



# Teacher Tip of the Week

## New Teacher Support Program 2009-2010

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Teacher Tip of the Week  
New Teacher Support  
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### Handling Romance in the Classroom

*Teachers need to recognize the issues at stake when student romances enter the scene, and learn how to keep the focus on learning and respect.*

As children grow up, they begin to notice students of the opposite sex and romance becomes a common issue. As romance blossoms, often classroom troubles begin. Here are some specific tips for teachers at all levels for handling romance in the classroom.

#### Handling Romance in the High School Classroom

A high school teacher realizes that dating and romance are part of the teenage years, but when romance enters into the classroom, instruction can be disrupted and classroom management can become an issue. The first thing a high school teacher needs to do is remember that romance during the teenage years is natural and normal. Attempting to prevent students from being attracted to one another is both ineffective and futile.

While romance and attraction is normal during the teenage years, teachers do not need to accept that it will have a negative impact on their instruction and classroom management. Instead, teachers should lay specific ground rules and revisit them whenever necessary. Mutual respect is a key rule for any classroom. When students are dealing with any number of romance related issues, they must respect the teacher and other students by participating and focusing during class.

Teachers can help students leave their romance trouble at the door by requesting that students leave all their problems behind at the beginning of each class and focus on learning. Issues between students can be solved between classes or after school, and the classroom should be respected as a place of learning.

#### Handling Romance in the Middle School Classroom

Middle School is a tumultuous time for many students as they begin to go through puberty. Romance is bound to enter the scene during these years and teachers need to be prepared for it. It is important for teachers to realize that as students begin to enter the romance scene, they need a responsible adult to model appropriate behavior for them in the classroom.

As these students try to find their way through these new emotions, it is important for their teachers to stand up and be a support and source of advice. Teachers should provide times for students to meet with them privately to discuss not only school work but anything that is on their mind. This is a great opportunity for teachers to help provide direction and guidance for their students.

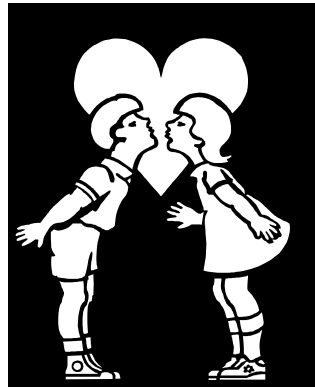
#### Handling Romance in the Elementary Classroom

Students in elementary school are becoming more and more aware of romance at a young age. Regardless of the reasons why this is, it is important for teachers to recognize this shift

and stand in the parent's stead to direct student to appropriate behavior.

Often, romance at the elementary level is immature and hurtful to other students. Elementary school teachers need to have a strict no-romance tolerance in their classroom, and spend time teaching children the importance of respecting each other. There is plenty of time for romance as the students become older and more mature.

Teachers at all levels have to be prepared to deal with romance in the classroom between students. Many times the parents are unaware or do not care about these issues and it is up to the teacher to ensure that all students learn and respect one another in the classroom.—Jennifer Wagaman, Suite101



### HOW TO DO IT— CHECKLIST



#### Calling parents when conduct issues arise

When considering how much homework to assign, consider how meaningful the work is. When students see the purpose of a homework assignment or are interested in the topic, they are more likely to do it. When they can select the topic, reading materials, or apply the work to their own lives or interests, they will put more into the assignment. As often as possible, encourage students to read and write. Have students journal about their reading, asking them to write at least a paragraph about each article or chapter they read.

Continued on page 2.....

## Presidents' Day Dilemma—Just whose birthday are we celebrating?

On Monday, the nation celebrates Presidents' Day. Or is it **George Washington's Birthday**? What about Abraham Lincoln? Confused yet? Everyone agrees that Monday is a holiday but exactly what the holiday is called can be tricky. Some government offices call it Presidents' Day. Others say the holiday is officially Washington's Birthday.



Washington's birthday February 22.

In 1968, Congress passed the Monday Holidays Act. This set the holiday as the third Monday in February, making it a three-day weekend. The new law did not change the holi-

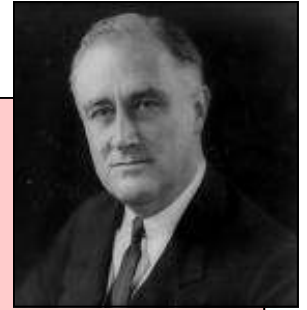
day's name. It was still called Washington's Birthday even though some lawmakers wanted to call it Presidents' Day to include Abraham Lincoln.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon issued a **proclamation** declaring the holiday "Presidents' Day." The new name was designed to honor all past presidents, including Lincoln, who was born February 12.

**The Great Presidential Debate**

Many people agreed with Nixon that the holiday should celebrate all past presidents. They felt Lincoln should be honored for his role in preserving the nation during the Civil War and helping to free slaves. Others felt the holiday should only honor Washington, the country's first President.

Laws have been introduced in Congress over the years to require use of the term "George Washington's Birthday" but none of those laws have passed. Should the holiday honor Washington, Washington and Lincoln, or all past presidents? Write to [emailbag@timeforkids.com](mailto:emailbag@timeforkids.com) and tell us what you think.



**"The school is the last expenditure upon which America should be willing to economize."—Franklin D. Roosevelt**

### The History Behind Presidents' Day

Washington's Birthday was first celebrated in the late 18th century, while George Washington was still president. He was elected the country's first president in 1789 and the holiday celebrated his day of birth.

Presidential historians say the actual date of George Washington's birth was February 11, 1732. A change in the calendar system 20 years later shifted all dates 11 days ahead, making

### RENT: JOHN ADAMS HBO miniseries:



John Adams is a sprawling HBO miniseries event that depicts the extraordinary life and times of one of America's least understood, and most underestimated, founding fathers: the second President of the United States, John Adams.

## A New Series: Testing Tips for Students #7



*Now that standardized tests are drawing near, a new series to help students and teachers prepare for the months ahead:*

To improve students' reading, math, and language arts scores, purchase practice materials -- and use the materials at least once week. If appropriate practice materials are not available or are not affordable, use copies of previous exams to practice, practice, practice!

'09-'10

NEW TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM  
PARTICIPANTS

Richard Boynton  
Tuckers Crossroads Elementary  
Physical Education

## WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

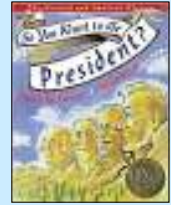
"I was looking for a career change after 27 plus years working in the blood program with the American Red Cross. I desired a position that I could make a positive influence in young people's lives. Tuckers Crossroads fit the type of school that I preferred to teach at. In the fact that it is a small, rural school where I can get to know the students, other teachers and parents. When look to change careers I had a desire to return to what I felt to be my first love of helping people enjoy life. As a physical education teacher, I have the desire to instill in the students a love for physical activity that they can take part in for the rest of their lives."—Richard Boynton



Scarlett Chadwell  
West Elementary School  
5th grade Math and Reading

## WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"Going back to school to become a teacher was a decision that required careful and thoughtful planning. I realized there are a couple of reasons why I became a teacher. The first reason I want to give kids a chance to succeed and to do something that they dream of doing. Someone cared enough for me and had high expectations for me and my life. I hope to give that to kids in my class. Dreams are not out of reach if you are willing to work for them. Secondly, I became a teacher to help children realize that learning not only takes place at school, but should occur the rest of their lives. I hope to develop life long learners by engaging all students in activities that are interesting and challenging. A lot of time real-life experiences or daily activities of life are not addressed in the classroom, but I think they are crucial to teach to children to benefit our communities and society."—Scarlett Chadwell

OFF THE  
BOOKSHELF

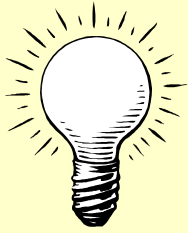
**So You Want to Be  
President?**  
by Judith St. George,  
David Small

This lighthearted, often humorous roundup of anecdotes and trivia is cast as a handbook of helpful hints to aspiring presidential candidates. St. George (*Sacagawea; Crazy Horse*) points out that it might boost your odds of being elected if your name is James (the moniker of six former presidents) or if your place of birth was a humble dwelling ("You probably weren't born in a log cabin. That's too bad. People are crazy about log-cabin Presidents. They elected eight"). She serves up diverse, occasionally tongue-in-cheek tidbits and spices the narrative with colorful quotes from her subjects. For instance, she notes that "Warren Harding was a handsome man, but he was one of our worst Presidents" due to his corrupt administration, and backs it up with one of his own quotes, "I am not fit for this office and never should have been here." Meanwhile, Small (*The Gardener*) shows Harding crowned king of a "Presidential Beauty Contest"; all the other presidents applaud him (except for a grimacing Nixon). The comical, caricatured artwork emphasizes some of the presidents' best known qualities and amplifies the playful tone of the text. For an illustration of family histories, Small depicts eight diminutive siblings crawling over a patient young George Washington; for another featuring pre-presidential occupations, Harry Truman stands at the cash register of his men's shop while Andrew Johnson (a former tailor) makes alterations on movie star Ronald Reagan's suit. The many clever, quirky asides may well send readers off on a presidential fact-finding mission—and spark many a discussion of additional anecdotes. A clever and engrossing approach to the men who have led America. Ages 7-up.

TEACHER WEBSITE of  
THE WEEK:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/white-house-101/>

Always been curious about where the President of the United States of America lives and works? Then be sure to visit this site. Besides details on the residence, the site also has an awesome slideshow on all our Presidents, and fun facts about their past lives and pets.



# Strategies for Teachers . . .

## Joint Construction

**What is it?**

Joint construction is a collaborative writing process involving the students and the teacher in constructing a text, individually, in small groups, or as a whole class.

**What is its purpose?**

It is an effective tool in teaching students about;

- The process of writing
  - The forms of writing
- The conventions, skills and behaviors of writing

**How do I do it?**

- The teacher selects a particular genre/text type which she or he wishes to explore and demonstrate using the contributions of the class
- The teacher takes on the role as a guide asking questions, confirming responses and offering necessary explanations about the purpose of the text, the form of the texts and the writing conventions required from the text
- The teacher with input from students constructs an example of the text form or genre. During the process the teacher 'thinks-aloud' about the decisions and reasoning behind those decisions ,modeling and explaining the processes involved in researching the topic, sharing and putting ideas together, and scaffolding the students' understanding of the structure of the genre or text type, whether it be for example, narrative, report, letters, or poems
- The joint construction is published and share with the students  
It may then become a model for independent construction

**How can I adapt it?**

- use similar process for teaching specific learning strategies for revising and drafting, spelling or proofreading, beginning with an appropriately constructed text in progress  
an excellent strategy for teaching older students how to write literary essays.



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

GRAPEFRUIT MONTH

NATIONAL BIRD FEEDING MONTH

RESPONSIBLE PET OWNER'S MONTH

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEK  
February 12-15

NATIONAL PANCAKE WEEK  
February 14-20

CHINESE NEW YEAR  
February 14

SUSAN B. ANTHONY DAY  
February 15

MARDI GRAS February 16



## Back to school

A teacher was having trouble teaching arithmetic to one little boy. So she said, "if you reached in your right pocket and found a nickel, and you reached in your left pocket and found another one, what would you have?"  
"Someone else's pants".

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