

# Christine Hertz & Kristine Mraz

## KIDS 1<sup>st</sup> FROM DAY 1

### Study and Reflection Guide

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#### SECTION 1: Teaching Is Heart Work

This section emphasizes cultivating our personal growth as humans and teachers. It is imperative that we, as teachers, become the best versions of ourselves so that we have the capacity, emotional resources, and support system to provide a responsive, compassionate learning space. Before we can take care of others, we must take care of ourselves.

#### THE FLOURISHING TEACHER

##### Questions

- ★ Everyone has a fixed mindset and a growth mindset; what matters is that we know which one is driving our thinking and our actions. How do you know when your fixed mindset is in charge? When does it happen the most? What about your growth mindset?
- ★ What strategies have you found helpful to address and reframe your mindset?

##### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Reflect on your beliefs. Try out the sentence frame: “I believe . . . you can see this when I . . .” Write these beliefs on the top of your plan book or notebook and look at that at the end of each day. Which do you find yourself returning to? Which are challenging?
- ★ Practice the language of self-compassion. Develop a mantra for yourself.
- ★ Open a social media account for your professional learning.

##### Paired Reading

About Growth Mindset:

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/09/23/carol-dweck-revisits-the-growth-mindset.html>

## THE EMPATHETIC TEACHER

### Questions

- ★ Tell a story of your life from when you were in the grade you teach. What connections can you make to some of the children in your class now?
- ★ What gets in the way of feeling empathy for your children? (It happens to all of us!)

### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Answer the questions on page 9. What do you notice when you look at your day from a child's point of view?
- ★ Role-play responding with empathy using the language on page 10 as a starting point.

### Paired Reading

About Types of Empathy:

<https://www.christinehertz.com/single-post/2018/02/05/>

[Tackling-tricky-moments-Four-steps-to-being-a-more-empathetic-teacher](#)

## THE PLAYFUL TEACHER

### Questions

- ★ What is your play personality? How do you “feed” it?
- ★ What are some of the play personalities of your students? How do you see that across each subject area?
- ★ When was the last time you played?

### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Commit to one week of feeding your play personality every day. How does it change your day?
- ★ Try to identify the play personalities of two or three of your students. Phrase “work” to them in a way that connects with who they are as players. What do you notice?

### Paired Viewing

Stuart Brown on Play:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/stuart\\_brown\\_says\\_play\\_is\\_more\\_than\\_fun\\_it\\_s\\_vital](https://www.ted.com/talks/stuart_brown_says_play_is_more_than_fun_it_s_vital)

## THE FLEXIBLE TEACHER

### Questions

- ★ When are you your most flexible? When do you struggle?
- ★ How does choice impact engagement in your own life?

### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Giving up control can feel challenging. Write or talk about what feels hard or scary. Go back to your belief systems. Compare what feels hard and scary with what you believe: where are those two things in tension? Write or talk about that conflict.

- ★ List every decision you make for children across a day (or as many as you can remember). Think small (writing utensil) and big (who gets a turn, who has to wait the longest). Think of how you could be more flexible in that decision or give more control to children.

## Paired Reading

About the Science of Good Decision Making:

<http://theweek.com/articles/632920/science-good-decision-making>

## THE REFLECTIVE TEACHER

### Questions

- ★ Discuss the study on page 19. What do you notice in your own school setting about who is “in trouble,” getting detention, suspended, and so on?
- ★ Bias can be an uncomfortable discussion, but is a necessary one; how do we make these conversations happen more in our communities?
- ★ What habits of mind do teachers need to cultivate in themselves to create powerful and positive spaces for children? Which habit of mind would you like to focus on developing? What next step will you take?

### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Listen closely to your responses to boys and girls over the course of a day. Do you notice a difference in your language?
- ★ Pay close attention to the behaviors you let slide and those you address. What do they uncover about your own bias or beliefs?
- ★ Look at the books you have read aloud in the last week. Do they reflect your students? Do they reflect inclusive stories?
- ★ Find and follow at least one of the people mentioned in this section.

## Paired Reading

Confronting Bias in Teachers:

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2010/i-dont-think-im-biased>

## INTERVIEWS

### Question

- ★ Which interview most impacted you? Why?

### Reflective Task

- ★ Choose one of the interviewees to learn more from. Go to their website, get one of their books, follow them on Twitter.

## Paired Reading

Sara Ahmed Sample Chapter:

<https://www.heinemann.com/products/e09970.aspx>

## SECTION 2: The Physical Classroom Environment

This section builds on the work of Section 1 as we see how these mindsets can influence classroom design. Space can drive behavior, and our behavior can impact our spaces. This section invites us to think more deeply about the intersection of environment and ideology.

### BIG IDEA: SETTING UP YOUR CLASSROOM: START WITH A BLANK CANVAS, NOT A FINISHED MASTERPIECE

#### Questions

- ★ What areas of your room feel the most successful? Why? What areas do you want to change? What would you do differently?
- ★ Where does your classroom capture your children's aesthetics? What areas could have more representation from your children?
- ★ Look at the maps on pages 38–39. What beliefs are evident in the classroom maps? What wonderings do you have?
- ★ Reflect on the mindsets from the previous section. How can you bring your own playfulness (and your students' playfulness) into the classroom's design?
- ★ Use an empathetic lens to try to see your classroom from the eyes of your students. What might you change?
- ★ How could your classroom be more flexible? Is there an old "rule of thumb" in classroom setup that you'd like to do away with (for example, removing your teacher's desk, letting go of assigned seats, or chairs for all)?
- ★ How does your classroom ensure that all children feel seen and heard?

#### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Sketch a map of your classroom. Label where your physical environment reflects your beliefs about children and learning.
- ★ How can you make sure your classroom is organized with your students' growth in mind? Share a picture of a way that you've planned the environment for growth, independence, and/or agency.
- ★ Choose one thing to change using the guidelines from pages 35–36. How does it impact your environment?

#### Paired Viewing

On Architecture and Its Impact:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/takaharu\\_tezuka\\_the\\_best\\_kindergarten\\_you\\_ve\\_ever\\_seen](https://www.ted.com/talks/takaharu_tezuka_the_best_kindergarten_you_ve_ever_seen)

### BIG IDEA: LET YOUR SPACE REFLECT YOUR STUDENTS

#### Questions

- ★ Shifting to a kids-first environment means letting go. Look over the chart on pages 46–49. Talk out how one of these transitions would go in real life.
- ★ What are your thoughts and reactions to Jacob's day on page 50?

## Reflective Tasks

- ★ Look over the list of things to get done before day one. Prioritize for yourself: which of these things do you want to make sure you do? Number the list 1 to 10 to stay on track.
- ★ Play with seating in your room. Vary seating for one student or for one part of the day. What impact do you see? What might you need to teach to help it go more smoothly?

## Paired Viewing

Spend Some Time Gazing at Beautiful Environments:

<https://www.communityplaythings.com/inspiration/case-studies>

## INTERVIEW

### Questions

- ★ How does Julie's description of her work fit with what you understood about the job of occupational therapists?
- ★ Julie's description of a child with sensory issues reacting to a sunny day (versus a person without sensory issues) is striking (page 56). What looks like misbehavior can have a very different cause. Have you experienced this with children in your care before?

## Reflective Task

- ★ Go back to the map of your room. Look critically for places that might be overwhelming for children with sensory issues. What adaptations could you make there?

## Paired Readings and Viewings

For More About Sensory Processing Issues (and How to Help):

<https://childmind.org/article/how-sensory-processing-issues-affect-kids-in-school/>

Tantrums Versus Meltdowns:

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/compare-the-signs-how-to-tell-a-tantrum-from-a-meltdown>

Through a Child's Eyes—Attention Issues in School (Make Sure You Do the Simulation):

<https://www.understood.org/en/tools/through-your-childs-eyes/player?simq=66d-c223a-29e3-4956-ae1e-e7b1beff3584&gradeId=15ccdf90-72d8-4529-aae5-ba2c1c49cdab&personalized=true>

## SECTION 3: The Emotional Classroom Environment

This section is near and dear to our hearts, and we hope yours. As classroom teachers we struggled with the concept (and implementation) of management that felt “right.” This section falls after physical environment because physical environment plays a role in our emotional environments. Again, we bring with us the mindsets and beliefs we worked through in Section 1 to guide our thinking and understanding about this topic.

### BIG IDEA: SCHEDULING FOR SUCCESS

#### Questions

- ★ We say (page 61) that the way we schedule can create and sustain misbehaviors. Can you think of an example when this is true? When did you revise your schedule and see a positive impact?
- ★ How do the suggestions for making our schedule more child oriented (focus on process, choice, movement) relate to the mindsets in Section 1?
- ★ Study one schedule. What do you wonder? What do you notice? How do you see the process, choice, and movement reflected within the schedules?

#### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Take a close look at your daily schedule. Code it for structured and unstructured times. Find as much flexibility as you can. Share what you might tweak and how. (See examples on pages 64–65.)
- ★ Choose the most highly structured part of your day. List out all the choices you make for your students. Think critically—what can you give back to children? (See page 63 for examples.)
- ★ Movement matters! Try a week where you incorporate more movement. What do you notice?

#### Paired Reading

More on Willpower Depletion:

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/willpower.aspx>

### BIG IDEA: BUILD A COMMUNITY, DON'T JUST MANAGE ONE

#### Questions

- ★ In your opinion, what do you see as the difference between building a community and managing a classroom? What long-held views does this make you think twice about?
- ★ Look at the chart on page 82. What do you tend to use that you might think about differently?
- ★ Logical consequences can feel tricky—brainstorm what logical consequences might be for common misbehaviors. Tip: Aim not to punish but to teach how to repair and do differently.
- ★ This section and the next section are two sides of the same coin. What questions do you have going into “Social Skills Can Be Taught” that you are hoping will get answered?
- ★ What gives you discomfort in this section? What does that discomfort reveal about your beliefs that you may not have realized?
- ★ We know that sometimes schools require specific behavior plans; what ways could you talk back to whole-school reward systems?

## Reflective Tasks

- ★ Write down your classroom triggers. What can you do to calm yourself when you do get triggered?
- ★ If you rely heavily on a classroom management system (marbles, stickers, etc.), consider how and why you started using it and reflect on how aspects of your teaching have changed over time. Has your understanding of management shifted?

## Paired Readings

A Few More Thoughts on Clip Charts and Marbles:

<https://community.theeducatorcollaborative.com/goodbye-clip-charts-marble-jars-and-stickers-for-behavior/>

Some Research to Help You Reframe Your School's Mindset:

<https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2015/07/schools-behavior-discipline-collaborative-proactive-solutions-ross-greene/>

## BIG IDEA: SOCIAL SKILLS CAN BE TAUGHT

### Questions

- ★ We apply a growth mindset to our students' behavior and believe that social skills, like academic skills, can be practiced and learned. How does this shift how you see social and emotional learning in your classroom?
- ★ What is a social skill that you'd like to teach your class? What are the strategies and steps students can take to practice that skill? (See our blog posts for more info on this!)
- ★ How can you see social skill instruction as happening at the same time as academic instruction?

## Reflective Tasks

- ★ Choose a social skill and work through the protocol on pages 88–89.
- ★ Teach one social skill to your class. What do you notice? What do you wonder?

## Paired Readings and Viewings

More on Teaching Social Skills with Strategies and Steps:

<https://www.christinehertz.com/single-post/2017/11/14/>

**Building-a-community-one-lesson-at-a-time-How-to-teach-social-skills-with-strategies-and-steps**

Kristi's Video on What to Do When Someone Says, "Stop":

Please see page v for instructions on accessing this video at [Heinemann.com](http://Heinemann.com).

## INTERVIEW

### Questions

- ★ How does Allyson's description of how trauma can affect children change your thinking?
- ★ Allyson writes, "The most important thing for teachers to know is that helping students impacted by trauma begins with self-reflection and awareness." What could you do to be mindful of your own emotions and triggers, especially in escalated moments?

### Reflective Task

- ★ If you have a child or children who have experienced trauma in your class, think through your day and find times that you can offer them additional choices to build their sense of control.

### Paired Readings

The Science of How Our Minds and Our Bodies Converge in the Healing of Trauma"

<https://www.brainpickings.org/2016/06/20/the-body-keeps-the-score-van-der-kolk/>

The Role of Schools in Supporting Traumatized Students:

[http://cqcengage.com/naspweb/file/YEfwxfQ75YH/prr\\_nov13\\_trauma\\_sensitive\\_schools.pdf](http://cqcengage.com/naspweb/file/YEfwxfQ75YH/prr_nov13_trauma_sensitive_schools.pdf)



## SECTION 4: Building Curriculum

The final section ties together our beliefs about children and learning, the physical and emotional environment we are building, and how we go about the complex work of developing and implementing curriculum. This section is filled with tips, strategies, and resources to make your teaching more responsive, effective, and engaging.

### BIG IDEA: CURRICULUM SHOULD BE RESPONSIVE AND INTENTIONAL

#### Questions

- ★ Read the paragraphs on curriculum-driven instruction and kid-driven instruction. Where do you see examples of each of these in your teaching?
- ★ What do you do to gather information about your students? What additional lenses or methods might be helpful?

#### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Read through the reflective questions on page 110. Notice which aspects of your teaching reflect your beliefs and which you could modify.
- ★ Try making a checklist like the one on pages 114–116. Use it to look closely at student work and set goals for what to teach next.

#### Paired Reading

How to Reintegrate Your Beliefs into Your Curriculum:

<https://kinderconfidential.wordpress.com/2017/10/18/how-to-reintegrate-your-beliefs-into-your-curriculum/>

### BIG IDEA: BUILD A BETTER TEACHING TOOLBOX: CLEAR TEACHING STRUCTURES DRIVE COMPLEX LEARNING

#### Questions

- ★ What feels successful in your teaching? What structures seem to work well for your class? Where are areas that you'd like to grow?
- ★ Go back to your core beliefs. How are they reflected in your teaching structures? What adjustments could you try to make them more aligned?
- ★ Which of all of the resources listed in the charts are you most interested in digging into?

#### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Try listing predictable problems that come up over the course of a workshop. Make a plan for helping your students solve these problems independently.
- ★ Look through the teaching structures. Pick one or two that might be new to you that you'd like to try out.

#### Paired Viewings

Please see page v for instructions on accessing these videos at Heinemann.com:

Christine teaches a fourth-grade focus lesson on self-talk.

Christine has a goal-setting reading conference with a first grader.

Kristi introduces grand conversations in a first-grade class.

Christine coaches a fourth grader through a student-led writing share.

## BIG IDEA: RESPONSIVE TEACHERS DRAW FROM ALL THEY KNOW

### Questions

- ★ Look at the classroom factors listed on pages 131 and 132. How does this change or add to your thinking about differentiation?
- ★ If we can adjust environmental factors and increase student access/success, how does that change our traditionally defined label of “struggling”?

### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Using the “Snapshots of Differentiation in a Third-Grade Writing Workshop” as a guide, try setting goals for your students based on content and the other factors described in this section. You could even sketch out and use the graphic on page 130 as a tool.
- ★ Design and build a scaffold for one child in your classroom that demonstrates a need for it. (Make sure you have a plan to take it away!)

### Paired Viewing

Kristi teaches a fourth-grade class about creating a personalized writing schedule.

**Please see page v for instructions on accessing this video at Heinemann.com.**

## INTERVIEWS

### Questions

- ★ Which interview most impacted you? Why?
- ★ Kate and Maggie write about focus on page 144. How could this idea of focus impact how you develop tools and plan units?
- ★ Think about the suggestions offered in these interviews. Which could you implement in your classroom?

### Reflective Tasks

- ★ Look at an individualized education program for one of your students. Can you find the identified parts in the interview? Plan to meet with a special educator to ask any questions that might have arisen for you.
- ★ Try some of the suggestions for working with English language learners on 141–142. What do you notice?

### Paired Reading

DIY Literacy Sample Chapter:

<https://www.heinemann.com/products/e07816.aspx>