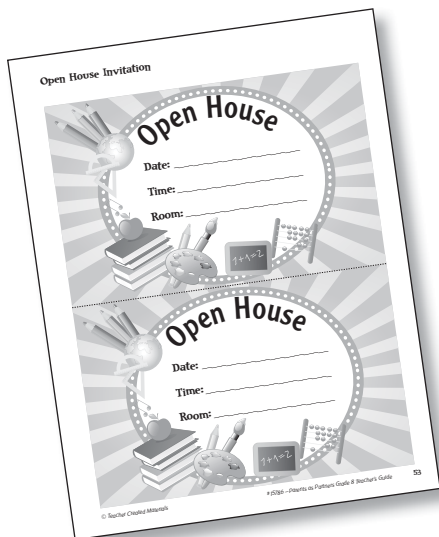


Increasing Open House Attendance

Most schools have an Open House toward the end of the school year. This is a wonderful time for students to bring their parents to school to share the work they have been doing. This is also an excellent opportunity for teachers to personally connect with parents. In order to gain the benefits of hosting an Open House, maximizing attendance is key. Below are a few ways you can achieve this.

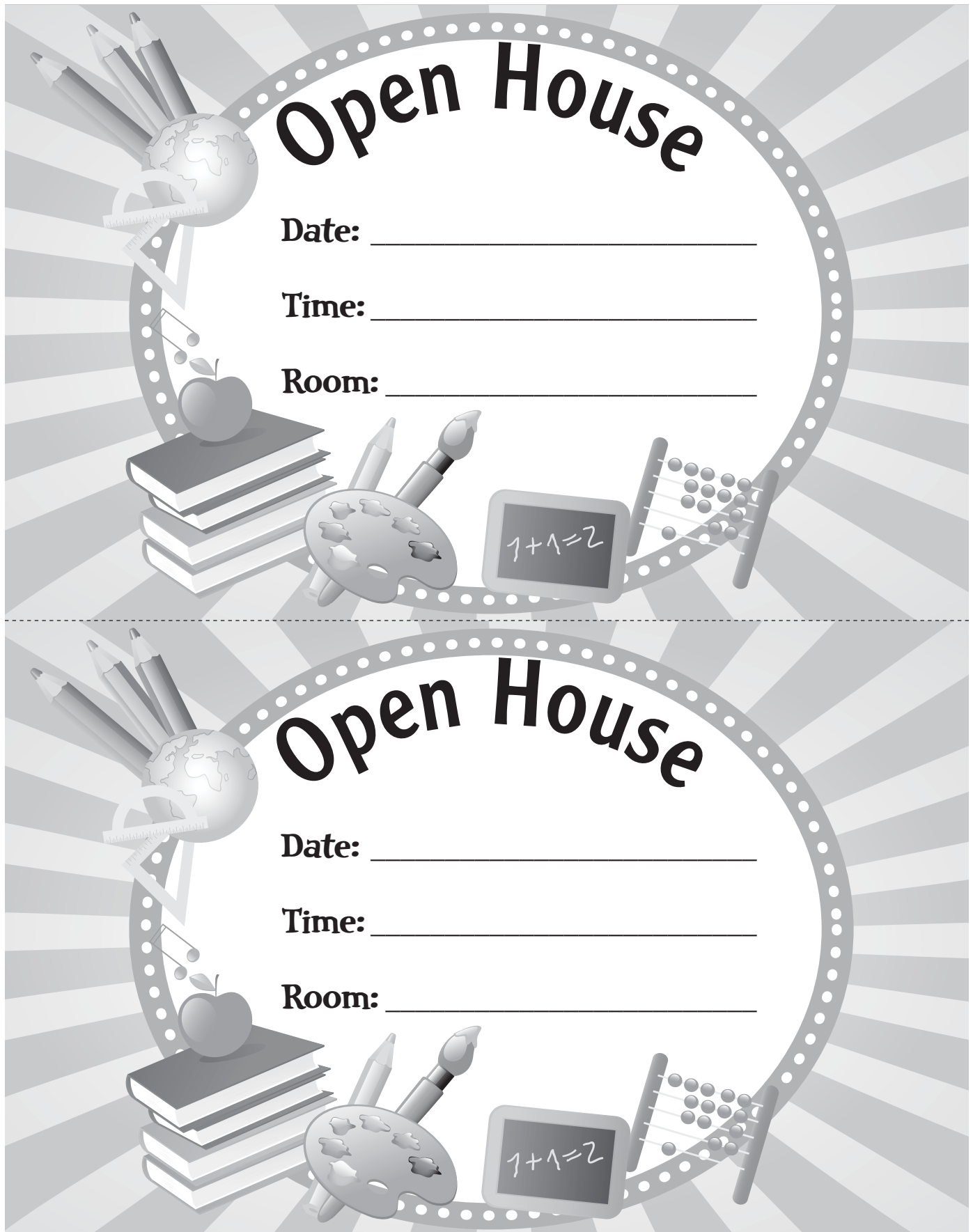
- ◆ **Send home an invitation** as far in advance as possible.
- ◆ Be sure the **invitation is translated** into any necessary languages to ensure that all parents can read it.
- ◆ A sample invitation can be found on page 53. A full-color version of the invitation can be found on the Teacher Resource CD (ohinvitation.pdf).
- ◆ **Invite the whole family**, including younger siblings and extended family. Open House is an excellent opportunity for younger siblings to be invited into the school community.
- ◆ **Consider serving food before Open House begins.** This is a fun and casual way for parents to meet their children's friends and their friends' parents.
- ◆ **Provide incentives for parent attendance.** Consider having a competition between your class periods. The class with the most participation wins a small reward.



Teacher Tip!

Consider attendance at Back-to-School Night and previous years' Open Houses. If it is lower than you would like, extend a personal invitation to parents. This can be done in person or by phone. If you are limited by time, you may want to consult with the students' previous year's teachers and find out which parents to target.

Open House Invitation



The image shows two identical invitation templates stacked vertically. Each template features a large, stylized sunburst background. In the center of each template is a large circle with a dotted border. Inside the circle, the words "Open House" are written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below the title, there are three lines of text for "Date:", "Time:", and "Room:", each followed by a horizontal line for writing. To the left of the circle, there is a cluster of educational icons: a globe, a ruler, a protractor, a stack of books, and an apple. To the right of the circle, there is another cluster of educational icons: a paint palette, a pencil, a paintbrush, a small chalkboard with the equation $1+1=2$, and a abacus.

Open House

Date: _____

Time: _____

Room: _____

Open House

Date: _____

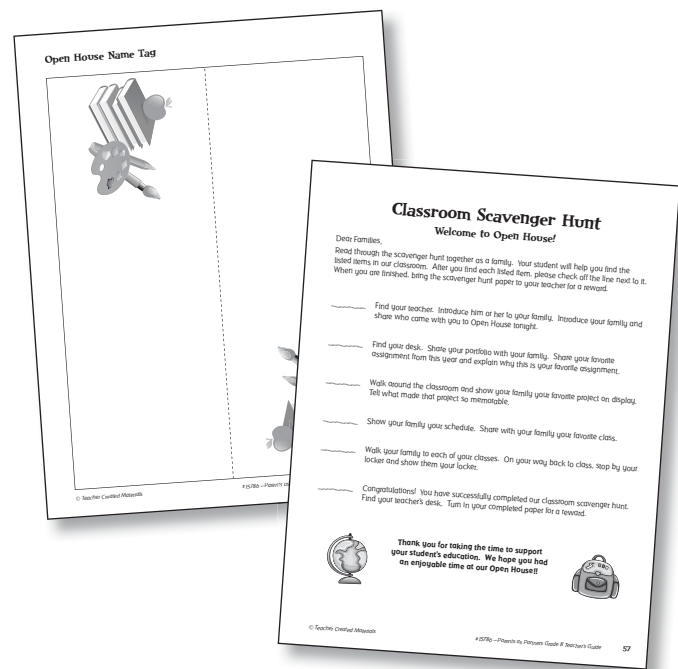
Time: _____

Room: _____

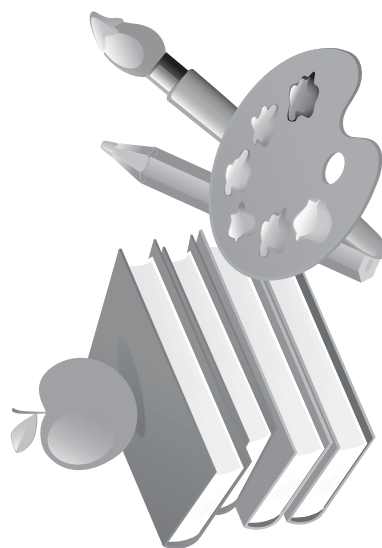
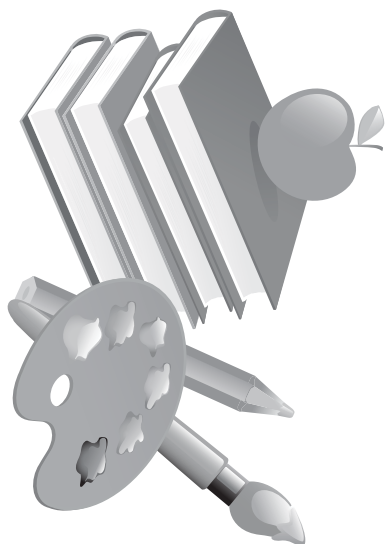
Hosting a Successful Open House

Before the Event

- ◆ Have students help **determine what to display** and share with their parents.
- ◆ **Prepare a slide show of pictures** taken throughout the school year. This will get students excited and talking about all the fun things they have done throughout the year.
- ◆ **Consider serving a snack** to help ensure that families spend time in the classroom.
- ◆ **Have students create name tags** to place on their desks. This way, parents can easily find their student's desk (page 55; nametag2.pdf).
- ◆ **Put together a classroom performance**, such as reader's theater.
- ◆ **Start a countdown to Open House** on the board or on your classroom door. Also, post the incentive you are offering for the class with the highest participation.
- ◆ **Have your students help get the classroom ready** for guests. They can begin to clean out their desks and classroom libraries.
- ◆ **Show your students the Classroom Scavenger Hunt** so that they are prepared to do this with their parents (page 57; scavengerhunt.pdf).



Open House Name Tag



Hosting a Successful Open House *(cont.)*

Day of the Event

- ◆ **Show students how to give a tour** of the classroom to their parents, using the scavenger hunt.
- ◆ **Have a sign-up sheet for conference requests** if parents have matters that need to be discussed thoroughly or privately.
- ◆ **Have a sign-in sheet available for parents** so you will have a record of who attended. A template can be found on page 58. A full-color version can be found on the Teacher Resource CD (ohsignin.pdf).
- ◆ **Be sure to encourage and remind students** to attend Open House that evening.
- ◆ **Ask students to do one last check** to make sure that the classroom is clean and organized for guests.

During the Event

- ◆ Be sure **students are giving their parents a tour of the classroom** by using the Classroom Scavenger Hunt (page 57; scavengerhunt.pdf).
- ◆ Make an effort to **greet each family**.
- ◆ **Resist the urge to conference with parents.** The evening should be about their student sharing class work. Direct parents to the conference sign-up sheet if they would like to discuss specifics about their student.
- ◆ **Try to tell parents and families one thing** that their student did especially well this school year. Students will love the compliment.

Classroom Scavenger Hunt

Welcome to Open House!

Dear Families,

Read through the scavenger hunt together as a family. Your student will help you find the listed items in our classroom. After you find each listed item, please check off the line next to it. When you are finished, bring the scavenger hunt paper to your teacher for a reward.

_____ Find your teacher. Introduce him or her to your family. Introduce your family and share who came with you to Open House tonight.

_____ Find your desk. Share your portfolio with your family. Share your favorite assignment from this year and explain why this is your favorite assignment.

_____ Walk around the classroom and show your family your favorite project on display. Tell what made that project so memorable.

_____ Show your family your schedule. Share with your family your favorite class.

_____ Walk your family to each of your classes. On your way back to class, stop by your locker and show them your locker.

_____ Congratulations! You have successfully completed our classroom scavenger hunt. Find your teacher's desk. Turn in your completed paper for a reward.



**Thank you for taking the time to support
your student's education. We hope you had
an enjoyable time at our Open House!!**





Open House Sign-In Period _____

Student's Name	Parent's Name	Phone Number	Email Address

Hosting a Successful Open House *(cont.)*

After the Event

- ◆ **Have students create a thank-you note** to give to their parents to thank them for coming.
- ◆ **Follow up with any parents** who asked questions or requested a phone or in-person conference.
- ◆ Make an extra effort to **contact families who were unable to attend** the event.
- ◆ **Send home paperwork** to parents who were unable to attend.
- ◆ **Follow up** on any questions.
- ◆ **Self-reflect on what worked and didn't** work in the classroom. Make notes for better strategies for the following year.

Teacher Tip!

Make an extra effort to contact families who were not represented at Open House. Offer them another time to come to school with their student to see the classroom. One option that suits many parents' schedules is to come in the morning right before school starts.