



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2008-2009

Terry Edwards, Program Coordinator

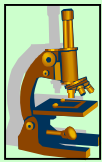
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Teacher Tip of the Week
New Teacher Support
Program
Wilson County Schools
615-453-7282

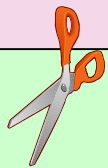
Seven Brilliant Things Teachers can do with Technology

HELPFUL WEBSITE FOR TEACHERS



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Cutting Corners

COMIC STRIPS

Cut apart comic strips and pass them out to your students. They must walk around the room to find the rest of their comic strip, creating a team. This activity is an easy way to create groups. The kids think it's fun so there are no complaints.



1. **Empower kids with technology.** Technology is an amplifier of natural abilities. Brilliant teachers see that good writers become better writers, good debaters become better debaters, good French speakers become better

French speakers, good mathematical problem-solvers become better mathematical problem-solvers, and so on. by helping their students harness technology. They do not see technology as a crutch, but as a propellant. Brilliant teachers have experienced the empowering power of technology themselves. Brilliant teachers use good assessment strategies to rigorously determine the quality of technology-enhanced projects.

2. **Creatively find and use resources.** I can't believe the technology found in some of our teachers' classrooms. And it was neither provided by our department nor stolen (I don't think). Through personal purchase, through parent-teacher groups, through grants, through business partnerships, through parental contacts, through fund raising, and through classroom supply budgets, brilliant teachers amazingly amass digital cameras and clickers and sensors and classroom computer labs. One of our brilliant teachers MacGyver-ed his own document camera out of an old camcorder, plastic pipe, and duct tape. He calls it his Grover (not his Elmo).

3. **Make conferencing real-time.** Brilliant teachers don't wait until scheduled parent conferences to communicate with homes. Through e-mail, Web sites, online grade books, blogs, wikis, and, yes, even telephone calls, technology gives teachers the ability to make parents partners who help assure students' timely, quality work. They post newsletters, spelling lists, as-

essment tools, assignments, grades, calendars, discussion lists, and tips. They read and respond to parent e-mails. Most parents *want* to be involved, but they like knowing *how*.

4. **Put kids in touch with the world.** The classrooms of brilliant teachers [hokey metaphor

alert] have no walls. Those teachers "get" the flat world challenge, understanding that tomorrow's citizens and workers will have an advantage if they can work successfully with other cultures. Brilliant teachers give even the most remote students a glimpse and dream of the bigger world -- and help them both communicate and empathize with those in it.

5. **Accept the role of co-learner.** One of the best signs of intelligent people is that they tend to willingly admit when they don't know something. Brilliant teachers not only accept the dismal fact that they will never know all there is to know about technology, they also turn that condition into a classroom advantage by having their brilliant children teach them how to do something techie now and then.

6. **Use the kids' own devices to teach them.** Brilliant teachers understand the old Arab proverb, "It's easier to steer the camel in the direction it is already heading." Students are increasingly and unstoppably bringing in personal communication devices -- cell phones, cameras, game devices, iPods/mp3 players, netbooks, laptops, and PDAs. Brilliant teachers know how to use cell phones to poll their classes; create podcasts of lectures for later review; use games to teach difficult concepts; and make "Google-jockeys" of student wireless laptop users.

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Seven Brilliant Things Teachers can do with Technology

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7. Delight in the discovery, the newness, and the fun technology

holds. It's not about technology; it's about finding out and doing "cool" things. We knew that ourselves as kids. Brilliant tech-using teachers have never lost the thrill of doing something new and interesting with these electronic Tinker Toys. They are pleased with their tech-using students and pleased with themselves. Brilliant teachers use technology's engagement (not entertainment) power. Technology is not "just one more thing," it's a vital experience that



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”—

Nelson Mandela

brings discovery, excitement, and even fun to the classroom.

Technology won't make a poor teacher a good one. But it can make a good teacher even better. And it can help make great teachers the ones that students remember for the rest of their lives. I hope you all know teachers who make brilliant uses of technology. What do you see them doing?



THE SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE

What shape the school of the future will take is amorphous, but most educators and observers agree that the future school will go electronic with a capital E.

"Next century, schools as we know them will no longer exist," says a feature in *The Age* publication, based in Melbourne, Australia. "In their place will be community-style centers operating seven days a week, 24 hours a day." Computers will become an essential ingredient in the recipe for an effective school of the future.

Students, *The Age* asserts, will see and hear

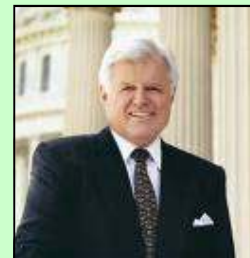
teachers on computers, with "remote learning" the trend of tomorrow. Accessing "classrooms" on their home computers, students will learn at times most convenient for them. Yet some attendance at an actual school will be required to help students develop appropriate social skills.

At Seashore Primary School, an imaginary school of the future created by the Education Department of Australia, technology is the glue that holds classes together. At the imaginary Seashore school:

- all teachers and students have laptop computers.
- teachers check voice-mail and return students' calls on a special telephone system.
- students use telephones to find information or speak to experts in subject areas they are studying.
- all lessons are multidisciplinary.
- all students have individual learning plans created by teachers.

As Seashore's acting principal says, a laptop computer is the students' "library, homework, data storage, and connection to the wider world. (Technology) has changed the emphasis to the learning of kids rather than the teaching of kids." — *Education World*

THANK A TEACHER



Edward Kennedy U.S. Senator (Mass.)

...three cherished mentors. The first was Reggie Nash, a history teacher and baseball coach at Milton Academy. "As a coach, Nash had a different approach to students. He really brought out the best in them." Kennedy recalls almost 60 years later. "He was a fun teacher, a lively teacher."

It was Nash who gave Kennedy a love of history but it was Milton Academy Headmaster Arthur Bliss Perry who gave him a love of the English language.

"He had a very serious presence," Kennedy says of Perry. "At Christmastime, he used to sit in front of this fireplace in the library at Milton and read 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens. There wasn't an empty seat in the place. He made that Dickens story come alive. He did all the accents, and it was just an enormously powerful rendition, one that has stayed with me ever since."

At Harvard, Kennedy met the teacher who would inspire him politically. Arthur Holcomb was teaching a course on the American Constitution when the young Kennedy, following in the footsteps of brothers, Joseph, John, and Bobby, signed up for his class.

New Teacher Support Participants:



Josh Marlowe
Mt. Juliet Middle School
Social Studies



Krista Hall
Mt. Juliet Elementary
Pre-K

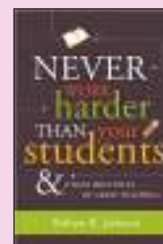
WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I felt it a calling to make a difference in students' lives by using examples throughout history to prepare students for the future."—Josh Marlowe

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I have always had a love for children and wanted to work with them. In school and even now, I am not a traditional learner so I want to be able to reach those students who are hands on and visual learners as well as traditional."—Krista Hall

From the Bookshelf:



Never Work Harder Than Your Students and Other Principles of Great Teaching
by Robyn R. Jackson

Is great teaching a gift that only a few of us are born with, or is it a skill that can be learned? In *Never Work Harder Than Your Students*, Robyn Jackson makes a radical assertion: Any teacher can become a master teacher by developing a master teacher mindset. The master teacher mindset can be achieved by rigorously applying seven principles to your teaching until they become your automatic response to students in the classroom. The more you practice these seven principles, the more you begin to think like a master teacher:

1. Start where your students are.
2. Know where your students are going.
3. Expect to get your students to their goal.
4. Support your students along the way.
5. Use feedback to help you and your students get better.
6. Focus on quality rather than quantity.
7. Never work harder than your students.

Using these principles, Jackson shows you how to become a master teacher no matter where you are in your practice. Jackson offers stories from her own teaching practice, as well as from other teachers she has helped, to show you how each principle works. Teaching is a hard job, but using Jackson's principles will help you and your students reap the rich rewards of that hard work.



After School Tracking with Clothespins

Keeping track of where students go after school can be simple even when their home schedules aren't. List the various ways your students leave school on heavy card stock or poster board and laminate the list.

Then, write each student's name on a clothespin. Teach students to move their clothespin each morning as they enter the classroom to indicate their plans for the day, and give a final reminder right before dismissal. This system is incredibly helpful when you have a substitute, as well as when the office or a parent calls to ask how a student went home, because you've got a visual record to remind you.



Teacher: Why can't you ever answer any of my questions?
Pupil: Well if I could there wouldn't be much point in me being here!



Master Teacher Tips... Student Relationships

In less than 60 seconds a day, any teacher can enhance his or her relationships with students by using two techniques: the first is a genuine smile. The second is a positive reflection or observation, based on a recent interest or occurrence in your school or classroom. The reflection or observation can be humorous or profound, casual or formal. You may want to congratulate students on last night's game or concert or supply them with a quote for serious reflection. Regardless of the direction you choose, using 60 seconds to "connect" with students can help your relationships with students to grow.

If you do nothing more than listen to the words students say, you may miss changes in thinking as well as the underlying meaning. Fortunately, two actions can aid your understanding. First, monitor nonverbal clues such as fidgeting, avoiding eye contact, and blinking excessively. These behaviors may indicate a change in level of comfort and require teacher reassurance or support. Second, are expressions of anxiety such as "I didn't like that," "That's not good," or "I worried all day." the cause of these shifts in behavior is fear. To keep our relationships with students on solid ground, we need to identify students' anxiety and address their fears.



Upcoming Events

National Poetry Month

National Environmental Week
April 12-18

ASPCA Day April 10

Thomas Jefferson Day April 13

Easter April 12

National Child Abuse Prevention
Month

For a Laugh!

