



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2009-2010

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New Teacher Support
Program
Wilson County Schools
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Introducing Marzano In Your Classroom

In the book, CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION THAT WORKS, Robert Marzano describes nine categories for instructional planning that research shows to improve student achievement. If you have never explored Marzano's philosophy of teaching, take note and try to introduce some into your classroom curriculum.

1. Identifying Similarities and Differences

The ability to break a concept into its similar and dissimilar characteristics allows students to understand (and often solve) complex problems by analyzing them in a more simple way. Teachers can either directly present similarities and differences, accompanied by deep discussion and inquiry, or simply ask students to identify similarities and differences on their own. While teacher-directed activities focus on identifying specific items, student-directed activities encourage variation and broaden understanding, research shows. Research also notes that graphic forms are a good way to represent similarities and differences.

Applications:

- * Use Venn diagrams or charts to compare and classify items.
- * Engage students in comparing, classifying, and creating metaphors and analogies.

2. Summarizing and Note Taking

These skills promote greater comprehension by asking students to analyze a subject to expose what's essential and then put it in their own words. According to research, this requires substituting, deleting, and keeping some things and having an awareness of the basic structure of the information presented.

Applications:

- * Provide a set of rules for creating a summary.
- * When summarizing, ask students to question what is unclear, clarify those

questions, and then predict what will happen next in the text.

Research shows that taking more notes is better than fewer notes, though verbatim note taking is ineffective because it does not allow time to process the information. Teachers should encourage and give time for review and revision of notes; notes can be the best study guides for tests.

Applications:

- * Use teacher-prepared notes.
- * Stick to a consistent format for notes, although students can refine the notes as necessary.

3. Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition

Effort and recognition speak to the attitudes and beliefs of students, and teachers must show the connection between effort and achievement. Research shows that although not all students realize the importance of effort, they can learn to change their beliefs to emphasize effort.

Applications:

- * Share stories about people who succeeded by not giving up.
- * Have students keep a log of their weekly efforts and achievements, reflect on it periodically, and even mathematically analyze the data.

According to research, recognition is most effective if it is contingent on the achievement of a certain standard. Also, symbolic recognition works better than tangible rewards.

Applications:

- * Find ways to personalize recognition. Give awards for individual accomplishments.
- * "Pause, Prompt, Praise." If a student is struggling, pause to discuss the problem, then prompt with specific suggestions to help her improve. If the student's performance improves as a result, offer praise.

Continued on page 2

HOW TO DO IT— CHECKLIST



Predetermine Your Reaction When Rules Are Broken

Control your reaction when rules are broken. A common reaction is for a student to ask, "What did I do?" Simply and calmly note the infraction but move on with a minimum of fuss. Don't give the student undue attention and power for the behavior. Wait until after class to discuss the incident and notify the student of the consequences of breaking the rule. This approach spares limited class time, avoids rewarding misbehaviors with more attention, and yet follows up with consequences.



Marzano in the Classroom (continued from page 1)

4. Homework and Practice

Homework provides students with the opportunity to extend their learning outside the classroom. However, research shows that the amount of homework assigned should vary by grade level and that parent involvement should be minimal. Teachers should explain the purpose of homework to both the student and the parent or guardian, and teachers should try to give feedback on all homework assigned.

Applications:

- * Establish a homework policy with advice—such as keeping a consistent schedule, setting, and time limit—that parents and students may not have considered.
- * Tell students if homework is for practice or preparation for upcoming units.
- * Maximize the effectiveness of feedback by varying the

way it is delivered.

Research shows that students should adapt skills while they're learning them. Speed and accuracy are key indicators of the effectiveness of practice.

Applications:

- * Assign timed quizzes for homework and have students report on their speed and accuracy.
- * Focus practice on difficult concepts and set aside time to accommodate practice periods.

5. Nonlinguistic Representations

According to research, knowledge is stored in two forms: linguistic and visual. The more students use both forms in the classroom, the more opportunity they have to achieve. Recently, use of nonlinguistic representation has proven to not only stimu-

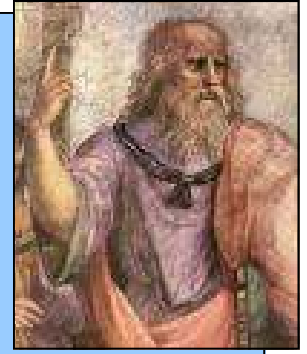
late but also increase brain activity.

Applications:

- * Incorporate words and images using symbols to represent relationships.
- * Use physical models and physical movement to represent information.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK WITH THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES:

6. Cooperative Learning
7. Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback
8. Generating and Testing Hypotheses
9. Cues, Questions and Graphic Organizers



“The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life.”

—Plato

Differentiated Instruction

Get to know your students' learning styles. Be aware of the variety of learning styles. Some students are tactile or hands-on learners while others do well with the written word.

Some students study best alone; some in a group. When do they study best? In the morning? In the evening? Where do they do their best work? Where do they have difficulty?

Create the right class-

room environment. Flexible seating charts. Don't put your weakest students in the back of the classroom. Develop a positive class culture with encouraging reinforcement of events that take place in the classroom.

Try mixing up groups. Occasionally group students by similar needs or interests. The



next time change the group so that it is mixed needs or interests. Allow students to leave the group if they are justified in feeling that they are out of place.

Test students on what they have or have not learned. Be aware that the prime focus of a test is to determine what to do next. If material has not been mastered, then there may

be a need to reteach it before moving forward with the curriculum.

Differentiate your questions by developing higher level thinking questions for students who can answer them and then adjust some questions for students with greater needs. Adjust the response time for students who need more time to process the question.—*Franklin Schargel/152 Ways to Keep Students in School*

'09-'10

NEW TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



Laura Wade

Mt. Juliet Middle School

8th grade Language Arts

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I made a decision to become a teacher because I know that having an education is the foundation of life. Engineers, CEOs, accountants, teachers, etc. all had to start from somewhere. A teacher is responsible for that beginning. Square one is where an education begins. No matter what career a person chooses in life...a teacher is responsible for getting them there. Another reason I chose to become a teacher is because teachers are always going to be needed. Being an educator isn't just some fad that popped up along the way. Teachers are the foundation for success."—Laura Wade

TEACHER WEBSITE of THE WEEK:

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

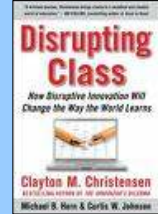


Outside My Window

If you're looking for a relatively simple but powerful project to try with your students, give this one a look. For this activity, students take some pictures of their neighborhood and send them to the teacher who created the project. In addition to a gallery of the "windows" submitted by participants, the site also includes a web forum where students can post a description of the view from their window and discuss the views that other students have. When you visit the site, look for the project outline with some great suggestions on using this activity in your classroom. A very powerful way to connect your students to the world.



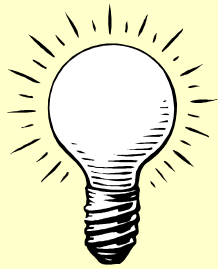
OFF THE BOOKSHELF



Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Innovation Will Change the Way the World Learns by Clayton M. Christensen, Curtis W. Johnson, Michael B. Horn

It's no secret that people learn in different ways, so why, the authors of this book ask, "can't schools customize their teaching?" The current system, "designed for standardization," must by its nature ignore the individual needs of each student. The answer to this problem, the authors argue, is "disruptive innovation," a principle introduced (and initially applied to business) by Harvard Business School professor Christensen in *The Innovator's Dilemma*. The idea is that an audience in need will benefit from even a faulty opportunity to fulfill that need; in education, the demand for individual instruction could be met through infinitely customizable online computer-based instruction.

The authors, all professionals in education, present a solution to the ills of standardized education that's visionary but far-fetched; even they admit that their recommendations would be extremely difficult to implement in current school systems. Still, the authors' unusual case, though occasionally bogged down in tangents, is worthy reading for school administrators, teachers, parents and, perhaps most of all, software developers.



Strategies for New Teachers . . .

WALK-AROUND ROSTER

Use a similar roster to grade homework. Tell students to put homework on their desks. Pick just a few items to check visually so you can quickly sample the work. Also, give a check for just having the homework on the desk. Example, if the assignment had five questions, tell the class that you are checking answers to #2 and #5. walk around the room, inspect the papers and give a check for each correct answer to those two questions, along with a check for having the homework on the desk. (You can do this while students are doing other work.)

FAIR & EFFECTIVE GRADING PRACTICES

Give serious consideration to how you will determine students' grades. Discuss your grading system with an experienced colleague before you begin. Also, find out if there is a mandated policy for grading and grade determination in your school or district.

WEIGHTED GRADES OR TOTAL POINTS?

There are two major methods for calculating students' grades: Weight Grades and Total Points. Next week we will explore each concept, along with tips, advantages and potential pitfalls.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FALL HAT MONTH

NATIONAL PIANO MONTH

SELF IMPROVEMENT MONTH

Constitution Week
September 13-19

Play Days
September 8-12

Substitute Teacher
Appreciation Week
September 14-19

Suicide Prevention Week
September 7-12

off the mark.com by Mark Parisi



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Back to school

Pupil (on phone) : My son has a bad cold and won't be able to come to school today.
School Secretary: Who is this?
Pupil: This is my father speaking!