chapter. Respond to them now as a pre-chapter activity and then go back and add information at the end of the month. You may choose to wait until the end of the month to respond. If you do use this as a pre- and post-activity, consider using two different colors, so you can see how much you learned at the end of the month.

# Guiding Questions

1. How do I reflect on the entire year?

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2. How will I learn the school closing routines?

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3. How will I keep students in mind at the end of the year?

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4. Why is it important to communicate to all parents at the end of the year?

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# Overview

What stood out in the chapter overview and introduction video that is useful to you?

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# Plan

Your thoughts as you begin the month and close the school year.

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## June Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Today I feel . . .

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I am confident in the areas of . . .

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I need some help . . .

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# Plan

What questions from the “Questions for Participating in Mentoring Conversations” will you ask your mentor?

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# Connect

Note any resources you will watch or use. If you do use a resource, keep your notes here for future reference.

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# The First ACT

1. What is going well in your classroom right now?

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2. How do you know your practice is working? What is your evidence of success?

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3. What would you like to improve or enhance this month?

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4. Review the ACT overview of possible conversations for this month with your mentor. What would you like to focus on this month?

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# ACTs

List ACTs you plan to review with your mentor. Note which ones you actually discuss to serve as evidence of mentoring conversations.

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# Reflect

Type your responses to the prompts here each month.

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This year my mentor helped me . . .

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Without a mentor, I would have . . .

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The biggest challenge I faced this year was . . .

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What I look forward to most next year is . . .

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As a 2+ year teacher, I learned . . .

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# Reflect Using Mindfulness to Explore Teaching Dilemmas

## Dilemma 11: Do You Ask to Be Mentored Again?

You have been mentored all year. You loved your mentor, and you met lots of novice teachers, and you really enjoyed it. You had so many questions, and your mentor helped you in many ways, but there is so much more to learn that you didn’t have time to talk about. You heard that the district is writing a comprehensive plan to support novice teachers beyond their first year of teaching, and they are asking for volunteers. You are tired. It is the end of the year, and you just can’t wait for summer break. It has been a wonderful year in many ways because you have successfully completed the year and are rehired! All of the time and energy spent on mentoring conversations have paid off. Your mentor has influenced your teaching, and you feel more confident and competent. However, continuing with your mentor for another year seems like a great opportunity. *What do you do?*

Respond to these prompts.

1. State the dilemma as clearly as possible in one sentence if you can.

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2. What decision do you need to make in regard to this situation?

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3. Write about the emotions that come up for you that relate to this situation. If you have two choices, write how the emotions might be different.

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4. Stop and reread what you have written. Underline any key words or phrases that stand out for you.

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5. Soften your eyes or close them and take three deep breaths. Ask yourself, what am I missing that I have not noticed.

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6. How can your mentor help you? Write your reflection.

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7. If you are truly stuck, bring your dilemma to another novice teacher who is in her/his second or third year of teaching. Ask him or her to listen and to ask you questions to clarify your dilemma. Ask her not to give advice, just to ask you questions to help you clarify your feelings and next steps.

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8. How do you feel about this dilemma now? All dilemmas are not resolved! This is a process of clarifying and understanding how you feel and how you might proceed in the future.

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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Acknowledge all you have done this year!

### Goal for the Summer

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## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* List any challenges you may be facing right now.
* What did you do to help yourself be more balanced and mindful this year?

### Goal for Next Year

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# Videos

List any key ideas from the videos that you want to remember.

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# Other Notes for the Month

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July

Respond to these reflective questions and add your own.

# Guiding Questions

1. What have I learned that will improve my teaching practices?

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2. What are the leadership opportunities for novice teachers in my district or school?

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# Plan

How can you help your district sustain a mentoring program for novice teachers? Consider designing a formal program with your district to ensure all your mentors are using a common language for mentoring novice teachers. By designing a plan, you will ensure that the district stays committed to mentoring and supports the mentors in being effective.

## 1. Professional Development for Mentors

* Do you need to learn more about how to mentor effectively?

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* Does your district offer mentor professional development?

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* Would you like to become a lead mentor? Someone who trains other mentors? Consider using the Mentoring in Action curriculum in your training.

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* Monthly mentor meetings provide a place to ask questions, share ideas, and reflect on best mentoring practices. Use this book as a guide, and the final reflection pages each month can be shared at a meeting like this.

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## 2. A District Action Plan

If your district does not have a plan for mentoring, consider designing a district action plan.

* Go to the mentoringinaction.com website to see an Interactive Guide for creating a District Action Plan.
* Review plans from other districts.
* Watch the videos that highlight key components of the plans.
* Select the school plan that meets your needs and modify it.

# Connect

Note any ideas that stand out for you as useful so that you will remember to integrate them into your next mentoring experience.

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Act 1

# What Have I Learned?

Ask yourself . . .

* Would I be mentored again next year if the district offered this option to me? Why or why not?

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* How would I use the book *The First Years Matter* and the Novice Teacher Journal next year in a continued mentoring experience?

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* What is the most significant thing I learned this year with my mentor?

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* What am I most grateful for in this mentoring process?

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* As a 2+ year teacher using the book for the second time, I learned . . .

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* As a 2+ year teacher using the book for the first time, I . . .

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Act 2: Retreat With Other Novice Teachers

What stands out for you after watching this video?

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# Reflect

Review all of your journal entries and end-of-month chapter reflections. Look for themes and patterns in your writing.

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Two things that stood out for me in my journal this year . . .

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I noticed . . .

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An area I wrote a lot about was . . .

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By reading these again, I . . .

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# Set Goals

## 1. Goal for Improving Your Teaching Practices

* Reflect on your teaching year. What stood out as effective? What will you do differently next year?

### Goal

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## 2. Goal to Support Your Social and Emotional Well-Being

* What were your biggest challenges this year? How did you handle them?
* Continue to explore mindfulness and consider taking a retreat day for yourself. Use your senses to relax and renew. What makes you feel relaxed? How can you find the time and space to enjoy nature and the beauty around you? How can you create a space for yourself that allows you to renew?

### Goal

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# Other Notes for Next Year

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