



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2009-2010

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May 2010

Vol. 5 Issue 31

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New Teacher Support
Program
Wilson County Schools
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HOW TO DO IT— CHECKLIST



Holy Cow! We Missed You Bags

Sew together 2 rectangular pieces of cow-decorated material to make a "tote-bag" for absent student's work. 2 additional strips of material can be used for handles.

Many times a parent will call the school wanting to pick up their child's work he has missed due to illness, vacation, etc. I can simply collect the work, put it in the bag, and it is all in one place. I attach a note that says, "Holy Cow! We Missed You!" and then write additional notes as to the work that needs to be completed. The bags are returned when the make-up work is finished.



Ten Qualities of Great Teachers (According to the Bill & Melinda Gates Project)

Bill Gates is a very generous philanthropist donating millions of dollars to many educational projects. Finding the rubric for the best teachers is important to him. After all, a good teacher is the most important factor in a successful classroom.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Project

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is devoting two years and \$45 million for the answer. Melinda Gates is quoted saying, "What was the thing that works absolutely the best? At the end of the day, it is the teacher in the classroom." An effective teacher in a classroom with children is the key to success. But, Gates wants to learn just exactly what the characteristics are that make one teacher more effective than another.



James D. Starkey Knows Effective Teaching

James Starkey would like to save Bill Gates some money. While Starkey applauds Bill and Melinda's efforts, Starkey thinks he has the answer. He has been around the teaching block several times and is recently retired. He knows what does not make an affective teacher. It is not

- Time on task
- Identifying objectives
- Administrative fiat
- The latest recycled fad
- Small-group instruction
- Large-group instruction
- Writing workshops
- Reading labs
- Concept attainment

- Modular scheduling
- Block scheduling
- Traditional scheduling
- Curriculum guides.

If it is not the above, just what is it? Starkey states that it is significant adult interaction with children.

What a Great Teacher Looks Like

"There are as many classroom approaches as there are master teachers, but the one thing they all have in common is that students learn. They get

higher test scores. When you walk by such teachers' rooms, students will be smiling. And none of those teachers learned how to create that feeling in a methods class, or from an administrator, or from some groundbreaking research," says Starkey.

Great teaching is magic, can't be measured and it can't be taught. You can teach good teaching but great teaching is intrinsic. It is instinct and intuition. Those characteristics can not be taught. Teachers can be taught how to assess, but can not be taught to instinctively know when students do not understand a concept. Starkey gives a list of what makes a great teacher.

- Sense of humor. If a student says something funny, it is okay to laugh.
- Is intuitive. Sometimes, a teacher can't explain "how" they know, they just know.
- Knows subject matter. No one can effectively teach something they do not know.
- Listens well. Each student is an individual.
- Is articulate.

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Great Teacher Qualities (continued from page 1)



- Has an obsessive/compulsive side. Attention to detail is important.
- Can be subversive. Buck the system if necessary and challenge the status quo.
- Is arrogant enough to be fearless. Students need teachers to be strong.
- Has a performer's instincts.
- Is a real taskmaster. Teachers need to hold students accountable and help them be responsible.

This list is not taught in methods classes. In fact, some items on the list would be discouraged by colleges. But, the educator that can manage the above list is most likely to be a great teacher. Starkey suggests that Bill Gates just use this list and save time and money. Starkey suggests giving the money to some "great" retired teachers.—
Barbara Pytel

Stage a Poetry Slam at Your School

Poetry slams blend poetry and theater to create a fun event that emphasizes creativity while it exercises -- and stretches -- students' thinking and presentation skills. Videotape your poetry slam, or use it as a fundraiser or Parents Night activity.

What Is a Poetry Slam?

"Simply put, a poetry slam is the competitive art of performance poetry. It puts dual emphasis on writing and performance, encouraging poets to focus on what they're saying and how they're saying it. A poetry slam is an event in which poets perform their work and are judged by members of the audience...."

Often, in a poetry slam, the audience participates by judging each performance on a scale of 1 to 10.

Tips for Your Poetry Slam

For the purposes of a classroom or school-wide activity, the rules of a poetry slam can be adapted in many ways, including the following:

- Students might perform poetry written by well-known poets, or they might perform poems they have written themselves.
- Student performances might be limited to two minutes in length; point penalties might be applied to any performance that goes longer than that.
- A ballot and rubric can be created so students can rate one another's performances, or the teacher might be the sole

grader.

- If a school-wide event is held, poets and other community members might serve as the event judges.
- Students might use props when they perform.
- Student performances can be videotaped in their classrooms; a panel of judges, including teachers and students, might review the videotapes to select the students who will perform in the school-wide event.
- The poetry slam might be open to any student who wishes to participate -- or each class could hold a mini poetry slam and select three students to represent the class in the school-wide event.
- Performances might be rated on a scale of 1 to 10 (with .5 increments allowed) or on the 1.0 to 6.0 scale often used in Olympic competitions (with .1 increments allowed).
- One score might be given for each student's performance, or separate scores might be given for the student's content and presentation; the "content" grade could reflect the content of the poem if it is student-written or, if not, that score could reflect the research that went into finding the ideal poem to perform.
- If this is students' first experience with a poetry slam, it should first be introduced in class as a fun activity. That way, students will get a feel for the form.
- Admission can be



**"The lasting measure of good teaching is what the individual student learns and carries away. —
Barbara Harrell Carson**

charged, with proceeds used to improve student programs. Individual students could be awarded cash prizes that would be turned over in their names to local charities pre-selected by the students.

LITTLE KNOWN TEACHING FACTS:

Little Known Teaching Fact - What do teachers expect from students?

A recent poll conducted by National Education Association asked the teacher respondents what they would like to receive most from their students. Nearly 50% of teachers responded saying that a simple "thank you" will suffice.

'09-'10 NEW TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



Cale Yarbrough

Mt. Juliet High School

Health Occupations, Rehabilitation, Anatomy & Physiology

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I became a teacher after six plus years in Health Care as an athletic trainer. As a teacher I want to help guide students into a career choice before they start college. In my case, I did not start college until four years after my high school education. The primary reason for not starting college, was I did not know what I wanted to do and I did not want to waste time or money. If kids can be educated, through their high school years on career options, even if they do not choose a health career, then I have done my job in giving them a realistic view of health careers."—Cale Yarbrough



Cory Walker

Lebanon High School

Business

"I became a teacher because I like to work with young people and help them reach their educational goals.—Cory Walker

TEACHER WEBSITE of THE WEEK:



<http://comminfo.rutgers.edu/professional-development/childlit/AuthorSite/index.html>

LEARNING ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR PAGES

If you or your students are curious about the people who create books, there may be a web site dedicated to the writer of your favorite book. The problem of how to find that site is solved at this site. The page isn't fancy but it does contain a list of hundreds of authors and illustrators which link to one or more tribute sites. An excellent reference that needs to be in your bookmark file.

Off the shelf:

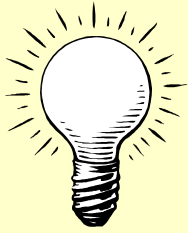


It's So Much Work to Be Your Friend: Helping the Child with Learning Disabilities Find Social Success

by *Richard Lavoie, Mel Levine*

"Life without friends is a lonely and barren existence," but that's a common fate for children who fail to develop proper social skills, writes veteran special education teacher Lavoie in his insightful guidebook to helping children with learning disabilities overcome social skill deficits. Eschewing sink-or-swim and carrot-and-stick approaches, Lavoie stresses communication and patience for parents looking to guide their children through the maze of social interactions encountered daily, from arranging successful play dates and navigating the hidden curriculum of school, to language difficulties, social anxieties and family issues.

Lavoie, who has taught and worked in the special education field for over 30 years, shows how to detect learning disabilities, discusses their impact on a child's social development and provides strategies (most notably his "Social Skill Autopsy") for implementing behavior change. Organized by the different types of social skills—those commonly used at home, at school and in the community—Lavoie's text is refreshingly free of jargon and is suitable for both spot- and cover-to-cover reading. Though aimed at parents of learning disabled children, this comprehensive guide will be handy for any parent whose child has trouble socializing at school or home.



Strategies for Teachers . . .

Interview the Author

What is it?

Students ask questions of the author of a text in order to develop their skills in understanding the intended message of the author and to hone their skills as critical readers. Claire Jennings and Julie Shepherd have developed an excellent approach to this strategy in their text *Literacy and the Key Learning Areas*.

What is its purpose?

Students are encouraged to investigate the following aspects of a text:

- What is fact and what is opinion?
- What is the intended message?
- What is the author's or illustrator's point of view? Is there a bias?
- What other readings are possible?

What is the interplay between the written and visual text?

How do I do it?

The lesson sequence could be as follows:

Find suitable texts that match the focus you wish to investigate

Make copies for students

Read text to class, followed by students reading silently

Students make a list of questions they would like to ask:

What is the author saying?

What message is the author giving you?

What is fact and what is opinion in the text?

Is the author trying to tell you about something they believe in?

Did the author change your ideas in any way?

Does anything puzzle you about the text?

Students try out the procedure on a related text.

How can I adapt it?

To promote reflection, students could ask such questions of their own work or indeed, interview each other in pairs.

How can it be used to evaluate students' language learning?

The Author Interview strategy provides evidence of a range of learning outcomes in the way students gain meaning from a text: Analysis of author/illustrator intention, message, point of view Multiple readings Fact or opinion Questioning technique



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CLEAN AIR MONTH

GET CAUGHT READING MONTH

NATIONAL HAMBURGER MONTH

NATIONAL SALAD MONTH

NATIONAL NURSES DAY AND WEEK

May 6-12

READING IS FUN WEEK

May 9-15

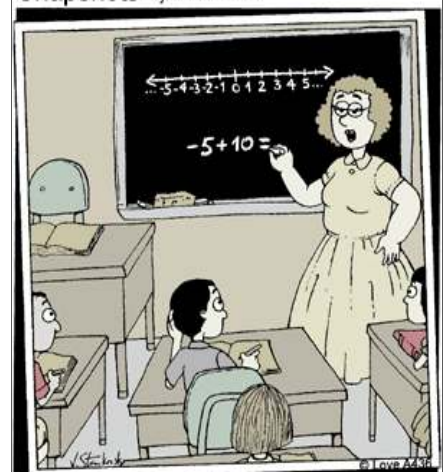
NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

May 9-15

MOTHER'S DAY

May 9

Snapshots at jasonlove.com



"If you go on a diet and lose five pounds, only to gain back ten the following month, how many infuriating, godforsaken pounds do you weigh?"