



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2008-2009

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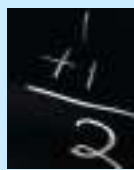
Teacher Tip of the Week
New Teacher Support
Program
Wilson County Schools
615-453-7282

Math activities for Valentine's Day

In the middle of winter, children start getting bored and restless. Spice up the math area while simultaneously celebrating Valentine's Day with these activities.

velopes with a numeral preprinted on them. Have the child cut a given number of strips into each envelope. For the child with more dexterity, have her cut out a given number of hearts for each envelope.

HELPFUL WEBSITE FOR TEACHERS



<http://www.mathplayground.com/>

Welcome to Math Playground, an action-packed site for elementary and middle school students. Practice your math skills, play a logic game and have some fun!

Numeral Cards

Replace numeral cards in the math centers or Montessori work areas with numerals either printed on a heart background or heart-shaped cards. For example, label the number rods, bead bars, or counters with the heart cards. Set up a supplemental teens or tens tray using heart-themed cards.

Make your own Sandpaper Numerals. Write large numerals on large hearts, printed or cut out of cardstock or poster board. Have the children trace the numerals with white glue, then cover them with sand or cornmeal. When dry, the children can trace them.

Make a Hundred Board. Cut out one hundred hearts to put into order. Use different colors for each row of tens.

Counting Hearts

Hearts come in a variety of styles. Find them as erasers, beads, stickers, plastic ice cubes. Whatever your desire, choose a set of fifty-five and have the children practice one-to-one correspondence counting 0 - 10.

Turn an art project into a counting project. Create a paper with the numerals 0 - 10 printed along one side. Have the children use a stamp to print the according quantities. For control, include a pre-printed grid and have the children aim to put one stamp into each box. Or use stickers instead of stamps.

For the child who loves to cut, provide heart-shaped or heart-decorated en-

Patterning

Practice patterning using different colored hearts or other Valentine's Day pictures. The simplest patterns can be two alternating colors (red-blue-red-blue) or two different pictures (heart-cupid-heart-cupid). Increase the difficulty with longer patterns and slight variations with more details between the pictures.

Graphing

Put out a bowl of candy hearts. Have the children tally the colors they find in a bar graph. Or use another kind of Valentine's Day candy. At group, ask the children what their favorite Valentine's Day treat is, and graph the results. If children pass out individual Valentines, graph how many are of a specific style or character.

Math Operations

Use candy hearts to perform the basic arithmetic operations of addition, multiplication, division, and subtraction. Supply equations printed on heart-shaped flash-cards. Write story problems about people sharing their candy hearts or other Valentines Day-related items. Create mats to guide them, if necessary.

Performing math activities with a heart theme around Valentine's Day will help spice up your math area and channel the children's excitement into something productive.—*Andrea Coventry*



Cutting Corners

SPLIT UP THE CLASSROOM

To avoid congestion when passing out something that everyone might need, split up the item into different parts of the room. For instance, if you need everyone to grab a clipboard, put them in three different places around the room.

Some alternatives to “free time”

Do you occasionally give your students some free time to let them learn as they choose?

Free time enables the teacher to help a child individually in a non-threatening environment and show how things learned in class can be used in everyday situations.

In order to make this work, you need to have an interesting classroom full of learning aids, interest areas, books, scientific equipment, blocks, games, etc.

These items should be in places easily accessible to students. Students should be allowed to use the items at their discretion.



Set a few rules for “free time”. For example, ordinary rules of conduct are to be followed—no running, no loud talking, no pushing, etc. Only a certain number are allowed in any one area of the classroom at a time.

Also, when the teacher says times up, each person must clean up the area in which he or she is

working.

While students are actively enjoying their free time, walk around—talking, explaining when asked, but mainly listening. Listening can reveal weak areas, as well as personal problems and areas of interest.

*Studies show free time activities are especially good as a reinforcement of good behavior for middle school students.—*The Instructor*

!!ALERT: Free time should be a privilege for your students, certainly not a frequent and everyday occurrence.

THANK A TEACHER



Megan Mullally
Actress

“My high school English teacher (Steven Surbeck), who for some reason assigned me the role of Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* when we read it aloud in class—it was the first time I’d ever done anything remotely like acting, and I thought, hmmm...”—Megan Mullally



“What a distressing contrast there is between the radiant intelligence of the child and the feeble mentality of the average adult.”

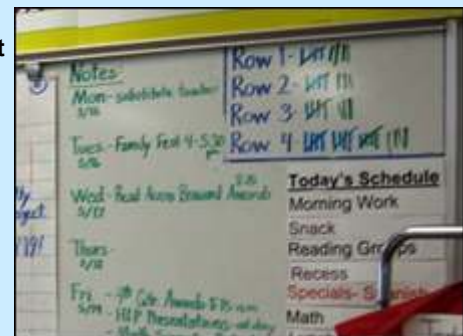
—Sigmund Freud



Keep Track of Classroom Schedules

Classroom schedules can be almost impossible to keep up with when there are multiple assemblies, field trips, half-days/holidays, and student-pull-outs for special education, speech therapy, reading group, and more -- not to mention all the cancellations and rescheduling.

To keep yourself and students up to date, post your daily schedule on the board using simple laminated strips with magnets on the back so they easily can be moved around. Then write notes (shown here in green) whenever there are special events, calendar changes, or pull-out cancellations. Leave up notes for the entire week so students have a reference point and can copy the notes into their agenda books if desired.



New Teacher Support Participants:



Kelly Sprague

Lebanon High School

Biology/Physical Science

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I became a teacher because I believe that today's youth and young adults need a good scientific background. I am passionate about the sciences and I believe that I can give the students at Lebanon the great science education that they deserve. It is my goal to demonstrate and show my students how science is important and useful in their everyday lives." —Kelly Sprague



Emily Tragle

Wilson Central High School

French

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I love learning about languages and cultures and I want to share that love with students. I want to help students realize that there is a big world out there for them to explore. I want to help students learn to appreciate differences in the many different cultures we have not only in our own country but also around the world." —Emily Tragle

Teach about how the human heart really works on Valentine's Day

What better time is there than St. Valentine's Day to teach your students about how the human heart really works? Whether your students are preschoolers or high-schoolers, you're sure to find a site here that will unlock for them a mystery of the heart.

Did you know that...?

- The human heart beats about 100,000 times a day, 35 million times a year, and two and a half billion times in an average lifetime.
- The average heart pumps more than a gallon of blood a minute.

- A kid's heart is about the size of a fist. An adult's heart is the size of two fists.

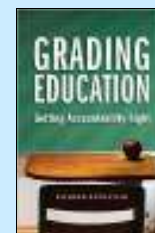


- In the United States, about 2,000 people a day die of heart disease.
- Most heart attacks occur between the hours of 8 and 9 AM.

- The right lung of a human is larger than the left one. This is because of the space and placement of the heart.
- Scientists have discovered that the longer the ring finger is in boys the less chance they have of having a heart attack.

CHECK OUT THIS WEBSITE FOR LESSON PLANS ON THE HEART: http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/sites/sites020.shtml

From the Bookshelf:



Grading Education : Getting Accountability Right by Richard Rothstein

Yes, we should hold public schools accountable for effectively spending the vast funds with which they have been entrusted. But accountability policies like No Child Left Behind, based exclusively on math and reading test scores, have narrowed the curriculum, misidentified both failing and successful schools, and established irresponsible expectations for what schools can accomplish. Instead of just grading progress in one or two narrow subjects, we should hold schools accountable for the broad outcomes we expect from public education—basic knowledge and skills, critical thinking, an appreciation of the arts, physical and emotional health, and preparation for skilled employment—and then develop the means to measure and ensure schools' success in achieving them. Grading Education describes a new kind of accountability plan for public education, one that relies on higher-quality testing, focuses on professional evaluation, and builds on capacities we already possess.



Hug Time

by Patrick McDonnell Ages 3-6



Master Teacher Tips...

Motivation

Some students are very nostalgic. They live off the past. You will find it much easier to motivate these students to work in the present if you follow two guidelines. First, show them that you understand both their devotion to the past as well as their willingness to work very hard. In the process, don't do anything to play down the past. Second, show them how the effort you are suggesting or the work at hand will perpetuate past glory. You will find linking the past to the present can be very motivational to them. Unless you use this approach, they may live in the past and miss the experiences and importance of the present for long periods of time.

Before you can even begin to have influence in motivating groups of students effectively, you must know your strategic advantages. If you don't, your words will be "air" rather than reality. Take out a pencil and answer some very important questions. First, why do your best students follow your urgings continually? Second, what is special about you, your class, and your subject? Third, how are you helping every student fit in and be more successful? Fourth, how are you improving learning for each student? Fifth, which students would use you as a reference? Your answers will reflect the motivational strengths and limitations of your urgings.



Upcoming Events

Youth Leadership Month

National Black History Month

National Time Management Month

Random Acts of Kindness Week February 11-17

Celebration of Love Week February 10-16

For a Laugh!

