



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2008-2009

Terry Edwards, Program Coordinator

September 2008

Volume 4, Issue 5

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

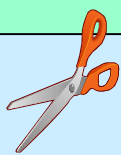
30 Ways to Show Students You Care!

HELPFUL WEBSITE FOR TEACHERS



<http://www.nickjr.com/teachers/index.jhtml?template=teachers>

The internet connection to Nickelodeon with resources of lesson plans and web sites.



Cutting Corners

BABY PICTURES:

Collect baby pictures and current pictures from your students. Place the baby pictures on one side of the bulletin board and the current pictures on the other side. Give each baby picture a number and each current picture a letter. Have a contest to see who can correctly match the pictures. A variation is to do this with pictures of the staff and faculty on a bulletin board the whole school can access.

COMPLIMENT STUDENTS

1. Go out of your way to compliment a child who gets very few strokes. Take more care to notice what is important to him or her.
2. Compliment the efforts, not just the successes: "That was a good try on that puzzle; I see you really working hard."
3. Compliment children for being kind and courteous and be courteous yourself: "Thanks for saying you're welcome."

NOTICE AND ACKNOWLEDGE STUDENTS

4. When you see one child has a difficulty, address the subject to the class as a whole: "Some of you may be having difficulty drawing a fish. Who would like to share a good way for the class to see?"



5. Ask the child about something that you know is important to him or her: "How was that Little League game you played last night?"
6. When you see a child is upset, take time to speak privately with him or her. Learn what is going on. That action will be appreciated.

MAKE SMALL GESTURES -- THEY GO A LONG WAY

7. Give a reward or gift to children for no reason at all -- other than to show you love them: "Tomorrow, we all get a treat, a popcorn party!"
8. Work on the placement of your desk so that when a child comes up to speak to you, that child will be next to the chair and not across from you.

9. A gesture that accommodates individual needs is appreciated. For example, give extra time on a test to a child who is a very nervous test taker.

10. Find a way to make a personal contact with parents and caregivers as soon as possible after the start of the school year. Acknowledge the importance of their role and something positive about each child.

FOCUS ON HELLOS AND GOOD-BYES

11. Tell students what is new and good for you this morning. Ask students to share the same.

12. When you make eye contact with a child during the day, smile! There are so many non-verbal ways that you can show you care.

13. When ending a conversation, pause silently with the child before turning away. A short pause while still looking at the child shows that

he or she is important and that you are not just rushing to the next thing to do.

WORK ON YOUR OWN ANGER

14. It is important to know how to deal with your own anger in a physical way. For example, when you're feeling anger, take a deep breath, count to ten, or find your own space.

15. Be aware of your own bias toward a child and go out of your way to try to deal with the child fairly. You may not like tattoos, but don't be unkind to a student because of his or her new tattoos.

16. When a child does something that is troubling or hostile, it can be helpful to ask yourself and/or the child: "What's really going on? What is happening behind what you are saying and the way you are saying it?"

Continued on page 2

30 Ways to Show Students You Care! (cont. from page 1)

SEEK AND EXPRESS THE GOOD

17. Identify some positive intent that exists, even in an action that does not work out well: "I know you want to help your friend, but giving him the answers on the test is a not a useful way."

18. Take note when you are starting to show continual disfavor with a child. Often by trying to understand more what is going on with the child, you can help yourself find a way to feel more positive.

19. Tell yourself that the student is doing something that annoys you, but he or she isn't doing it to annoy you!

LISTEN TO GAIN UNDERSTANDING

20. When listening to what a child has to say, turn your whole body toward the child. In that way, you show that you are giving the child your full attention.

21. Kneel next to the child to communicate with him or her. Speaking from on high can be distancing; it can feel daunting to the child.

22. Find quiet time for reflection or relaxing after a more active time. You might use a guided imagery activity or play music that allows a mood to be set and calm to return.

ENGAGE STUDENTS IN COMMUNICATION OF ALL SORTS

23. Bring in stories of your own experiences that relate to what you're teaching. "I know how frightening it was for Hansel and Gretel to get lost in the woods. It happened to me one time!"

24. Allow your weaknesses to show -- this is very human: "I must admit, I had trouble learning how to boil an egg, and my mom was a home economics teacher!"

25. When pressed for time, communicate with your students later in writing. Set up a special box where you put notes to hand to your students at a later time.

ENGAGE STUDENTS IN RESOLVING SOCIAL PROBLEMS

27. Be careful about invoking the "Golden Rule" too early in solving a problem. That can bring about guilt or resentment. It may be better to initially ask "How do you think she feels?" rather than "How would you like it if she did that to you?"

28. Note when a child in the class is being "excluded" by others. Give that child attention alone and with the class present.

29. Find a way to improve performance that looks for improvement and not perfection: "Alfredo, show me that you are making an effort to interrupt less -- by interrupting less."

30. When you notice a transgression, allow the child to see you noticed without calling him or her on it. This often gives the child the opportunity to appreciatively self-correct.

Marty Kirschen/Education World



"We teach what we like to learn and the reason many people go into teaching is vicariously to re-experience the primary joy experienced the first time they learned something they loved."

—Stephen Brookfield

Start with Multiple Choice



Putting multiple choice questions on the board or an overhead projector during class can prompt good discussion, as students battle over which answer would be most accurate.

Discussion is even better if the questions are ambiguous or have several potential right answers. Students can use the debate over answers as the first step in writing essays or performing small group tasks.

To generate even more thought and creativity, have students write their own multiple choice questions at the end of each writing assignment, and use these for class discussion starters as well. Ask students to defend their answer choices.

You may be surprised by how skillful students are at writing test questions. When you use a student's multiple choice question on a test, make sure to put their name beside the question on the test paper. A little pride goes a long way!!

New Teacher Support Participants:



Rhonda Everett
Rutland Elementary
2nd grade

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I want kids to know they are a success story no matter what happened in their life. I want them to know there is someone who believes in them, cares, and will help in any way to help them become what they are meant to be—awesome individuals with something to give and make the world a better place."—Rhonda Everett



Meredith Ashworth
Tuckers Crossroads Elementary
1st grade

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

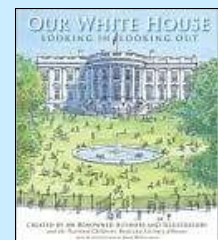
"Because I believe I can provide a safe and fun learning environment. I love children and feel that I have been called to be a teacher."—Meredith Ashworth

From the Bookshelf:



Black Ants and Buddhists: Thinking Critically and Teaching Differently in the Primary Grades
by Mary Cowhey

What would a classroom look like if understanding and respecting differences in race, culture, beliefs, and opinions were at its heart? Welcome to Mary Cowhey's Peace Class in Northampton, MA, where first and second graders view the entire curriculum through the framework of understanding the world, and trying to do their part to make it a better place. Her students learn to make connections between their lives, the books they read, the community leaders they meet, and the larger world. If you were inspired to become a teacher because you wanted to change the world, and instead find yourself limited by teach-to-the-test pressures, this is the book that will make you think hard about how you spend your time with students.



Our White House: Looking In, Looking Out by National Children's Book and Literary Alliance
Ages 4-8



Electronic Portfolios

A student portfolio is a representative sampling of a student's work designed to highlight the student's best work, demonstrate the student's progress over time, make the work available for evaluation, and/or provide opportunities for the student to reflect on his or her work.

A portfolio can be a hardcopy collection of a student's work -- printed and saved in a folder or 3-ring binder -- or work saved electronically in hyper-linked e-portfolios. E-portfolios offer the advantage of being able to save and display -- in addition to text and graphics -- sound and video files, collaborative online projects, Web-Quests, Web links,

and more.

Hardcopy portfolios have been used to collect and save student work for quite some time; the use of electronic portfolios, stored on a computer, CD-Rom or the Web, is a relatively recent, but growing, trend in K-12 education.

The three most common types of portfolios are:

1. the working portfolio, which contains projects the student is currently working on or has recently completed.
2. the display portfolio, which showcases samples of the student's best work.
3. the assessment portfolio, which presents work

demonstrating that the student has met specific learning goals and requirements.

The following are two website sources that contain more detailed information about electronic portfolios:

Electronic Portfolios

This page from Tammy's Technology Tips for Teachers explains what electronic portfolios are and how to create them. The site also includes sample portfolios.

The Power of Portfolios

Scholastic Online offers this excerpt from an article that appeared in the February 1999 issue of *Early Childhood Today*. The article explains the benefits of student portfolios in early childhood education.



Master Teacher Tips... Student Relationships

Do everything you can to get students to seek you out for advice. But go very slow when giving advice you haven't been asked for. And never give unwanted advice. If you do, students will think you are evaluating their lives, and they won't like it. In fact, students will hate it. Do all you can to move closer to students, but don't step over the line—if you want to develop relationships in which students seek you out for advice and then take your counseling gratefully.

Some students are ill a lot. They are absent from school too much—far too much. Yet, be careful of your reactions toward these students. Remember, adults can be unkind to children who are ill frequently. Adults show anger. They show annoyance. And it is not uncommon for adults to reveal disinterest, rejection, and a lack of caring toward the frequently ill. It is far better to make a telephone call and ask three questions. First, how are you feeling? Second, what are you doing to get well? Third, is there anything I can do? These three questions will build much better relationships with students than rejection, anger, annoyance, or disinterest.



Teacher FAQ

Question: Apparently there is a "golden rule for communicating with administrators." What is that rule and how can a new teacher implement it?

Answer: The golden rule for communication with administrators is to make sure it takes place, especially when issues regarding student safety, school policy, community relations, or serious parent complaints are involved. That is best accomplished by scheduling a meeting with the appropriate administrator, bringing the necessary documentation to the meeting, and taking notes during the meeting.

For a Laugh!

