

Published on ADDitudeMag.com

A Letter Introducing Your ADHD Child to His Teacher

Our sample letter for introducing your child with attention deficit disorder (ADHD ADD) to the teacher will give you great ideas for creating your own.

by *ADDitude Editors*

Write a letter to your child's school teacher to start the academic year off right. You'll want to discuss your child's symptoms of attention deficit disorder (ADD ADHD), dyslexia, or other learning disabilities, his ADHD medication, if he takes one, as well as ADHD accommodations that have helped him succeed at school.

Here's one parent's letter, which may give you some ideas for creating your own.

To Zachary's Teachers:

Zachary Klein will be in your class this year. Over the years, we have found it helpful to give teachers some background about him, in addition to the IEP in his file. This often ensures a successful beginning to the school year.

Zach has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). He is on medication, but it doesn't change who he is, and it is more effective at helping him focus than at controlling his behavior. Zach has a great sense of humor, and tapping into this early in the year usually works well. Zach takes criticism personally and hates being yelled at. He won't always let you know it, but he worries and is very sensitive. He might act cool and tough, but, if he has had a bad day, he falls apart when he gets home.

Zach is excited about the new year. He wants to settle down and "be mature and responsible." He says this at the beginning of every year, but he can't always succeed. Last school year was a difficult one, and Zach's self-esteem is pretty beat up.

We have attached a list of things that have worked in some situations.

We welcome any ideas you have to keep Zach engaged in school, while boosting his self-esteem and helping him succeed. Please contact us at any time by phone or by e-mail. We have flexible schedules and are able to meet whenever it is convenient for you. We look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,
Zach's Parents

-
1. **Praise.** Zach responds to praise. When he receives positive reinforcement, his anxiety decreases, and he can better stay on task. It is best, when possible, to talk to Zach about misbehavior in private.
 2. **Flash pass.** In the past, teachers have given Zach a “flash pass,” so he can leave the room when he needs a break. He doesn’t use it often, but knowing that he can helps him control anxiety. He may get up from time to time to get a tissue or sharpen a pencil, and this helps him settle down for the rest of the class. He gets anxious, almost to the point of claustrophobia, when he is in the same setting for too long.
 3. **Quiet space.** Zach has difficulty focusing for long periods of time when test-taking and when reading. During these extended periods, you might move him to a quieter, private space, such as a teacher’s office or the hallway.
 4. **Enlarged math problems.** Zach has trouble with taking math tests. He does better when tests are enlarged, so that one or two problems are on each page. He sometimes folds his math paper into quarters, with only one problem on each quarter, to help himself focus.
 5. **Limited in-class reading.** It is nearly impossible for Zach to read in class for any extended period of time. It is best to send reading assignments home, where reading can be done quietly.
 6. **Scheduling for difficult classes.** If possible, Zach’s hardest classes should be scheduled in the morning hours. Concentration becomes more difficult for him as the day progresses. Teachers in his later classes should be made aware of this.
 7. **Leniency for lateness.** Unless he’s given plenty of reminders, Zach’s disorganization inhibits his ability to hand work in on time. While we strive to meet deadlines, we’d appreciate leniency for late assignments.