

---

PODCAST  TRANSCRIPT

---

EPISODE 9  
**MORNING MEETINGS**

---

SEE THE SHOW NOTES AT: [www.teachcreatemotivate.com/9](http://www.teachcreatemotivate.com/9)

---

**ASHLEY MARQUEZ:** Hi and welcome back to the Teach Create Motivate podcast. I am so excited that you are choosing to listen today. Whether you are on your way to school, maybe on your lunch or your planning period or you're on your way home after an amazing day of teaching. I'm so thankful to have you here with me today. I'm excited to finally get back in the groove of recording episodes for you guys. I took a break over the summer and then it's taken me just a little bit of time to get acclimated and situated, with the new year. So thank you for sticking with me. Today, I'm excited because we're going to talk all about morning meeting and this is actually an episode you guys have requested from me for a while. So today we're just going to cover all things morning meeting. I'm going to tell you guys kind of what has worked for me, the importance of morning meetings, some examples of things that you can do with your students in morning meeting and how to just get started or continue meeting with your class each morning. And how to make that time valuable and benefit both you and your students.

So morning meeting: morning meeting can look a variety of different ways in different classrooms and it can even look different for you in your classroom depending on the day or the time of year. So I do get a lot of questions about how I recommend running morning meeting and what types of activities I have used during that time of day.



---

EPISODE 9: MORNING MEETINGS  
[www.teachcreatemotivate.com/9](http://www.teachcreatemotivate.com/9)

---

---

PODCAST  TRANSCRIPT

---

Like a lot of things in the classroom, this is the time of day that can be used to hit multiple skills and have many purposes. My hope for you after listening to this episode is that you will feel confident to start morning meetings in your classroom if you have not already or you'll feel the urge to stay consistent with these times with your students if you're already doing this and you'll leave excited to try some of the ideas and use some of the resources mentioned today in your morning meeting times.

### Consistency is Key

So let's talk about consistency first before we even dive into ideas and other things about morning meeting. I find it very, very important that morning meetings happen every morning. Now this might be difficult and there may be a day or two that this doesn't happen. We have all been there. But just like with effective classroom management and lots of other things in the classroom, consistency is definitely key. So there's a few reasons for this. Number one, it creates credibility with your students. That is so important. It's really important no matter what, but especially when it comes to morning meeting. If we want our students to believe and buy into the effectiveness and safe space that morning meeting is, we need to be meeting with your class each day. This also provides that safe space because over time students learn to associate that morning time together as a place to share and come together about different things and different feelings.

And if we only have morning meeting once a week, once every two weeks, here and there, we do lose that credibility and in turn, we stop our students from feeling safe to be able to share and open up during this time. So just remember to be consistent if you're going to do this with your class to show up every morning in morning meeting.



---

PODCAST  TRANSCRIPT

---

And it's okay if some morning meetings are shorter or longer than others or if some morning meetings happen a little bit earlier than others. Either way, make sure you're having that meeting time together each morning. So how long should morning meetings be? Let me start by saying there's definitely no right answer to this. I clearly don't recommend you spending an hour each morning maybe with your class because that would obviously really affect instructional time.

I know teachers who spend five to seven minutes together each morning. My personal morning meetings times range from 10 to 20 minutes usually. And it all really does depend on the activity, the read aloud, the discussion, whatever you're working on or doing with your students that morning. Also, in the beginning of starting morning meetings with your students, it may take more time, like all other things in our classrooms to get situated and get your students used to the routine. Just know that you'll be able to shave some time off of it as it becomes more consistent. I like to use my [class slides with timers](#) with the timer running during our morning meeting because this helps us manage the time spent together like it does throughout the rest of the day.

### **So what can morning meetings include?**

There's certain things that I do at the beginning of every morning meeting and then I also supplement with other activities that I see as a need to fill that time. You have so many options for this and it's really important that no matter what, what you do during this time with your students fits your classroom and your students' needs. Here is what has worked for me.

Morning meeting would start after morning work. So sometimes the morning work is actually a segue or a part of the morning meeting and we'll talk about that more later on in the episode.



---

PODCAST  TRANSCRIPT

---

But depending on what time your kids come in during the day, I mean like at the beginning of the day can determine your morning meeting's start time. So if your students are coming in, if they're trickling in one at a time, like at different moments, then you probably want to wait until everyone's there to start. Obviously you wouldn't want to start morning meeting with some of your students not in the classroom. If you have a school or campus where you go pick up your class from the cafeteria or they all meet you at your door, a morning meeting could be the very beginning before you even do morning work or start your instructional time. So again, just make sure whatever you're doing does work best for you.

### **Start with a greeting**

Start at the beginning of each morning meeting with students sitting in a circle and tell them to greet each other. So sometimes this might be a handshake and eye contact all the way around the circle one at a time saying, "good morning Josh, good morning Anna, good morning Mrs. Marquez" until it reaches the end. This is an amazing way to help your students really work on making eye contact as they speak to one another. Students have to learn this, this is learned and there's a lot of opportunities to help teach eye contact when we're speaking to each other. But morning meeting provides this easily. And at first they might giggle and they will probably think it's silly, but they wind up really looking forward to the greeting part of morning meeting. They feel like heard and listened to and valued when each of their classmates are shaking each other's hands and saying good morning with eye contact.

Other greetings sometimes could also be turned to your left and your right to greet your neighbors. So if you're kind of short on time and you don't want to go all the way down around the circle, you could do that too. But just what works for you is what I recommend.



---

# PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

---

## Check-In with students

Those are some ideas to begin the very start of your morning meeting and I like to follow up, greeting each other with a check-in. So there's a few different ways I've done this, but my favorites are using one-five on our hands quietly to show where we are that morning, that day with our emotions. So you might say, okay, can everyone show me, I'm going to hand how they are today. Let's do our check-in. A 1 would be very sad or angry, upset or afraid down feeling turned up to 5 would be very happy, very joyful, very content, very excited about something.

And then two or three and four in the middle are just a variation of those lows and those highs. So sometimes when I might see a student say that there are one or two that day and then usually a five, I am able to take a minute and check in with them. And sometimes I ask if they want to share or chat with me at a later time. Whenever we do our check-ins, give them the opportunity to share. So go around and have a few friends share why they are five that day, why they're a one that day. When you're introducing this with your students, it's important that you are explaining the emotions that guide each number 1-5 and explaining the genuine emotions that come with the check-in. And I then sometimes have my students tell me how they feel using an emoji poster of feelings.

It's a great visual for them to see how they're actually feeling that morning. I feel not just happy, sad, excited, but other emotions that they can learn the name of and what they mean. So I'm content, I feel confused, embarrassed, calm, heartbroken, lonely. So instead of just excited and happy and sad, it helps them navigate those feelings and what they might mean and then gives them an opportunity to also share why they may feel that way that morning. Also, sharing is always optional.

---

# PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

---

I never press a student to share and they do open up after many morning meetings and hearing their classmates start to share. This is why that consistency is also really important too.

The last part of morning meetings is a great time for an activity or read aloud. Sometimes the morning meetings can just be greeting and just be sharing feelings and emotions of that day. That's perfectly fine if you're short on time, do not feel like every morning has to have some elaborate morning meeting activity or lesson to accompany it. Just meeting and sitting and talking with your students as a classroom community is so beneficial. However, I do like to have some activities and resources to use during this time. So here are some examples of some of my favorite activities and resources to use during morning meeting time.

## [Discussion Slides](#)

I recommend doing once a week. If you teach grades two and up, these are great, to have your students interactively, during their morning work time type out their response and then that slide, that discussion prompt is moved into the morning meeting discussion. If you don't have devices or if your students are too young to be interactively typing the answers on a slide, you could definitely have it projected with your projector written on the whiteboard.

Just having a discussion prompt, have them write in their notebook on a sticky note their answer, think of their answer. But that can be something that they do as morning work that then leads to classroom discussions. It can be about kindness. It could be about content related discussions or Would You Rather. There can be holiday or theme discussion questions. There's so many. And I actually have a resource that our [interactive discussion slides](#) with tons of slides for you guys with different prompts.



---

# PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

---

So whatever you decide to do, that is a great idea to use as an activity for morning meeting time. I kind of like to set mine up where each day is a different thing. So discussion slides was one of the morning work activities once a week. And then that, again, like I said, is what is discussed during morning meeting time.

## Read Alouds

Obviously read alouds are perfect for morning meeting. I do not think that should be the only time that you are reading aloud to your students. However it's a really great way to start your day and you can really choose your read alouds based on things you want to focus on during that time of morning meeting or if a lot of your students say they are struggling with a certain emotion, maybe a couple of days later you find a book that helps them cope with that or deal with that. So there is so many good read alouds for morning meetings specifically. I actually wrote a [blog post](#) about this so I will link it in the show notes if you want to check out, there's a list of 10 really good books for morning meeting. Some of my favorite titles include: After the Fall, The Invisible Boy, We're All Wonders, Those Shoes and The Bad Seed. So those are just a few examples of read alouds.

## Goal Setting

Something else you can do in morning meeting time is goal setting. So I have talked a little bit or a lot about goal setting with students over on my Instagram page. And pretty soon I'll have a blog posts up and running for you guys, all about goal setting with your kids. But every so often you can use this time of the day to explain what goals are, how to goal set, how to know when you've reached your goal, how to know what goal to choose. And then you could use another time in the morning to have them all choose a goal.



---

# PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

---

So that's the other thing is if you're doing something specific, like a lesson or activity and it's longer than you would want to spend in a morning meeting time, you can break it up over the course of a couple of morning meeting times. So that is always an option. So [student goal cards](#) are perfect for this too. I will make sure those are linked in the show notes. If you want to try goal setting with your students during morning meeting time.

## Character Traits

Something I used a lot last year that I have finally finished and it's available to you guys now. I've been working on it for a while to make it available for y'all to use in your classrooms is a [Character Trait Interactive resource](#). So this is something that could be used over multiple morning meeting times throughout the month and it's perfect for this time of day. It's not the only time of day you can use this, but it really is perfect for that time of day for morning meetings. It has a lot of interactive pieces for multiple focus traits like courage and kindness and responsibility. Those are just a few examples that you can use throughout the month to focus on.

For example, the kindness tree could be used where you use the interactive slide that has definition and examples to fill out with your students in one morning meeting one day. So you work with your kids to fill out what kindness is, what are some examples of it and you use this slide to do. So that would be enough for one morning meeting. And then another day, maybe the next week that you're talking about kindness, you could use the kindness student journal pages that are also included for each focus trait. So during morning meeting the next week you could review kindness and do the journal pages with your students. There's also a read aloud list for every trait.



---

# PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

---

So that could help you pick out those certain read-alouds in books to read with your class that focus specifically on kindness or whatever trait you're teaching and focusing on.

And then there's also discussion slides that relate to each trait. You could choose for a different day. And then there's a ton of other parts of this resource that you can sprinkle in through other morning meetings or even just your day. Like I've made sure to include what I call "Caught Ya" slips that show when a student has shown that trait. So if you see a student showing kindness, you can give them a Caught Ya slip and they can take it home and then you can display it somewhere. There's a bingo board for every trait to encourage showing kindness or responsibility or courage, whatever it might be. And then posters and stuff like that that are included for each trait. So there's also quotes that go with each trait that are perfect to give out for students either after you've learned the trait or you're introducing the trait and you can give them during morning meeting too.

So this resource specifically can cover you for multiple morning meetings throughout the month and there's 10 traits included. So this is another idea of what you could focus on as some of your morning meeting activities. You can see this new resource in my store, but I have a freebie for you at [teachcreatemotivate.com/charactertraitfreebie](https://www.teachcreatemotivate.com/charactertraitfreebie). So once you're done listening to this episode, I will link it in the show notes as well. Make sure that you go get part of that resource for free and try it out with your class.

## Conferences Prep

Something else you can do during morning meeting time is get ready for conferences.



---

# PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

---

And what I mean by this is if you are doing student led conferences or you are doing some activities that you want your students to be apart of the conference that you're having with parents, maybe they're not going to lead, but you're going to have them fill out some stuff so that they have a voice in the conference. And I have a [blog post](#) all about this as well as a podcast episode.

So make sure you tune in to [episode five](#) of the podcast it's student led conferences if you want to get a little bit more ideas about this, I won't go into too much detail about what I'm referring to, but I recommend you either having your students help you lead conferences or giving them some of the [pages and printables and sheets](#) to fill out that you share with parents. So how does that relate to morning meeting? You can use this time with your class to explain those things and even maybe pass some of them out and have them work on a clipboard, there in the circle on something, or just explain what it is and why it's important and why you're choosing to do that with your class and then let them know what time of day they're going to be working on it. It kind of helps free up some of that instructional time that you might be spending explaining things like that too.

## Classroom Management

The sixth idea that I wanted to share with you guys for what you can do in morning meeting time is introduce your next classroom management game or vote on your next classroom management game or focus area. So if you're ready to introduce a [classroom bingo board](#), [Classroom Connect](#), [Tic-Tac-Toe](#) or even any type of classroom management tool, if you're doing something new and wanting to tell your students about what it is and how to do it and why you are choosing to do that with them, do that during your morning meeting.



---

# PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

---

This provides you more time to discuss it. Then maybe those two minutes between math and science. It just gives you that one on one time with your students in the beginning of the day. And it's a perfect time also to let your class vote on what they're working on or what game to play.

So I've talked before how sometimes I let my students, they voted on if they wanted to play bingo or if they wanted to play connect for the next round of games or I also love to get their opinion and their feedback on what we're focusing on: transitions, on task behavior, monitoring our voice. This time in the morning with your students and your class altogether is a great time to do this too.

## Growth Mindset

If you teach growth mindset or you review it or you haven't done that and you plan to this year, morning meeting is a great time to introduce it and go over that. So you could do read alouds with growth mindset. If you are using [growth mindset flipbooks](#) or any type of activities, morning meeting provides a really good time to go over each of those answers that your students have filled out. So get their feedback, go deeper into discussions about that.

Again, use the morning meeting time to go deeper or to focus on something more than you might be able to do during the regular day or throughout the day. You could do this with the character education flip books as well. Lots of lots of choices there. So overall there are so many things that you can do. There's also a lot of community building activities if you just look on Pinterest or on Google. Some of the ones that I loved doing in the beginning of the year, like "Saving Fred" and different games where they have to learn each other's names. Those are really fun and they don't take a lot of time, but they help build classroom community.



---

PODCAST  TRANSCRIPT

---

And I think that is a big aspect of morning meeting. It's not just to get some extra content in, really it's to build up the community in your classroom and have your students open up and be willing to share and get them to know each other more and feel safe with each other and enjoy each other's friendships and feel close to you.

And this helps the rest of your day because the reason that it helps the rest of your day and helps the rest of their day: number one, you are continuing to form those relationships with your students, which is the basis of all classroom management and classroom engagement and all of the above. So if you have those relationships built and they're strong, that's going to help everything else go smoother. Number two it is allowing your students to recognize and share emotions and work through those. Talk about them, hear other classmates and what they have to say and realize they might not be alone in the fact that they're frustrated this morning because they were late to school or whatever it might be that's weighing heavily on them. Let them share that and once they do, once they can, their day is going to go better and those behaviors are going to be better and they're going to be more focused and more engaged and we're excited to be there. So it really is just super beneficial. So I thought I'd throw that out there too.

### **Calm Down Corner/Basket**

The last thing I want to share with you is if you don't have a calm down corner or basket, I highly recommend having that in your classroom. If even if it's just a basket of fidget toys and timers and things to help students calm down and it's just somewhere in your room where your kids know where to go if they need to calm down. Introducing that basket and what it is in that corner or that space in your room and why it's there and how to use it and how to know when it's appropriate to use it and how long to stay there and all of the above.



---

PODCAST  TRANSCRIPT

---

That is an amazing thing to do during your morning meeting time and I definitely don't think that it's ever too late to start a calm down corner, a calm down basket. The times that I saw students using this the most was after recess or after lunch when they may have had some altercations with some of their friends and they just came in and would go to the calm down basket and they would just take some time to themselves and it wasn't a time to play. It was a time to calm down, get our emotions together, reflect and move on with our day. Also, the morning time is also a popular time when students might need to go calm down. We really don't know the reality of what is happening at our students' home lives and on the way to school and how much tension there may or may not be with siblings or parents or family members. So having that available to them when they come in. Sometimes that is when a lot of students need to calm down is really important.

So use your morning meeting time to introduce it, talk about each item that's in your calm down basket and explain how that is used and where it'll be in the room. And then you can always do all of these ideas like again. So you can halfway through the year, have another morning meeting time where you review the calm down basket or calm down corner expectations and reasons why we have it in a reminder of that it's there for them to use. So you can always go back and review things or always go back and set new goals. You can always go back and review growth mindset. So those are definitely eight or nine I don't remember, I've lost track now, ideas of activities specifically that you can be doing in your morning meeting time.

Overall, there's not just one way to start or facilitate morning meetings in your classroom. Think about things that you want to bring into your day or your week with your students and use this time to do that.



---

PODCAST  TRANSCRIPT

---

Start with a greeting, allow students time to share feelings and emotions and do maybe one short but meaningful activity to fill the rest of that time. If you're meeting together consistently each morning, you're providing a safe space for your students to share, you're building classroom community and you're providing meaningful opportunities to do more things like class discussions, character education, growth mindset, goal setting, and more.

Don't forget also to grab that kindness [Character Trait Freebie](#). It is at [teachcreatemotivate.com/charactertraitfreebie](https://teachcreatemotivate.com/charactertraitfreebie). And this can help you get started with morning meetings right away. So I really do hope this episode provided you some good ideas of ways to start morning meeting in your classroom or even to some fresh ideas of what you can keep doing with your students if you already do this. So as always, thank you so much for tuning in today and listening to this episode. Make sure to be checking back for some future episodes coming very soon. If you would be so kind when this episode ends too, please leave a review. I would seriously appreciate it so much. And until next time, happy teaching.



---

**EPISODE 9: MORNING MEETINGS**  
[www.teachcreatemotivate.com/9](https://www.teachcreatemotivate.com/9)

---