13 Ways to Beat the "First-Day" Jitters

1. **Know the rules.** Get acquainted beforehand with school policies and procedures, such as opening and closing hours, attendance procedures, fire drill regulations, lunchroom expectations, nurse services, etc.
2. **Find out where**. Familiarize yourself with the building. Locate the exits, the principal's office, the gym, the nurse's office, the cafeteria, the supply room, the faculty lounge, media center, etc.
3. **Introduce yourself.** Meet the teachers in your hall. They can be of real help in the first few weeks of school. Take the time to say "Hello" to other important people in your building- the librarian, the counselors, the school nurse, the cafeteria workers and custodians.
4. **Decorate your room.** Get your room ready. Make sure your classroom is friendly and livable for opening day. Put up pictures; design a colorful bulletin board, etc.
5. **Set a seating arrangement.** Start with one arrangement until you've established control and know your students' names. You'll want to change it later.
6. **Get your materials ready.** Make sure you have all the materials you'll need for getting school under way- paper, pencils, books, and so forth.
7. **Schedule your time.** Make a detailed schedule for the first few days, including times for each subject, restroom and lunch breaks, and other times your students will leave the room.
8. **Get there early.** On the first morning, arrive early so you'll have time to ask any last-minute questions, go over final plans, and relax before the students come in.
9. **Greet your pupils.** Be in your room when the pupils arrive. Have your name written on the whiteboard. Greet the students with a smile and a pleasant "Good Morning." Encourage them to be seated and remain so.
10. **Get down to business.** Make opening exercises brief. Your goal for the morning is to get down to business.
11. **Plan, plan, plan.** Create lesson plans for the first few days. Plan at least twice as much as you think you can cover. Write down everything. Detailed plans will give you a feeling of security when facing the class for the first time.
12. **Go over the rules.** Introduce your students to your classroom rules and regulations the first day. There must be a way of getting books and materials, of sharpening pencils, of entering and leaving the room, and so forth.
13. **Start the learning.** Make the first day of school a real one. Accomplish some constructive learning with your students. A good start yields big dividends later on.