Foundational Teacher Mentor Training

Introduction to
Mentoring Essentials

Participant Packet

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
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Introduction to Mentoring Essentials

Participant Packet

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Connector Template

Part 1: Getting Started
WHAT?

What role did mentors and/or colleagues play in your own induction experience? What were the most helpful supports? Fill in your response below**:**

Part 2: Big Ideas
SO WHAT have I learned? (Reflection)

A period of induction is important for all beginning teachers. All teachers deserve equitable access to quality mentoring and induction support. Consider the components and benefits of quality induction programs discussed in this chapter**:** *In what areas do you feel you have control or influence to change (examples include: regular meetings, improved communications from school leaders, your own professional learning and development, specific guidance)*

Part 3: Big Ideas
SO WHAT have I learned? (Reflection)

Effective mentors possess knowledge, skills, and behaviors supportive of educator growth and development. Relational trust is critical to the mentoring relationship and is reinforced through attributes. *How might your new learning influence the initial meeting with your beginning teacher*?

Part 4: Big Ideas
SO WHAT have I learned? (Reflection)

A common vision is important when defining effective practice. Professional standards provide a definition from which mentors can assess and support professional practices. Beginning teacher development is fluid, and mentors must adjust supports to meet the changing needs of the teacher. *How might the beginning teacher's self-assessment process inform the work of the mentor?*

Part 5: Big Ideas
SO WHAT have I learned (Reflection)?

The Educator Effectiveness System process is a framework for continuous improvement and is supported with quality mentoring and induction. *How might you work to cultivate a learning-centered environment which supports the beginning teacher with both district expectations and social/emotional needs?*

NOW WHAT?

How does learning lead to action?

Goal #1: Use the space below to write your goal. Then determine what action steps will be needed to achieve your goal, determine the anticipated timeline for your work, what supports are needed for each step, and what indicators you will use to determine success.

Action Step	Timeline	Supports Needed	Indicators of Success

Goal #2: Use the space below to write your goal. Then determine what action steps will be needed to achieve your goal, determine the anticipated timeline for your work, what supports are needed for each step, and what indicators you will use to determine success.

Action Step	Timeline	Supports Needed	Indicators of Success

**Behaviors that
BUILD TRUST**

Listens

Encourages

Helps others

Shares (thoughts, opinions, ideas)

Speaks frankly and directly

Consistently cooperates

Acts an equal

Accentuates the positive

Acts calmly under stress

Act spontaneously and authentically

Offers empathy

Fair and accurate

Freeing & allowing

Caring, friendly, smile

Accepts and tolerates

Transparent and open

Above-board

Open to new ideas and information

Verbal-nonverbal congruency

Resolves conflicts

Empowers and builds people up

Treats people as individuals
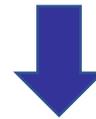
**Behaviors that
Reduce TRUST**

Discourages people

Put-down

Remains aloof, uninvolved, or ignores

Hides thoughts and feelings

Indirect, vague, or devious conversation

Erratic or unpredictable

Competes, stresses winning

Acts superior

Emphasizes deficiencies and negatives

Explodes, overreacts

Manipulative

Acts indifferent, cold

Evaluative and judgmental

Controlling or unconcerned

Standoffish, uninvolved

Criticizes, judges

Covert, underhanded, sneaky

Close-minded, opinionated

Actions differ from words

Threatens, punishes, acts vindictive

Cuts others down, insults, ridicules

Categorizes, stereotypes

Norms			
	Pausing	Putting ideas on the table	Presuming positive intentions
	Paraphrasing	Providing data	Maintaining Confidentiality
	Posing questions	Paying attention to self and others	

Source: Adaptive Schools, Seven Norms of Collaboration, by Garmston

High Quality Mentoring & Induction Practices

This New Teacher Center resource is for education leaders seeking to create and/or improve induction programs with practices that support teacher retention, teacher development, and improved student learning.

Moving Toward

RIGOROUS MENTOR SELECTION BASED ON QUALITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR
Qualities may include: evidence of outstanding teaching practice, strong intra- and inter-personal skills, experience with adult learners, respect of peers, and current knowledge of professional development.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR MENTORS
Effective teachers don't always know what it is about their teaching that is effective. Many mentors are also surprised to find that translating knowledge to students is not the same as translating knowledge to adults. High-quality, ongoing training as well as a professional learning community are needed to help mentors develop the skills to identify and translate the elements of effective teaching to beginning teachers.

SANCTIONED TIME FOR MENTOR-TEACHER INTERACTIONS
Mentors need sanctioned time to focus on beginning teacher development. Mentors and beginning teachers should have 1.25 to 2.5 hours per week to allow for the most rigorous mentoring activities. That time should be protected by teachers and administrators.

MULTI-YEAR MENTORING
Mentoring should be intensive and ongoing for at least two years in order to improve teacher practice and, consequently, student achievement. NTC and other research suggest that most deep learning about instruction through mentoring happens during the second and third years of teaching.

INTENSIVE AND SPECIFIC GUIDANCE MOVING TEACHING PRACTICE FORWARD
Mentors who are trained to draw upon professional teaching standards and appropriate content area standards can focus their support on instructional growth and concrete steps to help new teachers improve their practice. Example: "Let's look at your assessment data and talk about what strategies will help you address the concern you had about reaching your struggling English Language Learner students."

Moving Away From

CHOOSING MENTORS WITHOUT CRITERIA OR AN EXPLICIT PROCESS
Without strong criteria and a rigorous selection process, there is a risk that mentors may be chosen based more on availability or seniority, rather than their qualifications to engage in meaningful interactions with beginning teachers.

INSUFFICIENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR MENTORS
Without ongoing, high-quality training to support their development, mentors miss out on the guidance and professional community they need to support the developing practice of beginning teachers and address the challenges they face.

MEETINGS HAPPEN OCCASIONALLY OR 'WHENEVER THE MENTOR AND TEACHER ARE AVAILABLE
Often both parties are so busy that meeting time gets relegated down the list of priorities. The short fragments of time that may be found are typically insufficient for fostering real relationships and growth.

MENTORING FOR FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS ONLY
One-year mentoring programs are great at providing the initial support first-year teachers need to survive but are insufficient to help teachers reach optimal effectiveness.

NON-SPECIFIC, EMOTIONAL OR LOGISTICAL SUPPORT ALONE
Emotional support is important, but alone is not sufficient to improve teacher practice. Without specific instructional feedback, mentoring cannot impact student learning. Example: "You're doing a great job, Jane. Keep it up!

Moving Toward	Moving Away From

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS AND DATA-DRIVEN CONVERSATIONS

Just like student learning, beginning teacher learning should be data-driven and standards-based. To be effective, feedback to beginning teachers must be grounded in evidence about their practice, including information gathered through classroom observations and student work. Use of professional teaching standards, documentation of mentoring conversations, and data collection on various components of classroom practice ensures a solid structure for focusing on continuous instructional growth.

INFORMAL AND NON-EVIDENCE BASED FEEDBACK

The rigor of the program may be compromised when interactions are too often based on informal conversation and opinions not drawn from evidence. Without a structure and focus on real-time data derived from beginning teacher practice, interactions may not result in improved teaching practice.

ONGOING BEGINNING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Beginning teachers benefit from a professional learning community that is guided by professional teaching standards and appropriate content area standards, and focused on teacher development, problem-solving, and mutual support. Opportunities such as regularly scheduled seminars and online learning communities provide a context for rich networking, professional dialogue, and reflection, as well as combating isolation.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NOT SPECIFICALLY TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

Novices are in a unique developmental phase that cannot be addressed by "one-size-fits-all" workshops or trainings. Professional development disconnected from teacher needs can feel irrelevant, at best, and in many situations, only serves to overwhelm beginning teachers.

CLEAR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators play a critical role in setting the stage for beginning teacher and mentor success, creating time for induction, and establishing a positive culture for teacher development in their buildings and in the system. Professional development for administrators, including ongoing communication about the needs of new teachers and the nature of the program, ensures that they understand their role in fully supporting induction.

LACK OF TRAINING/COMMUNICATION WITH ADMINISTRATORS

Without clearly articulated strategies to support beginning teachers and protected induction activity time, principals may inadvertently undermine the prospects of beginning teacher success (e.g., assigning beginning teachers the most challenging classes, assigning additional responsibilities, or not anticipating their needs for basic resources).

COLLABORATION WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Strong communication and collaboration among stakeholders, including administration, school boards, union/association leadership, and professional partners creates a culture of commitment and ensures success.

ISOLATED PROGRAMMING AND LACK OF ALIGNMENT

Without strong partnerships and alignment, instructional initiatives can be undermined. Beginning teachers may receive mixed messages from varying support providers and feel overwhelmed, confused and frustrated by the different layers of information coming at them

NEW TEACHER CENTER

Mentor Self-Assessment

Using this tool: This tool is designed to reinforce self-knowledge and indicate areas for professional growth and development. Mentor self-assessment should be ongoing. Revisit the self-assessment at the beginning, mid, and end-of- year to inform your professional development. *Note: attributes listed below are representative of those found in literature.*

Directions: Assess yourself on each of the characteristics listed below by putting a check in the column that best represents your current practice: *Growth Needed, Consistent Practice,* or *Area of Strength.* Tally the results to determine one or two areas of focus for your professional growth as a mentor.

BUILDING TRUST:

	Growth Needed	Consistent	Strength
I maintain confidentiality in my interactions with others.	_____	_____	_____
I am open and honest with others, even when it's difficult to be so.	_____	_____	_____
I demonstrate respect through caring and concern.	_____	_____	_____
I respect the knowledge and expertise my colleagues bring to the conversation.	_____	_____	_____
When I'm wrong, I acknowledge it and act to remedy it.	_____	_____	_____
I always speak of others as if they are in the room.	_____	_____	_____
I trust my colleagues.	_____	_____	_____
I give credit to and recognize others for their contributions.	_____	_____	_____
I assume positive intentions when interacting with others.	_____	_____	_____
I follow through with commitments.	_____	_____	_____
TOTALS	_____	_____	_____

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICE:

	Growth Needed	Consistent	Strength
I believe all students can learn and achieve at high levels.	_____	_____	_____
I respect the uniqueness of the individual.	_____	_____	_____
I acknowledge my personal bias and work to develop my own culturally responsive practices.	_____	_____	_____
I am comfortable addressing instances of bias and practices which limit equitable opportunities and outcomes for others.	_____	_____	_____
I am aware of and articulate my own biases, values, and beliefs within professional conversations.	_____	_____	_____
I use strengths-based, person-first language.	_____	_____	_____

	TOTALS			

INSTUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP:

	Growth Needed	Consistent	Strength
I am aware of and understand the Educator Effectiveness System expectations within my district.			
I can articulate knowledge of best practices as defined by professional standards and the framework my district uses to assess practice.			
I engage in routine analysis of student data to inform my practice.			
I routinely collaborate with my colleagues.			
I engage in continued professional development to improve upon my own practice.			
I routinely share with and support the practices of my colleagues.			
I work to create a shared vision and mission within my school and district.			
TOTALS			

REFLECTIVE PRACTICES:

	Growth Needed	Consistent	Strength
I am aware of my strengths and weaknesses and take steps to address areas of needed growth.			
I monitor and regulate my own emotional state in order to maintain focus on goals and outcomes.			
I seek out and use feedback in order to improve upon my professional practices.			
I anticipate learning from the beginning educator.			
I value feedback from my peers and/or evaluator.			
I recognize when I've damaged a trusting relationship and work to repair it.			
TOTALS			

SUPPORT OF BEGINNING TEACHERS:

	Growth Needed	Consistent	Strength

I am prepared to advocate for the beginning teacher in order to provide appropriate support.

I am prepared to uphold the confidentiality of our work with my principal or colleagues.

I am committed to the success of the beginning educator.

I am committed to the role of mentor.

I understand the range of beginning educator needs and am prepared to adjust my supports accordingly.

TOTALS

COMMUNICATION:

	Growth Needed	Consistent	Strength

I am intentional with and use nonjudgmental language when working with others.

I am careful not to assume a position of expertise, but rather draw out ideas and solutions from others.

I practice using verbal and nonverbal language which support the norms of collaboration.

I listen as much, if not more, than I speak.

I am transparent in my interactions with others.

TOTALS

*Tally the results to determine one or two areas of focus
for your professional growth as a mentor.*

New Teacher Development for Every Inning

New Teacher Center has created a series of resources to help you assess and plan for an all-star team of effective educators for next school year. So far, you've been able to assess whether your teachers will be ready for opening day, if all your coaches are working from the same playbook, and how to reduce strikeouts from day one.

Now it's time to turn attention toward understanding teachers' developmental needs at every "inning" of their first year. Are you familiar with the "Phases of First-Year Teaching," documented by New Teacher Center founder and CEO Ellen Moir?

While not every new teacher goes through this exact sequence, these phases are very useful in helping everyone involved—mentors, coaches, administrators and others—in the process of supporting new teachers. They also highlight why it's critical to provide comprehensive mentoring and induction for new teachers, to ease the transition from student teacher to full-time professional. Use this guide to recognize the phases new teachers go through in their first year, and to help you understand how and why to design support programs that make the first year of teaching a more positive, successful experience.

Phases of First-Year Teachers' Attitude Toward Teaching
by Ellen Moir, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, New Teacher Center

Anticipation · Survival · Disillusionment · Rejuvenation · Reflection · Anticipation

Aug   Sept   Oct   Nov   Dec   Jan   Feb   Mar   Apr   May   June   July

ANTICIPATION PHASE

The anticipation phase begins during the student teaching portion of preservice preparation. The closer student teachers get to the completion of their assignment, the more excited and anxious they become about their first teaching position. They tend to romanticize the role of the teacher and the position. New teachers enter with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals.

> "I was elated to get the job but terrified about going from the simulated experience of student teaching to being the person completely in charge."

This feeling of excitement carries new teachers through the first few weeks of school.

SURVIVAL PHASE

The first month of school is overwhelming for new teachers. They are learning a lot and at a very rapid pace. Beginning teachers are constantly bombarded with a variety of problems and situations they had not anticipated. Despite the lessons of their preparation programs, new teachers are caught off guard by the realities of teaching.

> "I thought I'd be busy, something like student teaching, but this is crazy. I'm feeling like I'm constantly running. It's hard to focus on other aspects of my life."

During the survival phase, most new teachers struggle to keep their heads above water. They become very focused and consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching. There is little time to stop and reflect on their experiences. It is not uncommon for new teachers to spend up to seventy hours a week on schoolwork. Particularly overwhelming is the constant need to develop curriculum. Experienced teachers routinely reuse excellent lessons and units from the past. New teachers, still uncertain of what will really work, must develop their lessons for the first time. Even depending on unfamiliar prepared curriculum such as textbooks is enormously time consuming.

> "I thought there would be more time to get everything done. It's like working three jobs: 7:30–2:30, 2:30–6:00, with more time spent in the evening and on weekends."

Although tired and surprised by the amount of work, first-year teachers usually maintain a tremendous amount of energy and commitment during the survival phase, harboring hope that soon the turmoil will subside.

DISILLUSIONMENT PHASE

After six to eight weeks of nonstop work and stress, new teachers enter the disillusionment phase. The intensity and length of this phase varies among new teachers. The extensive time commitment, the realization that things are probably not going as smoothly as they want, and low morale contribute to this period of disenchantment. New teachers begin questioning both their commitment and their competence. Many new teachers get sick during this phase.

Compounding an already difficult situation is the fact that new teachers are confronted with several new events during this time frame. They are faced with back-to-school night, parent conferences, and their first formal evaluation by the site administrator. Each of these important milestones places an already vulnerable individual in a very stressful situation.

Back-to-school night means giving a speech to parents about plans for the year that are most likely still unclear in the new teacher's mind. Some parents are uneasy when they realize the teacher is just beginning and many times pose questions or make demands that can intimidate a new teacher.

Parent conferences require new teachers to be highly organized, articulate, tactful, and prepared to confer with parents about each student's progress. This type of communication with parents can be awkward and difficult for a beginning teacher. New teachers generally begin with the idea that parents are partners in the learning process and are not prepared for parents' concerns or criticisms. These criticisms hit new teachers at a time of waning self-esteem.

This is also the first time that new teachers are formally evaluated by their principal. They are, for the most part, uncertain about the process itself and anxious about their own competence and ability to perform. Developing and presenting a "showpiece" lesson is time-consuming and stressful.

During the disillusionment phase classroom management is a major source of distress.

> *"I thought I'd be focusing more on curriculum and less on classroom management and discipline. I'm stressed because I have some very problematic students who are low academically, and I think about them every second my eyes are open."*

At this point, the accumulated stress of the first-year teacher, coupled with months of excessive time allotted to teaching, often brings complaints from family members and friends. This is a very difficult and challenging phase for new entries into the profession. They express self-doubt, have lower self-esteem and question their professional commitment. In fact, getting through this phase may be the toughest challenge they face as a new teacher.

REJUVENATION
The rejuvenation phase is characterized by a slow rise in the new teacher's attitude toward teaching. It generally begins in January. Having a winter break makes a tremendous difference for new teachers. It allows them to resume a more normal lifestyle, with plenty of rest, food, exercise, and time for family and friends. This vacation is the first opportunity that new teachers have for organizing materials and planning curriculum. It is a time for them to sort through materials that have accumulated and prepare new ones. This breath of fresh air gives novice teachers a broader perspective with renewed hope.

They seem ready to put past problems behind them. A better understanding of the system, an acceptance of the realities of teaching, and a sense of accomplishment help to rejuvenate new teachers. Through their experiences in the first half of the year,

beginning teachers gain new coping strategies and skills to prevent, reduce or manage many problems they are likely to encounter in the second half of the year. Many feel a great sense of relief that they have made it through the first half of the year. During this phase, new teachers focus on curriculum development, long-term planning and teaching strategies.

> *"I'm really excited about my story writing center, although the organization of it has at times been haphazard. Story writing has definitely revived my journals."*

The rejuvenation phase tends to last into spring with many ups and downs along the way. Toward the end of this phase, new teachers begin to raise concerns about whether they can get everything done prior to the end of school. They also wonder how their students will do on the tests, questioning once again their own effectiveness as teachers.

> *"I'm fearful of these big tests. Can you be fired if your kids do poorly? I don't know enough about them to know what I haven't taught, and I'm sure it's a lot."*

REFLECTION
The reflection phase, beginning in May, is a particularly invigorating time for first-year teachers. Reflecting back over the year, they highlight events that were successful and those that were not. They think about the various changes that they plan to make the following year in management, curriculum, and teaching strategies. The end is in sight, and they have almost made it. More importantly, a vision emerges as to what their second year will look like, which brings them to a new phase of anticipation.

> *"I think that for next year I'd like to start the letter puppets earlier in the year to introduce the kids to more letters."*
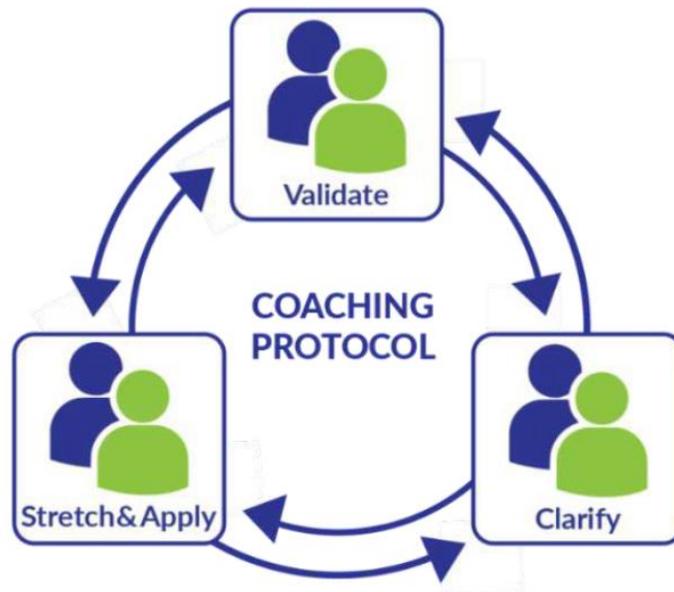
Phases of First Year Teaching

Phase Name: _____

School Calendar Events	Tools/Resources	Focus of Mentor Meetings

Validation:

"Tell me what went well today."

"I can see you are making an effort to extend your wait time."

"The students transitioned and engaged with the task right away."

Clarify:

"I want to make sure I understand the concern correctly."

"Tell me more about that."

"What makes you think that?"

Stretch and Apply:

"How might you engage students in the assessment of their own learning?"

"How might you apply this strategy in your lesson on Thursday?"

"I look forward to hearing the results when I check in at the end of the week."

For more information, view the Professional Conversations online module:
https://media.dpi.wi.gov/ee/professional-conversations/story_html5.html

User Guide Scavenger Hunt

Directions: Complete as many of the squares as you can in the time allotted.
Be ready to discuss and share with others.

A teacher's first year in the field or district, referred to as which EE cycle year?	SLO data can include what types of evidence?	What are the three required EE conferences?
What two goals are included in the Educator Effectiveness Plan?	Which assessment method will provide the best evidence to monitor student learning throughout the SLO cycle?	What tool or resource might help a mentor to guide the beginning educator in the development of a quality SLO?
What are the differences in the approaches to classroom observations?	What are the three types of language stems used in professional conversations?	Which professional practice framework performance level describes potential knowledge and skills, but inconsistent application?

School Culture Assessment

An integrated, supportive school culture and climate supports the professional growth and development of the beginning teacher.

Directions: Read each statement below and indicate whether it "*Never*," "*Sometimes*," "*Often*," or "*Very Often*" reflects your sense of, belief about, or knowledge of the culture within your school.

Collectively, your responses will provide a representation of the overall professional culture within your school. Responses marked as "*Never*" or "*Sometimes*" indicate barriers for the beginning teacher. If barriers exist, consider what actions you might take to help improve the culture.

Professional Culture

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Teachers share ideas and materials with each other.	___	___	___	___
Teachers observe each other teach.	___	___	___	___
Teachers work together to develop and improve the curriculum.	___	___	___	___
Teachers look at student work and analyze student learning together.	___	___	___	___
Opportunities for teachers to work together are structured into the school day.	___	___	___	___
Experienced teachers share their expertise through leading in-school workshops and/or in-services.	___	___	___	___
The principal visits teachers' classrooms and provides feedback that facilitates teacher learning.	___	___	___	___
The principal's interaction with teachers focuses on improving teaching and learning.	___	___	___	___
Beginning teachers seek and receive assistance from several experienced teachers.	___	___	___	___
Beginning teachers work with experienced teachers in study groups and/or professional learning communities focused on improving teaching and learning.	___	___	___	___
The principal and experienced teachers view their work with beginning teachers as opportunities to learn.	___	___	___	___
The principal and experienced teachers value the knowledge beginning teachers bring to the school.	___	___	___	___

Curricular Guidance and Resources

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Beginning teachers are given comprehensive curricular materials.	___	___	___	___
Beginning teachers are provided opportunities to work with their colleagues on the curriculum.	___	___	___	___

Assignments and Workload

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Beginning teachers are not assigned the most difficult classes and/or students to teach.	___	___	___	___
Beginning teachers are assigned fewer classes than experienced teachers.	___	___	___	___
Beginning teachers have only a few different preparations. (They teach several sections of the same courses.)	___	___	___	___

Schoolwide Conditions for Learning

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
The school has clear and consistent student discipline policies.	___	___	___	___
The school has clear and consistent grading policies.	___	___	___	___
The principal and teachers consistently enforce these policies.	___	___	___	___
The principal and teachers share and articulate high standards for teaching and learning.	___	___	___	___
Teachers in this school take responsibility for their own and each other's student learning.	___	___	___	___

Adapted from the Michigan State University ASSIST program school climate survey.

Introduction to Mentoring Essentials Resources

Part One: Introduction

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