



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2009-2010

Terry Edwards, Program Coordinator

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

Teaching students with attention deficits

Students with attention deficits often are bright and capable of learning, but problems focusing and low frustration tolerance can impede their academic performance. In addition, those students might exhibit organizational and learning difficulties. In fact, about one of every three students with an attention deficit disorder also exhibits a learning disability. If an attention deficit goes unrecognized and accommodations are not made, those student also might exhibit significant social and behavioral difficulties.

ods, however, and do not use the strategy at all if he seems to feel singled out or isolated from his peers.

Shorten the student's work periods. Your student might have difficulty working for long stretches. He might be more productive if he works for two or three short periods rather than one long period. Instead of having him work on a task for 40 minutes, you might have him work for 20 minutes, give him a break, and then have him work for 20 minutes more.

Break a large task into smaller, more manageable parts. Students with attention problems can be overwhelmed by large tasks. As a result, they give up quickly or fail to even attempt a task. Breaking the task into more doable parts can give the student more confidence and help him complete the task successfully. Instead of asking him to complete a whole page of math problems, for example, you might assign him two or three problems, check his performance, and then assign him a few more.

Vary your presentation of information. Direct a student's attention to important information by making it stand out. When writing on a chalkboard, for example, you might underline key words or write them in all capitals or in a different color.

On handouts, you might highlight essential information or change the color, font, or size of the type. For students prone to careless math errors, you might try circling the math signs or highlighting them in color.

Help the student adjust to change. Students with attention problems often have difficulty with transitions. To deal with that problem, let the student know in advance of any upcoming changes. Keep him informed about daily activities by putting his work for the day on the chalkboard. Also, consider posting his personal schedule and responsibilities on his desk on a 4-inch by 6-inch card, perhaps numbering the tasks in the order you want him to work on them. —*Dr. Ken Shore, Education World*

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Help keep the student on task by using a signaling system. You might signal the student that he needs to pay attention or get back to work by walking past his desk, making eye contact with him, or pausing while you are speaking. Or you might work out a private signal with him, such as scratching your head, raising your eyebrows, or tugging on your ear. In a similar vein, develop with the student (and with other students) a signal that he can use to ask for help. That signal might be a "help" flag attached to a pencil that they can stick in a piece of clay on the corner of their desk.

Make sure the student is paying attention when you give directions. Use his name and make eye contact with him when giving instructions. Keep directions clear, short, and specific. If you give a long string of instructions, he might remember only part of what you say. Even if the student is looking right at you and seems to be paying attention, he might be thinking of something else, so you might want to have him repeat the directions in his own words to make sure that he understands. If necessary, write the directions down in addition to stating them orally.

Seat the student in a study carrel. You also can use a cardboard divider or partition to decrease distractions while the child is working independently. Make the idea inviting by telling the student that this is his "office." Only place him there for short peri-

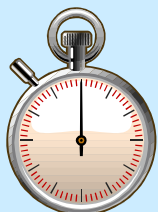


HOW TO DO IT— CHECKLIST



Plan for Classroom Transitions

Prepare your students for classroom transitions before they occur. Let students know up front how much time they have to work on a task in class. Watch your time carefully and let them know throughout the task how much time they still have. Transitions are far smoother when students can anticipate the change and how the time constraints they are under.



What students *REALLY* think of their teachers and education

Between the fall of 2006 and the spring of 2008, a survey of students was conducted by the educational assessment group of Pearson and the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations (QISA) an educational research organization. It is the largest study to date of student perceptions from grades 6 to 12 of the current academic environment. The final report is based on responses from 414,000 students within 569 schools in 32 states from various socioeconomic backgrounds.

Adults' ideas about students' attitudes toward their educational experience often are based on speculation and assumptions. The result is a disconnect between what educators think students need and how to meet those needs and what students consider important.

What the report indicates in part is that many students enjoy school and want to succeed, they also

want their education to be more relevant to their everyday lives and teachers to show more interest in them as individuals.

- Among the positive findings, according to a press release released about the results:
- Seventy-five percent of students reported enjoying learning new things, and that same percentage felt that what they learn will benefit them in the future.



Eighty-four percent of students agree that getting good grades is important, and 69 percent feel testing is an important part of their education.

- Sixty-five percent of students said they have a teacher who is a positive role model.
- Forty-nine percent of students taking the survey enjoy being at school, 54 percent enjoy their classes and

64 percent believe learning can be fun.

ON THE OTHER HAND:

- Only 38 percent of students felt their classes help them understand what is happening in their everyday lives.
- Forty-seven percent felt school is boring and only 31 percent felt teachers make school an exciting place to learn.
- Just 48 percent felt teachers care about them as individuals and even fewer -- 45 percent -- felt teachers cared if they were absent from school.
- Only 30 percent of students respect their fellow students.—
Education World



“A master can tell you what he expects of you. A teacher, though, awakens your own expectations.”
—*Patricia Neal*

FACTS ABOUT KIDS HEALTH

The average child gets less than 15 minutes of vigorous activity a day.

The average U.S. child gets approximately 43 minutes of moderate physical activity a day.

A New Series: Testing Tips for Students #8



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

Make students aware of some of the signs of stress, such as headaches, upset stomach, muscle cramps, cold hands, and sweating. Encourage students to reduce stress by:

- thinking positively and focusing on what they can do.
- being aware of the rhythm of their breathing -- simply breathing in and out can help reduce tension.
- relaxing their muscles by clenching muscles tightly, holding for a few seconds, and then slowly letting go.
- shrugging their shoulders or stretching.

'09-'10

NEW TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTSWanda McInturffLebanon High SchoolPhysical Science

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I chose to pursue a career in education after I obtained my bachelor's degree, but I am as excited and committed as someone who always aspired to teach. Many of my own teachers were excellent role models, and I realize what a tremendous impact educators can have. I enjoy my content area, I seek out challenges, and I desire to help others reach their goals. I am proud to enter a profession that promotes lifelong learning and excellence. Teachers don't just touch the future; they see their future potential in each of their students in the present and help them achieve."—Wanda McInturff

Richard MosesWest Wilson Middle SchoolLanguage Arts

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I worked six months in the business world and knew I could not do that for the rest of my life. I feel teaching is the only true career where you can be yourself everyday and have the freedom to constantly grow as a person who is shaping society."—Richard Moses

Off the shelf:

Awakening Genius in the
Classroom

by Thomas Armstrong

"Every student is a genius," declares author Thomas Armstrong, and an educator's most important job is to discover and nurture the "genius qualities" that all students were born with but that may no longer be obvious. Urging readers to look beyond traditional understandings of what constitutes genius, Armstrong describes 12 such qualities: curiosity, playfulness, imagination, creativity, wonder, wisdom, inventiveness, vitality, sensitivity, flexibility, humor, and joy. He cites research in various fields that supports this broader understanding of genius and explains how influences in the home, the popular media, and the school itself "shut down" the genius in students.

Combining thoughtful insights and practical information, Armstrong offers guiding principles to help educators awaken genius in the classroom --beginning with awakening the genius in themselves. Readers will find dozens of suggested activities and helpful resources to provide "genius experiences" and create a "genial climate" in the classroom. In addition, suggestions for further study at the end of each section provide starting points for personal and professional reflection and growth.

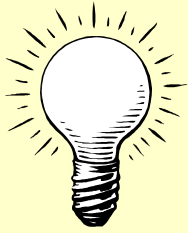
As it celebrates the potential brainpower waiting to be unlocked in classrooms everywhere, *Awakening Genius in the Classroom* inspires educators to look at their students from a different perspective and to reinvigorate their teaching with a new sense of excitement and possibility.

TEACHER WEBSITE of THE
WEEK:

<http://www.jason.org/public/whatis/start.aspx>

THE JASON PROJECT

The JASON Project was founded in 1989 by Dr. Robert D. Ballard following his discovery of the wreck of the RMS Titanic. Since then, they have tried to take students along on an annual expedition to some place on earth or below the ocean. This site, designed for grades 4-9, uses many different multimedia features to enrich your activities in math, science, geography and ecology. The site includes information from both the current year's project and archives of past years. Look for their Teachers Guide to using the Jason Project in your classroom.



Strategies for Teachers . . .

Sequence Chart

What is it?

A cooperative activity in which students learn how to create a sequence of events or ideas to solve a particular problem and arrange them in a logical way using a graphic organiser.

What is its purpose?

- To involve all students in cooperatively speaking, listening and thinking about an issue.

To provide students with opportunities to plan and think logically.

How do I do it?

- Explain how a sequence of actions is required to solve problems or achieve a desired outcome.
- Provide examples appropriate to the age group of students e.g. - To make a cup of tea - To assemble a Kinder Surprise toy - To find a book in the library - To recount the story of a TV program
- Show the sequence chart:
- Have the students use sticky notes to brainstorm steps or ideas. Write one on each note.
- You might like to write the items for very young children. Ask the class to help you put the sticky notes in the sequence boxes, one note per box.

Divide the class into groups to try their own sequence chart using these steps:

- Identify the problem.
 - Brain storm possible steps that might lead to a solution using sticky notes.
- Use the sequence chart to order these. Write no more than 2 or 3 words in each box
- How can I adapt it?
- Select other texts such as news articles, magazine stories, TV shows, biographies, historic events.
 - Provide students with sequence charts to use with reading a novel.
- For younger students cut up comics from a newspaper and mix up the frames. Have students glue them to the sequence chart.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

YOUTH LEADERSHIP MONTH

NATIONAL TIME MANAGEMENT MONTH

NATIONAL CHERRY MONTH

READ ME WEEK
February 22-26

NATIONAL PANCAKE WEEK
February 14-20

LOVE YOUR PET DAY
February 20

NATIONAL CHILI DAY
February 25

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY February 22

