Do you think a lot about how to create Morning Meetings that positively impact each day and prepare your students for the learning to come? I’ll share a little secret that has worked for me: Try planning Morning Meeting after you do your lesson plans for the rest of the day. Morning Meeting is one of the first chances I have to set the tone for the day, so I find that taking the time to consider the flow and goals of each day helps me plan a meeting that sets my students up for success.

For instance, if I know we’ll have a busy Monday morning with an assembly first thing and a practice fire drill, I might plan to begin with a left/right greeting in which students quickly greet and are greeted by the students standing on either side of them. This fast-paced but friendly greeting starts a busy day on a positive tone while also allowing time for a slightly lengthier sharing about past weekend activities, which is always a hot topic on a Monday morning.

On a day when I’m planning to focus on the revision process during Language Arts in the afternoon, I may bring this into the sharing component of Morning Meeting by inviting students to share with a partner what they’re writing about and strategies they might use to revise and edit their writing later in the day.

I may also get students’ brains fired up for the task ahead with a morning message that asks them to share ideas about “what good writers do.” This sets the stage for Language Arts and also forecasts for students what they’ll be working on later on in the day. A struggling writer might appreciate the reminder, and an enthusiastic writer will have something to look forward to.

And what do we need first thing on a day when I know our time will be packed with academics, with no breaks for specials? Maybe a high-energy greeting like “Chugga Chugga,” which allows students to move, sing, dance, and choose multiple partners to greet, or a movement activity like Freeze Dance. Being physically active and a bit silly together in the morning will help us get our energy up and prepare for a long day of staying focused.

Finally, on a Friday morning that will be full of testing, I might include an activity like Sparkle in our Morning Meeting. This playful activity offers students a helpful review of the words they’ve been learning all week, while also helping them relax and reduce any anxiety they might be feeling. Spelling Stroll would be another good choice. By offering students the chance to move around and choose where to go in the circle, this activity promotes autonomy and assertiveness, while giving students practice in thinking quickly.

There is a feeling of satisfaction that comes from looking at a set of carefully crafted Morning Meeting plans that integrate well with the daily life of our classroom. Planning my Morning Meetings after I do my lesson planning—whether for a whole week or day by day—lets me help...
students focus at the start of each day with meetings specifically tailored to their needs. Each day’s Morning Meeting should truly be a reflection of the day ahead, so try planning the beginning with the middle and the end in mind.