



Teacher Tip of the Week

Some Quickies on What Works in Teaching



Points to Ponder

Teachers, especially new teachers, are always on the lookout for ideas and practices that work. In the course of a career as a teacher, you will discover many things that work for you, but maybe not for your fellow teacher down the hall. You will also, if you get really good at teaching, invent things that work, and that is what this little page is all about -- what works.

Not everyone agrees on the most effective ways to teach content to all children or to motivate them. Much depends on variables over which the teacher has little, if any control. However, there are a number of principles that have nearly universal agreement. Below are a number of these.

READING

When reading is taught by someone who reads a lot, and who has skills in both whole language and phonetics instruction, student achievement in reading increases significantly.

Children are more likely to derive meaning from a reading assignment if the teacher precedes the lesson with background information and follows it with discussion.

When students work in a cooperative learning situation, possibilities exist for increases in self-esteem and the responsibility they take for their own work.

When students hear good readers read, and when the teacher encourages students repeatedly to read passages aloud they are more likely to become good readers.

Telling young children stories can motivate them to want to read. Storytelling

SCIENCE AND MATH

Children in the early grades learn mathematics more effectively when they use physical objects in their lessons.

Children learn science best when they are able to do experiments and see "science in action."

In addition to learning how to solve mathematics problems to derive an exact answer, children also learn mathematics by learning to estimate answers.



WRITING

An effective way to teach writing is to teach it as a process of brainstorming, composing, revising, and editing. Having a clear sense of purpose for any writing assignment helps students become more interested in writing and the quality of their writing.

Children learn vocabulary better when the words they study are related to familiar experiences and the knowledge they already possess.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social studies encompasses a wide range of content. It is not learned by memorizing facts - there are just too many.

Having students construct their own knowledge by making connections about facts and ideas reinforces and deepens understandings about the content.

Simulations, games, and role play (continued on next page...)

Irresponsible Students:

- WHAT CAUSES NORMALLY RESPONSIBLE STUDENTS TO OCCASIONALLY BEHAVE IRRESPONSIBLY?
- WHAT SPECIFIC CONTRACTS HAVE YOU FOUND HELPFUL WITH IRRESPONSIBLE STUDENTS?
- HOW CAN YOU HELP STUDENTS WHOSE IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR IS CLEARLY A REFLECTION OF THEIR HOME ENVIRONMENT?



HELPFUL WEBSITES FOR TEACHERS

<http://www.didyouknow.cd/facts.htm>

Fascinating Facts and Interesting Stories



The New Teacher Support Program

Some Quickies on What Works in Teaching

cont...

-ing can be one of the most effective techniques for teaching social studies, but require the teacher to be a good explainer of the background information and manager of the activities.

STUDENT MOTIVATION

When teachers explain exactly what students are supposed to learn and demonstrate the steps needed to accomplish a particular academic task, students learn more.

Student understanding increases and achievement rises when teachers ask questions that require students to apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information in addition to simply recalling facts.

When teachers set high expectations for students, communicate those expectations to the students and hold the students to them, student achievement rises.

Students are more motivated if they perceive value in what they are supposed to learn

When students connect success to personal effort, rather than ability or luck, they are more likely to be motivated to learn.

Young children, ages four through eight, attend more to social reinforcement and praise than to feedback about performance.

Older children are more extrinsically motivated and are more likely to engage in appropriate activities to get a good grade.

Inappropriate or indiscriminate use of extrinsic rewards has a long-term negative effect on student motivation to learn.—*Bob Kizlik*



“CHILDREN ARE COMPLETELY EGOISTIC; THEY FEEL THEIR NEEDS INTENSELY AND STRIVE RUTHLESSLY TO SATISFY THEM.”—SIGMUND FREUD

Master Teaching Tips...MOTIVATION



It is not uncommon to occasionally feel that our students need a “pep talk.” if you want these talks to work, follow these five guidelines: First, determine exactly what you want students to “feel” when you are finished. Second, know precisely what you want them to do after your talk. Third, make sure you give them the atti-

tudes, skills, or resources needed to meet your expectations. Fourth, determine what students will gain or how they will benefit from your urgings. Fifth, know how you will evaluate what you say as well as how students respond. If you ignore these guidelines, your “pep talk” may fall short of your expectations.



Meet the Principals: LISA MAJORS

School: **West Elementary**

How long have you been a principal at this school? **I have been at West for 6 years.**

Colleges and universities attended:

Cumberland University and Middle Tennessee State University

Special interests and hobbies: **gardening, reading historical novels, and shopping!**

Who or what inspires you each day as you do your job and why?

My special needs students inspire me daily! They meet the day with smiles and enthusiasm. This really puts my “so-called” problems into perspective.

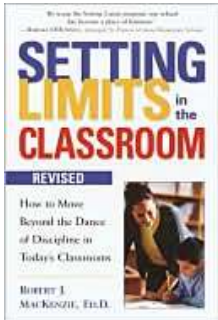
If you had not gone into education, what type of job would you have chosen? **I sometimes wish I had gone into nursing.**

What is the favorite part of your job? **Watching the development of young, innocent, shy 5 year-old children into students who are self-confident and socially adept.**

(Sometimes I think they’ll never make it, but they do! I am awed and inspired by them.)

ADVICE AND SUPPORT FROM THE VETERANS

Suggested Reading for Teachers



Setting Limits in the Classroom: How to Move beyond the Dance of Discipline in Today's Classrooms by Robert J. Mackenzie, Robert J. MacKenzie

Without the knowledge and skills I learned from this book, I would be another person who dropped out of the teaching profession. My first two years of teaching were extremely difficult because of my lack of effective classroom management skills. I had continuous behavior problems in class that made my classroom an unpleasant place to work. Veteran teachers at my school referred me to this book. They stated this book was so good that they still reviewed it every few years. I read the book and it revolutionized my classroom and behavior management skills. The book made me aware of what I was doing in the classroom to continue and perpetuate behavior problems. The book offers realistic and practical techniques to solve most problems encountered in the classrooms. I wholeheartedly recommend this book!



JOANNE HARRELL

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION TITLE I SUPERVISOR

Display and explain your positive rules (3-5 of them), and be consistent all year.

Rehearse your procedures (passing papers, transition times, small group work).

Reading instruction that leads to increased student achievement is accomplished by working in flexible, small groups.

Do Formative Assessments, based on State Standards, on a regular basis. Then have a plan of intervention for those who need it.

New Teacher Support Group Participants



LENA BRYANT
MT. JULIET ELEMENTARY
2ND GRADE
WHY DID YOU BECOME A

TEACHER?

"My decision to become a teacher was a journey that began after my first year in school. I fell in love with learning and the way my teacher make it fee like magic. Over the years I realized that teaching was a calling for me and now that I've got a "place of my own", with kids of my own, it is a wonderful feeling."—Lena Bryant



JENNIFER WILSON
MT. JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
SOCIAL STUDIES


WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I want to see if I can change students' lives like some of my teachers changed mine."—Jennifer Wilson

It is the policy of the Wilson County School System not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its educational programs or employment policies as required by Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.







Marzano's Nine Essential Instructional Strategies

Number Seven: **Setting Objectives & Providing Feedback**

Setting objectives can provide students with a direction for their learning. Goals should not be too specific; they should be easily adaptable to students' own objectives.

Applications:

- * Set a core goal for a unit, and then encourage students to personalize that goal by identifying areas of interest to them. Questions like "I want to know" and "I want to know more about . . ." get students thinking about their interests and actively involved in the goal-setting process.
- * Use contracts to outline the specific goals that students must attain and the grade they will receive if they meet those goals.

Research shows that feedback generally produces positive results. Teachers can never give too much; however, they should manage the form that feedback takes.

Applications:

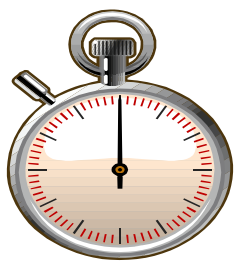
- * Make sure feedback is corrective in nature; tell students how they did in relation to specific levels of knowledge. Rubrics are a great way to do this.
- * Keep feedback timely and specific.
- * Encourage students to lead feedback sessions.

Next week #8: Generating and Testing Hypotheses

Time Management Tips for Teachers

Continued from last week...

5. Learn to say "no" to tasks that are really not that important to achieving your personal and professional goals or your school's mission. Take a few seconds to think about a request before committing yourself to any action.
6. Establish classroom routines and stick with them.
7. Eliminate clutter and devise ways to keep it from recurring.



8. Take time to set up an efficient filing system, then use it.
- GETTING A GRIP ON PAPERWORK**
1. Do your photocopying for the week all at once on Monday or Friday so you don't have to keep running back to the workroom.
 2. Use a three-ring binder to keep your unit lesson plans, activity sheets, reviews, and tests. This makes it easier for copies next time.

Continued next week

Need a Laugh?

off the mark by Mark Parisi
www.offthemark.com



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