



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2008-2009

Terry Edwards, Program Coordinator

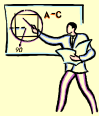
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Teacher Tip of the Week
New Teacher Support
Program
Wilson County Schools
615-453-7282

Why should I use Venn Diagrams in my teaching?

HELPFUL WEBSITE FOR TEACHERS



<http://www.graphic.org/>

Graphic Organizers, Mind Maps and Concept Maps are pictorial or graphical ways to organize information and thoughts for understanding, remembering, or writing about. Graphic organizers, mind maps and concept maps are powerful tools that can be used to enhance learning and create a foundation for learning.



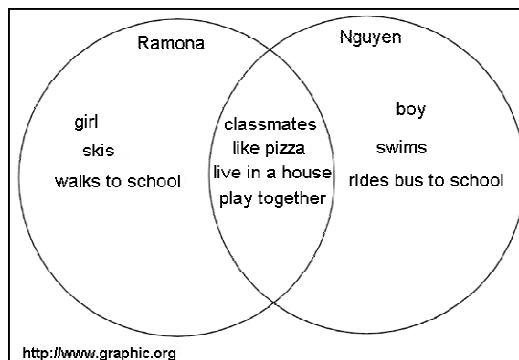
Venn Diagrams can be used to teach concrete concepts or objects at the K2: Recall level. A Venn Diagram is a visual organizer used to compare and contrast concrete concepts. Venn Diagrams are made up of two or more overlapping circles. The circles show relationships between concrete concepts and allow learners to visually organize similarities and differences between the physical characteristics of the concepts.

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are shared and which aren't. String or colored yarn can be used to make circles on the floor and manipulatives and pictures are strongly encouraged.

A Venn diagram serves to organize students' thoughts, and is labeled according to the topic at hand and the aspects that need to be compared and contrasted. Due to their relatively simple structure and visually effective nature, Venn diagrams are considered to be an indispensable educational technique, equally useful for both children and adults.

Most teachers prefer to use a Venn diagram as a pre-writing activity in order to help students categorize the knowledge they have already gained. Having classified all the similarities and differences, students are able to make an in-depth analysis of the topic and draw a well-grounded conclusion.



Venn diagrams can be successfully

applied to a wide range of subjects. For instance, students can compare and contrast several cities and their climates during a Geography lesson, organize various animals or different cell structures in Biology and study the character traits of different protagonists in works of twentieth century Literature. The key point is to determine the objects that need to be compared beforehand.

The more aspects that are included in a Venn diagram, the more comprehensive the analysis is. To optimize the process you can use various colors and shapes. Originally, Venn diagrams were made using simple circles; however, triangles and quadrangles can be also used, especially when constructing several diagrams at the same time. If used correctly, this graphic tool makes the teaching and learning process a lot more interesting and effective.

Critical Questions:

- What items do you want to compare? What characteristics do the items have in common (intersecting portion)?
- How are the items similar (the same) and different (non intersecting portion) based on the characteristics?

Venn diagrams are useful as a graphics organization tool when comparing two things (and particularly for use with younger children). Simple Venn diagrams are used, in which no more than two curves intersect at a common point. Shared characteristics are listed in the overlapping section allowing for easy identification of which characteristics



Cutting Corners

TAKE A TIME OUT:

Sometimes it is so easy to get caught up in our classroom that we forget about real life. We need to make sure we have an outlet for our creativity outside the classroom or we will get burned out.

New Series: Complete Guide to Learning Theories

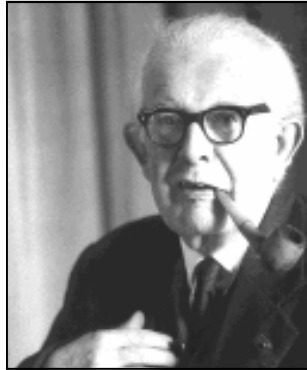
Educational theorists, from philosophers like Socrates and Rousseau to researchers like Howard Gardner today, have addressed theories of learning. Many of their ideas continue to influence traditional educators. A little familiarity with some of the ideas will help you make sense of the wealth of available resources and materials when you begin to make choices for your classroom:



“If we do not plant knowledge when young, it will give us no shade when we are old.”—

Lord
Chesterfield

PART ONE: JEAN PIAGET AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT



He proposed that children go through several distinct stages of cognitive growth. First comes the sensorimotor stage (birth to two years), during which the child learns primarily through

sensation and movement. At the pre-operational stage (ages two to seven), children begin to master symbols such as language and start to be able to form hypotheses based on past experiences. At the concrete operational stage (ages seven to eleven), children learn to generalize from one situation to similar ones, although such reasoning is usually limited to their own concrete experience.

Finally, at the formal operational stage (eleven years older), children can deal with abstractions, form hypothesis and engage freely in mental speculation. Although the rate at which children

progress through the stages varies considerably, the sequence of stages is consistent for all children.

Therefore, to be appropriate and effective, learning activities should be tailored to the cognitive level of the child.

Next week:

Rudolf Steiner and the
Waldorf Schools

Jean Piaget Society:

<http://www.piaget.org/>

Take the test online: What type of teacher personality are you?



Take the following quiz to find out what type of teacher personality you have. Are you the ditto master, the strict disciplinarian, the fair and balanced, or the popular teacher? Maybe you're more coach than teacher? Surely you're not the walking carpet! Of course, the results are nonscientific and *mostly* meant for fun.

http://712educators.about.com/library/quizzes/blteacher_personality.htm

New Teacher Support Participants:



Rebecca Dunlap
Wilson Central High School
History



James Blackmon
Elzie D. Patton Elementary
3rd grade

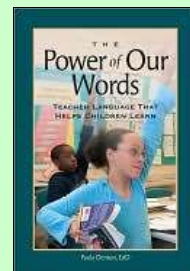
WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I had several teachers in my high school career that really helped shape who I am today. They gave me a passion for history that I will never lose. I chose this profession because I want to help the students who come through my doors the same way I was during my time in school. I also love the fact that I will be developing a passion for history in students through my enthusiasm for the subject."—Rebecca Dunlap

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I love kids and wanted to find a job I love."—James Blackmon

From the Bookshelf:



The Power of Our Words: Teacher Language that Helps Children Learn by Paula Denton

This book, by an author with more than twenty years of experience teaching children and educators, will help you recognize the influence your words have on the children you teach. It will show you how to use language more skillfully, building a classroom where students feel safe, respected, appreciated, and excited about learning.

Full of practical tips, real life anecdotes, and concrete examples, this warm and thought-provoking guide includes specific suggestions about language to adopt and language to avoid.



Madeline and the Cats of Rome

By John Marciano

Ages 6-8



Are your tests fair?

In judging the fairness of tests, we must have realistic expectations. Tests are not mysterious sources of information. They are not miraculously perfect and fair.

Test scores show what the persons tested were willing and able to do on test questions at a certain time. Education tests do not—and cannot be expected to—measure other areas such as desire to work hard, moral character, or exceptional creativity.

Test scores do, however, yield valuable data. Test information often re-

Lates, as well as or better than other data sources, to important future activities such as academic or job performance.

Tests are most valuable when they are well prepared and carried out. Important factors include relevant content coverage, the design of test questions, carefully controlled testing situations and uniform scoring procedures.

Test fairness is also directly related to how the test results are used. It is important for those using the results to seek only what the tests were meant

to measure.

Test validity, the ability of a test to actually measure what is trying to measure, is another key factor in judging test fairness.—*Educational Testing Service*





Master Teacher Tips... Mastering Meetings

Sometimes we go into a meeting knowing we are on “the other side” of an issue with a colleague or a group of colleagues. Worse, we expect a conflict to arise and worry that a destructive confrontation will result. In these kinds of situations, we cannot sit on the other side of the table or the other side of the room in the meeting. Rather, we must sit next to the person or persons with whom we disagree. If we do, we’ll help to defuse the situation. We will send the message that “we’re on the same team” rather than the signal to “draw swords.”

If you are making a presentation and want your colleagues to follow you closely, be sure to take these two actions. First, announce your objectives at the beginning. Second, preview with the group the patterns you intend to follow. Remember, your colleagues will come to the meeting with many pressing issues on their mind. You need to make it easy for them to follow what you have to say. Try this technique. It is every effective.

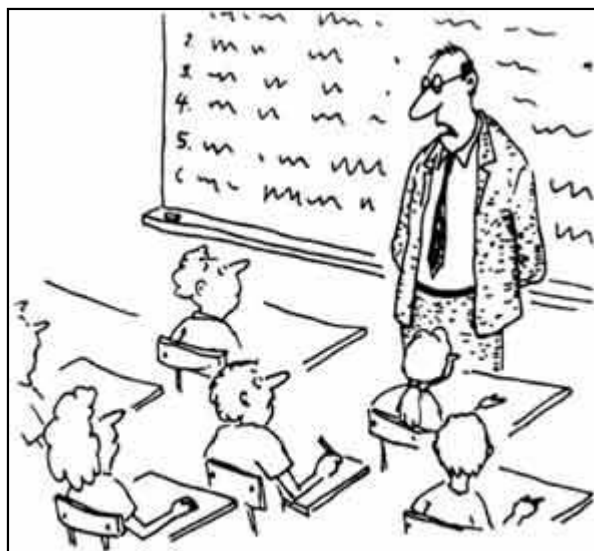


Teacher FAQ

Question: What does good record keeping have to do with good teaching, and what kinds of records should a new teacher keep?

Answer: Good record keeping is an essential part of good teaching. Accurate records give the teacher an objective view of both classroom dynamics and student progress and, because they provide verification, they also can improve communication with parents, staff members, and administrators. New teachers should keep copies of anything they write to or for others, notes they receive from others, and student work samples, in addition to such mandated records as daily student attendance and grades.

For a Laugh!



“I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!”