**Incorporating a Volunteer into Your Classroom**

**During the first meeting, share with your volunteer**

* The structure of your class
* The current topic of study. Any topics/materials the volunteer can review in order to be prepared to help students with the material.
* Your discipline policy; how you would like a volunteer to handle issues that may arise; their role.
* What specific tasks you would like your volunteer to do or help with.
* Students your volunteer should focus on.
* How the volunteer should contact you in case of not being on time or able to come. (email? text message?)
* Where the volunteer should be in the room during various activities.
* The volunteer’s role during various times of teaching – lecturing, group work, reading, tests and quizzes, working one-on-one with students, etc.

**The first day your volunteer is in in the classroom**

* Introduce the volunteer to the class and define his/her role/duties in the class to the students
	+ Play a [name game](http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/classroom-activities-first-day-school-icebreakers-grades-kx965) to help the volunteer learn student names.
* Communicate with the volunteer ahead of time whether they will take a more observational or participatory role during the first class they visit.
* Debrief regularly with the volunteer about their impressions, ideas and questions.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is important for teachers, students and volunteers to understand their roles in the classroom. Below are some suggestions for the responsibilities of each group.

* Teacher
* Chooses what to teach in the classroom, and how to teach it.
* Meets with the volunteer; communicates periodically.
* Provides clear and explicit instruction to the volunteers of the expectations, routines, and procedures of the classroom, and specifically what is expected of them. Doesn’t assume any knowledge of the part of the volunteer.
* Introduces the volunteer to the students and other volunteers.
* Models respect for the volunteer.
* Coaches, manages and supervises the day-to-day work of the volunteers in the classroom.
* Is a role model for volunteers in how to work with learners.
* Provides meaningful tasks for the volunteer to do in the classroom.
* Is aware of training and support that volunteers receive; suggests additional training.
* Provides on-the-job training as needed.
* Provides feedback to the volunteer. Is open to suggestions from the volunteer.
* Reports volunteer activity (records, concerns, ideas) to the volunteer coordinator.
* Asks for comments from the students about their work with the volunteers.
* Keeps volunteer informed of progress made by the learners.
* Provides individual volunteer recognition.
* Helps to make the volunteers feel a valued part of the organization.
* Volunteer:
* Works with individual students or small groups of students in the classroom or nearby, at the direction of the teacher.
* Maintains confidentiality with respect to the learners and the program.
* Maintains appropriate contact with the students.
* Chooses the best methods to accomplish a particular task.
* Informs staff of additional training that would be useful.
* Models appropriate behavior to the students.
* Respects and adheres to school policies and procedures.
* Learns and follows classroom behavior expectations and management strategies.
* Notifies the teacher privately of any student concerns.
* Arrives when expected, or contacts program.
* Is flexible, enthusiastic, and creative.
* Students
	+ Show respect for the volunteers, the teachers, and others in the program.
	+ Provide feedback when asked, or if there are concerns.

**How to Best Use Volunteers**

* Ask yourself these questions:
	+ What student needs are not being met?
	+ What would I like to try during instructional time, but don’t have the time or skills to accomplish?
	+ What kind of help would I like during instructional time?
	+ What does my program ask of me that is difficult for me to provide alone?
	+ What do I do that someone else could do, thus freeing me up for other activities?
* Think of your Dream List
* List the tasks that you would like to see happening in your classroom that are not currently happening.
* What skills would be needed to perform these tasks?
* Possible roles for classroom volunteers
	+ Tutor one-to-one with a student.
	+ Work with small groups of students, usually all at the same skill level.
	+ Instruct and assist students using computers.
	+ Plan field trips.
	+ Organize classroom materials.
	+ Search for videos on particular topics.
	+ Correct worksheets, tests, writing assignments.
	+ Facilitate physical activity breaks or team building activities.