

Teachers

“WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH” [PROVERBS 29:18]

WINTER | 2011
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of Vision



**MOTIVATING
HARD-TO-REACH
STUDENTS**



DIRECT TO YOU

From Finn Laursen
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I have been blessed this school year to meet with many devoted Christian educators working in our public schools across the nation. They come from different communities and backgrounds, but one consistent issue surfaces: a lack of knowledge of the many religious freedoms that our Constitution protects within our public school culture.

Our forefathers had great perceptiveness when they penned the Constitution. They realized that building a country could not happen without the help of the Lord. In the First Amendment, they made sure that the government would not establish a religion nor prohibit the expression of religion.

At the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin set the tone for the writing. He realized that they had been meeting to draft a guiding document for a new nation and had neglected seeking the Creator. After the following speech overflowing with Biblical allusions, all future sessions were commenced with prayer.

How would the First Amendment impact a public school teacher? The courts have equated teachers as arms of the government since they are supported by public dollars. Thus, a public school teacher cannot establish his or her religion in that classroom. In other words, Christian educators cannot use their public position to force their beliefs on students.

However, the school cannot use its power to ban the free exercise of religion in the school. If teachers of faith believe that their expression of religion includes communicating with their God, schools cannot prohibit such expression. Teachers can engage in personal prayer. In fact, every superintendent in the nation must annually sign an assurance document that they have no policies that inhibit constitutionally-protected prayer.

Teachers can attend student or staff initiated prayer groups, Bible studies or worship activities. If these are held during the workday, the teachers should not lead them, but are free to fully participate before and after the workday.

All elementary curriculums include some reference to religion and teachers are free to teach about religion and to even go beyond the basic required curriculum. Since they are public employees, they cannot lead religion devotionally, but can clearly teach about it.

If questioned about their faith by students, they can certainly answer honestly. The courts have clearly communicated that teachers do not lose their freedom of speech rights when entering the public school classroom.

...I have lived, Sir, along time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth- that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that 'except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this, and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.

Isaiah 1:27; 'Except the Lord build...' Benjamin Franklin
'Matthew 10:29 'A sparrow...' Constitutional Convention
June 28, 1787

As they penned the Constitution, they assured that future government agencies, like schools, would not control religion or silence the convictions of a religious people.

Freedoms for Educators

- Personal Prayer
- Attend student/staff activities including Prayer, Bible Study, and Worship
- Lead after school GOOD NEWS CLUB
- Personal Expression
- Religion in Curriculum

The First Amendment United States Constitution

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,..."

"...abridging the freedom of speech, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Establishment Clause
Free Exercise Clause

Student Freedoms

- Prayer
- Bible
- Distribution of Material
- Discussion/School Assignments
- Access to Space and Media
- Religious Garb
- Release Time
- Objectionable Lesson or Activity Release

CEAI exists to help Christian educators understand and carry out their mission. CEAI provides resources such as magazines, newsletters, daily devotionals and many other printed and digital resources from a Christian worldview.



WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH:
BUT HE THAT KEEPETH THE LAW, HAPPY IS HE. [PROVERBS 29:18]

Teachers of Vision

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A Teacher's Prayer

Lord, help me in my teaching Your love to demonstrate,
And guide me in my life's work, my service consecrate.
Entrust to me more wisdom for tasks I need to do;
Then grant me greater patience and strengthen me anew.

Forgive me for my sins today; make me forgiving, too.
Then help me think before I speak, and let my words be true.
Revive enthusiasm like when I first began.
Renew my dedication to do the best I can.

May all my discipline be fair, my class control be good,
And may my students try their best to learn the things they should.
Impart to me the knowledge of words I need to say,
A spirit of discernment to lead my class today.

Empower me with goodness, and keep my temper sweet.
May I show only kindness to everyone I meet.
Bless all the students that I teach and guide them, this my prayer.
Then give them happy, useful lives and keep them in Your care.

Verna Cole Mitchell
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National Association
of Evangelicals



Evangelical Council for
Financial Accountability



Evangelical Press Association

FIFTY WAYS TO COLOR A MOTIVATED CLASSROOM

by Ed Tooley

It happened again! An energy and buzz permeates my university classroom each time this particular activity is completed. The activity is quite simple. I ask a class of current and future teachers to list various ways teachers can motivate their students. The activity commences with the teachers making a personal list then sharing their answers with a small group. The activity culminates in a class discussion where these teacher-students share their findings with the entire class. The energy of the activity seems to reach its pinnacle when I write the findings on the board. The list of ideas usually fills the board. But more importantly, it fills the hearts and souls of those present.



My only regret is that more teachers can't take part in this activity. This activity has the ability to motivate and invigorate both beginning and veteran teachers. Hey, wait a minute! I can make more teachers a part of the activity by putting the list of ideas on paper. So here goes!

I have loosely categorized the ideas to give them order. Let's begin with some general ideas.

Motivate students by:

- Having a mastery of the subject you teach. (In other words, know your stuff!)
- Searching high and low for illustrations/visuals that help bring LIFE to the curriculum.
- Being organized and ready to teach EACH DAY!
- Seeking to find and appreciate the strengths of each student.
- Channeling students into activities and vocational opportunities that are geared to their unique abilities and talents.
- Using as many teaching methods and strategies as are available.
- Catering to the different learning styles students bring to class.
- Visualizing whenever possible. (What does it look like?)
- Making every possible effort to make each lesson interesting.
- Searching for relevant stories that illustrate your topic or unit.

Motivate students with words by:

- Looking for opportunities to encourage verbally.
- Being genuine in your praise.
- Using specific words to encourage students.
- Encouraging students consistently.
- Encouraging more than criticizing the students you teach.
- Encouraging students both publicly and privately. (Consider praising their achievements in other classes.)
- "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11).

Motivate students by writing notes and calling home:

- Call parents immediately when a student improves or makes a noticeable effort. A positive phone call can really make a mom or dad's day. If you don't reach them, leave a message, if possible.
- Mother Teresa rule: Make an effort to find a certain time each week to write positive notes or cards. Keep an accurate record of notes sent to students. (I keep a record in my grade book.)

Motivate students by showcasing student work:

- Acknowledge student work in front of the class (W. Glasser, *The Quality School*).
- Before students begin a new project give them ideas with completed projects. (Show students what quality work looks like!)
- Make the effort to locate places such as libraries, museums, universities, fairs and businesses to showcase student work.

Motivate students with contests and competitions:

- Enter student work in various contests and competitions, which are held each year for many different subjects. It takes some effort to find them. Help students fill out any entry forms. You may also want to make up your own contests and competitions. Students love the challenge and prospect of competing.

Motivate students with an awards center:

- Buy old trophies, clean them and have new plates made for them.
- Make your very own plaques and have new plates made for them.
- Become friends with the owner of a trophy shop!
- Oriental Trading Company – an inexpensive mail order catalog.
- Make your very own certificates of achievement for your subject or class. (The computer is your friend here.)
- Ask various businesses and companies for free certificates and coupons. You will be amazed at the generosity of some businesses and companies.

Motivate students with classroom appearance:

- The cities of Cooperstown, Canton and Springfield have them. Why not build a HALL OF FAME in your classroom for students who have accomplished great things inside or outside of the classroom?
- Display motivating and encouraging signs and banners.
- Post a thought for the day or week written on the chalkboard.
- Fill your classroom with your students' work. (I tell my students that I don't need to shop for posters to decorate my classroom because their projects are so good.)

Motivate students with cheers and activities:

- Make up cheers and salutes when a student accomplishes something special.

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PUT THE CARE BACK INTO WHO CARES?: FOUR WAYS TO CONNECT YOUR MATERIAL AND YOUR STUDENTS

by Margo L. Dill

One of the most disheartening comments a teacher hears when giving a lesson is, “Why do we have to learn this?” Followed by the other popular student comment, “Who cares?” We live in a society and age where there are hundreds of things to fill your students’ time and stick in their minds besides the causes of the Revolutionary War, long division and finding the main idea. If we only teach our subject matter and objectives, then we’ll lose many of our students to the questions stated above. If we show students how the material we teach affects their lives now and in the future, then we have a better chance



of capturing their attention and engaging them in our subjects. If we involve them in the learning process, they will learn more.

Engaging students and capturing their attention is easy to say but hard to do. It takes brainstorming, creativity, thinking outside the box and effort to connect our objectives to students’ lives today. Take history for example—if you are a history teacher, it is more difficult for students to connect to the United States Civil War than it is for them to understand the importance of being able to add and subtract money. No matter what you teach, there are ways to connect your material to students’ lives through using technology, implementing learning strategies, giving specific examples and creating new environments in your classroom.

Technology Gets Them Every Time

Most students, no matter what their age, love computers and surfing the Web. How can you work technology tools into units of study to keep students connected and engaged? You can find websites that provide additional practice, allow students to prepare PowerPoint presentations or create an Internet scavenger hunt where students will learn needed information.

Here’s a real classroom example. A combined fourth and fifth grade class is studying the pre-Civil War era in history, focused mostly on slavery and the causes of the U.S. Civil War. The teacher finds a wonderful interactive website through a search engine, “National Geographic Online Presents: The Underground Railroad” (<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/railroad/>). Students use this website to learn facts about traveling on the Underground Railroad,

freedom routes to the north and important people on the Underground Railroad. With this site, students make choices on whether or not they want to make the hard journey and trust people on their way to freedom.

The teacher can also do a different type of assessment throughout the unit instead of the typical end of the unit test. She can assign students to prepare PowerPoint presentations on certain topics in the unit. Students love to be creative and find photos and interesting facts on the Internet that they can use for their presentations. They often know more about these programs than we do! Because students are engaged when using technology, they feel connected to the material. They are interacting and learning, not just hearing information, taking notes and memorizing them.

Think about math—use computers to create graphs and tables with Microsoft Excel. What about reading? Look at authors’ websites to find more information about a book or send students on a scavenger hunt to find other titles by the same author. No matter what you teach, there’s a way to work technology into the lessons at least once a week, if not more. Your students will be excited to come to class when you use technology.

Learning Strategies—Tried and True

One learning strategy that helps students connect with a unit of study is using the KWL (**Know, Wonder, Learn**) chart. When you are introducing a topic to your students, you can ask them, “What do you already **know** about Antarctica or the states of matter or Ernest Hemingway?” Students write down ANYTHING they know, even if it seems small. With the above examples, students may write basic facts about Antarctica, such as it is cold and has the South Pole; or for Ernest Hemingway, they may write that he was an author. You want students to write down anything they’ve seen or heard or read about the topic to start making connections in their minds.

For the **Wonder** column, students write questions they have about the topic. If students want to know this information, then they will be more engaged in trying to find the answers to their questions. You may have to work with students on good questioning skills or asking important questions, but students should be allowed to write what they are wondering, even if it strays from your main objectives.

Finally, in the **Learn** column, students write facts they learned during the unit of study as well as the answers to their questions from the Wonder column.

Other learning strategies that help students connect to the curriculum are buddy teaching, Venn diagrams and role playing. Buddy teaching is when students research a certain topic and teach their buddies or small group about the topic. The other “buddy” or members of the group are also reading or researching a related topic and teach their subjects also. We learn best by doing, so when students are doing the teaching, they feel responsible for helping their classmates to learn and connect with the material.

Venn diagrams, which are graphic organizers using two or three interlocking circles to compare and contrast anything, are useful for many reasons. One of the best ways to use them is for students to make personal connections with characters in books or with historical figures. Students can list characteristics about themselves in one circle and

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KEEPING THEM ENGAGED

by Bobby Brooks, MA

We are living in a media saturated world where sound bites, text messages and YouTube clips are becoming standard. With this shift, attention spans are craving and needing engagement now more than ever. We are in a world where two-hour movies are well attended, yet students have difficulty concentrating for fifteen minutes in a class.

What “enticing power” does Hollywood and all the new media offerings seem to have? In a word – *engagement*.

Can educators incorporate this power into their teaching methodologies? The answer is a resounding “yes!”

Why is engagement necessary in today's classroom?

In my experience, this question is answered by the New 3 R's: Relevance, Reinforcement and Retention.

The New 3 R's are the benefits of having a fully engaged class.

- A fully engaged class sees the **R**elevance in what they are learning to the world around them.
- A fully engaged class is exposed to tools that **R**einforce what they learn.
- A fully engaged class **R**etains what they learn because of the engagement tools used in class.

Now is the time to add engagement tools to our teaching toolbox for the sake of:

- providing a quality education to our students
- professional growth
- following the instruction of Paul in Colossians, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving” (Colossians 3:23-24).

Proven ideas that can create an engaging learning experience

1) Create a comfortable learning environment

What is a comfortable learning environment? A comfortable learning environment is one that fosters learning. It encourages questions by posting “road signs” in the room that state “There are no stupid questions” or “Yield to new thinking” or “Listen for new ideas.”

I also have a PowerPoint slideshow that randomly shows trivia questions, quotes and/or facts about today's subject before class. I use music as a backdrop to the presentation to help shape the mood of the class.

2) Use the element of surprise

When you go to a concert, you are not given a list at the door of all of the songs the music artist(s) will play. Why is this the case? The answer is the element of surprise.

I have found that the element of surprise is a powerful tool to harness in creating student engagement by resetting the students' energy levels. By energy levels, I am speaking of the waning of energy that happens when a student sits in class for an extended period of time. I keep a close eye when this might be occurring and then implement engagement tools that use the element of surprise to reset the levels.

The two particular tools I have used that wield the element of surprise are animated PowerPoint characters and the Hot Potato game.

- I use PowerPoint animated characters to appear whenever the students would least expect something like that to appear on-screen. The characters may introduce new topics, provide shortcuts or give examples to further explain the topic at hand.

- I also use a stuffed “hot potato” to throw around the room when the students least expect it. I play an upbeat instrumental song while the hot potato is being thrown around the room. When the music stops, I ask the student with the hot potato a question from the content we have covered in class so far. The classroom quickly takes on a festive nature during the game. The bottom line is that Hot Potato helps students retain the content and it also resets their energy levels.

3) Props, costumes and demonstrations

As evidenced by the amount of money companies spend on packaging each year, we live in a visual society. For example, when I stroll down the grocery store cereal aisle with my daughter, she immediately spots the “Dora the Explorer” or “Barbie” cereal because of the brightly colored characters emblazoned on the boxes. With this in mind, educators can use the power of visuals to drive home key teaching points to the students.

I have found that props, costumes and demonstrations are key engagement tools for creating a visual hook to hang the teaching point on within the students' minds.

For example, when I explain the 4 P's of marketing in a business class, I equate mixing the marketing mix to making a cookie recipe. I then don a chef's hat and apron and begin to “make” the cookie recipe. Each of the four containers is then turned around to show the students how each component of the recipe is like the four components of the marketing mix.

4) Video

Most textbook publishers supply videos to accompany their texts. I use these extensively in my classes. I have found that videos help connect concepts to the real world. I also will use clips from movies to demonstrate concepts. I have included a reference regarding educator's fair use of copyrighted materials on my website at: www.KeepingThemEngaged.com.

5) Games

I have found that games not only engage but also help solidify and reinforce content. In a marketing class I teach, I use a computer game called “Lemonade Stand Tycoon” to have the students experience making marketing decisions with the lemonade stand business. This has quickly become one of my most popular tools I use in the classroom. There are many computer games and simulations on the Internet that you can try before you buy.

Another game I use for reinforcement is a direct questioning game that divides the class into teams. The teams then have designated members press the button on the buzzer when they think they know the answer. This game brings a fun learning experience to the classroom that helps reinforce content.

Engagement is something to be attained as an educator. The place to start is to reconnect with the original passion that led you to become an educator. Remembering this “why you do what you do” will provide the fuel for the power tools of engagement.



Bobby Brooks is an award-winning educator with over a decade of experience in teaching, training and speaking. His unconventional methods of student engagement have won the praise of students and colleagues alike. He credits the shaping of his teaching style to being an adult with ADHD and his background in the entertainment industry. His “Keeping Them Engaged” workshop is conducted at education institutions and conferences nationwide. He can be contacted through his website, www.KeepingThemEngaged.com.

A TEACHER'S LESSON

by John M. Imperiale

I pay attention to words; words in books, words in songs, words people say, words I say. Words matter. Too many people go through life not realizing what they are listening to, or worse, what they are saying. Not me. But then again, I had the benefit of a teacher who did not let me, or any of my classmates, get away with hearing words, or worse, repeating words without thinking about what they meant.

It was a wonderful lesson, obviously, since that lesson was delivered to me forty-two years ago. I remember it today. In fact, it has framed the way I think ever since.

*"Hello darkness, my old friend.
I've come to talk with you
again."*

It was 1966. I was sixteen years old and pop music was turning from rock-and-roll to protest, defiance and social commentary. I was into it all: arguing with my father about the war, defying authority, rebelling against anyone who tried to tell me anything. So why when Mr. Muccigrosso, our English teacher at Nazareth High School in Brooklyn, New York, asked the entire class who among us liked "The Sounds of Silence" everyone raised their hand, but when he followed it up with "Who can tell me what it means?" not a single hand went up, especially not one of mine.

I wanted to jump up and say "I do" except I didn't! I had never thought about it. I was so mad at myself, so disappointed in myself. How could I be so foolish? Walking around, singing a song, buying the record, listening to it over and over on the radio, at home, endlessly, and not being able to just say what it was about. How could that be me? I remember shrinking in my seat hoping that he had not noticed how enthusiastically I had flung my hand up when he asked who liked the song. That response of mine would surely have him calling on me to explain (more than explain, defend) myself. And I could not.

What he did was to look at all of us, rather incredulously, and say, "You like it, but no one knows what it means?" Then he seemed to be searching the room for some sign of intelligent life, but none was to be found. We were all just silly teenagers, singing songs, mindlessly repeating other people's thoughts, without any regard to meaning or purpose. Mr. Muccigrosso seemed to be not much older than we, his students, were. As I looked up at him, out of the corner of my eye, I could see that he knew exactly what the Sounds of Silence meant. And I could also see how shocked and disappointed he was in us that we didn't.

"How can you listen to it, sing it, like it and not know what it means?" he asked, not expecting an answer – which was good, of course, because I had no answer. No one did.

We were in for quite the scolding, I imagined. But none was forthcoming. Instead he said, "Let's take a look at what it means."

What did it mean?

"It is poetry, pure poetry, brilliant poetry," he said. "So let's look at it and see if we can comprehend what Paul Simon is trying to tell us." Good idea, I remember thinking.

"A vision softly creeping left its soul while I was sleeping."

Mr. Muccigrosso led us through the poet's dream. I had not even realized that the Sounds of Silence was taking place in a dream.

*"People talking without speaking...
People hearing without listening."*

Who are these people? A great discussion ensued, ending with a realization that we are the people. And Paul Simon was urging us to start speaking, to start listening. To, in effect, start paying attention. How ironic that this message was in a song whose meaning none of us had paid attention to.

Mr. Muccigrosso proceeded to describe the world as seen in the song: Mindless masses ("ten thousand people, maybe more") going through life, bowing to the "neon god they made." And just what is this "neon god?" he wanted to know. All of a sudden the silent class came alive with opinion. Television. Advertising. Subliminal

messages. We argued amongst ourselves for ten, maybe fifteen minutes, without Mr. Muccigrosso having to say a word.

Then he moved us on to "No one dared disturb the sounds of silence."

"Who should disturb the sounds of silence?" he asked.

"We should," I said.

And so began a life of activism and of caring about the words that are literally or figuratively written on subway walls and tenement halls. That one class, that one lesson, helped define how I would try to live my life. I would pay attention.

I met Mr. Muccigrosso in 2006 at a fundraiser for that same high school, where he was by then the principal. When I told him the story of his asking our English class about the meaning of "The Sounds of Silence," he smiled, thanked me, although it was clear that he did not remember that day. I thought to myself, how wonderful! The fact that he did not remember meant that he must have had thousands of other, similar classes. Besides, it did not matter if he remembered. I did.



John M. Imperiale is a graduate of Adelphi University and a product of twelve years of Catholic education in Brooklyn, New York. After 37 years in banking, John recently retired to write and live on the shore in Harvey Cedars, New Jersey with his wife, Barbara. He is a regular contributor to newspapers and magazines, commenting on business, politics and current events. He can be reached at Imperiale@msn.com.

FOUR REASONS WHY LEARNING CAN BE DIFFICULT

by Ron Dultz

It is usually assumed that when a youngster has difficulty learning the curriculum offered at school, it is caused by the student's inability to comprehend or cooperate or by the student's lack of initiative. In these instances, the student is usually believed to be the culprit and is urged by educators and society to improve his learning performance.

There may be other reasons why a young student may have difficulty learning, for which the student should not be blamed. An awareness of these will increase the learning know-how of the student and can help clarify the teaching process for educators. The four other possibilities are: the quality of the subject matter, the quality of the presentation of that subject matter, the student's preparedness and the student's approach.



Quality of Subject Matter

Subject matter that is introduced to a student can be of poor or good quality. That fact is readily accepted with regard to books. Just because a book is found in a bookstore or in a school's curriculum does not mean that it is a good book. The same can be said of all subject matter. A youngster should not be expected to learn subject matter of poor quality, as even the brightest student may have difficulty learning it and would be worse off for it!

What is important here is the precise degree to which subject matter warrants being learned. If no such specification is made in connection with the subject matter offered, one can assume they consider its quality to be beyond reproach. While the subject matter they offer might be good, it is unfair to expect students to accept it as good prior to satisfying their judgment that it is. And if students do not, on their own initiative, question the quality of the subject matter offered by teachers and schools, it is the responsibility of educators to see that they do, as it is a necessary aspect of learning procedure.

If teachers and schools openly stated their impression of the quality of the subject matter they are presenting and backed up their statements with a meaningful defense, one could at least have some idea of the criteria the teacher or school has for presenting the books, authors, ideas and programs that they do. But if no such defense is voiced, it is logical to assume that teachers and schools do not want the

quality of the subject matter they are offering to be questioned by their students. This is unfortunate because it would generate healthy debate which, while it may interrupt lesson plans and interfere with pat formulas for teaching, invigorates the learning environment like few things can.

Teachers who want their students to learn for the right reasons should always examine subject matter of every kind for its quality, and students should be permitted to expose subject matter to every critical test before submerging themselves in studying it. Both teachers and students should realize that inability to learn could well be the fault of subject matter of poor quality.

Presentation of Subject Matter

Just as subject matter may come in all degrees of quality, so can its presentation. Students who have difficulty learning something have every right to question its presentation. Just as attractively presented, good tasting food will encourage us to devour it, well presented subject matter will encourage us to study it.

It is the same with learning. Esthetics is important. Educators and students should not discount improper presentation of subject matter as the cause of faulty learning prior to establishing sufficient reason why this could not be so.

Student Preparedness

Preparedness is a factor that is not given proper attention in the learning environment, perhaps because teachers are impatient to get on with the task at hand and do not want to have to cope with too many complex challenges. But it must be stressed that a student who is not prepared to learn something cannot be said to lack ability to learn. First of all, although a student may not be prepared to learn certain subject matter, he may be prepared to learn other subject matter of equal value. This would be simply a matter of suitability of subject matter.

Secondly, learning is actually a sub-function. By that, I mean life cannot be measured in its terms. It must be measured in terms of life. Learning is beneficial only if it applies to living and is useful for living. If a student is not prepared to learn certain material as there is not room in the student's life for it or it does not relate to his interests or other things concern the student more, it is not the time for the student to learn it. At another time, it may be appropriate for the student to learn it.

A student should not be criticized when his learning needs do not equate with the teacher's choice of subject matter. Teachers and schools must always consider these factors when confronted with a student's failure to learn. And individuals wishing to be good students should always remember that preparedness is a crucial factor affecting their learning skills.

Student Approach

The student's approach to what he is studying is another key factor affecting learning skills. The connection between a student and subject matter does not occur automatically; instead, it is determined by the student's approach. Someone else's approach cannot be substituted for the student's approach. If you are to pick up a glass, you must have an approach. If you are to drive a car, you must have an approach. Anything you do requires an approach. If you fail to be able to do something, it does not mean that you are unable to do it. It may merely mean that your approach is inadequate.

A student who is poor at learning, or at learning some particular thing, may not have stumbled onto the right approach. Do not be quick to accuse the student of being inept, as underneath may lie great aptitude

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION AT A DISTANCE: A KINDER, GENTLER APPROACH

by Sheryl Price Maffett

Teachers of developmental English are instructional warriors ready, willing and able to reform the grammatically-challenged and instill critical thinking and composition skills. All while motivating the unmotivated, inspiring the uninspired, reassuring the unsure and throwing in some basic word-processing and college survival skills for good measure. (Yet, even as we jump these tall educational hurdles with a single bound, we are very aware that it is our colleagues, teaching upper-level courses across the hall, who get all the respect.) Now, we're being expected to add one more thing to our extensive repertoire of skills — keep doing it all, keep doing it well, but start doing it "at a distance."

Distance learning has been around since the old "course in a box" correspondence classes, but now with the advent of sophisticated online course management systems, learning at a distance is contributing to a major paradigm shift in higher education. That shift includes applying corporate concepts to education so that students are now "consumers" and course content is now the "product" (http://cde.athabasca.ca/online_book/index.html).

The "consumers" are currently demanding that the "product" be delivered when and where they want it. But is distance learning really a good idea for students who need remediation? Do developmental students have access to the proper hardware and software, and if so, do they know how to use that technology? Are their reading comprehension skills sufficient to thrive (or even survive) in a learning environment that is primarily text-based, and are they motivated enough to stick with an online class without the constant monitoring, prodding and encouraging that a face-to-face teacher provides?

The fact that some populations do not have access to technology has been called the "digital divide." According to The U.S. Department of Commerce (2002), this divide can be defined in terms of ethnicity, income levels, education level and age. Fewer African American and Hispanics, people with income levels of less than \$15,000, poorly educated people and older people have access to the Internet and reliable, up-to-date hardware and software. Since statistics clearly show that developmental students are more likely to be minorities, lower income, older and first-generation college students, it follows that access to technology would present a significant challenge for many developmental students (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2000).

Although some community colleges collect computer user's fees, which are used to equip, supply and staff computer labs, the major appeal of online classes is the flexibility and convenience of being able to work from home. If students have to schedule baby sitters, work schedules and other obligations around the hours the college computer lab is open, they might as well attend traditional classes.

Access is a vital element in taking developmental classes online. However, Lisa Martin, an instructor at a community college in South Carolina, confirms that other problems also present major obstacles. "Retention is usually quite a bit lower in my developmental class than in my other online classes... The typical developmental student is a weak reader and a weak writer. Additionally, his or her computer skills and study habits are usually not good either. This combination makes the prospect of succeeding in an online course unlikely -- or difficult at best."



Many sources agree that retention rates in online classes are lower than in face-to-face sections of the same courses. According to Sarah Carr, "Although there is significant variation among institutions -- with some reporting course-completion rates of more than 80 percent and others finding that fewer than 50 percent of distance-education students finish their courses -- several administrators concur that course-completion rates are often 10 to 20 percentage points higher in traditional courses than in distance offerings" (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Feb. 11, 2000). Keep in mind that Carr was writing about mainstream students, not developmental students, who generally must overcome more hurdles to get in and stay in school.

Perhaps instead of throwing these students into an online environment that is completely over their heads, a kinder, gentler approach is in order. Can we help our developmental students wade slowly into online education, allowing them the opportunity to get comfortable with one level before venturing deeper? Would this approach lessen the number of causalities in the forms of dropouts and failures? Perhaps we can start as simply as posting quiz grades on the college's course management system. To learn their grades, students must use the technology. Then, what if assignments were due on days that classes don't meet? Conscientious students would be forced to turn their papers in early, make a special trip by the teacher's office or submit the paper via e-mail.

Dr. Braden J. Hosch's recent study on using online quizzes showed that online quizzes motivated students to complete homework reading assignments as well as provided immediate feedback for the students while recapturing valuable class time. Additionally, since the tests were administered through existing course management software, the quizzes caused the instructor very little extra work.

This "kinder, gentler" approach taken one step farther forms a "blended" or "hybrid" educational environment, which has been called "the best of both worlds." In blended or hybrid classes, students and

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TIPS FOR ENGAGING YOUR STUDENTS

by Carol Meek

Use visual technology whenever possible.

Have learning centers around the room, in which students can engage when their seatwork is finished.

Audio learning centers can have ear phones.

During a teaching session, sometimes let a student be the teacher, asking questions after the class has read an article or story.

Play "Jeopardy" with the whole class, dividing into teams. Make a Jeopardy Game illustration on the board. Head it with subjects such Science, Math, English and Social Studies. Give different levels of questions with 100, 200, 300, and 400 points. The hardest question in Math, for instance, should be worth 400 points. Divide the class in 2 groups. Take turns and the one with the most points is the winner.

Tic Tack Toe is also a great game to play. Drawing two lines parallel to each other up and down and across, make the Tic Tack Toe illustration. With two teams let each add an "x" or an "o." They add one as they have the right answer. The team that receives Tic Tack Toe first is the winner.

Have "Challenging Material" and have "Easier Material" of the grade level available in the classroom. Also, don't be afraid to give different quantities and different levels of work for your students. Everyone does not need to do the same! (My motto has always been: Never FRUSTRATE your student by making the work too hard and never BORE your student by making things too easy!)

Always have extra writing assignments available for students to be challenged with. You might have every student write in their journal, but an extra credit challenge might be to take something from that daily happening and make a story out of it.

Put students in pairs. You could pair them by one bright student with one needing help, pairs of the same intelligence level or like abilities in art or writing.

Put students in groups of four. This is especially important for science experiments.

Have them solve scientific problems scientifically.



Carol Meek has taught in both public and Christian schools. She taught in private schools for 21 years at second and fourth grade levels. She now teaches all grades (K-12) for public schools in homes. When she is not teaching she loves to write.



PUTTING THE INTRINSIC BACK IN MOTIVATION

by Janet L. Jackson

Brooke's midterms arrived today. An A in music appreciation (a hard class), an F in English and Spanish, a D- in math. I'm done. I will no longer monitor her. She has a right to fail and evidently she wants to. We have to allow her to fall and face the consequences. Brian won't apply for any scholarships. He expects us just to pay the tuition. We won't. So I guess he won't be going back to school.

Looks like we failed in the motivation department. Congratulations!

Can you detect this parent's frustration in her journal entry? I was that parent. As an educator and parent, motivation has been the biggest brute I have battled over the past twenty-five years. I also recognized my determined attempts to control it were making situations worse.

Motivation is a natural curiosity born in our children. But a combination of mesmerizing media, couch potatoism and enabling parenting has so saturated our victim mindset society that it has led to a lack of intrinsic motivation in adults and children. Many of us sit back, expecting the outside world to motivate us.

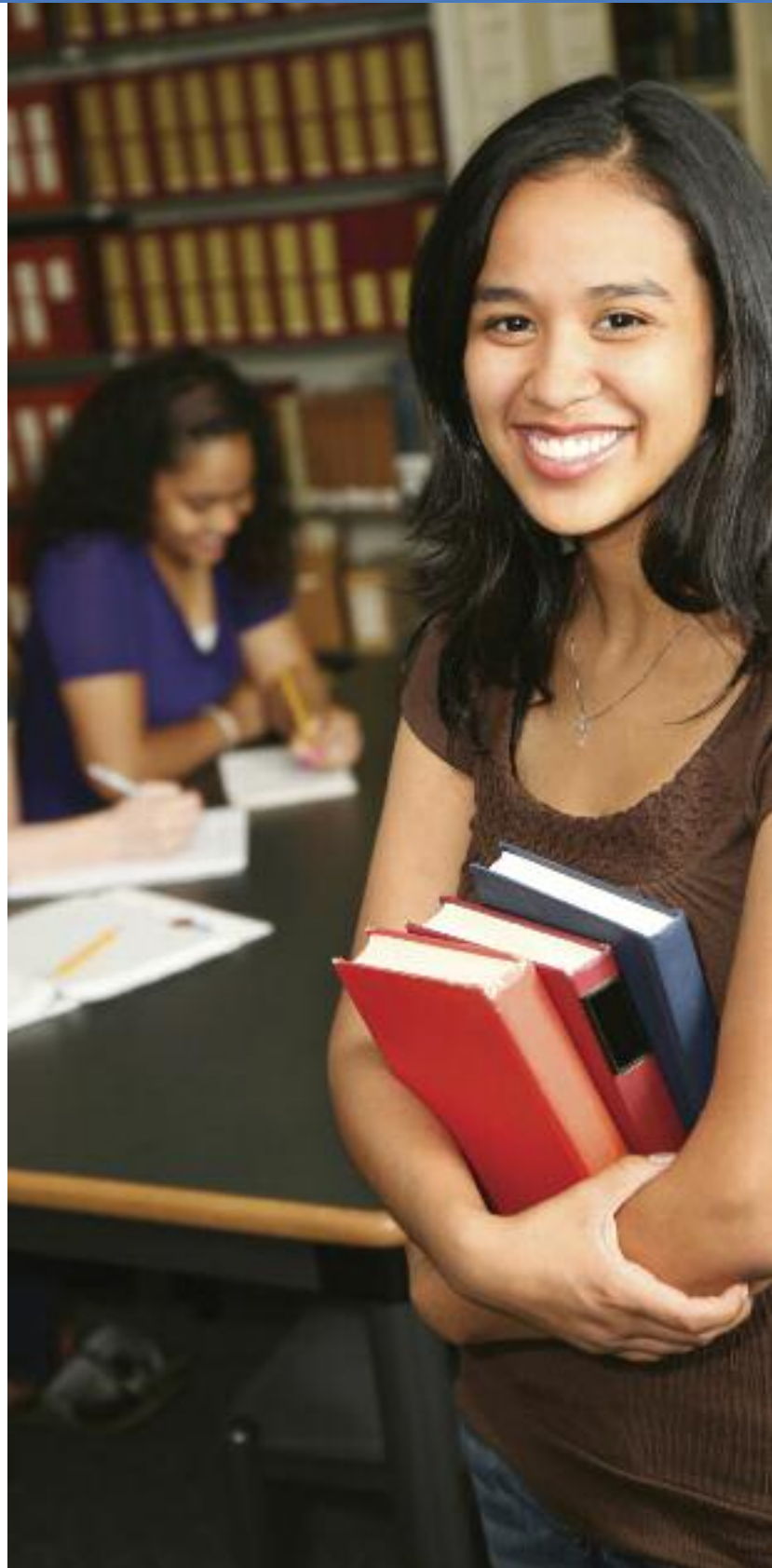
How can we put the intrinsic back in motivation? Acknowledging this trend is a huge first step. Following are time-tested tools I have discovered to enhance intrinsic motivation in children. As educators, we can model in the classroom in addition to offering these suggestions to our students' parents. And if you can apply some as a parent, consider it a bonus.

- Venture to the library for them to choose their own books.
- Read to them often.
- When questions come, grasp the potential of the moment! Don't just tell them the answers, help them discover for themselves.
- When frustration rears its ugly head, resist the temptation to jump in and fix things right away. Allow them to get mad and try not to lose control yourself. When they respectfully seek your help, eagerly offer assistance.
- Model for them your own curiosity to learn. Observing you passionately pursuing your own hobby will teach tons more than just telling them.
- Load up praises when they make a sincere effort. If they try and fail, ask them, "Did you do your best? Then, good for you!"
- Share your personal triumphs and failures. Everyone loves a good story of one who fails over and over again, but never gives up.

We cannot force motivation. Fortunately, real life is a valuable teacher. A wise counselor once suggested there are many instances when we need to sit back and let our kids discover on their own the consequences of their choices, good or bad. We just love them through this discovery.



Janet Jackson has spent 27 years in various roles as a special education teacher. She is currently an English inclusion teacher with the freshmen academy at Richmond Senior High School in Richmond, Indiana. She has been married to her pastor husband for 33 years and they have two grown children and a brand new granddaughter.



WHEN GRACE STEPS IN

by Amy Morrison

It was probably her giggling that drew my attention. Sentence diagramming really wasn't all that funny as far as I knew.

It was early May and I was facing a class of sixteen inner-city kids in South Central Los Angeles. Though I had almost three years of teaching under my belt, this particular sixth grade class had pushed me to the limits of my patience far too many times, and I was more than ready to wave goodbye to them for the summer.

I had come a long way from the idealism of my first year of teaching and living in the inner-city. That first year, I'd covered up the bullet hole in the window with an inspirational poster. I'd plastered the walls with pictures of places worlds removed from the industrial buildings across the street. I told the kids daily that they had something worth saying and that I could help them say it. Together we would work hard and make something of their lives.

The problem, of course, was that my ideals kept crashing up against reality. Not just the spirit-deadening reality of the inner-city – gang pressures, poverty, drug-destroyed families. I was also up against the basic, universal reality of the twelve- and thirteen-year-old mind. A mind with the switch tuned in almost permanently to the channel, “You can't make me!”

And now I was faced with a giggle when I should have had only rapt attention.

Walking over to the young offender, I asked for the note she had in her hands. Frozen, she refused to give it to me. I waited, all attention in the room on the quiet battle between teacher and student. When she finally handed it over she mumbled, “Okay, but I didn't draw it,” the first clue that this wasn't just an ordinary note being passed.

After getting the class going on a sentence diagramming competition, I finally had a chance to sneak a peek. It was a hand drawn picture of me, dress details down to perfection, teeth blackened, nostrils flaring and the words “I'm stupid” coming out of my mouth. The artist had done an amazing job and there was no doubt about who it was supposed to be.

I managed to fold up the picture calmly and return to directing the competition. My mind, however, was working furiously as I wavered between wanting to cry and wanting to ream a certain few students up one side and down the next. I figured I knew the two most likely candidates for drawing the picture. It would do them some good to get taken down a notch or two, and maybe it was high time that I did it!

Thankfully, that's when grace intervened.

Somehow, in those moments of very real hurt and fury, God was able to save me (and my students) from myself, by asking me very softly, “Do you want to do it your way or My way?”

I'd had almost three years of mostly trying to do it my way, and my head and my heart were really beginning to hurt from pounding against so many little twelve and thirteen year old walls of resistance.

“Okay, Lord,” I silently prayed, “what should I do? How can you ever bring good out of this?”

With loving faithfulness, God showed me.

When there were about six minutes left of class, I had the kids stop what they were doing and get out a piece of paper. Then, stamping down on my pride, I showed them the picture. The whole class was silent as I told them how hurtful this was for me. Struggling not to cry I told them there must be a reason behind why someone would draw such a picture and that now was their chance to tell me anything they needed to tell me. Then I let them write silently while I sniffled in the back of the classroom.

As I looked over the notes later, many of them said something like, “I've got nothing against you, Miss Grether” or “I'm sorry your feelings were hurt.” A number of them said, “You give us too much homework.” One student said, “We're afraid of you.” And two notes, from the girls I figured were behind the picture, had a list of issues. I was too mean, too strict and I picked on certain people too much.

Reading those notes I realized that over the course of this year of slipshod work and incomplete assignments, I had moved from being disappointed to being downright angry. Instead of encouraging my students, I had begun commanding them to achieve. I'd set high expectations without allowing for grace. Where I

thought I was busy trying to drive them to success, I was actually driving them away.

I had some apologizing to do.

When the kids walked into my classroom the next day, one boy and one girl each handed me a card. The one signed by all the boys expressed sincere regret for the ugly joke. The one from the girls asked for forgiveness.

I was dumbfounded. And more than a little humbled. I had my little speech all ready to give to the kids, but they'd beat me to the punch. God had not only been busy softening my heart but also the hearts of my students.

If only I had let Him lead more often before this. If only this was the *only* time I would need to be taught this lesson.

It wasn't. And with the help of this recalcitrant class, who I would also have as seventh and eighth graders, God gave me many more chances to learn just Who was better at knowing how to teach (and love) my middle school students.



Amy (Grether) Morrison spent six years teaching middle school Language Arts in South-Central Los Angeles. She now lives in Spokane, Washington with her husband and three children.

ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN

by Missy Ohe



As I begin this article, I am reminded of the lyrics to Whitney Houston's song, "The Greatest Love of All": "I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way..."

I couldn't remember all of the lyrics, so I Googled the song. After I did so, I was saddened. A few lines after the above lyrics comes, "People need someone to look up too... I never found anyone to fulfill my needs. A lonely place to be, so I learned to depend on me."

I am a motivational speaker. I am not a minister. I am not a counselor, although I was a cosmetologist for 13 years (I often wonder if that counts).

Kindergartners know what they want to be. I ask them, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" I can't answer their hands fast enough. "Doctor, teacher, artist" and, of course, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the boys say "UND Hockey Player!"

By the time I talk to junior high students, maybe just one or two share their dreams. When I ask the question within businesses or church groups, not only do people feel they have to write the answer down, but they often cover their papers as well. People have been told so many times, "Who do you think you are? How is that going to work?"

There was a little boy sitting outside of his neighbor's window playing in the flower garden one night; no one knew he was there. This little boy overheard a conversation the couple was having just within the kitchen window. The husband heard something on the radio and he said to his wife, "I'll believe that when the neighbor boy

goes to the moon!" That little boy was John Glenn.

Children will listen to what they hear. Recently at one of my seminars, I told the group, "Believe in yourselves to go after your dreams and you can achieve the impossible. It is going to be hard work and seem as though you have many obstacles, but you can do it!"

Someone raised their hand and said, "You mean to tell me that if a high school student is 5'8" and they want to be on a pro basketball team that you are going to tell them they can do it?" My friends, that is what saddens me the most. There are so many people that only see one way to do something. I said, "You had better believe I will!" I asked this smart individual at my seminar, "Who is on a basketball team?" The answer was, "The players." I said, "Who else?" The person said, "A coach." "Who else?" "Trainers." We listed off five positions other than the center position on the team.

If your children want something, don't discourage them. Help them find that hero or mentor that can help fulfill their needs or be that person for them. Show them what they possess inside. "Oh, yes I can!"



Today, as a keynote speaker, breakout speaker and soon-to-be author, Missy Ohe shares personal stories of her journey, as well as lessons she has learned while connecting with her mentors. In her presentation, she shares three tools that help people continue to grow and connect with others. Her book telling of her journey is due out in Spring 2011. Her website is www.TheOhepenMind.com.

SEEING POTENTIAL

by Malinda Fillingim

I walked into the chaos of the fourth grade classroom. Loud music was playing. Students were dancing on desks. Girls sat huddled under a table applying make up. Two students were sleeping. One was talking on her cellphone. Others laughed and played various games. It was disorderly from the start.

I was a mid-year replacement teacher at this charter school designed to implement Native American heritage into the curriculum. My students were primarily Native Americans from an impoverished rural neck of the woods in North Carolina. Their former teacher decided this class was too much for him to handle and he resigned during the holidays. As I stood there watching these undisciplined students, I knew exactly why he quit.

I sat down and looked at the classroom roster. I immediately prayed for each one of my 12 students by name. I stood up and hung a medium sized mirror strategically on the wall next to my chalk board. I then flickered the lights and told the students to return to their seats. I called each one to my desk and asked them to tell what they wanted to learn the remainder of the year.

Not to my surprise, a lot of what they wanted to learn had nothing to do with reading, writing or arithmetic. They did want to learn how to swim, how to dance better, how to do arts and crafts, learn Spanish and see new things outside of their own community. I took notes and explained to the class that I would try my best to help them reach these goals, but it would be a reward for their good behavior and learning what the state mandated me to teach.

We set classroom rules, healthy boundaries and consequences and rewards for not so good and really good behaviors. I contacted parents. I came early and stayed late, helping students who were far behind. I brought them breakfast and snacks. I listened to their stories of previous classroom failures.

I gathered much-needed supplies from other schools' discarded collections. I called the local recreation center and acquired swimming lessons. I bought from my own pocket materials to make arts and crafts with the children. We danced traditional Native American dances and the children laughed at my unrhymed feet. We went on field trips just like the kids who went to the "rich" school nearby (while doing written assignments on the bus to and from school). I bought Spanish tapes and taught myself and the students some basics of a new language. I invited the elders and Native American craftsmen into our classroom and we contacted nationally-known Native Americans so the students could have healthy role models from their own heritage.

We worked hard. Some worked harder than others. Some sat in



time out more than others. Some parents were called, numerous times. Some students grew quickly; others needed the soil of education tilled more than others.

And I saw potential in each child.

My mirror served me well that year. As I wrote on the board, I had vision behind my back by looking into that mirror.

I could call out a name of a child who was making faces at me, the child who was throwing paper planes across the room and reward the child who was diligently copying the assignment from the board. This trick evoked several questions from my students, and may indeed have placed some fear into them as well.

"How do you see us when you are writing on the board?" became a common question.

I smiled and mysteriously kept the answer to myself. They did not need to know everything. This mysterious gift I had of seeing with "eyes on the back of my head" intrigued the students and let them know I indeed was able to see well beyond the obvious.

Teachers need deeper vision to see the potential, the hope within each child. Teachers need the dedication to see how what they do within the walls of a classroom goes much further into the world. Teachers with vision of possibility know the chalk board is just the beginning place of greatness that lies within each student.

Sometimes we just need a bigger mirror to see clearly.



Malinda Fillingim lives in Rome, Georgia and can be reached at fillingim@comcast.net. She is the mom of two daughters and has been married 27 years to her college professor husband, David.

HOMework 101

by Alice Accardi

My name is Alice and I'm a mean teacher. I teach high school math and I assign homework five days a week... That's right, even on weekends.

Math, like foreign language, requires more than an attentive audience. Over the years, I've taught a number of students who were brilliant in other subjects, but floundered in math. For quite a few, the difference was homework. It seems that they were smart enough to get by, or even excel, in their other classes by simply paying attention in class. Yet the same approach in math and foreign language left them struggling to keep up.

I must admit, I think the notes I give in my math class are phenomenal. And my examples are well thought out, progressing from the simple to the complicated in slow increments. My classroom management isn't normally a big issue. Yet still I find that students who don't do homework don't do as well as their homework-doing peers.

Picture a typical class. I'm introducing polynomial division to my first period freshman honors class. Class begins at 8:34 and ends at 9:12. During the course of one period, I start with a numeric example, move on to an algebraic example, give notes on the process, and let the kids work independently before going over three or four additional examples. When that 9:12 bell rings, my kids are confident that they can divide polynomials like a pro.

But here's the problem: they leave my class and go on to someone else's class! For some reason I'll never understand, they do not choose to spend every waking hour on that polynomial division! No, instead they talk about predicates and participles, volcanoes and igneous rocks, China and Indonesia. They have lunch with their friends, go to soccer practice, go home and tell mom and dad about their day, and text-message most of the western world. By the time our next lesson rolls around, those polynomials are no more familiar to them than a biography of Chekov.

Except, of course, for those who do the homework. And, no, I'm not talking about the ones who copy the answers to the odd problems from the back of the textbook and pass them off as having done homework. I'm talking about those students who carve out 20 minutes to remind themselves of what a polynomial is and how to divide one by another. They re-read those process notes and refamiliarize themselves with what we discussed from 8:34 until 9:12. They try and try and try, and practice until they either get some right or know that they'll need to stop by extra help.

"But, wait!" you exclaim! "Twenty minutes? Who is she kidding?" You'll be glad to hear that the rule in my classroom is that your math homework should take you no more than twenty minutes. Twenty minutes of no phone, no Ipod, no instant messages, no music. Twenty minutes of polynomial division and nothing else. My students are instructed to stop at the end of twenty minutes and go on to their next subject.

If I've done a good job of explaining the material and of assigning appropriate homework, most students should be done at the end of that twenty minute period. Those who are far from finished will sign up for extra help; they'll know they need it if they're that far behind.

And if I haven't done a good job—if too many students are too lost, then either my assignment was too long or my explanation wasn't completely on target. Either way, I'll know before I've checked four or five homework assignments and will adjust the next lesson accordingly.



When I check homework, I walk from desk to desk with a highlighter. I mark those who haven't done their homework or whose assignment is incomplete. Then I run a highlighter line through the assignment I've been shown. The highlighter helps keep that assignment from being shown later in the day by a good friend of the original student, yet it doesn't get in the way of anyone trying to read the material.

In my class, you're allowed to miss, and then make up, up to three homework assignments per marking period without penalty. As we all know, life sometimes gets in the way of schoolwork. Sometimes it's grandma's birthday or the dog gets sick or the car breaks down. My three-miss rule makes it easy for my students to want to make up a reasonable amount of assignments. Anyone who misses more than three isn't having a problem with life getting in the way of homework; it's a problem of a different nature.

The mom in me sometimes wishes that homework would just go away. (Especially alphabetical order. My kids HATE alphabetical order!) But the teacher in me knows that practice makes perfect, and that my kids need to practice those skills they'll need along the way.



Alice Accardi lives on Long Island, New York with her husband, Peter, and her children, Brian, Julia and Kira. She has been teaching math since 1980. When she's not giving homework, she loves planning trips to Disney World!

MATH AND SCIENCE: AN INTENTIONAL BRIDGE WORTH CROSSING

by Denise Glenn

Knowing when and how to use curriculum “bridges” and learning strategies between the middle school math and science classrooms that all students can use and understand is pivotal in developing deep learning in students. This, in turn, may lead to greater student interest in and individual ownership of learning, and thus, greater long-term achievement.

Students Achieve Ownership

Interest in the subject matter and student ownership of learning is best achieved when the learning is intentionally student-centered and has a direct impact on their own lives. Begin any unit with a rundown of vocabulary terms laced with facts and figures and students’ eyes glaze over. However, in the middle school math and science classroom, there is a way to prevent distaste for learning new, and sometimes complex, information. Let the learner do the teaching.

Build the Bridge Anytime

Before beginning a venture into cross-curricular connections between math and science, it is important to stress through teacher modeling that students not look at their math and science curriculums in an isolated way. The introduction of cross-curricular connections can take place at the beginning of a school year, at the beginning of a new nine weeks or semester, or it can be proposed at any time during a lesson in which there is a clear connection that can be made in a math-science concept, vocabulary term or application. It’s interesting to note that many students will automatically make the connections for themselves (and other students) if allowed to without teacher suggestion.

It’s simple to introduce the connection model in one class period, and the concepts learned from the session will then be used, often on a daily basis, and retained for years to come. The lasting impact, however, comes from permitting students to make the connections meaningful for themselves.

Introduce the Cross-Connection Model

Begin with the idea of how nice it would be if everything was connected. Then, allow students to begin brainstorming how things in life are connected. Leave this open-ended and, if there are no suggestions from students, offer up an example of students and their grades, and then perhaps of students, grades, studying, success, etc. Allow students time to brainstorm their ideas. The ideas can be written on the board for them to visualize the connectedness.

Next, distribute three small sticky note papers to each student. Direct students to write three ways math and science are connected. They can write down specific concepts or ideas that are similar or they may write examples of real-world applications that incorporate both math and science.

The last step is to allow each student to bring their sticky notes up to the board and place them under a teacher-written header of “Math-Science Bridges.” Once all the sticky notes are placed on the board, then a brief discussion over the connections should be started.

Student Bridge Examples Lay the Foundation

Two student examples of specific concepts include measurement and proportions. Student examples of real-world applications include going to the store with a certain amount of money to spend and baking a cake. One student even suggested the example of calculating how many recyclable materials are currently being thrown away at home or at school, and then calculating how much space the materials would occupy in a landfill.

Once the foundation of the math-science bridge has been purposely laid out for students, it will become common practice for students to

understand how math and science are interconnected. What’s more, students will begin taking charge of coming up with ways that their math-science curriculums are related and will begin sharing those connections. Empowering and motivating, these interconnections allow for incredible synthesis of concepts that are likely to increase their success rate in math and science.

Students will also look to their math and science teachers to help guide and reaffirm their natural curiosity of the importance of having a firm handle on why middle school math and science curriculums are essential to their daily lives.

How to Measure Success

The math-science bridge can be evaluated on a number of levels. One that was particularly encouraging was an instance where a sixth-grade math and science student of this teacher made an automatic connection between endothermic, exothermic (transfer of heat energy) to inverse operations. In science, as we were studying the terms endothermic and exothermic, the student raised his hand and immediately made the connection that the two terms had an inverse relationship to one another. Endothermic was the absorption of heat energy, while exothermic was the release of heat energy. This, he stated, was what he was learning in math as we were studying one-step equations and how he had to perform an inverse (or opposite) operation on the right-hand side of the equation in order to solve for the variable. This is only one example of how this teacher has noted the success and progress of students who naturally strive to tie their worlds together with things that make sense.

Connection Model Mirrors OSDE Guidelines

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) stresses the importance of K-8 curriculum-based words and concepts. With its adoption of “Building Academic Vocabulary” (Oklahoma Academic Vocabulary Project, 2007), the OSDE provides guidelines for teachers to use in not only exposing students to new terms and concepts, but also to help make them more prepared for their high school years.

A quick review of the document shows that for sixth-grade math there are 28 suggested terms and phrases. Sixth-grade science nets a total of 36 suggested terms and phrases. The document notes that if students were exposed only once to the terms and phrases, then students would only come away with a partial understanding, and in some cases wouldn’t have any understanding. This doesn’t set middle school students up for future success.

Fortunately, Oklahoma educators have a blueprint of what kinds of vocabulary that should be introduced to grades K-8 to help prepare students for high school and beyond. While the document doesn’t address how to incorporate vocabulary words across the curriculum areas, it pays to compare the word lists between the math and science curriculums, taking note of how we as teachers can be helping students to naturally bridge the words and concepts they learn in math to science and, vice versa.

It will soon become clear that as exposure to words and concepts in different classrooms—and in different subjects—increases, so will understanding. *This* sets middle school students up for success at school as well as in the real world.



Denise Glenn teaches at Afton Elementary School in Afton, Oklahoma. Denise, who is a multi-certified teacher, has a passion for teaching math and science as subjects but also as her mission field. She has taught various subjects in elementary, junior high and high school. She is married with one son. As a family, they operate Higher Purpose Park, a recreation area for church groups and other organizations.

Teaching Christianly

Unmotivated Students and the Need for Grace

by John Van Dyk, Ph.D.

One of my most enjoyable assignments as a professor of education was conducting a two-week seminar for student teachers. The sight of students returning from their first extended classroom experience was nothing less than exhilarating. They bubbled with excitement as they reconnected with members of their cohort, gushing with stories to share. It took a while to settle them down!

Their first tasks were to identify the problems they encountered and rank them in order of importance. They did not need much time to assemble an impressive catalog. Two items invariably topped the list: discipline problems and the unmotivated student. Often they described a connection between these two: unmotivated students tended to create discipline problems.

A next step was to construct, in small grade-level groups, two more lists: (1) What factors cause students to be unmotivated? (2) What factors encourage motivation? Again, the student teachers had no difficulty compiling a multitude of proposals. For each of the two lists, numerous suggestions were offered. We shared, collected and collated the suggestions, then created a booklet of tips, a handy and welcome resource for every one of the student teachers.

But now I ask you: Can motivation problems be solved with a set of tips? Well, good advice is always welcome. There is much we need to know about motivation, and there is much that we can do. Educational psychology courses in teacher education programs are important. And books that help us understand how motivation works are often very useful. But just as maintaining good order and discipline cannot be reduced to a set of recipes, so it is, as seasoned teachers know from experience, that not even the longest list of suggestions leads inevitably to changing a disinterested student into a paragon of enthusiastic diligence. Humans are just too complicated for easy solutions. The fact is, we are marvelously and wondrously knit together (Ps. 139), beyond the profoundest understanding of even the most knowledgeable psychologist, and beyond the scope of the longest list of tips.

No matter what we know or try, some students simply seem beyond reach. Their problems run so deep in a life story so muddled that nothing we do avails. When that happens, we Christian teachers need to be on our guard. We easily come to dislike the unmotivated student. So intensely sometimes that we wish for him or her to be expelled from the school. Watch out for a wrong kind of motivation: to give up on the kids who seem beyond hope.

The Apostle Paul tells us that love perseveres (I Cor. 13). The command is clear: Christian teachers may not give up on seemingly hopeless children. God didn't. If the Lord had given up on us, where would we be? But God's love is as wide as the east is from the west (Ps. 103). How wide is ours?

But, you say, I am not God. I am a mere teacher – often tired and crabby. Loving apathetic, indifferent students does not come naturally or easily. On the contrary, to persevere in love requires much persistent prayer for the grace we all desperately need. We must pray much, not just for our students, but for ourselves as well.

I see two indispensable ingredients preceding any discussion about how we might motivate our students: (1) receiving and experiencing God's grace, and (2) practicing the love needed to stay with the difficult students. God's boundless grace enables us to continue to serve as loving and caring teachers. I am not speaking about a wishy-washy kind of squishy love. I mean love expressed with firmness and determination. Tough love may be needed. But love nevertheless. Once we become the recipients of grace and exercise love, we learn to care for each one of our students, even the ones we wish away or want to ignore.

Caring teachers are probably in the best position to motivate. As someone once put it: "I don't care how much you know until I know how much you care." A hackneyed saying, perhaps, but still very apt for the Christian teacher in a difficult classroom.

Dr. John Van Dyk is senior member at Seattle-based Alta Vista Educational Services. He works from out of his home in Marion, Illinois. John is much involved in staff development and teacher training programs in various parts of the world.



Picture Books

by Joyce Anne Munn

What do you think of when you hear someone mention picture books? This term doesn't refer just to books for toddlers and young children.

Many are also available for older youngsters, too. Picture books are a combination of a visual and narrative format.

Most of the books listed in this particular column are not ones I have used in my classroom. I have read most of them and skimmed some. Check out your own libraries for these and similar ones. When I discovered several shelves of books devoted to young readers, I spent much more time looking through them than I had intended. (That reminded me again of why I would probably have been fired from any job as a librarian!) Perhaps you'll want to check some of these books out to read to your students or even to use for lessons in art.

Dancing with Katya, a fiction book, is authored by Dori Chaconas and illustrated by Constance Bergum. The story of a young girl with polio is based on the author's grandmother. The illustrator's father also had polio. I grew up in the era when polio put fear in the hearts of families. The illustrator's family headed the line when vaccines became available. This book touched close to home for me as I recall standing in line for both Salk and Sabin vaccines. A touching story of overcoming, this book could be used in many situations. It would work well in discussing medical advances and health issues today. The ravages of polio are becoming evident again. Many children who were not paralyzed at the time are facing wheelchairs or other problems today. Perhaps you can share in a personal way.

Love, Lizzie by Lisa Tucker McElroy and illustrated by Diane Paterson could probably be helpful to most educators today. The book is composed of letters written to a military mom. It has good lessons about family and patriotism. A special section offers advice for times of family separation.

Doctor on an Elephant is by Steven Kroll and illustrated by Michael Chesworth. This is the story of a doctor in India who earlier served as a missionary in the Congo. It is a beautiful book of courageous men and a competent elephant.

Angels in the Dust by Margot Theis Raven tells the tragic story of life during the Dust Bowl. Another story based on truth means you need to be aware that great loss, and even death, is wound into it. Illustrator Roger Easley does a good job.

The Flag Maker by Susan Campbell Bartoletti and illustrated by Claire Nivola has its basis in a story that may or may not be true. The plot tells of a young girl and her mother who made the flag that flew over Fort McHenry. (Have you ever thought of what size it was and how it was made? No huge factories back then!) The illustrations are simple and bright.

Naming Liberty, authored by Jane Yolen, tells the story of a young girl immigrant. The unusual format by illustrator Jim Burke shows the story of the Statue of Liberty alongside the narrative.

The Buffalo Soldiers by Sherry Garland is told through the soldier's voice. This fascinating part of our history needs to be shared. It tells how these Cheyenne Indians served our country and also studied and learned to read from the chaplains. Do you know why they were called Buffalo Soldiers? Ronald Himler illustrated this book with beautiful, realistic pictures.

The Bee Tree, a fiction book by Stephen Buchmann and Diana Cohn, takes place in Malaysia. The story of a young boy who climbs a tree for honey is beautifully illustrated by Paul Mirocha. Many photos and information about bees make this a useful book, too.

Frank Murphy wrote *The Legend of the Teddy Bear*. (I wish I could add my name after his. Years ago I wrote and sold a magazine article very similar to his story.) Bright, colorful illustrations by Gijsbert Frankenhuyzen bring the story to life. Even though they may not admit it, many of your students probably still have a teddy bear. Share this book anytime, but it will fit in well if you're studying about President Teddy Roosevelt.

Why not take an hour or so and check out some great picture books for yourself? You're sure to find many to share with your students. Just a word of warning! You may become so intrigued, you'll have to make a second trip to the library. I did!

Joyce Anne Munn is a retired elementary teacher. She volunteers for a clothing and food distribution center and for a health clinic for the uninsured. Church activities and two Bible study groups keep her busy, too. To relax, she plays with her two dogs and two cats. She also serves as a CEAI Board member.



HEAD AND HEART IN SCHOOL

by Drs. David and Karen Kletzing

Veteran teachers know that academic problems sometimes have nothing to do with intelligence or learning style. Very often school becomes the foil for family and other personal issues. Last week at church, a high school English teacher asked for special prayer for several of his students with adult-sized “life issues.”

Jackie, a junior, is scheduled to come to me (Karen) for two hours of tutoring a week. She has always been polite, but distant. Jackie began in the summer, and as we first got to know each other I would bribe her with coffee to come first thing in the morning. When school started we switched to smoothies, as sugar won out over caffeine. I knew I was spoiling her, but I didn't mind. I was intrigued by this girl and wondered what life was like for an African American girl adopted into a white family, attending a 90% white high school. Jackie had recently been diagnosed with ADD but couldn't remember to take her medicine. One day a girlfriend grabbed her pills from her locker, took some and shared the rest with a third girl. Of course, this earned all three a suspension from school. Our main tutoring project was to prepare Jackie for the ACT, hoping for a score worthy of a good private college. The day of the test she forgot her meds, and nearly all of our hard work went for nothing.

I was devastated. Here was an intelligent girl with a life pattern of setting herself up for failure! I decided to tell her my theory. I told her I thought she was sabotaging herself because she didn't believe she had

value. Even though in her head she knew she had a good family, and she was glad that she had been put up for adoption, in her heart she needed to forgive her birth mother for letting her go. This opened up an hour-and-a-half of the young lady sharing the story of the last year of her life: boyfriends, parties, breakups and sneaking-out. At the end, she summed up her worldview with, “Life sucks and then you die.” Self sabotage indeed.

Nearly all teachers know a few “Jackies.” Sometimes they are even from Christian families. We care for them deeply and dearly wish that their lives would come together, that God would miraculously intervene. As teachers, we may be limited in the kinds of conversations we can have with students, but at least we can do two things: pray and model a transparent life of joyful integrity. God knows the human heart (Psalm 44:21 and Acts 15:8) and He loves these children more than we can ever imagine. Academic problems may be in a student's head, but they often reveal what is happening in the heart.



Dr. David Kletzing works at Wheaton College in the area of course and media design. He is also pastor of a new church plant, Hope Anglican Church, in Elburn, Illinois. Dr. Karen Kletzing recently completed her M.A. in Clinical Psychology at Wheaton College. She tutors students with learning disabilities and prepares juniors and seniors for the ACT and SAT tests. The Kletzings have been married for 35 years.

HOW TO CAPTURE STUDENTS' ATTENTION: LESSONS FROM THE MASTER TEACHER

by Kathy Koch, Ph.D.

Several months ago, after I spoke to several hundred middle school students in a one-hour program, teachers asked how I was able to keep their students' attention. They seemed stunned.

Through the years, I have met many teachers and parents concerned about children's attention spans. It's even more true now than before. Do you wish children listened better? Is competing with all that distracts them wearing you out?

I've learned a lot from Jesus, the Master Teacher. He kept people's attention. He also captured peoples' attention, but He knew that wasn't enough. I see adults make that mistake – they think more about how to get children's attention than how to keep it. Whether we need to talk with one child, a small group or an entire class, we can learn much from studying Christ's example. How did He keep people's attention?

The *methods* Jesus used were a factor. He expertly used a variety of well-chosen teaching techniques. For example, He told relevant stories that always had a purpose, used concrete object lessons His students could relate to, taught with vivid language that encouraged people to visualize, involved His students by asking thought-provoking questions, and taught with authority.

Jesus was other-centered. He chose methods that were best for those who were listening. For example, although He had been a carpenter for years, he didn't use analogies about two or three legged tables, chairs that wobble or choosing the best wood for a project. That humbles me because I have a tendency to want to tell my stories whether others can relate to them or not. I need to communicate as Jesus did.

The *content* of Jesus' lessons captured and kept peoples' attention. What Jesus taught was relevant, personal, important, practical and life changing truth. Lessons were directed to the heart and the head. If Jesus was the

best story teller who ever lived, but the content of His stories wasn't important or true, people would have eventually stopped listening and following. Content matters! Am I teaching life-changing, encouraging truth?

I believe people paid attention to Jesus, and still do, because of His *character*. There was no hypocrisy in Jesus Christ. His walk matched His talk. Some people followed Jesus to try to catch Him in a lie because they were sure He would be like all the others. Others paid attention because His stellar character was refreshing. I believe qualities such as His consistency, dependability, honesty, vulnerability, sincerity, integrity and inner peace motivated the disciples to stay with Him over the long haul. Do I need a character check-up?

Jesus' *unconditional love and value* for people encouraged them in the midst of difficult days. It motivated even individuals in crowds to listen and learn. I've seen the same thing happen when I consciously think about loving and valuing students, teachers, and parents I address. Some have told me they feel and even see the acceptance and love. It can make a difference. Do people I talk with and teach know they're important to me?

Communicating one-on-one and teaching groups of children isn't always easy. There are many children (and adults) who don't easily pay attention for many valid reasons. I encourage you to persevere in the pursuit of Christlikeness and, when students are inattentive, ask yourself, “What would Jesus do?”



As the founder and president of CELEBRATE KIDS, Inc. of Fort Worth, Texas, Dr. Kathy Koch speaks to educators, students, women, parents, singles and missionaries nationally and internationally. She is also a former CEAI Board member. Check out her website at www.CelebrateKids.com.

School districts have spent great amounts of their budgets on technology in the last decade. Is it making a difference? Are we getting a return for our investment (ROI)? Any teacher who has experienced the engagement level of their students using an interactive whiteboard, computers for writing, reading, researching and more know that even the most reluctant learner is more apt to come to the table of learning when technology is involved. Our students are hungry for more technology in the classroom because it truly is their world. Most teachers are not as technologically savvy as the students today, but the truth is that although our students may be clever on devices, they do not have the wisdom and desire to utilize these devices for their lifelong learning.

So teachers, don't be concerned that the students may know more about how to use a device or software than you. Remember that you are the content expert. You are the professional who has a passion for your area of expertise and you can help these device-smart students become learners for life by inspiring them with technology. We have all heard the argument that you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink. Recently, I heard a podcast where the speaker reasoned, "Ah, but we can make them thirsty!" Let's make it a goal to create a thirst for learning using the technology of today to reach all our students. While attending a digital content creation seminar recently, I was exposed to a new study that has researched the question I posed earlier, "Is technology making a difference in our schools?" Project RED (Revolutionizing Education), a



national research and advocacy plan for improving education in America has posed this essential question, "What will it take for technology to transform learning and schools, just as it has transformed homes and offices in almost every other segment of our society?"

Major associations and business including INTEL, Apple, Pearson Foundation, ISTE and more have supported this initiative because we are

all heavily invested in technology and certainly need to see an ROI for the sake of our students, particularly the reluctant learner. The study reveals that districts that have invested in 1:1 technologies have made an impact on achievement, if properly implemented.

According to Project RED, "Schools with one-to-one computing programs have fewer discipline problems, lower dropout rates and higher rates of college attendance than schools with a higher ratio of students to computers. But for 1:1 programs to boost student achievement, they must be properly implemented." To summarize properly implement, they have narrowed it all down to **3 Cs: consume, collaborate and create.**

Transforming our students into consumers of knowledge is immediately enhanced with technology. Give them many different options to read, research and gather information.

The next C is key. Have them collaborate about what they are learning. Be sure they can partner and team with other students to explain content they have just learned. You don't know it, until you can teach it!

Next, the critical difference in schools that are properly implementing technology is to have students create with this new knowledge. Students who design, script and create a digital project are more likely to remember what they have learned and better equipped to explain the concept.

Without any authority on my part, my opinion is that there needs to be a 4th C – communicate. Give the students a wider audience for their creations and the quality of their work increases significantly.

How do we reach the reluctant learner? Turn their savvy devices into lifelong learning tools and even the reluctant learners become engaged.

As always, I am
Ubiquitously yours,
Karen C. Seddon

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Karen C. Seddon is CEAL's state director for Florida. She writes a weekly technology newsletter/blog called "tuesdays with Karen" and is the founder of e-Cubed, an instructional technology service to encourage, equip and empower teachers with creative technology. Her website, blog and newsletter can be found at her website www.ecubedcreative.com.



Historically Speaking: Black History Month

by Forrest Turpen

February is a month we celebrate many things in America. National Ground Hog Day is one of them. It's hard to forget that on February 14th we celebrate Valentine's Day. We also observe the birthdays of two famous presidents – George Washington on the 21st and Abraham Lincoln the 12th of February. There are many other observances, but the one I

"I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain and the crooked places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh see it together" (Isaiah 40:4-5).

would like to address is Black History Month.

You can go in many directions to commemorate Black History Month. This is an important topic for every school and each classroom teacher to address. Where do you start? How do you find information that will be beneficial to the students at different levels?

In our 1999 winter issue of *Teachers of Vision*, we printed Dr. Martin Luther King's August 28, 1963 "I Have A Dream" speech. This is still a powerful statement for today as we teach about black history in America. Highlights include:

"No, we are not satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream" (Amos 6:24).

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal" (Declaration of Independence and James 2:8-9).

"I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character" (Galatians 6:10).

If you are looking for resources and lesson plans adaptable to your classroom for Black History Month, try some of the following websites:

- <http://www.everystudent.com/features/truth.html>
- <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/black-history-month/teacher-resources/6602.html>
- <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/black-history-month/teacher-resources/6602.htm>
- <http://www.biography.com/blackhistory/apollo-theater/tour.jsp>
- <http://www.biography.com/classroom/blackhistory.jsp>
- <http://www.biography.com/blackhistory/>
- <http://www.biography.com/blackhistory/history/101-facts-inventions.jsp>
- <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history-month>
- <http://www.infoplease.com/black-history-month/>
- <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/penguin/guide-africanamerican.pdf>



with Judy Turpen

God may sometimes see His adult children as hard to motivate. He has given so much to motivate, prompt, impel and incite me to action and I'm often slow to respond. Why? I've been reading through the Old Testament in Eugene Peterson's *Message Bible* for a class I co-teach at our church. The Message is my favorite reading Bible. There are several verses that deal with motivation.

Galatians 5:16-18

"My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit. Then you won't feed the compulsions of selfishness. For there is a root of sinful self-interest in us that is at odds with a free spirit, just as the free spirit is incompatible with selfishness. These two ways of life are antithetical, so that you cannot live at times one way and at times another way according to how you feel on any given day. Why don't you choose to be led by the Spirit and so escape the erratic compulsions of a law-dominated existence?"

Romans 15:14a

"Personally, I've been completely satisfied with who you are and what you are doing. You seem to me to be well-motivated and well-instructed, quite capable of guiding and advising one another."

Paul was encouraging his fellow workers as they were reaching the non-Jewish community in order to lead them to the Lord.

This verse and those following may indicate why I am slow to respond sometimes. I may be choosing my self-interest rather than the "free Spirit" of Christ. Or I may be relying on my feelings rather than on faith.

Philippians 1:15-17

"It's true that some here preach Christ because with me out of the way, they think they'll step right into the spotlight. But the others do it with the best heart in the world. One group is motivated by pure love, knowing that I am here defending the Message, wanting to help. The others, now that I'm out of the picture, are merely greedy, hoping to get something out of it for themselves. Their motives are bad. They see me as their competition, and so the worse it goes for me, the better—they think—for them."

In Paul's letter to the Philippians he observed that some were motivated by love while others were motivated by greed. We know that Jesus said to love God with all our hearts and then to love others as ourselves. Again, perhaps the reason I don't always act when prompted by my Lord is my "love" motivation may be lacking.

I am thankful the Lord is merciful, slow to anger and loves me in spite of my disobedience. My desire is to be good and to please Him but my "self" often gets in the way.

Proverbs 16:10

"A good leader motivates, doesn't mislead, doesn't exploit."

And I want to also be a good leader, one who motivates.

As you deal with your hard-to-motivate students, I pray the Lord will remind you of his mercy and grace and give you all you need to meet the needs of these very needy children and youth to spur them to be who God created them to be.

Pupil Concern

by Blanche B. Lindblad

I brought that unruly one
before the Lord:
Oh, Lord, don't You see?

Then was my heart enlarged
within His love:
Oh, Lord, teach me!



by Vernal Lind

Jesus, the Greatest Teacher

Come, let us continue our walk with Jesus through His earthly life. We begin to see Him as the greatest teacher. Walking with Him as our teacher means that we are always learning.

An early hymn writer, Sigmund Van Birken, wrote these words: "Let us ever walk with Jesus, Follow His example pure, Through a world that will deceive us, And to sin our spirits lure."

Jesus teaches us an ethical and professional code that is unsurpassed. May all our relationships with students and colleagues and parents and others reflect Christ's perfect love. And may we commit both subject matter and teaching style to Him.

We teachers always look to earthly authorities or experts on teaching and our subject matter. May we also look to Christ as the ultimate authority.

Let us always look to Jesus as teacher and faithful guide.

1 **Weeks One and Two. Knowing Jesus Better.** As we spend time with a friend, we get to know him better. The same is true with Jesus as we see how He would & have us live.

2 **John 5:1-15 (note v. 14).** Jesus helps and heals but warns of sin.

John 5:16-30. Always remember who Jesus is.

John 5:31-47. Trust in Jesus only; not in people and institutions.

Mark 2:23-28 (note v. 27). Remember the need for Sabbath worship and rest.

Matthew 12:1-8 (note v. 7). Be kind and merciful to students and others.

Luke 6:1-5. Beware of legalism.

Mark 3:1-6; Matthew 12:9-14. Always do good.

Luke 6:6-11. Remember there may be opposition to Christians and Christian actions.

Matthew 12:15-21. Again and again, be mindful of who Jesus is.

Mark 3:7-12. Remember that God's timing may not be our timing.

Mark 3:13-19; Luke 8:12-16. You have been chosen to represent Jesus in the classroom.

3 **Weeks Three, Four and Five. Always Learning.** God's Word is alive! No matter how many times we read Scripture, there is a new or special message for the day.

& Matthew 5:1-12. What do these beatitudes mean in my teaching?

4 **Luke 6:17-23.** Rejoice in your learning and relationship with Jesus.

4 **Luke 6:24-26.** Check the warning to the comfortable and rich.

& Matthew 5:13-16. Learn of ways to be salt and light in the classroom.

5 **Matthew 5:17-20.** Laws and rules are important in the classroom.

Matthew 5:21-26. Beware of anger and unforgiveness.

Matthew 5:27-32. Find ways to encourage good and godly relationships.

Matthew 5:33-37. Always keep promises; don't forget.

Matthew 5:38-42. Never try to "get even."

Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 6:27-36. Treat kindly your opposition. Love your enemies.

Matthew 6:1-4. Do your good deeds without expecting praise or recognition.

Matthew 6:5-18. Learn about prayer from the perfect prayer.

Matthew 6:19-34. Put money and possessions in their proper place.

Matthew 7:1-6; Luke 6:37-42. Always be discerning. Beware of judging.

Matthew 7:7-12 (note v. 12). The Golden Rule applies well in the classroom or anywhere.

Dear Jesus. May I always walk with You and seek Your will in the classroom or anywhere I go. I pray that my walk with You will encourage others to follow You. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

MEET THE BOARD: **Clint Elliott**

“

How did you come to serve on the CEAI board of directors?

I was serving on the Advisory Council for the Kentucky Christian Educators Association when a board member invited me to join the national board several years ago.

What is your position on the board?

I serve with the administrative committee and the strategic planning team, and also serve as a liaison from the field in Kentucky while continuing to serve with the Kentucky Advisory Council.

How long have you served on the board? How long in your current capacity?

Since 2008

Why do you think it's important to serve in this way?

CEAI has a long history of making a kingdom difference in the lives of educators and in our culture, and I consider it an incredible privilege and blessing to serve Christian educators by serving on the CEAI board. The educators that we serve are the real ambassadors for Christ on the ground in this country's largest mission field, and it's important for us as a board to do what we can to support them by prayerfully helping to guide and support CEAI and its incredible staff as CEAI seeks to encourage, equip and empower Christian educators.

What do you enjoy most about working on the board?

I enjoy the many opportunities to learn from the vast wisdom of my fellow board members and the CEAI staff. I also enjoy seeing God at work through the ministries of CEAI and hearing transformation testimonies from the field.

What is the toughest challenge (or growth opportunity) you have faced as a board member?

The toughest challenge and greatest growth opportunity for me personally has been to increase my vision for what God can and will do – learning to trust in the Lord with ALL my heart, not leaning on my own understanding, and learning to pray large, consistent with Ephesians 3:20-21, understanding the enormity of the task for the church in this culture but also knowing that nothing is impossible with God and trusting that together we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength.

What would you like members to know about the board and CEAI? How can they support you?

I hope you, CEAI members, truly know that we strive to serve and bring glory to God through our service to you. We want to help encourage, equip and empower you as best we can so that you will be used by God to transform your school with God's truth and love as modern day Daniels. You can support us by letting us know how we can better serve you and by praying for us!

What do you do when you are not serving CEAI? (Your occupation and recreational pursuits.)

I am an attorney by vocation and also consider myself a life-long learner. I graduated from seminary in December 2009, but I am already back in seminary taking additional classes in an urban ministry program. I also teach law, leadership and ethics from a biblical worldview perspective at Indiana Wesleyan University. For recreational time, I like to hang out with my wife Lorie, and occasionally dig in our flower gardens, and I also enjoy hiking, fishing and canoe/kayak outings with our two kertianious sons, Clayton and Colin.

Tell me a little bit about your personal life -- family, church, where you call home.

My wife Lorie and I, along with our two sons, call Crestwood, Kentucky home. We are members of Crestwood Baptist Church and are involved in discipleship and prayer ministries at CBC and in our community. God has given Lorie and me hearts for Africa and a special love for the incredible people and churches of Africa. Lorie and I will be returning to Ethiopia with our oldest son in the spring on another mission trip to Africa together.



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Forest and Cheri Risch, CEAI Central California Area Directors

Seventeen teachers from the Central Valley of California were able to experience the mission of CEAI at a "Daniel Weekend" at the Pines Resort in Bass Lake, October 8-10. Each teacher came away with an "action-plan" to live-out their job as a God-given calling and ministry.

Dick and Londa Amundson of Tentmakers International facilitated the weekend with the assistance of Finn Laursen, executive director of CEAI, Richard and Linda Nicholson, Forrest and Judy Turpen, Nancy Kannard and Forest and Cheri Risch – all on the CEAI leadership team.

On Saturday, the teachers spent time in small groups discussing such questions as:

* What are the challenges facing Christians who work in public schools?

* How might God's love and truth transform our schools?

* What would it look like if God had His way on my school campus?

There was also the freedom and time to share any problems, frustrations, concerns or challenges each teacher faced. With this information as a foundation, the Amundsons were able to lead the teachers through exercises building relational skills, sharpening creative thinking skills and sharpening planning skills. The teachers were challenged to "dare to dream!" Dick Amundson shared how he had an accountability partner who would not allow him to abandon following his dream. He said that God gives personal dreams. He emphasized they are God-given! He directed us to Ephesians 2:10: "We are created in Christ Jesus to do good works that He has planned and prepared for us to walk in" and Romans 10:17: "So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ" It was inspiring to see the balance between prayer and action as the teachers expressed how they were drawn to both.

Finn Laursen shared about the legal rights of Christians in the classroom. We discussed several legal cases regarding expressions of faith in schools. Finn referred to the Prayer, Care, Share model where you pray for someone first, then look for practical ways to care for them and then expect God to open up opportunities to share with them. He reminded us that there is no law against loving someone and telling them the truth. He also said there is no law against leading kids in a positive direction.

On Sunday, Finn connected the legal rights issues with the example of Daniel in the Old Testament. He made these observations about Daniel:

* Daniel was an outsider in a secular society.

* Daniel worked from inside the system.

He then shared this astute insight: "While it is important to know what our rights are... it is MORE IMPORTANT to be sensitive as to how to live out those rights"

And these seventeen teachers came away from the weekend determined to live out their rights and network with like-minded Christian teachers. They used words like "inspiring," "encouraging" and "relevant" to describe the Daniel weekend.

Elaine Brown's reflection summed up the experience: "A band of seasoned Christian educators met to discuss what was required to change schools for the sake of our country's most precious resource: it's CHILDREN! As I sat among this group of dedicated Christian teachers and conference facilitators, I knew that this group would be the spark that would ignite the fire of revival and begin our nation's finest hour. Prayer – fervent prayer is the forerunner of any revival. The assembled

teachers and leaders consecrated themselves as vessels to be used for change. These people will return to their schools and become modern-day Daniels within their school districts and communities. Think of it... a small group of people given a weekend to learn how to create action plans and empowered to carry out our purpose of transforming schools with God's love and truth! When this revival is through, our country's course will be righted and returned to the original purpose our founding fathers were divinely given in its formation: A land of the people, by the people and for the people... one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all!"

Carl Mosebach, CEAI Northern California Area Director

Our next state-wide "Californians Together AND Serving Our Schools" gathering will be April 1st (no, not an April fool's joke) and April 2nd. We will meet again in our state capitol building in Sacramento on April 1st for prayer and strategizing, and then gather at one of our partners' sites in Sacramento on April 2nd to pray and share what the Lord is doing through many in California. For those in California (or beyond), please contact me (cmosebach@ceai.org or 415-872-6940) if you'd like more information about this third annual "Californians Together AND Serving Our Schools" gathering.

Here also are some of the websites of our many "Prayer/Care/Share" partners:

Prayer: momsintouch.org; California Canopy of Prayer (transformourworld.org) and praynorthstate.org.

Serving/caring: Freedom Hall (<http://www.teamsts.org>)

Outreach/sharing: <http://www.mycampus.net>;
<http://www.releasedtime.org/>; Chaplains on Campus (<http://www.sacchaplains.com/templates/System/details.asp?id=40401&PID=492779>); <http://www.cefonline.com/>;
<http://www.younglife.org/>; <http://www.compassionbridges.com/> and <http://www.pacificjustice.org>.

Roger Dillon, CEAI Kentucky State Director

For the fourth year, local educators in the Corbin/London/Williamsburg area organized a great Christian Educators conference at Grace on the Hill Church in Corbin. Keynote speakers and breakout session presenters provided many tips and creative ideas to help local Christian educators. Topics included: living out your faith in their classrooms, positive classroom management from a Christian perspective, starting a Bible class in high school, remaining in Christ ALL of the school day, loving the tough student and more. A special thanks to Beth Arnold, Susan Fiechter, Bernie Harrington and Jon Eppley for planning such a super event.

Have you ever heard of 'popcorn' Christian educators? We encounter them all the time in Kentucky. They are CEAI members in Kentucky who suddenly pop out of their normal circumstances, communicate with the Kentucky CEAI office and want to make a difference in their building. They set up after school meetings in their classrooms where we talk with their colleagues, helping them understand their religious freedoms and the value of joining CEAI. They set up dinner meetings where we all discuss the ways to live out the Christian faith in school. They simply serve as conduits for Jesus and for CEAI in their schools. Thank you to our 'popcorn' members across Kentucky including Tina Whaley, Susan Hack, Pete Mokhatas and Kim Wirthwein.

Continued on page 27

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DIRECT TO YOU | Continued from page 2

Our public school students have total freedom of religious expression in school since they are not government employees. Students can lead prayer, read or distribute Bibles or other religious material, openly discuss their faith publicly or through assignments, be given the same access to facilities as others get for non-religious activities. In other words, school employees must be “blind to religion.” They cannot treat religious expression differently than non-religious expression.

Precisely because there are so many negative influences bombarding public school students today, CEAI considers our public schools a mission field ripe for harvest. Through public schools, we have access to many who will never enter our churches.

Like no other time in history our children are bombarded nonstop with negative information. Media saturation has reached a level so that our children, starting in elementary school, experience greater influence from outside the home than from within. They are exposed to a sexualization in our culture that has expanded to all areas and ages. Hard core pornography is just a point and click away with many of our children unintentionally being exposed to unimaginable perversions.

According to Barna Research, only four to six percent of school-age children self-identify as Christian. Christian educators interacting with young people daily can have a life-changing effect on those not having a personal relationship with our Lord and at the same time can be a powerful role model for Christian students on campus.

CEAI's position in the schooling culture is straightforward and clear:

Our Vision is...

God's love and truth transforming our schools.

Our Mission is...

To encourage, equip and empower educators according to biblical principles.

- Proclaim God's Word as the source of wisdom and knowledge
- Portray teaching as a God-given calling and ministry
- Promote educational excellence as an expression of Christian commitment
- Preserve our Judeo-Christian heritage and values through education
- Promote the legal rights of Christians in public schools
- Provide a forum on educational issues with a Christian worldview
- Partner with churches, parachurch organizations, educational institutions and parents
- Provide resources and benefits for educators including professional liability insurance

Our Core Values

- Love
- Biblical Knowledge
- Respect
- Integrity
- Prayer
- Patience
- Self-control
- Worship
- Truth
- Unity
- Forgiveness
- Faith
- Servanthood
- Joy
- Professional Excellence

FIFTY WAYS TO COLOR A MOTIVATED CLASSROOM

Continued from page 4

- Build student and classroom motivation with traditions.
- Use music as a tool to stir students, especially as they enter the classroom. I use this opportunity to introduce students to various Christian artists. Classical music is effective for big tests and finals. (Composer John Williams has an amazing CD of famous movie themes.)
- As students are entering the classroom, show a motivating movie or TV clip.
- Make a notebook of articles that features students who have accomplished a significant task and then share it periodically with your students.

- Make up a notebook of students' acceptance letters to colleges and universities.
- Year in Review: Make a booklet highlighting what the students accomplished during the school year. (Have students help with the production.)

Motivate students by building positive relationships:

- Attend extra-curricular activities or sporting events.
- Support student endeavors such as mission trips.
- Walk the halls with a smile and kind words for students.
- After attending a student activity, share with them your appreciation for their skill.
- Greet each student at the door of the classroom.
- Give high-fives as you walk through the halls.

Motivate students by sharing personal stories:

- Share with students books that you are currently reading.
- Share words that have come up in your reading that are interesting and unique. (Can you say jocund?)
- Ask students about books they are currently reading and have them share interesting and unique words.
- Share with students about personal hobbies that might be of interest to them. (Don't forget to have students share what hobbies they are involved in.)
- Share with students your favorite scriptures and quotes.

Motivate students by creating clothing items:

- Come up with a class logo or logo of a particular unit that the students have responded positively to and make t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats or sweatbands with the logo on them.

Oops, I went over fifty. I guess I got very motivated. My prayer is that this list will give you additional ideas about this important responsibility that we have as teachers. By the way, remember that class of future and current teachers I was talking about earlier? We have started making a list of another fifty ways teachers can energize their classrooms with motivation.



Ed Tooley is a full-time social studies teacher at Los Angeles Baptist Middle/Senior High School and an adjunct professor in the school of Education at Azusa Pacific University. Ed is passionate about writing and developing unique ways of teaching. He is presently working on a book for teachers entitled, Looking for Teachers with Passion.

PUT THE CARE BACK INTO WHO CARES?:

Continued from page 5

differences between them and a story character in the other circle. Where the two circles overlap, students will list similarities. Sometimes, students are shocked to see that they have a lot in common with a person who lived 200 years ago or a character from a fantasy novel. Making personal connections to a book or history helps students stay engaged.

Role playing is fun! Most students love to act out situations and pretend to be someone else for a few minutes. You will have some shy students, who will not want to role play—don't force them. Remember these are strategies for students to feel connected with the material and engaged in your class. Don't give them a reason to dislike your material.

Continued on next page

We Live By Examples...

Giving students specific examples of how they will use your material in their lives is a great way to reach students. You don't have to have an elaborate, creative teaching strategy for every class. If you are studying fractions in math class, then tell students specific ways they will use fractions in their lives today and in the future. For example, students will use fractions when they follow a recipe. One day in class, you may have students make trail mix, so they can see how to use fractions when cooking. You might also provide homework practice where students have to read a recipe with fractions and double it.

You can provide specific examples about your community laws and officials in social studies when studying government. In science, if you are teaching about the transfer of energy in the food chain, you can ask students how we get energy and lead them into a discussion about getting energy from the food we eat.

With examples, it helps to be specific and allow students to brainstorm other examples besides the ones you gave them. How do students think they use multiplication in their lives? When might finding a main idea help them while reading or studying? If students are able to provide the examples, then this shows you that they are already connecting with the material.

Create a New Place in Your Classroom

If students are "living" day-to-day in a colonial marketplace, they are participating in a form of role play and connecting with the material. If students are running a classroom store, then they are learning on a first hand basis about economics. If students are writing and publishing their own books in a publication center, they are connected to the writing process.

You can coordinate an area of your room or your entire room to a unit of study. Take the colonial history example. Each student could have a job in the village or run a booth, their desk, at the marketplace. Each day during the colonial unit, they can role play with other students trading, creating products or taking care of their family and business. Ask students to write in their journals about their experiences at the marketplace to see the connections they are making.

Children love creative, interesting environments. If you are studying different cultures of the world, bring in artifacts from that culture and make snacks or treats that are commonly eaten there. You can do the same with different periods of history. Make passports for each of your students and travel with them through the Ice Age, Renaissance and Industrial Revolution.

Don't Reinvent the Wheel

Many teachers are already doing these types of activities and connecting objectives to students' lives every day across the United States. Some post ideas on the Internet, or you may share lesson plans and activities in your school. Be creative, help one another and search for ideas. Remember, it is as important to teach the material as it is to show students how it affects them.



Margo L. Dill is a freelance writer, editor and teacher, living in St. Louis, Missouri. Her work has appeared in publications such as Grit, Missouri Life, The Chicago Tribune, Fun for Kidz and God Allows U-Turns Vol. 4. She is a contributing editor and online instructor for WOW! Women On Writing and also teaches courses for the National Writing for Children Center. To find out more, please check www.margodill.com.

FOUR REASONS | Continued from page 8

which merely requires the right approach; which, if the student discovers it, will make his critics appear inept. The proper approach may be all that is lacking to begin a brilliant learning career.

Imagine that a student is studying a given set of historical material. If the student studies it with no particular approach, she should not be surprised to arrive at no particular outcome. If the student's approach is primarily an esthetic one, she would visualize the material and obtain information from it in terms of its entertainment value, cultural value and so on. If the student's approach is primarily a philosophical one, she would visualize the information and obtain data from it in terms of the profound truths inherent in it. If the student's approach is to understand her own society by picking up facts about such matters as the development of governments and economies, that is likely what she will gain from studies of history. If the student's approach is just for laughs, she may well end up contributing to a career as a budding comedian through her studies of history. As approach varies, so does the result.

For a more specific example of how learning approach affects learning outcome, imagine a classroom in which the children are being introduced to carpentry. The teacher decides that since the students are young and need to improve their coordination, dual goals can be accomplished by getting them to work at pounding nails into blocks of wood, sawing lengths of wood and planing blocks of wood into cylindrical spheres using simple hand-held tools. So the teacher helps the students get started at those tasks.

One of the students, a little girl, proves to be a terribly poor pounder of nails, has little strength for sawing wood and shows no interest in using the carpentry tools. Instead of participating joyfully with the others, she simply pouts and complains. Obviously she has not discovered the right approach for her.

Now suppose the teacher is imaginative and gets some of the shavings from the wood being planed by the other students and some glue, and introduces the little girl to the type of model building that occurs in beginning architecture, something which he has never before tried in his class. The little girl likes the activity a lot and excels at it from the start. When then presented with a healthy supply of ice cream sticks and toothpicks, she busies herself turning out little models of buildings, some of which are quite good by semester's end. And the activity ultimately leads her to a successful career as an architect.

In the preceding example, the girl's stubborn refusal to participate in pounding nails, sawing or planing wood proved to be a successful response for her. Had she not stuck to her aversion to using the carpentry tools and simply submitted to the approach to learning that suited the other students, she would have made a big mistake because she may never have been diverted in the direction of her future career.

People of all ages who express little enthusiasm for learning are missing out on a lot of the best that life has to offer. I am not suggesting that anyone should learn just because they are told to; but that all people should find something they really want to learn and keep working at learning it until they stumble upon the right approach for them. It is usually not due to inability, or even to absence of initiative, that a person is a poor learner. It is more likely caused by one or more of the four reasons for poor learning I have just presented.



Ron Dultz is a freelance writer, working in the areas of philosophy and popular psychology. His writings have appeared in magazines, journals and newspapers in eight countries.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION AT A DISTANCE:

Continued from page 9

teachers meet for traditional classroom instruction part time and complete additional assignments through distance learning technology part time.

When Linda Stine designed her hybrid classroom to accommodate learners who often drove more than 100 miles to class, she discovered that some of the tools of distance learning "seem made to order for basic writing students." She noted that asynchronous discussion lists give timid students a chance to let their voices be heard while giving all students more time to reflect and "polish" their answers before joining in the discussion (*Journal of Basic Writing*, 2004).

Virginia Crank agreed that requiring students to use asynchronous message boards to reply to peers' papers not only assures that every student will respond, but also results in clearer, more specific and more constructive responses. She explained, "A 'That was good,' can be tossed off in a brief, face-to-face group but seems silly and inefficient in an e-mail message" (*Teaching Developmental Writing: Background Readings*, 2004). Crank's hybrid class evolved naturally. Her class schedule included meeting one day each week in the computer lab. As the students became comfortable with the technology and the assignments, that day became "attendance optional," so students who had computer and Internet access could complete their assignments at home.

Developmental students need experience with technology, and some of the tools of distance learning definitely show promise and can be used effectively during remediation. However, these students have other needs that cannot and should not be ignored. Individual institutions must make the call about developmental education at a distance, but is it doing developmental students a disservice to keep offering courses that have consistently low retention rates and high failure rates? Students should, at the very least, get special advisement sessions explaining the challenges inherent with distance education. The only certainty is that the field of distance education is very young and very dynamic.



Sheryl Maffett earned a Master's degree in Educational Technology and is a Global Career Development Facilitator. She is currently developing online resources for a community college, where she also works as an academic and enrollment adviser. Her articles have appeared in many publications, including *Community College Journal*. While not at work, Sheryl enjoys spending time with her family on her farm in Saluda, South Carolina.

This article was previously published in the October/November 2007 *Community College Journal*.

FROM THE FIELD

Continued from page 22

CEAI had the privilege of speaking with statewide Youth Ministers at a Kentucky Baptist Convention conference in November. The Youth Ministers were encouraged to educate their youth to both live out their faith actively at their school and adopt their school as their personal mission field. The youth ministers were also taught about the many religious freedoms their public school students possess. *The Western Recorder*, KBC's weekly newspaper, recently published an article on CEAI and ways Kentucky churches can honor their Christian educators and serve their local schools as a mission field. This article can be found at www.ceai.org/pdf/wr2010.pdf.

A CEAI student organization at Western Kentucky University is now formed with faculty sponsor Dr. Lisa Murley. Student member Hannah Blankenship worked with the administration to gain approval of the student organization. The student group meets monthly to encourage one another, learn about teaching Christianly and plan for the first Kentucky Teacher Camp in May. More information on the Teacher Camp will be coming soon.

If you are a Kentucky member, we invite you to help create a stronger group of Christian educators in your school or in a local institution of higher education, contact me at 502-618-1972 or e-mail at roger.dillon@ceai.org. Join your colleagues across Kentucky who are making a difference.

Ruth Coney, CEAI Georgia State Director

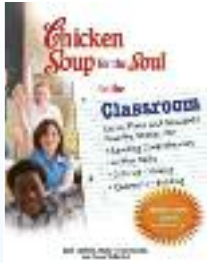
In September, Finn Laursen spoke on religious freedoms in our public schools in Gwinnett County, Georgia. The event was especially significant because this school system is very influential throughout Georgia and surrounding states. Recently, Gwinnett County Public Schools was named the top urban system in the United States. People in attendance included teachers, students, support staff and administrators. The district superintendent of schools participated in break-out discussions and spoke to Finn afterwards.

CEAI members from other parts of Georgia also attended. This gathering served as a kick off to reach out to current and new members throughout Georgia. We are grateful to Amy Turner, the Gwinnett Area Director, who orchestrated the conference with excellence.

Dr. Christine Allen, CEAI South Florida Regional Director

The South Florida CEAI began the school year with a teacher breakfast at Office Depot. Various vendors attended such as the *Sun Sentinel* newspaper, AVON, LA Fitness and, of course, CEAI was there to spread the good news. Once again, the Family Christian Bookstore allowed us to post a bulletin board featuring CEAI, boasting opportunities to network, fellowship and other benefits. Recently I was contacted by an organization in Central Florida responsible for constructing and establishing a home for unwed mothers. They wanted to inquire about how they could incorporate CEAI membership and vision into their mission. Of course, I communicated to the entity that we equip, empower and educate teachers. I explained practical benefits and the fact that we collaborate on Educator's Sunday, share prayer partners and promote the spiritual and professional growth of educators. At the conclusion of the conversation, I felt joy that even though in these desperate times when the future mothers may feel despair, they are still considering the Holy Spirit when making decisions for the general welfare of their children.

Resources



Chicken Soup for the Soul in the Classroom – Middle School Edition:

Lesson Plans and Students' Favorite Stories for Reading Comprehension, Writing Skills, Critical Thinking, Character Building

by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Anna Unkovich

Regular price \$29.95

CEAI price **\$26.96**

As a teacher, you have the unique opportunity to teach and inspire your students to be goal-oriented, compassionate, confident and ambitious. Anna Unkovich, a former teacher of thirty-five years, made a difference in her students' lives through the daily use of stories from the bestselling series *Chicken Soup for the Soul*.

Chicken Soup for the Soul in the Classroom – Elementary Edition

by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Anna Unkovich

Regular price \$29.95

CEAI price **\$26.96**



Learning Outside the Lines: Two Ivy League Students With Learning Disabilities and ADHD Give You the Tools

by Jonathan Mooney and David Cole

Criticism for the public school system in the United States is nothing new; kids of all skill levels are slipping through the cracks at every age and in every city. The authors have created a practical guide to help kids jump through the necessary hoops to achieve whatever larger, post-school goals they may have. While much of the material is written for kids who've received the label LD or ADHD, many of the suggestions can be just as helpful for those who've been labeled "gifted," or any other student who feels frustrated with the daily routine of standard education.

Regular price \$15.99

CEAI price **\$14.39**

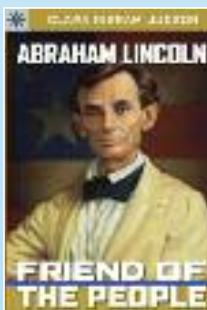


So Help Me God: A Reflection on the Military Oath by So Help Me God Project

As service members continue to fight the War on Terror, many are reflecting on the military oath that they pledged to keep. Four words ultimately transform American citizens into soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and coast guardsmen. Appendix section includes reference resources such as a list of all U.S. military oaths, the code of conduct, the will to survive, the flag folding ceremony and much more.

Regular price \$10.50

CEAI price **\$9.45**



Abraham Lincoln: Friend of the People

by Clara Ingram Judson

This Newbery Honor Book – from a three-time Newbery Honor author – paints an indelible portrait of the prairie president. Clara Ingram Judson presents Lincoln in all his gauntness, gawkiness and greatness: a backwoods boy who became president. She reveals the unforgettable story from his boyhood and days as a shopkeeper and lawyer, to Lincoln's first elected offices and his election as president, the Civil War and assassination.

Regular price \$6.95

CEAI price **\$6.26**

George Washington Carver

by Warner Press



Dr. George Washington Carver was the first African-American student accepted at Iowa State University. He was a man of deep faith who believed God had given him abilities – not for himself, not to become rich or famous – but to help people. He developed more than 300 uses for peanuts, over 100 uses for sweet potatoes and taught southern farmers the benefits of crop rotation, composting, fertilization and pest control.

Regular price \$8.25

CEAI price **\$7.43**



The Presidents' Rap (CD/book kit) New Version to George W. Bush

by Sara Jordan

Relive the history of our past presidents in this treasure trove of tidbits of knowledge about our presidents packaged neatly into over a dozen catchy songs written within the musical style of each historical period. Comprehensive, illustrated, encyclopedic summary of the history of the American presidents from Washington to George W. Bush.

Regular price \$16.95

CEAI price **\$15.26**



George Washington: Curriculum Guide (Heroes of History Unit Study)

by Janet Bengé and Geoff Bengé

With historical and thematic depth, the *Heroes of History Unit Study Curriculum Guides* provide the schoolteacher with countless ways to teach and reinforce diverse curriculum areas as they relate to the life of a key historical figure. Choose from an array of options to build a meaningful unit study just right for you and your students including: chapter questions/key quotes, community links – field trips, classroom visits, interviews, service projects.

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For You They Signed

by Marilyn Boyer

For You They Signed is an antidote to the rampant historical revisionism dominating the schools and media today. To understand America, you must understand the character and faith of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Our founders were not atheists and deists, but God-fearing men, many of whom left clear, written testimony of their faith in Christ. Read why Jefferson, Franklin, Hancock, Adams and the other signers appealed to the laws of nature and of nature's God in declaring America free and independent.

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