

## Teacher Created Materials

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## 9 Teacher Tips to De-Stress During the Holiday

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The holidays are such a crazy time of year, especially in the classroom. Students are filled with excitement and anticipation, and it's not easy to manage both your classroom and your own holiday to-do list. That's why when the bell rings on the last day of school for the year, it's important to relax and unwind so that you return from break refreshed and ready to hit the ground running in January.

Here are my tips for de-stressing during the holiday season:

### Exercise

No matter whether you sport your yoga gear or a tracksuit, or exercise indoors or outside, it is important to get your body moving. Exercise releases stress-busting endorphins that will give you pep in your step and lift your mood.

### Ignore Your Teacher Bag

I know it might be hard—teacher guilt is *real*—but resist the temptation to crack open your lesson plan book or grade papers... for at least *some* of your holiday. You need some time to separate yourself from work to give your brain a break before getting back into “teacher mode.”

### Binge on Your Favorite TV Shows

While this shouldn't happen every day of your holiday break, there's nothing wrong with an all-day binge-a-thon. Or if you're like me, a holiday movie marathon. There's nothing better than snuggling on the couch with some holiday cookies or carton of ice cream, the fireplace roaring, and the remote in hand.

### Travel

Holiday travel can be stressful, but with so many places to go and people to see, the allure of travel can be hard to resist. If you decide to pack a bag and get away from it all, make sure to give yourself at least one day at home before you go back to school to get organized, do laundry, and stock your fridge.

### Read a Book

My “to-read” list is always a mile long and includes a mix of pleasure reading and professional reading. The holiday break is not the time to read more about increasing rigor in my instruction or supporting academic discourse. It's the time to crack open an actual novel for pleasure reading and losing myself in a good book.

### Indulge Your Hobby

Make sure to devote some time to doing things you love. Whether it's scrapbooking, hiking, baking, sewing, or artistic pursuits, carve out specific times for that activity so that it becomes a priority over the holiday break. When you're done, you will be glad that you didn't brush it aside.

### Pamper Yourself

You've been working hard this school year and you deserve to treat yourself. Whether it's a massage, a mani/pedi, or the haircut and color you've rescheduled twice because you were too busy, making time to focus solely on *you* will help you de-stress and be your best self during the holidays.

### Spend Time with Loved Ones

The holidays are a special time to share with friends and family. Think about ways to have fun such as game nights, looking at outdoor lights and decorations, going to the movies, or cooking meals together. Even something simple like drinking hot chocolate and taking a walk can build special holiday memories with the people you love.

### Do Something Charitable

Acts of kindness toward others are a great way to de-stress and help put into perspective all we have to be thankful for. Check in your area for volunteer opportunities at local homeless shelters or food banks to help serve meals. Donate gently used clothes, shoes, or socks. Purchase toys and drop them off at participating fire and police stations to distribute to children in need. No matter how you decide to give back, your philanthropy will leave you feeling fulfilled and happy to have helped.

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