



Get-to-Know Me: Prompts, Planning and Impact

Opportunities to Build Connection and
Community in Your Classroom

Get-to-Know Me Prompts

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DESCRIPTION

These 240 prompts are designed to help students reflect, share, and connect with you and with each other as well as help strengthen their social-emotional competencies. They can be used in a variety of ways depending on your teaching style, your students' interests, and the time you have available. Below are some ideas for integrating these prompts into your classroom routine.

PREP TIME

5 minutes

ACTIVITY TIME

5-10 minutes

MATERIALS

Question Prompt

Implementation Guidance

Before Using Discussion Prompts

- 1. Start Small and Make It Routine.** Try setting aside just 5–10 minutes once a week. When this time becomes consistent, students come to look forward to it. You might choose the question yourself and read it aloud or post-it in class. You might also consider rotating student facilitators, or even invite students to submit their own prompts to add to the list.
- 2. Use As You See Fit.** These prompts could be used in a class, it could also work well in a club setting, on the go, etc. As an educator, you know your students the best, including when they might feel most comfortable sharing about themselves.
- 3. Make a Plan.** The prompts are organized by categories so you can strategically pick ones from the same category, or mix them up! Consider using a calendar to plan out your discussion prompts for the month so that it's ready to go and one less thing on your list to do. See below for a planning calendar template.

During Discussion Prompts

1. **There are a variety of ways you can use prompts in your class. Here are just a few ideas:**
 - Post a prompt at the start of class and have students complete a quick-write, giving them 5 to 10 minutes to answer the question.
 - Ask students to turn and talk to a partner, which can make them feel more comfortable, then share a few highlights with the class.
 - Use individual whiteboards or journals so everyone can respond at once.
 - Facilitate a whole-class discussion sparked by the question. Encourage students to respond to one another by providing scaffolds like "I agree, I disagree. I want to build on your answer. I have a question about your answer."
 - Incorporate movement: beach ball activity, four corners, etc.
 - Use a prompt as an exit ticket at the end of class.
2. **Make it a safe space for students to share.** Consider giving students the option to pick out their own question. Give them a minute to think before sharing. And, emphasize that students always have the option to pass if they don't feel comfortable sharing. For students who have a harder time opening up, consider giving them the prompts beforehand to think through, presenting several options for answers, and providing sentence frames/starters.
3. **Let Students Get to Know You, Too.** Students often share their desire to know their teachers beyond the classroom. When students know something about your life, interests, or personality, it gives them a way to start a conversation and deepen your relationship. One easy way to model this is by occasionally answering the prompts yourself. When you participate, it shows students that connection is a shared experience.

After Discussion Prompts

1. **Make It Personal and Meaningful.** Students also often say that they want their teachers to know them—not just as learners, but as people. One thing that helps them feel seen is when teachers remember and follow up on what they've shared. For example, if a student mentions they have a soccer game on Thursday, check in the next time you see them: *"How was your game?"* These small moments go a long way in building trust.

You can also incorporate what you learn about your students into class examples, casual conversations, or even the content you teach. These gestures help students feel recognized, respected, and connected. One strategy for tracking the things you learn is to write simple, quick notes of things that stood out to you or that you want to follow-up on next week. See below for a template to get you started. If you have a huge class, and use journals, consider asking students to tag 1 or 2 responses that they really want you to read.

240 Creative Prompts to Build Connection & Belonging

Identity & Self-Expression

1. What's something that makes you *you*—something you're proud of?
2. What's a talent or skill you have that most people don't know about?
3. If you could design a personal logo or symbol, what would it include?
4. What's a value or belief that's important to you?
5. What's one way your culture or family has shaped who you are?
6. How would you describe yourself in three emojis?
7. What's a story or experience that shaped you?
8. What nickname have you had—and how did you get it?
9. What's something that helps you feel grounded or confident?
10. If your life were a playlist, what song would be track one?
11. What's a piece of advice that sticks with you?
12. What languages do you speak, want to learn, or hear at home?
13. What makes you feel most like yourself?
14. What's something people often misunderstand about you?
15. How do you express yourself creatively?
16. What are three words you hope others would use to describe you?
17. If you had a personal motto, what would it be?
18. What's something unique about your name?
19. What role do you usually take in a group?
20. What are you most passionate about? For example, what is something you do in your free time that you care a lot about?

Fun & Playful

21. Would you rather time travel to the past or future? Why?
22. If your personality was a color, what color would it be?
23. If you or someone were to write a book about you, what would the title of the book be?

24. If you were a character in a movie, what role would you play?
25. What's your go-to karaoke song (even if it's just in the shower)?
26. If you had a superpower, what would it be and why?
27. What animal best represents your energy today?
28. What's the weirdest food you've tried—or want to try?
29. Which fictional world would you want to live in?
30. What's your “useless” but impressive talent?
31. If you could live in any decade or era (time in history), which one and why?
32. What's your dream vacation?
33. What game are you really good at?
34. What would you bring to a class talent show?
35. What's the funniest thing that's ever happened to you?
36. What's a food combination you love that others think is weird?
37. If you could instantly become famous for something, what would it be?
38. If your life had a theme song, what would it be?
39. Would you rather be able to talk to animals or read minds?
40. What's a childhood cartoon or show you still love?

Everyday Life & Routines

41. What's your favorite way to start or end the day?
42. What's one thing you always carry with you and why?
43. What's something small that makes your day better?
44. Do you prefer mornings or nights? Why?
45. What's your favorite way to take a break or relax?
46. What's your ideal way to spend a Saturday?
47. What's something that's part of your daily routine that you actually enjoy?
48. Where do you like to go to clear your mind?
49. What's your favorite sound or smell?
50. What strategies do you use to stay organized with all of your classes? Do you use an organizing system, highlighters, apps, rely on your memory or anything else?
51. What's your go-to after school snack?
52. What's your favorite weather and why?
53. What's your ideal bedtime and do you actually follow it?
54. What kind of workspace helps you focus?
55. What's something you look forward to each week?
56. What do you enjoy about lunchtime at school? How would you like to spend lunchtime differently, if at all?
57. What's something you do every day that feels like a ritual?
58. What's your favorite kind of weekend activity?
59. What's your favorite thing to wear and why?
60. What's one chore you don't mind doing?

Favorites & Recommendations

61. What's a book, show, or movie you recommend to everyone?
62. What's your favorite meal or snack—and why do you love it?
63. Who's a musician or band you think more people should know about?
64. What's the best thing you've ever read or seen online this week?
65. What's a favorite tradition from your life?
66. What's a place you've been that you recommend everyone visit?
67. What's your favorite holiday or celebration?
68. What's the best gift you've ever received?
69. What's your go-to comfort food?
70. What's something that you are really into right now?
71. What's your favorite type of music or artist?
72. What app could you not live without?
73. What's a favorite quote that inspires you?
74. What's your favorite way to spend a rainy day?
75. What's a favorite memory from a family or community event?
76. What's your favorite restaurant or cafe?
77. What's a fashion trend you secretly love?
78. What's your favorite board or card game?
79. What's a book or movie that inspired you?
80. What's a place you want to visit someday?

Friendship & Connection

81. What's one quality you really appreciate in a friend?
82. When do you feel most supported by the people around you?
83. Who has made a positive impact on your life and how?
84. What's something you wish people knew about you?
85. When do you feel most like you *belong*?
86. What makes someone easy to talk to?
87. What's a shared experience that brought you closer to someone?
88. How do you show others that you care?
89. What's a way you've been a good friend recently?
90. What's something you've learned from a friendship?
91. How do you make new friends?
92. What does a healthy friendship look like to you?
93. What do you value most in your current friendships?
94. What makes a friendship last over time?
95. What's a small act of kindness you've received?
96. What's something you admire in someone else?
97. What's your favorite way to spend time with friends?
98. Who is someone you feel you can be completely yourself around?
99. How do you stay in touch with people you care about?
100. What do you think makes someone a good listener?

School & Learning

101. What makes a classroom feel like a community?
102. What's a topic you wish your teacher would spend more time on?
103. When do you feel most engaged in learning?
104. What kind of project would you design if you could choose the topic?
105. What do you think makes a teacher great?
106. When do you feel proud of your schoolwork?
107. What helps you stay organized for school?
108. What's your favorite classroom memory?
109. What kind of learner are you: visual, auditory, hands-on, or something else?
110. What do you wish school prepared you more for?
111. What helps you feel heard or seen in class?
112. What class would you add to the schedule if you could?
113. How do you handle group work?
114. What does academic success look like to you?
115. What helps you stay motivated in school?
116. What's something you learned recently that surprised you?
117. What school subject do you find most useful outside of class?
118. What kind of feedback helps you learn?
119. How do you manage stress around grades or tests?
120. What would make school more fun or meaningful?

Goals & Dreams

121. What is a goal you're proud of achieving?
122. What's something you hope to accomplish this year?
123. If you could have any job in the world, what would it be?
124. What's a goal you have for your life outside of work or school?
125. What would you start doing today if there were no barriers?
126. What inspires you to work hard?
127. Who supports you in reaching your goals?
128. What's a skill you hope to develop in the next year?
129. If you wrote a bucket list, what would be the first three things on it?
130. What is one thing you hope others will remember about you from this time in high school?
131. How do you celebrate your accomplishments?
132. What's a dream you've had since childhood?
133. What personal qualities help you move toward your goals?
134. What does 'growth' look like to you?
135. Who is someone whose career or life path inspires you?
136. What motivates you when you feel stuck?
137. If you could solve one local issue, what would it be?
138. What does your ideal future look like?
139. What advice would you give to your future self?

140. What advice would you hope your future self gives you?

Imagination & Creativity

141. What would you invent to make everyday life easier or more fun?

142. What would your dream room look like?

143. If you had a million dollars to donate, where would it go?

144. What would be in your ultimate snack box?

145. If your life was a movie, what would it be titled?

146. Design a new holiday—what are we celebrating?

147. If you could design your own app, what would it do?

148. If you could build a theme park, what would it be based on?

149. Create a superhero based on one of your personality traits.

150. What would be your talent in a fantasy world?

151. If your mood today was a movie genre, what would it be?

152. What kind of art (music, film, visual, dance, etc.) do you connect with most?

153. What kind of story would you write if you had no limits?

154. If you could host your own podcast, what would it be about?

155. If you had a signature fashion style, what would it include?

156. What animal would be your loyal sidekick in a fantasy adventure?

157. Design your own school mascot—what is it and why?

158. What would be the first 3 songs on your dream playlist?

159. If you could mix two animals to create a new one, what would they be?

160. What fictional invention do you wish existed?

Reflection & Growth

161. What's a mistake that helped you grow?

162. How do you take care of your mental health?

163. What helps you manage conflict?

164. What does kindness mean to you?

165. What's something you're working on improving about yourself?

166. How do you respond to challenges?

167. What are you grateful for right now?

168. What have you learned from someone younger than you?

169. What have you learned from someone older than you?

170. When do you feel most at peace?

171. How do you reflect on your own learning or behavior?

172. What's something you want to let go of?

173. What's something you're holding onto that motivates you?

174. How do you recharge your energy?

175. What are your strengths in a tough situation?

176. What helps you bounce back after disappointment?

177. What's something you've changed your mind about recently?

178. What's a compliment you'll always remember?

179. What have you learned about yourself this school year?
180. What are you most proud of in the last 6 months?

Community & Belonging

181. What makes you feel welcomed in a group?
182. How do you make others feel included?
183. What's your role in your school or community?
184. What's something special about your community?
185. How do you help build trust with others?
186. When have you seen your school come together for a cause?
187. What helps a group become a team?
188. What do you think everyone deserves at school?
189. How do you show appreciation for others?
190. What's something you want to improve in your school or neighborhood?
191. What are the qualities of a strong leader in your eyes?
192. What would a more inclusive school look like?
193. What's a tradition you'd like to start in your class?
194. What does being part of something bigger than yourself mean to you?
195. What's something kind a stranger has done for you?
196. What can classmates do to help each other succeed?
197. How do you support your peers when they are struggling?
198. How do you speak up when something isn't fair?
199. What does a respectful community feel like?
200. What does belonging mean to you, and how do you create it for others?

A Note on Subject-Specific Activities

Students have shared that they want to be known as *people*, not just as learners. While you can absolutely align your get-to-know-you questions with your content area, we encourage you to mix in more personal prompts as well. Doing so helps build trust, connection, and a sense of belonging beyond academics. Below are some sample prompts to help you get started.

Art

201. If you could create art with any material in the world—no limits—what would you use and why?
202. What kind of art (drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, etc.) do you enjoy the most and why?
203. Who is your favorite artist or art style, and what do you like about it?
204. Describe a piece of art that made you feel something—what was it and how did it make you feel?
205. What inspires your creativity the most (e.g., music, nature, emotions, stories)?

English/Language Arts

- 206. What type of stories do you enjoy most—funny, mysterious, real-life, or something else?
- 207. If your life had a title like a novel, what would it be called?
- 208. What's a line or quote (from a song, movie, or book) that really sticks with you?
- 209. Would you rather write a short story, a script, or a poem—and what would it be about?
- 210. Who is a fictional character you relate to—or wish you were more like?

History/Social Studies

- 211. If you could time travel to *any* time period just for a day, where would you go and why?
- 212. Who is someone from history (famous or not) that you admire—and what do you admire about them?
- 213. What do you think people in the future will say about our current time?
- 214. Would you rather make history or study it—and in what way?
- 215. What's a moment in your own life that you think would make a great story in a history book?

Math

- 216. What's something in life you *wish* there was a formula for?
- 217. When have you solved a real-life problem by thinking logically or using numbers?
- 218. Would you rather do one giant puzzle or lots of quick brain teasers—and why?
- 219. What's something you used to think you'd never understand in math—but now kind of do?
- 220. If math class were a team sport, what role would you play?

Music

- 221. What's a song that always puts you in a good mood, and why?
- 222. If you could learn any instrument instantly, which one would you pick and why?
- 223. What kind of music do you listen to the most? Has it changed over time?
- 224. Who is a musician, band, or composer you admire—and what do you like about their work?
- 225. If your life had a soundtrack, what song would be playing during the opening scene?

Science

- 226. If you could invent one scientific tool or device, what would it be and what problem would it solve?
- 227. What's something in nature or science that makes you feel curious or amazed?
- 228. Would you rather explore the deep ocean or outer space—and why?
- 229. Has there ever been a science fact or concept that completely surprised you?

230. If your brain were a lab, what kind of experiments would you be running this week?

World Languages

Spanish

231. If you could visit any Spanish-speaking country, which one would you choose and what would you do there?

232. What Spanish word or phrase do you think sounds beautiful or fun to say?

233. If you could celebrate one Spanish or Latin American holiday, which one would you choose and why?

234. Imagine you're an exchange student in Spain or Mexico. What's one thing that would excite you? What might be challenging?

235. Which do you find harder in Spanish class—speaking, listening, reading, or writing? How do you try to get better at it?

Chinese

236. If you could visit any place in China, where would you go and why?

237. What's one thing about Chinese culture or history you find interesting or want to learn more about?

238. Would you rather attend Chinese New Year celebrations in Beijing or the Lantern Festival in Taiwan? Why?

239. What do you think is the hardest part about learning Chinese? What helps you when it gets hard?

240. Why do you think it's important (or useful) to learn Chinese today?

Using Get-to-Know Me Prompts to Better Support Students with IEPs Or 504 Plans

Students with IEPs or 504 plans often benefit from strong, trusting relationships with their teachers, relationships that recognize both their strengths and their unique needs. The get-to-know-you prompts in this toolkit offer simple, powerful ways to build these connections.

Below are five intentional strategies for using prompts to support belonging, voice, and individualized learning. These approaches not only help teachers understand their students better, but also reinforce the inclusive, supportive environments all students deserve.

- 1. Understand Strengths and Interests.** Students with IEPs/504s often have strengths that are overlooked when the focus is solely on their challenges.

How to use the prompts:

- Use identity, imagination, and interest-based prompts (e.g., “What are you most passionate about?” or “What would you invent to make life easier?”) to learn about a student’s talents, motivations, and preferred ways of learning.
- Reflect those interests in instructional examples or accommodations.

- 2. Build Psychological Safety and Belonging.** Students with disabilities sometimes feel isolated or misunderstood. Prompts can open space for expression and inclusion.

How to use the prompts:

- Choose prompts that invite students to share about their routines, challenges, or needs in low-stakes ways (e.g., “What helps you stay organized for school?” or “What’s something that helps you feel calm?”).
- Ensure you honor confidentiality by privately connecting with students about their responses.

- 3. Support Self-Advocacy and Agency.** Consider using prompts to help students develop voice and agency.

How to use the prompts:

- Use prompts about goals, dreams, or challenges (e.g., “What helps you bounce back after disappointment?” or “What’s a small goal you’re working on right now?”) to start conversations about self-advocacy.
- Encourage students to identify what supports help them succeed—and when they’d like to use them.

4. Collaborate with Support Staff. Insights from prompts can inform how teachers, case managers, and support staff collaborate to individualize support.

How to use the prompts:

- If students consent, share insights from prompts during IEP/504 meetings or team huddles to ensure alignment between classroom relationships and formal supports.
- Use what you learn to inform goals around executive functioning, self-awareness, or classroom participation.

Know Me Tracking Tools

Below are two simple tools to help you plan and track 'get to know you' moments with your students. Use them to build a consistent routine of connection and belonging in your classroom.

Strategy 1: The “Connection Calendar”

Purpose: Help teachers intentionally plan, track, and reflect on get-to-know-you moments throughout the school year.

How it Works:

- Set aside 5–10 minutes once a week to build classroom connections.
- Use this calendar to schedule prompts in advance.
- Include space to note key takeaways or follow-up actions.

Week	Date	Prompt # or Topic	Method (e.g., quick write, turn & talk)	Notes or Student Highlights	Follow-up Action
1	Aug 28	#13 What makes you feel most like yourself?	Quick write & Share Out	Quinn shared “when I was at my old school and had friends”. Follow-up with intentional partner matching in class to help facilitate a connection.	Invite student-suggested questions for next week.

Week	Date	Prompt # or Topic	Method (e.g., quick write, turn & talk)	Notes or Student Highlights	Follow-up Action
					1

Strategy 2: “Know Me Notes”

Purpose: Help teachers track and remember small but meaningful details about students to personalize relationships.

How it Works:

- After a get-to-know-you activity, jot down what you learned.
- Refer back to these notes for check-ins, class examples, or feedback.
- Helps teachers personalize interactions without needing to memorize everything.

Student Name: _____

Likes/Interests: _____

Recent Share: _____

Follow-up Idea: _____

Fun Fact: _____

Student Name: _____

Likes/Interests: _____

Recent Share: _____

Follow-up Idea: _____

Fun Fact: _____

Student Name: _____

Likes/Interests: _____

Recent Share: _____

Follow-up Idea: _____

Fun Fact: _____



About Search Institute

We collaborate with schools, youth-serving organizations, programs, and communities to conduct applied research, co-design solutions, and build the relational infrastructure every young person needs to thrive. Through professional learning experiences, surveys, measurement tools, and support for continuous improvement, we help partners turn knowledge into action and create the conditions where young people can truly learn, grow, contribute, and thrive.

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