



breaking it down: the basics of teaching



Breakthrough
COLLABORATIVE

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Breaking it Down: The Basics of Teaching

Breakthrough Collaborative Teacher Guidebook

Brought to you by:

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Intro



How to Use this Book

Teaching is a Learned Skill

The Breakthrough Model is incredibly simple: take bright middle school kids who care about going to college, and let bright high school and college students guide them over the hurdles and roadblocks that their schools and the system have put in their paths.

As simple as the model is, the execution requires a level of commitment that other internships just don't ask of people. Yes, you will put in long hours; yes, you will take on managerial responsibilities with which you may be unfamiliar; *yes, you will be performing tasks which take years to master*. The stakes are high.

Perhaps the most common question about this unique program model is ***If you are demanding college from your students, many of whom are suffering from low performing schools and inexperienced teachers, why are you teaching them with undergrads and high schoolers?*** Our answer is simple and profound: our young teachers bring in passion and innovation that can change lives, as long as they are ***relentlessly trained, supported, and coached*** in the science and art of teaching throughout their summer.

Teacher Support at Breakthrough

The Mentor Teachers you work with this summer will be professional, experienced teachers, tasked with making sure that you perform in the classroom as a teacher should. During orientation week you'll perfect the ins-and-outs of lesson planning and classroom management. Throughout the summer your mentors, your directors, or your peers will be by your side ready to help you solve any challenge you face in your classroom. Don't forget to utilize Breakthrough veteran teachers in their 2nd, 3rd or 4th year with the program.

Only through constantly engaging in a feedback process with your Mentors will you improve and ensure that your students have the knowledge they need to excel in honors classes in High School. Demand critical feedback, and always be questioning your own performance.

That is the critical balance to strike with your work here: **You need to bring your A-Game, be confident and strong in your leadership, *and* you must never forget that you are a young teacher; that you need to struggle for every bit of skill and knowledge; that you cannot succeed without seeking help.** Lots of it.

Using *Breaking it Down*

This guidebook is meant to supplement the training and support you will receive from your directors and Mentor Teachers during orientation and through the summer. The writing in this document is meant to be clear, engaging, and precise; read as much as you can before the summer begins.

Chapters provide clear descriptions of teaching theory, much of which will be familiar to you if you've taken any classes on educational pedagogy. There is also some procedural instruction for developing lesson plans and guidance on classroom management. Following instructional chapters are "Toolkits." These are worksheets and items to print out and use directly in your planning or teaching. New teachers can lose a lot of hours creating materials from scratch. Experienced teachers know that thoughtful borrowing of lessons and tools is an essential skill that allows you to stand on the shoulders of the giants who came before you. The Toolkits will also be available in an editable Word Doc format, allowing you to personalize printouts for your classes. Whatever you need that isn't in the toolkit is probably floating around the Breakthrough Site office somewhere, so be sure to ask your Mentor Teachers and Directors for help navigating your resource room.

Breaking it Down is an electronic resource that you should have available to refer to time and again throughout your service. You can print out the entire document, you can keep it on your laptop or desktop or in a key drive in your pocket, or you can print out pages and sections as you need them.

It's no secret that you are the best resources we have for improving our systems and programs, so please be sure to send your feedback to teach@breakthroughcollaborative.org. What could use more clarification? What's hard to use? What great resources did you create this summer that you think the rest of the Collaborative could use? Your input will be folded into everything we do here, and good stuff will be shared with the other teachers on TeachBreakthroughs.org, the Breakthrough Teacher Blog.

Staying Engaged With the Network

After your summer, you won't be done with us. Breakthrough teachers pretty much always go on to do big things, and it's in our interest to make sure you do as many of those things as possible with us. We are always looking for new site directors, national staff members, consultants, and friends out there in the education world. It's not all selfish, though. Breakthrough has been around for a long time, and our name is recognized as something valuable. Foundations, excellent public, private and charter schools, higher education institutions, and wonderful peer organizations are always asking for access to you and your resumes. However, as your e-mail address changes, you move, you grow older, it becomes more difficult to connect you to our new projects and initiatives for alums.



We're working on some big things when it comes to providing support to you past your Breakthrough summer, but we need to keep you engaged. The first thing you can do (right now!) is **become a loyal subscriber** to TeachBreakthroughs.org and [Breakthrough Collaborative – Teach Next Summer Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/BreakthroughCollaborative-Teach-Next-Summer)

Fan Page. We'll always go there first with our posts and requests, and by subscribing you'll be sure not to miss a thing. We also try to keep our blog updated with current education news and dispatches from our alums. Check it out! **-Dave Bryson, Teacher Network Specialist**