



A complete plan with  
editable checklists &  
kid-friendly tasks  
to delegate

*Angela Watson's*

**Stress-free system for**  
**END-OF-YEAR CLOSEOUT**

## This system really works! Here's how it turned out for 2 members of the 40 Hour Teacher Workweek Club who tried it last school year.

THANK YOU, Angela! This is the first year I'm not stressed about the last day of school. Everything is done and I can spend quality time with my students during our half day tomorrow!!

I was skeptical as heck about following your advice to keep the classroom looking the same until the day before or last day of school. Instead of taking things down, I focused my prep time on organizing and getting rid of junk-- still kept the room looking the same. I freaked out a bit because so much needed to be packed up, removed from the walls, and moved. Would you believe me if I told you my kids were still working hard? Still following directions? Still walking silently down the halls? And tomorrow is the last day?! I'm amazed!!! Students within my reading groups rotations were assigned jobs to do around the room. They finished faster than I thought and we got the entire room done in 2 hours! So happy!!



Okay - can I brag about just how much this club has changed my life? Our last day of school for students was last Wednesday (Friday for teachers) and my students and I finished packing up on Monday! Whaaat?! 4 days early! I am homeroom teacher to two classes (35 students) and everything had gone home by then - portfolios, notebooks, etc. Because I followed Angela's checklist, I started by packing up my personal resources and taking them home, one box a day, and then sorting and recycling papers. I spent Thursday and Friday finishing unit reflections and other administrative tasks.

This club is no joke. Tell your friends. I have. #likeaboss 🤪



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# END OF YEAR GAME PLAN: Checklists, tips, & tricks



## A STEP-BY-STEP SYSTEM FOR DECONSTRUCTING & CLOSING OUT YOUR CLASSROOM

With this resource, you'll choose actionable steps to help you:

- Keep kids on task when spring fever's in the air
- Delegate end-of-year tasks to students
- Prepare in advance for the summer classroom shutdown
- Purge your classroom of clutter at the end of the year
- Set yourself up now for success in the fall



## END OF YEAR CHECKLISTS & CLOSE OUT SYSTEM

Here's an all-too-familiar scenario I think we can each relate to:

You're feeling exhausted and overwhelmed one morning by the end-of-year tasks on your plate. You decide not to give regular Morning Work and let the class do a word search page instead, hoping that they'll be engaged enough to let you work on your end-of-year data submission tasks. The kids get excited about the change in routine, and all the expectations for quietly completing Morning Work go out the window. You get irritated and blame the problem on 'spring fever.'

After that, you figure there's no way the kids will be attentive during the regular vocabulary lesson, so you give a partner reading assignment instead. The kids become even more wound up and start chattering loudly because now their routine is really off.

You figure you might as well funnel that energy into something constructive, so you start having them deconstruct the classroom. The kids become even more distracted as they're constantly turning around to watch their friends pull down bulletin board paper and borders.

It seems impossible to get the kids settled down at this point, and eh, it's the end of the year, so you allow students to get noisier than you would normally and just focus on getting your paperwork done. The kids quickly realize you're pre-occupied and aren't addressing the noise level, so they stop pretending to work altogether.

Now they're calling out to each other, walking around the room, and being silly. This is when you get totally fed up, yell at the kids, and start mentally counting down to the last day of school for the millionth time.

***This year, things are going to be different.*** We're going to put systems in place now that will keep your class engaged, allow you to delegate many of your end-of-year tasks to them in an orderly and systematic way, and help you prepare your classroom for summer well in advance so you're not stressed out.

### How to keep kids on-task when spring fever's in the air

#### Stay on a predictable schedule and keep your routines in place

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## Use high-interest, engaging activities for the 2 weeks of school

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## How to delegate end-of-year tasks to students

### Don't start deconstructing your room until the second-to-last day

I've seen teachers close up their classroom libraries, centers, and so on a full month in advance so that they don't feel overwhelmed with cleaning, organizing, and packing up the room during the last week. However, this throws off all their daily routines, and ramps up kids' excitement levels and behavioral issues. **It really doesn't take longer than a few hours to deconstruct a classroom with students when you have an organized plan**, so you can choose to set aside those hours at the very end of the year.

I have experimented with many different approaches and can tell you without a doubt that it's best not to have kids help deconstruct the classroom until the second-to-last day of school. **If you do it any sooner or try to spread the tasks out over a week or two, it will be very difficult for the kids to concentrate on academic work because the room screams, "We're done here!"**



## END OF YEAR CHECKLISTS & CLOSE OUT SYSTEM

Many of your colleagues will look at your room during the last week of school and nervously ask when you're planning to start taking things down. Don't stress out! **There are plenty of things you'll be doing in advance to make the end of the year go smoothly (I'll share more in the next section.) Just keep the *classroom looking exactly same for as long as possible*** so you can keep your regular routines in place, and on the second-to-last day of school, turn your full attention to overseeing classroom deconstruction.

**Keep the class engaged in meaningful tasks while a handful of students help deconstruct**

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**Create an efficient system in which you assign tasks to pairs of students**

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### Kid-friendly tasks for end-of-year

Here are some examples of jobs you can assign to your students—a [longer and completely editable list of jobs is included with this resource.](#) Simply cross out or delete the ones that don't apply to you and add additional tasks as needed.

- taking down bulletin board borders and paper
- packing books up
- recording textbook numbers and stacking texts on shelves
- labeling everything with masking tape marked with the teacher's name
- returning materials to the library, science lab, etc.
- re-organizing math manipulatives, science lab equipment, etc.
- checking centers for stations for missing or misplaced pieces
- straightening the class library so all books are categorized correctly and neatly
- testing out dry erase markers to see which ones need to be thrown away
- taking student name labels off of materials, cubbies, coat hooks, desk, etc.



**My third graders were usually able to complete every task on the editable list in less than two hours using the process explained above: we'd start around 10 a.m. and be done by noon, with a handful of miscellaneous tasks completed after lunch.**

**I know it's scary to wait until the second-to-last day of school to handle these tasks, but trust me (and the hundreds of 40 Hour Teacher Workweek Club members who have tried this.) It really does work!**



# END OF YEAR CHECKLISTS & CLOSE OUT SYSTEM

## How to prepare in advance for the summer classroom shutdown

While the actual room deconstruction and student involvement don't happen until the second-to-last day, there's lots of other work to be done that you can distribute throughout the weeks before school ends in order to work at a manageable pace.

<p>On the second-to-last-day of school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delegate the kid-friendly tasks to pairs of students while the others independently complete an end-of-year activity. Remember, if you call too many pairs at one time, kids should be sitting down doing their end-of-year work.</li> </ul>	<p>earlier on and the more low-key stuff (like a simple class pizza party) on the last few days of school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin completing any close-out tasks and paperwork that are required. These are often small, annoying tasks that I prefer to tackle in batches rather than worry myself over them. You can set aside time to do these tasks this week to get it all done.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>End of Year Checklist</b></p> <p>Edit this document to create a final personalized version you can reuse every school year. Then write the tasks into your Weekly To-Do List so you can ensure they get done on the appropriate days.</p> <p><b>2-4 weeks before your last day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decide on any special end-of-year activities you would like to do with students. Notify parents, get administrative permission, and collect materials and supplies.</li> <li>Catch up on any organizational tasks you've been meaning to get around to, such as filing. Try to get your room as clutter-free as possible so you have less to pack and/or put away when school lets out. (More suggestions for this in the next section.)</li> <li>If you're new to the school, talk to your team leader and colleagues about your school's specific traditions and expectations. There may be an end-of-year picnic, party, or ceremony that you need to begin preparing for. Also find out whether you'll be getting a checklist with close-out tasks on it, and what typically needs to be done to finish the year.</li> <li>List the big organizational jobs that you want to get done, and assign them to specific days or weeks. You can work slowly and spread them out over several weeks (ie, clean out your file cabinet one week, clean out the storage closet, containers, and posters the next, and reorganize centers and manipulatives the third week.) Or, you could batch it: plan to stay late after school each day for one week (perhaps the second to last week of school) and tackle one of these tasks each afternoon. The important thing is to write down a plan that will work for you so jobs don't slip through the cracks or pile up on you all at once. If you're feeling anxious about getting everything done, start sooner rather than later.</li> <li>Prepare end of year awards. You can use the ones provided in your End of Year Surprise TpT Bonus sent in early May.</li> </ul> <p><b>1 week before your last day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete any special end-of-year activities you planned. I recommend that you do NOT schedule an open house, field trip, or other 'big event' for the last week of school! You'll be frazzled, the kids will be hyper, and the room will be a wreck because you're in the process of deconstructing it. You will definitely not want any parents or visitors in your room when it's half undone. I suggest doing the elaborate end-of-year activities</li> </ul>	<p>should not be allowed to help. You also so that the tasks get done correctly to sit at your desk to do end-of-year a lot of students out of their seats not paying attention.</p> <p>ure with your name and room number. Students love to help with this, so level chairs, specialists, etc., to submit.</p> <p>is who don't bring their backpacks and other belongings. Some kids (girls and won't send them despite my stacks on the last day or two of schoolbooks, and classroom materials) you don't run the risk of sending them home, and if you forget to return anything at all. Sending things home one day led down with too much stuff on it.</p> <p>or students</p> <p>ut their desks and scrub them down with three or four buckets and sponges. A clean desk looks like, Be very careful of the kids are playing around or making you use reinforcement narration to send time how the job is done. Assign, and have a few kids at a time to take. Afterwards, ask for a responsible of the desks of students who lost their math problems, or do handwipes and tables. This gets the top squares</p>	<p>lots of fun. You can do this as a whole class activity or with small groups of students at a time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send home students' school supplies and collect anything unwanted for your reserves. Wait until the end of the day to do this so you can be sure kids will not need pencils or crayons anymore. You can ask for class donations if you want—lots of my students would give me their old glue, rulers, and so on, since they would all want new supplies for the fall, anyway.</li> <li>Relax and enjoy the kids! This is the last time you'll all be together. By the afternoon, you should have just about everything done anyway, so have some fun and spend time talking and playing together.</li> </ul> <p><b>Final teacher work day(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use any days you are given after the students' last day to finish cleaning and organizing. Rely heavily on your Weekly To-Do List to ensure you haven't forgotten small tasks and have scheduled tasks into time slots that work for your schedule.</li> <li>Complete all cumulative folders, inventories, and other paperwork.</li> <li>Turn in your gradebook, lesson plans, and attendance, if required.</li> <li>Always pack up and put away the contents of your desk LAST. You will be searching for pens, paperclips, and staplers until you walk out the door for the last time, so there's no point in trying to put those items away early.</li> <li>Put in requests for maintenance over the summer.</li> <li>Protect school and personal belongings that will stay in the classroom. Cover furniture and/or important personal items with sheets to protect them from dust. Lock up valuables and store fragile items away where the custodian won't accidentally break them.</li> <li>Pack up personal belongings you want to take home. Bring chart paper, markers, binders, etc. if you will need them in order to plan lessons and activities over the summer.</li> <li>Turn in classroom keys and celebrate!</li> </ul>	<p>to students. Use the info from the more tasks that need to be done (or as or parts of jobs to your delegation</p> <p>time, you may have accumulated folders, etc. Returning them is a great</p> <p>you want when report cards are due ten around to, so don't let yourself</p> <p>ed to submit a list. Students can track their work and fix errors than it</p> <p>ents' placement next year. This is, and so on.</p> <p>and filling out any associated of this and you can simply oversee</p> <p>ides for the quarter and year. If grades during the last week or two re allowed.</p> <p>ward certificates if your school does es.</p>

Use the guidelines in the [editable end-of-year checklist](#) to help you plan out your Weekly To-Do List during your last few weeks of school.

The checklist is organized six time periods:

- 2-4 weeks before your last day
- 1 week before your last day
- During your last week
- Second-to-last day of school
- Last day of school for students
- Final teacher work day(s)

You can move, add, or delete tasks as they apply to your specific teaching context.



## How to purge your classroom of clutter at the end of the year

**Work from a mindset of abundance rather than scarcity**

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**Clean and organize only when you're in a mindset of abundance and ready to purge**

[Redacted text block]

**Dedicate a week to slowly cleaning out your files and papers.**

[Redacted text block]



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

**Plan to stay late ONE day (no more than two) to clean your cabinets**

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

**Make a pile of everything you want to give away and have student volunteers carry it all out**

[Redacted]

**Avoid panicking over the things you're letting go of**

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



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**How to set yourself up now for success in the fall**

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**Give yourself a head start on tasks that create anxiety**

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**Make photocopies and laminate materials for the first 2 weeks of school**

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**DON'T create double work by starting tasks you'll have to re-do**

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## END OF YEAR CHECKLISTS & CLOSE OUT SYSTEM

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### Take action!

Start prepping for the end of the year using the editable checklists and timelines provided this week. You want to try to pace yourself and plan in advance when you will do each task. Just assigning each task to a specific week is enough for right now, and you can break things down into daily tasks when each week arrives.





**2-4 weeks before your last day**

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**1 week before your last day**

[Redacted content]



**During your last week**

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**On the second-to-last-day of school**

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**On the last day of school for students**

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**Final teacher work day(s)**

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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### **Kid-friendly tasks for end-of-year room deconstruction**

**Here are some examples of jobs you can assign to your students. Simply cross out the ones that don't apply to you and add additional tasks as needed. Call students over to you in pairs to assign each task, then check it off or delete it from the list when they're finished.**





## BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE...

I'm **Angela Watson**, the creator of this resource. I'm a National Board Certified Teacher with a masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction, and have 11 years of classroom teaching experience and over a decade of experience as an instructional coach. I currently work as a Productivity and Mindset Specialist in the area of educational consulting. In practical terms, this means I author books, design curriculum, and provide professional development services. Everything I do is centered on sharing more effective, efficient, and enjoyable ways of teaching and learning!

I founded my website ([TruthforTeachers.com](https://www.truthforteachers.com)) in 2003 to connect with other educators. You can now find thousands of ad-free articles and resources there from me and our K-12 teacher-writer's collective.

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