

What Your Student Teacher Would Like to Tell You

by Sandra Looper

These tips were a compilation of East Central University Project TEAMS students' responses when asked, "What things can your mentor teacher do to assist you in your growth as a professional educator?"

- X Remember, I'm just learning to become a teacher. Please . . .
- X **Provide encouragement** and support when I need it.
- X **Don't put me in a difficult situation** which I'm not yet equipped to handle.
- X **Provide honest and timely feedback** so I won't keep making the same mistakes over again and develop bad habits. Offer alternatives and suggestions when I have a problem.
- X Tell me when I've done something wrong (privately and courteously, but tell me).
- X **Communicate with me.** Inform me about what you want me to do and how I can help.
- X Provide me with the basic classroom procedures so I'll know how you want things done.
- X **Give me some of your insight** into the children as individuals so that I might better understand their personalities, their learning styles, their strengths and weaknesses.
- X **Discuss the techniques** and methods that you've tried and share those that have or haven't worked.
- X **Allow me to share** in some of the excitement of learning that goes on in the classroom. I realize that grading papers and putting up bulletin boards are part of a teacher's role, but please don't limit my experience only to the things you dislike doing.
- X **Let me gain some experience** before you expect me to handle a large group activity.
- X **Try to provide some time** in the schedule away from the students so that I can feel free to ask questions and process what's actually taking place in the classroom.
- X **Teach me how you plan activities** and develop lesson plans and schedules.
- X **Be as flexible as possible.** I'm working around a school schedule just like you are.
- X **Listen to me** and be receptive to my ideas and suggestions.
- X **Instruct me** about effective classroom management and unique guidelines for your school/classroom.
- X **Show me how to organize** a classroom and keep up with the myriad of details.
- X **Share tips** on handling parent conferences and ways of dealing with angry or unhappy parents.
- X **Be the kind of role model** that will make me want to be like you.

I need your knowledge, support and confidence. You're my teacher, my mentor, my friend. I'm counting on you.