

WEEK 11

Dear NEA Members,

Greetings! There are many new ideas out there to help teachers. NEA has created a web-site called "Works-4-Me" which are tried and true teaching hints suggested by NEA members. Each week you will receive an e-mail with six helpful (and short) hints to help you in your teaching. They will fall under the following categories:

Teaching Techniques
Content
Getting Organized
Managing Your Classroom
Relationships
Using Technology

In addition, you will get information about your NEA Member Benefits that are available to you through your membership in the Association. Click on the link or visit www.neamb.com.

Teaching Techniques

Students' Year-End Evaluations

"I ask my students for their opinion on the activities and special projects that were assigned during the school year. They list the major projects, assignments, or novels that we studied as I read them aloud. I ask them if I should 'use it' or 'lose it' for next year and what they liked or disliked about each project. This helps me to evaluate projects from year to year and to modify and adjust my assignments for the following year. The students love this activity because they know that their opinion counts and I love this activity because I get valuable feedback!"

Content

Prop Writing Prompt

"Here's a good writing prompt to use for almost any reading: 'Imagine that you are prop master for a play based on the piece we just read. What props would you bring on stage? Whose prop would it be and why is it important to the play?' Props must be explained and examples might need

to be given. Kids love doing this as it gives them the opportunity to be creative."

Getting Organized

Weekly Sanity Schedule

"At the end of the school day the amount of work that a teacher takes home seems endless. To keep focused, I designate different nights of the week to different purposes. For example, Monday, Wednesday and Saturday are for marking, Tuesday and Thursday are for planning and organizing upcoming units, Friday is TGIF no work day and Sunday is my day to renew. This prevents me from procrastinating and I seem to accomplish more by knowing my focus ahead of time. A wise teacher recommended that I stick to a 90-minute homework time every night so that I don't get behind in my work. I increase it to two hours when I have to prepare for a report. When something comes up and I have to take a night off, I don't feel burdened because I've kept up. I subtract school meetings and inservice time from that 90 minutes to keep my life in balance."

Managing Your Classroom

Tell Mr. Bucket

"I use a small plastic bucket to address the issue of tattling. I decorate the bucket with a sad face, a nose, eyes and some big ears. After I discuss tattling with the class, I tell my students that if they want to tattle, they must write their concern on a piece of paper and place it in Mr. Bucket. This has been a great help in stopping the tattling because kids don't get my attention. Later, I read what is placed in Mr. Bucket and then decide if anything needs to be addressed."

Relationships

Parent Newsletters

"I help parents connect with their child's school experience by sending home a weekly newsletter. When parents ask students what they did at school the response is often, 'Played'. Although I am pleased that my kids think of what we do as play, I want the parents to understand that there is a lot of learning packed into that play. My newsletter tells what I am

teaching and how often I am teaching it. I describe special days and always include parent tips for at home follow up. After reading my newsletter, parents can ask their children specific questions about their day and get specific responses. I also have parent workshops twice a year where I show my parents the methods and materials we use in class. I teach them about alternatives to workbooks ? (manipulatives!) and hope that they will use them at home too. I also set up hands on demos and provide handouts. Parents are grateful to learn my methods and lingo."

Using Technology

Historical Searches

"I designed two Internet searches that introduce students to two great Americans. One is a Civil War hero, Joshua Chamberlain, and the other is an American Indian named Chief Joseph. This assignment was designed to provide an orderly search on the Internet and allow the students to learn about two historical figures. When the students have successfully completed the search, they have to select a search of their own. The search must investigate a technology that become important to the world between 1740-1900AD. The students are to do a historical search and try to determine the societal impact of this 'new technology'. Furthermore, they are to determine if the technology is still in existence today and how it has changed to meet the needs of today's society. The students enjoy doing the searches and find that the technology they experience in their everyday lives has not always been available."

NEA Member Benefit of the Week:

With the holidays just around the corner...well almost...check out this week's NEA Member Benefit of the week. In addition, attached to this e-mail is a pdf entitled, "NEA Magazine \$5.00 off coupon," use it to start your holiday shopping.

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For more information, please call 1-800-637-4636 Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (or Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) ET. Our friendly representatives are waiting for your call!

Source: http://www.neamb.com/home/1207_916.htm

NEA Member Benefit Article of the Week:

Five Ways to Improve Your Credit Score

Date published: Tuesday, September 22, 2009

The Federal Reserve Board

As lenders tighten their credit standards and firms continue to push their credit score tracking services, it is now more important than ever to focus on your credit score rating. Defects in your score can cause a great amount of pain in getting a loan, making a purchase or even seeking a new position. The Federal Reserve Board suggests five ways to improve your score.

1. Get copies of your credit report

Go to www.annualcreditreport.com and obtain your report. Under federal law, you can secure a free report from each of the credit reporting companies once every 12 months. You may also call 877-322-8228 to order. After you get the report, make sure the information is correct!

2. Pay your bills on time

One of the most important things you can do to improve your credit score is to pay your bills by the due date. You can set up automatic payments from your bank to help pay on time, but be sure you have enough money in your account to avoid overdraft fees.

3. Understand how your score is determined

Your credit score is usually based on the answers to these questions:

- Do you pay your bills on time?
- What is your outstanding debt?
- How long is your credit history?
- Have you applied for credit recently?
- How many and what types of accounts do you have?

4. Learn the legal steps to improve your credit report

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has published a guide on how to improve your credit report at: www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/credit/cre03.shtm. It outlines ways to correct errors in your report, including how to write a “dispute letter.”

5. Beware of credit-repair scams

The FTC says that companies target consumers who have poor credit histories with promises to clean up their credit report. The truth is these companies cannot deliver an improved credit report using the tactics they promote.

Doing it yourself is the best way to repair your credit.

For help on learning more about credit scams, see the FTC fact sheet at: www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/credit/cre13.shtm.