**15 creative lesson ideas for the first day of school**

[**https://www.bookwidgets.com/blog/2017/08/15-creative-lesson-idea**](https://www.bookwidgets.com/blog/2017/08/15-creative-lesson-idea)

Back to school. Finally! In Russia school starts on the 1st of September, after a summer break of three months. Other countries have already begun the new school year, others still have a few weeks to go.

There’s one thing we all have in common: the first day of school. A special day for students and teachers. A day full of emotions. Stress, fear, relief, happiness, joy, …

How can you make sure those first-day-of-school emotions are good emotions? I’m betting on creative back-to-school lesson ideas students will find a fun thing to do.

So here they are!

**15 fun back to school classroom activities**

First day of school activities are based upon one goal: to get to know each other. Most first day of school activities are for elementary, but I included a few as well for middle school students and high school students. Some can be used for all ages too.

**First day of school activities for elementary students**

**1. All about the bag**

Hand out a paper bag to all your students the first day of school and put a little note on it:

Directions:

* Fill this bag with 4 things or objects that tell something about yourself. (only 4 things, no more, no less)
* All your objects have to fit in this bag.
* Decorate the bag if you wish!
* Bring the bag back tomorrow and be ready to share with the class.

**2. Figure me out**

In fourth grade, students have already learned arithmetics. You could let them create a profile of themselves, describing some fun facts using arithmetics. Take a look at the image below for an example.

Students have to figure out the person by calculating the facts. Then they have to guess who that person is.

**3. Beach ball game**

All you need for this first day of school activity is a beach ball and a marker. Write down several questions on the beach ball in a random order.

Examples of questions:

* What are you most proud of?
* What’s the most heroic thing you did?
* What’s your favorite animal?
* What color is your toothbrush?
* I am thankful for \_\_\_\_\_
* What’s your favorite movie?
* What’s your favorite sport?
* How many siblings do you have?
* What’s your favorite dessert?
* What do you like to do after school?
* When’s your birthday?
* And so on.

Now form a circle and throw the beach ball to a student. Wherever the student’s left thumb lands, is the question he has to answer. After answering that question, he can throw the ball to another student.

**4. Create a time capsule**

You probably already know the concept of a time capsule. If you have ideas of your own, go with it. If you don’t, here’s something you could do with a time capsule an the first day of school.

Let your students write down their wishes and hopes for the following school year. What do they want to learn this school year? Then put everything in the time capsule and bury is somewhere safe beneath the ground. You could also put a fun class picture in it.

At the end of the school year, you dig up the time capsule and let your students reflect on what they’ve learned and if their wishes at the beginning of the school year came true. You can also try to make the exact same class picture. It’s fun to see who has changed in one year and who didn’t.

You could do this first day of school activity in college as well! If your students are much older, like college students, you could let them write down the profession they want to practice at the end of their studies. A lot of them will have changed along the way, but it’s fun to see how their dreams and expectations change in time. It’s also fun to just include a bucket list of each student. These are things they want to do during their time as a college student.

**5. Nice mnm'ing you**

Everyone loves mnm’s. Besides eating them, you could also use them for a fun back to school lesson. Divide the mnm’s over a few cups and share them with your students. Students have to pick out a mnm blindfolded and tell a story or answer the question. Every color represents its own story.

Tell us

* Red: something about yesterday
* Orange: something you do well
* Yellow: something about your childhood
* Blue: something you learned last week
* Brown: something you can’t live without
* Green: something you watch or listen to

Oh, one more thing… Of course students may eat the mnm’s after finishing the question. Guess who’s going to be the most popular teacher this year? 😉

**6. Randomness**

The Randomness widget from BookWidgets is handy for creating a variety of back-to-school games. Spin the wheel to generate a student and ask them to talk about a randomly selected topic. Alternatively, you can give a specific topic and spin the wheel to see which student is chosen. Curious for our example? Click [here](https://www.bookwidgets.com/play/LBJNPV).

Topics may include:

* What would you do with 1 million euro?
* What is your favorite place on earth?
* What is your biggest dream?

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**7. Would you rather**

To get to know your students you could ask them crazy choice questions. Make fun cards and let them pick one. They have to answer the question “would you rather…?”.

Here are some examples:

* Would you rather have to eat raisins every day or eat peas?
* Would you rather walk around with a hole in your pants or with a broken zipper?
* Would you rather eat a salad or liver?
* Would you take a bath or a shower?
* Would you rather have lunch with the president or a famous singer?
* Would you rather wear gloves or a hat in the winter?
* Would you rather eat chocolate or skittles if it’s all you had to eat on a hike?
* Would you rather adopt a cat or a dog?
* Would you rather go snowboarding or skiing?
* Would you rather wear flip flops or sneakers?
* Would you rather have an in ground pool or a horse?
* Would you rather live in Hawaii or in Italy?
* Would you rather get in trouble with your parents or your teacher?
* Would you rather ride on an elephant or a giraffe?
* And so on.

**8. Snowball fight**

Let each student take out a sheet of paper and write down 3 interesting, but not widely known, facts about him or herself. There can’t be any names on the papers!

Let students crumple up their papers into balls and have a paper “snowball” fight. After a few minutes, all the paper snowballs will be all over the classroom. Now, students have to find a snowball, and unfold the paper. Each student must try to find the student whose snowball he or she retrieved.

**9. Fit in puzzle**

Create a giant blank puzzle and hand out a blank piece of the puzzle to every student. They have to decorate the puzzle piece with drawings that say something about themselves. After, you collect the puzzle pieces and complete it again with the help of your students. Now you have something to put on your empty classroom wall!

**First day of school activities for middle school students**

**10. Tell it with emojis**

Let your students summarize what they did during their summer break using only emojis! If you have new students, you can also let them introduce themselves using emojis.

**11. Bingo**

The back to School Bingo is a fantastic icebreaker activity for middle school children as it will help them to get to know their classmates. Create a Bingo Card in BookWidgets and in each square, write a brief description, such as:

* Lives close to school
* Likes pizza
* Has 3 siblings
* Loves sport
* Can juggle

Challenge your students to go around the room, asking classmates some questions. When they have a match, they are allowed to tick off that square. Click [here](https://www.bookwidgets.com/play/DBH2JW) or on the image to check it out.

Click [here](https://www.bookwidgets.com/a/signup) to start creating your own back to school bingo activity with BookWidgets.

**12. Art-phone**

Social media and smartphones are going to be omnipresent during this school year. This fun classroom activity for the first day of school is a nice reminder of that fact. Let’s get crafty and create an art-phone like the one in the image. Create an Instagram wall, a chat session and a social profile.

For more details, take a look at [this Pinterest pin](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/395542779764167714/).

**13. (B)all about me**

It’s kind of the same as the creative Instagram activity above this one, but still a little bit different.

Students have to decorate their paper ball with drawings of themselves. Check out what I mean by clicking on [this Pinterest link](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/395542779764219868/). The result is beautiful!

**First day of school activities for high school students**

**14. Get on that chair**

For this classroom icebreaker, students need to be flexible and balanced. For every student, the teacher places a chair. All the chairs should be lined up in a single line. Every student has to stand on a chair. Then, the teacher asks them to go stand in a certain order. For example: “I want you to organize yourselves from young to old.” The students now have to change places without touching the ground.

With this 1st day of school activity, the students get to know each other better in an interactive way. The teacher can give other orders like: “from tall to small.” or “from A to Z.” Every time the students have to change their positions without pushing someone off the chairs. If you want to make it more challenging, you can set a time limit.

**15. Lie to me**

This first day of school activity is a fun way to get to know your students better. Not just the basics, like where they live or if they have a brother, but real stories and anecdotes.

The students have to tell 3 facts about their life. Something that happened to them. Two of them should be true, and one should be a lie. The other students have to find out which one is the lie. You’ll be surprised what kind of crazy things can actually happen! (Or how good your students can lie!)

I hope you now know what to do during your first day of school. Share this with your teacher colleages to give them some inspiration. Here comes the new school year! 🎉

Oh one more tip: here, you can find [student introduction games](https://www.bookwidgets.com/blog/2016/08/5-fun-back-to-school-icebreakers-for-the-first-school-day) and [fun student energizers](https://www.bookwidgets.com/blog/2016/10/15-fun-classroom-energizers-for-students).