



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2008-2009

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Teacher Tip of the Week
New Teacher Support
Program
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Reflection: Ending the School Year Right!

THE END IS NEAR!

For some, that is a welcome phrase. You and your students have worked hard. You all deserve time to refresh yourselves, to relax and to reflect on the past year and the year to come.

For Teachers - End the school year on a positive note. Whether you're a beginning teacher or a veteran, we can all benefit from reviewing what we've done in the past and looking for new ways to strengthen our teaching skills.

- Be sure all paperwork is done and submitted on time.
- Thank students, parents, and colleagues for a good year – in person or with a quick personal note.
- Sort and file materials for use next year. If you'll be teaching the same subject or same grade level, take the time now, while it's still fresh in your mind, to review lesson plans and sequencing and make notes about things that were especially successful – or things that you need to work on before you try them again.
- Make sure you understand what can and what cannot be left in the classroom over the summer. Nothing's worse than returning to school in the fall and finding paint all over your materials.
- Over the course of the school year, you've probably identified areas of classroom instruction, content or even personal relations skills that you feel could be improved. After reflecting on things that went well – and those that didn't – develop a plan on how to address identified needs during the summer recess. Remember – how the school year ends can be just as important as how it begins.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

As impossible as this sounds to you and me: get some sleep! Granted, we all have many deadlines at this time of year (like this article for me) and staying up all night to get it done seems like the only thing to do. However, the law of diminishing returns tells us that this might not be

the most productive use of our time.

REFLECTION

Reflect on all you've done this year. All good work should have a beginning, middle, and end. The end should not be a wild release, but should be a fulfilling summary and reflection that will lead to greater learning. This reflection should be done with your students, with your colleagues, and privately.

Reflect with students: Have your students think about what they learned this year and write about it. They can write to you about their favorite unit and how it had an impact on them, they can write a letter to your next year's class and tell them what they should expect in your class. Having students revisit their learning gives them crucial processing time, which reinforces what they've learned. You can have the students share and talk about their written reflections in small groups or in the whole group, which gives more students the benefit of each student's thinking.

Reflect with colleagues: Take multiple opportunities to talk with your peers about what you've learned about teaching this year. It helps to see how much we've grown through the eyes of our colleagues.

Reflect privately: Look over your plan book, student work, journals, and your notes about your students. Think about how you and your class have matured—how you worked together at the beginning of the year, and how you work together now. Notice especially the things that gave you the most trouble at the beginning of the year and realize how your thinking has changed about these things.

DO SOMETHING FUN WITH YOUR STUDENTS

Just because it's fun, doesn't mean that it's not educational. Take a trip to the park to study local species of birds or rodents or examine the parts of different types of flowers, trees, or plants. Plant a school garden. Go to the museum to trace, through art, the

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SOME PARTING THOUGHTS...



The Best Teachers

Teachers open up young minds, showing them the wonders of the intellect and the miracle of being able to think for themselves.

A teacher exercises the mental muscles of students, stretching and strengthening, so they can make challenging decisions, find their way in the world, and become independent.

The best teachers care enough to gently push and prod students to do their best and fulfill their potential. You are one of those. Thank you.

By Joanna Fuchs

Above: Wilson County Teacher of the Year, Catherine Hobbs, from West Elementary

The End is Near!

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history you've been studying. Apply what your students have learned all year: interdisciplinary projects, trips, and outdoor activities are perfect opportunities to bring it all together at this time of year.

DO SOMETHING FUN WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

Plan an evening out doing something totally unrelated to teaching. Go bowling, do karaoke, see a movie, go out for dinner and try to make talk about school and teaching off limits!

We have a tendency to work on something until we get it right and then move on to something else. In teach-



"We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures."

—Thornton Wilder

ing, we "can get it right" with one group and the next year we have to figure it out all over again with a completely different group of students. Though we get better with experience, it's always a new adventure with the next group. But the fact is, right now, we pretty much have it right, the children know the structure and we know

them. So while you are looking forward, please take the time to take advantage of all you've done for your students this year.

More can be accomplished now than any other time of the year and we should use the opportunity well... at least until the last week—there's the real challenge!

Tennessee names Teacher of the Year for 2009

Bradley County high school mathematics teacher Luajean Bryan was named Tennessee Teacher of the Year during the annual Teacher of the Year banquet. Meera Krishnan, of Shelby County, and Micahel Brown, of Montgomery County, are the grand division winners from West and Middle Tennessee respectively.



"Teachers are on the front lines making sure every student gets the education and help they need to graduate and be successful," Education Commissioner Timothy Webb said. "It's a challenging and rewarding task that requires tenacity. Congratulations to Ms. Bryan, Dr. Krishnan and Mr. Brown on modeling the best of what our profession has to offer."

Ms. Bryan has dedicated 35 years to teaching in Tennessee public schools and currently teaches 10th-12th grade math at Walker Valley High School in Cleveland. Her classroom work has been featured in Time magazine, USA Today and Education World. The student body awarded Ms. Bryan the honor of Most Dedicated Teacher in

2006. She is a long-time member of national and state professional organizations for teachers of mathematics, has been a guest speaker at regional and state professional events, authored an article for Mathematics Teacher, a national professional journal, and has been commissioned to co-author a 2009 Pre-Calculus textbook.

"Recognizing the hard work of some of the state's outstanding educators also gives us pause to show gratitude to all teachers making a positive difference in the lives of Tennessee students," said Connie Smith, Assistant Commissioner for Accountability and Teaching and Learning. "There is great honor in working to prepare the next generation to achieve a better future."

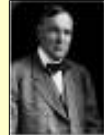
Tennessee's Teacher of the Year award program is sponsored by The Niswonger Foundation, a Greeneville-based organization that provides student scholarships and resources for school systems in Tennessee. Each of the finalists receives a cash award courtesy of The Niswonger Foundation.

20 FAMOUS PEOPLE WHO WERE ONCE TEACHERS



1. Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888), U.S. author

2. Clara Barton (1821-1912), U.S. founder of the American Red Cross



3. Clarence Darrow (1857-1938), U.S. lawyer

4. Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), British sexologist

5. Roberta Flack (1940-), U.S. singer



6. John Fowles (1926-), British author

7. Art Garfunkel (1941-), U.S. singer

8. Vo Nguyen Giap (1910?-), Vietnamese army chief

9. W. C. Handy (1873-1958), U.S. blues composer

10. John Wesley Hardin (1853-1895), U.S. outlaw

11. Edith Head (1907-), U.S. costume designer

12. Lyndon B. Johnson (1908-1973), U.S. president

13. D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930), British author

14. Albert Luthuli (1898-1967), South African political leader

15. Benito Mussolini (1883-1945), Italian dictator

16. Carry Nation (1846-1911), U.S. temperance leader

17. Pat Nixon (1912-), U.S. first lady

18. George Orwell (1903-1950), British author

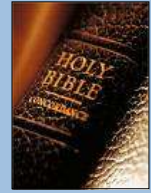
19. Thomas Paine (1737-1809), U.S. patriot

20. Lydia Pinkham (1819-1883), U.S. patent-medicine manufacturer

Thank you to the participants in the New Teacher Support Program for 2008-2009:



From the Bookshelf:



THE TOP TEN BOOKS TO READ BEFORE YOU DIE

#1 - The Holy Bible

The most popular and best-selling book of all time is The Holy Bible. No book has had more influence on the world.

#2 - Gone With the Wind

Published in 1936, *Gone With the Wind* sold 50,000 copies on its first day, and two million after a year.

#3 - The Lord of the Rings

The *Lord of the Rings* is regarded by many to be the most important and influential work of fantasy of the 20th century.

#4 - Harry Potter series

Follow Harry Potter from his first days at Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry.

#5 - The Stand

In 1978, Stephen King published *The Stand*, the novel that is now considered to be one of his finest works. It depicts his apocalyptic vision of a world blasted by plague and embroiled in an elemental struggle between good and evil.

#6 - The Da Vinci Code

The elderly curator of the Louvre has been murdered. Near the body, police have found a baffling cipher.

#7- To Kill a Mockingbird

is about the crisis of human behavior and conscience arising from the racism and prejudice that exist in the small Southern town during the Depression.

#8 - Angels and Demons

When a canister of anti-matter is stolen from a Swiss research facility, Robert Langdon is called in to investigate.

-#9- Atlas Shrugged

Rand's 1200-page novel *Atlas Shrugged* is a hymn of praise to the concept of rugged individualism.

#10 - The Catcher in the Rye

J. D. Salinger's famous and enduring chronicle of Holden Caulfield's journey from innocence to experience is the quintessential coming-of-age novel.



Versatile Boxes

Plastic tubs, drawers, and organizers can be expensive, but there's a free alternative that's just as sturdy and incredibly appealing to kids! Visit your local shopping mart and pick up any empty cardboard boxes you see on the shelves.



August is a great time to take away extra boxes that actually are designed to hold just the items you need containers for -- school supplies! After you reassess your classroom needs, stop by again in October to pick up the candy boxes from the leftover displays. Check with a cashier on your way out to make sure it's okay -- chances are they'll thank you for helping clear out the store. Use your boxes for years to come to hold books, student's extra school supplies or communal supplies, binders, notebooks, or anything else you need!

THERE ARE TEACHERS...AND THEN THERE ARE TEACHERS!

According to a radio report, a middle school in Oregon was faced with a unique problem. A number of girls were beginning to use lipstick and would put it on in the bathroom. That was fine, but after they put on their lipstick they would press their lips to the mirror leaving dozens of little lip prints.

Finally the principal decided that something had to be done. She called all the girls into the bathroom and met them there with the maintenance man. She explained that all these lip prints were causing a major problem for the custodian who had to clean the mirrors every night. To demonstrate how difficult it was to clean the mirrors, she asked the maintenance man to clean one of the mirrors. He took out a long-handled squeegee, dipped it into the toilet and then cleaned the mirror.

Since then there have been no lip prints on the mirror. There are teachers and then there are TEACHERS.



Master Teacher Tips... Student Relationships

If you want superb relationships with students, never refer to anything you do for students as “your job.” students want you to do what you are doing for them because you want to, not because you think you have to. Make no mistake: Students do not want to be part of your job—even though the reality is that they are.

If what you are teaching includes giving examples, presenting story problems, or explaining concepts, use the opportunity to employ a relationship-building technique that works: using the names of students within your narrative. When you personalize the information to your class, students are likely to pay more attention. They are also apt to show greater interest in what you are saying. And they will be “set up” to listen and understand what you are teaching as well.



Upcoming Events

Memorial Day May 25

National Backyard Games Week
May 18-25

International Jazz Day May 23

Neighbor Day May 24

Hug Your Cat Day May 30

Wilson County Last Day of School
June 6

For a Laugh!

