



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2009-2010

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Teacher Tip of the Week
New Teacher Support
Program
Wilson County Schools
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HOW TO DO IT— CHECKLIST



Keep Track of Time

A small, portable digital timer is an effective tool for keeping track of time during a lesson. For example, you could set the timer for five minutes as the students complete a warm-up activity. Then, give your instruction for the day and set the timer for the amount of time left for students to work independently (the amount of time left in the period minus five or ten minutes for the closure activity and clean up).



Become a Task Master

Time. It's something we have in limited supply. There are only 24 hours in a day, eight of which should be spent in sleep. The remaining hours then must be divided into work, personal time, and recreation/relaxation time. As a new teacher, it's easy to become overwhelmed by the number of activities and tasks that fill your time. There are lessons to plan, papers to be graded, classes to teach, paperwork to fill out, meetings to attend, parents to call, colleagues to conference with, students to redirect, and more. At times, it might even feel as though you're drowning. For many of you, there also will be laundry to do, meals to fix, shopping and cleaning to do, and families to care for when you get home. How can you manage all of those aspects of your life? That's where time management comes in. It's all too easy to let your tasks control you and your time. Instead, strive to be the master of your own time. Below are a few ideas to help you be a "Task Master."



Know your tasks.

Our "To Do" list takes up much of our time and so often things get added to the list at odd moments. You might be walking down the hallway when the special education teacher stops you and says, "Oh, good, I caught you. Can you please fill out this referral packet on _____? I need it by tomorrow morning." A little later you might realize, "We need more toilet paper at home." Then you walk into your classroom and get ready to teach the next lesson. It's no wonder that our "To Do" list can pile up on us, with many items forgotten and left undone.

One way to keep track of all those items is to keep a small journal or a legal sized pad with you at all times. This is something I find helps keep me on top of all the different tasks I face -- both personal and professional. Make two, three, or four columns on the page (depending on how many parts of your life require specific tasks). My list is divided into three columns for Work, House, and Family. In each column, I list the tasks I need to complete. If you keep the pad with you at all times, it's easy to jot down an unexpected task that comes your way. Add a

star next to important items to show higher priority, and a deadline date if one is needed. I also mark down a day and time for specific items on my list. For example: Parent Meeting -- Tues @ 3pm (office). That way if I don't have my calendar with me, I know what appointments are coming up. Keep the list for a week at a

time. At the end of the week transfer any items not completed to the next page on the pad.

Keep a calendar.

This tool will be a lifeline when you begin ARD meetings, parent conferences, staff development meetings and all of the other appointments that will fill your time when you're not teaching. Outlook has a great calendar tool that will notify participants via email of appointments and changes to those appointments. You

continued on page 2.....



AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

NOVEMBER 16-20

Website: www.wcschools.com

Become a Task Master (continued from page 1)

"Task Panel," where you can list all your tasks to complete that week. As soon as you set up a parent conference/phone call, staff meeting, field trip, etc., mark it on your calendar. When you get memos from your administrator noting due dates, meetings, and so on, mark it on your calendar. When another staff member requests your attendance at a meeting, mark it on your calendar. Then keep your calendar handy. Do not commit to any additional meetings until you have checked your calendar.

Allot specific amounts of time for tasks.

If you get into the habit of using a calendar, you then can set appointments to complete certain daily tasks. For example, you might set an appointment each Wednesday afternoon to plan lessons for the following week. Go ahead and mark those on

your calendar (don't forget to take into account weekly faculty meetings). Now, when making appointments, you won't accidentally over-plan your time and not have enough to grade papers and plan lessons. Also, be sure to put personal appointments on the same calendar. Keeping two calendars is simply too confusing with all the tasks and appointments you'll have throughout the year.

Don't forget to allot time for those tasks that are important for your health and well-being. That includes time for exercise, personal reflection, and relaxation. Believe me, you'll find yourself so overwhelmed by work that those important activities will be left by the wayside. You need to take time for yourself each day and each week

so that you don't burn out, which can happen easily in this profession.

Managing your time is all about allotting segments to accomplish the various tasks and appointments required by your job and personal life. Using a "To Do" list and a calendar are two ways you can keep track of all that's going on without getting overwhelmed. Don't forget to reward yourself when you've accomplished your major tasks and goals. Stop and eat a piece of chocolate or go out and watch that new movie. You see, when you are in control of your tasks, you can do those little things for yourself that make life more enjoyable. In essence, you become a "Task Master."



"Education comes from within; you get it by struggle and effort and thought."

— Napoleon Hill

What does an inclusive classroom look like?

Inclusive classrooms look different all the time because the environment is created by whatever interactions the teacher and students have as a group or as individuals in the group, explains Chris Kliever, thinking of his second grade classroom in New York.

It's a lot of students doing different things with people helping them, students moving from one environment to another. It's also a classroom where everybody is smiling, the

students are actively engaged, and the teacher is delighted to be there. It sounds like pandemonium and looks messy.

Students spend a lot of time in learning

centers where they make a lot of choices about what they're working on. It's a classroom where learning often happens in small



groups with peer helping and supporting each others.

It's a classroom with a lot of time for social interaction that means something to curriculum expectations.

It's a classroom that is student-centered. Students have a high level of responsibility for creating their community. They help

structure the rules and are expected to follow them and to meet contracted expectations for curriculum. It's a classroom where students know others will be doing different things and the issue of fairness doesn't come into play because that's just the way it is.

It's a classroom that reaches beyond the classroom and into the community as a resource for learning new skills.

'09-'10

NEW TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



Tracy Dowell

Carroll Oakland Elementary

First grade

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I became a teacher because I want to provide children an opportunity to reach goals that exceed their desires. I love the thought of being an individual that can make a difference in a child's life. My desire is to reach and teach every child that enters my classroom that they are special and they can do anything that they put their mind to. Children are the future of our world and I can't think of another profession that plays a bigger part in providing them with the knowledge and ability they need to become the best citizens possible. I am so excited to be a part of my students' lives."—Tracy Dowell



OFF THE BOOKSHELF



Skillful Teacher : Building Your Teaching Skills by Jon Saphier

Of all the things that are essential to high performing schools, nothing is more important than the teacher and what that person knows, believes and can do. A teacher's skill makes a difference in student performance, not only in achievement scores, but also in students' sense of fulfillment in school and their feelings of well-being.

Twenty chapters capture a blend of research and practitioner-developed approaches for using the research in the classroom. Each chapter lays out a known repertoire of strategies to help teachers fulfill a particular kind of mission from the spiritual imperative of communicating high expectations to the abstract challenge of planning lessons.

I have been recommending *The Skillful Teacher*, by Jon Saphier and Robert Gower, to administrators and teachers for years because I believe it to be the single best resource available for all teachers, from beginners to experienced pros.

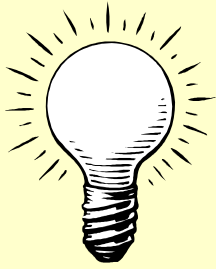
TEACHER WEBSITE of THE WEEK:



<http://eduscapes.com/ladders/>

Literature Learning Ladders

Created by Annette Lamb and Larry Johnson, two former teachers, this site encourages "active reading" through the use of a structure called Learning Ladders. In addition to providing detailed instructions on how to create your own Learning Ladders activities, the site features many other resources for teaching literature, primarily in the elementary grades. This is actually part of a larger site for "life-long learners" called eduscapes which features a variety of resources for teachers and parents.



Strategies for New Teachers . . .

PARENT COMMUNICATION

- Ask for specific help from the parents. Some parents may not know how best to address the concern of how to support you. For example, you might ask that they speak to the student about the concern or behavior, check his or her homework every night, help with organization by assisting with keeping book bags and notebooks organized etc.
- Come to an agreement about how each party (the student, the parent and you) will address the issue. "Thanks for agreeing to check Johnny's book bag for his homework every night. I think we can solve this homework problem if you check on that, if Johnny fills out his log every day and if I remind him that I need to initial it."
- When meeting with parents in person, ask for the student to be present. This can help minimize potential miscommunication and denial on the part of the student.

(continued next week...)



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

NATIONAL HUNGER AND HOMELESS AWARENESS WEEK

November 15-21

NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK

November 22-28

NATIONAL GAME AND PUZZLE WEEK

November 22-28

BETTER CONVERSATION WEEK

November 23-29

CHILDREN'S DAY

November 20

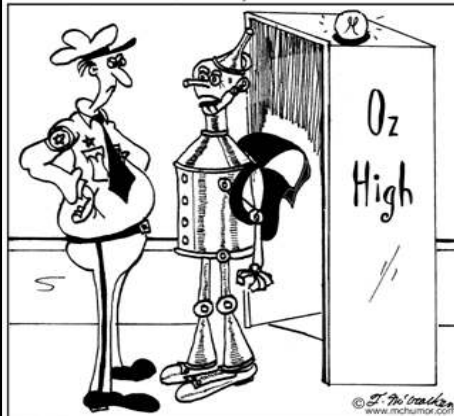
McHUMOR.com by T. McCracken



"I made it in shop class."

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"I set off the metal detector again? This is going to make me late for class the for the fifth time this week."

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INSERVICE REMINDER:

December 3—Parent/Teacher Partnerships/ Survival Tips (required for all)



Back to school

Student 1: (to female teacher) Can you hold on to my wallet for me while we take the exam? There may or may not be money in it.

Teacher: I can't be bought!
 Student 2: Yes, but can you be rented for a little while?