



# Teacher Tip of the Week

## New Teacher Support Program 2008-2009

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Teacher Tip of the Week  
New Teacher Support  
Program  
Wilson County Schools  
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### Brainstorming vs. Outlining\*

#### **\*It Only Makes Sense That You Must Have Ideas Before You Can Outline**

Brainstorming is a method of generating new ideas leading to an outline. You can brainstorm by yourself, with the help of others, or with free software readily available.

Teaching students to effectively outline before producing an essay or research work can be an extremely overwhelming task for high school teachers.

Here are some suggestions for working with your students to determine the most effective method for them—to brainstorm or to outline? That is the question?

If your mind goes blank when you try to gather ideas for your essay, it may be because you know too much rather than not enough. Sometimes the mind is so full of ideas from all the research you've done that you are left spinning in your tracks with a wheel in the ditch. Brainstorming can give you traction.

#### **START BY FREE-WRITING**

Begin with some free writing. This means that you are to put everything you ever learned about paper organization, grammar, correctness, syntax, and the "Elements of Style" to the side. The point is just to dig up ideas that you didn't suspect you had. Don't predict an outcome. Ideally, do this when you are fresh and relaxed.

Just pick up a pen and write down the first thing that comes to mind. Don't worry if it doesn't seem connected to the task at hand. Just reach out and grab the first idea that floats by. Then get it down in the fewest words possible. Include stuff

you know you won't use. Try not to take yourself too seriously. When you have what looks like enough writing to start thinking about an outline, go back and select about five ideas that don't sound all that bad.

Can you prioritize the list? Are there any hypotheses that can be made about each idea? Can you summarize anything yet?

Now would be an excellent time to bounce these concepts off another person to hear how they sound and to get their reactions and thoughts.

Now might be a good time to take a break and let things percolate. Go for a short walk or take a shower. Stretch. Take deep breaths. Remind yourself that you are well on the way to getting this essay written.



#### **MIND MAPPING IT ALL TOGETHER**

When you return to your desk ready to work, write down any final thoughts that may occur to you. Now it's time to diagram all your ideas with the help of a mind map. This is another fun part of this process. Mind mapping helps you to generate ideas as well as sort out and develop the ones you already have.

Mind maps open up new ways of thinking that are not linear. It becomes easier to see the big picture. They are made for your right brain – the one that is intuitive, synthesizing and random. Turn off the logical and rational left brain for a while.

First put the central idea in the middle circle. Now add new ideas, action points and strategies that relate to it. Free associate. Don't judge too quickly. There are no boundaries. Just keep going.

Look for branches coming from the main idea. Then you will see that each

Continued on page 3

#### HELPFUL WEBSITE FOR TEACHERS



<http://www.rinkworks.com/brainfood/>

Give your mind a work out on our devious collection of puzzles. There are hundreds, ranging from word games to logic problems to riddles. Some are tricky.



#### Cutting Corners

##### TOOTHPASTE

When you are working with small children in the classroom, kids are always getting crayon and marker stains on their clothes.

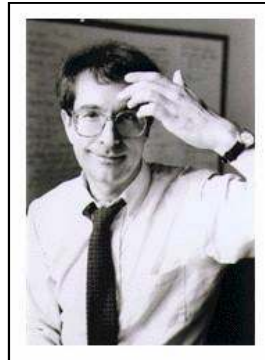
Toothpaste will get rid of almost any stain from any surface including permanent marker out of clothes!

## Part Six: Gardner and Multiple Intelligences

### PART SIX:

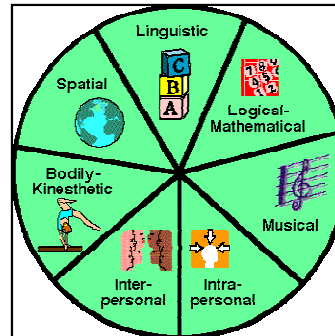
#### GARDNER AND MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Psychologist Howard Gardner argues that intelligence is not a single unitary property and proposes the existence of "multiple intelligences." He identifies seven types of intelligence: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Because each person has a different mix of these intelligences, learning is



best tailored to each individual's strengths, rather than emphasizing the linguistic and logical-mathematical approaches traditionally used in schools. A bodily kinesthetic learner, for instance, might grasp geometric concepts presented with hands-on manipulative far more easily than she would if they were presented in a more traditionally logical,

narrative fashion. A teaching approach that recognizes a variety of learning styles might encourage many individuals now lost by conventional methods.



Howard Gardner's  
Multiple Intelligences  
Chart

NOTABLE HOWARD  
GARDNER EDUCATION  
BOOKS

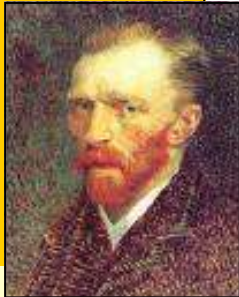
[Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons in Theory and Practice](#) by Howard Gardner

[Five Minds for the Future](#) by Howard Gardner

[Frames Of Mind: The Theory Of Multiple Intelligences](#) by Howard Gardner

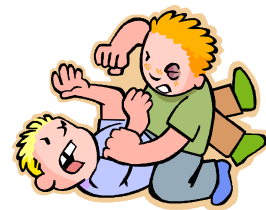
[The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think And How Schools Should Teach](#) by Howard Gardner

[Changing Minds: The Art And Science of Changing Our Own And Other People's Minds \(Leadership for the Common Good\)](#) by Howard Gardner



**"What would life be if we had no courage to attempt anything?"**

—Vincent van Gogh



A peer mediation program in public schools encourages students to resolve problems themselves, rather than resort to violence.

The mediation sessions are governed by at least five rules:

- Agree to try to solve the problem,
- Agree to tell the truth,

- Agree not to interrupt,
- Agree to no name-calling or put-downs; and,
- Agree not to physically fight.

Training consultants say students learn they have a responsibility for their own conflicts. Sources say, "the mediation session is set up to preserve or establish respect for individual feelings and needs. Students are given the task of creating workable solutions to their problems."

The process begins by asking students, "What

would you like to see happen to solve this problem?" Then, each is asked, "What can you do to help solve this problem?"

The teacher may restate the solution each has offered. If all agree, the settlement is written and each student is asked to sign it. If there is no agreement, the teacher helps the students to negotiate further until there is a solution.

Students are asked to tell their friends that the problem has been resolved.—*Better Teaching, Freda Jinks*

## Teachers mediate student conflicts

## New Teacher Support Participants:



**Noel Grizzard**  
Lakeview  
Elementary  
4th grade

### WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

*"I wanted to work with kids. I want to provide my students with the fun learning experience I did not always have. Everyday you work with kids is an adventure. There is never a boring day in this job. I just love to be around the students. When you see the light bulb come on when they understand something is the best part of the job."*—Noel Grizzard



**Periann Cantrell**  
Elize D. Patton  
Elementary  
K-5 Special  
Education

### WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

*"I became a teacher because I believe that I can truly make a difference in the lives of the children I teach. I can give them hope when they feel like no one cares and I can inspire them to pursue their dreams. My students know that I believe in them and that they can accomplish anything they put their minds to!"*—Katie Ackerman

## From the Bookshelf:



**Mini-lessons for Literature Circles** by Harvey Daniels, Nancy Steineke

Harvey Daniels' Literature Circles introduced tens of thousands of teachers to the power of student-led book discussions. Nancy Steineke's Reading and Writing Together showed how a teacher can nurture friendship and collaboration among young readers. Now, Daniels and Steineke team up to focus on one crucial element of the Literature Circle model; the short, teacher-directed lessons that begin, guide and follow-up every successful book club meeting.



**First the Egg** by Laura Vaccaro Seeger

This is a book about transformations...from egg to chicken, seed to flower, and caterpillar to butterfly. But it's also a book about creativity as paint becomes picture, word becomes story...and commonplace becomes extraordinary.

4-6 years of age

## Brainstorming vs. Outlining (continued from page 1)

that each branch is developing branches off that lesser branch. Keep adding relationships and connections. You can use images, symbols, codes and dimensions. But each word/image must be alone and sitting on its own line. The software will guide you.

### WRITE THE OUTLINE/ WRITE THE ESSAY

When you're finished with your map, you should easily be able to transfer what you came up with onto paper in outline form. When the outline is finished, you are ready to

write the first draft of your essay.

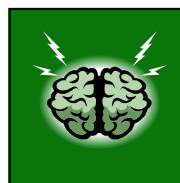
### WRAPPING UP THE PROCESS

In conclusion, you prepared for your essay not by coming up with a hypothesis based on your research alone, but by stream of consciousness brainstorming along with free writing without worrying worrying about how it sounded as you strove to just get the flights of fantasy ideas down on paper.

When this process was complete, you lifted the diagram into outline statements. It then became quite

simple to write the outline of your essay and the subsequent first draft. Mind mapping can be used not only for academic assignments but for personal decision making as well.

—Maryellen Grady





## Master Teacher Tips... Communication Skills

We often think of visual aids as a way to jazz up our presentations and lessons or to help us look good as speakers. But research claims that 80% of what a person remembers is information that he or she gained visually. Therefore, visuals heighten an audience's retention of information. Whether giving a class or a public speech, or conducting a back to school night, use visuals. They can be the best communication—even better than what you say.

When you are making a presentation, be careful about how you use your hands. If you don't, your audience may focus more on your body language than on your message. For instance, don't stand with your hands in your pockets. And never clasp your hands in front of your body as though they were a fig leaf. Finally, don't stand with your arms folded. These gestures all show you don't know what to do with your hands—and they may even effect your presentation. Use your hands to make appropriate gestures and to amplify what you say—or rest them on the podium in a relaxed way. By doing so, you will make sure your hands don't detract from what you are saying.



## Teacher FAQ

**QUESTION:** What is meant by “value-added”?

**ANSWER:** Value-added is a measure of change, or effect, brought about by a certain action. When the subject is teaching, the value-added is the amount of students' academic growth produced by a teacher.

The most compelling evidence for the importance of teacher quality initially came from economists who adapted value-added models from business to measure the effect of teachers on student learning. While the statistical methods are complex, the definition of effective teaching is not. Simply, researchers looked for the change in students' test scores according to the teacher they were assigned to. A highly effective teacher, therefore, is one whose students show the most gains from one year to the next.

## For a Laugh!

