

## WEEK 20

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](http://www.neamb.com).

### Teaching Techniques

#### Student Made Study Guide

"To help the students review for their semester final, I divide the class into the number of units we have covered. Each group has about twenty-five minutes to prepare one overhead transparency with all of the most important information from the section. At the end of class, each group shares their overhead with the others. Every student gets a study guide to help them when they study at home and we all get to see many colorfully decorated pages! Afterward, I make a couple of classroom copies that students can check out if they were absent."

### Content

#### Positive and Negative Numbers

"Teaching operations with positive and negative numbers is a difficult activity in math. I use a card game to help my students grasp the concept. I draw two cards at random and hold one up on each side of my face. Red cards are negative and black cards are positive. Tens and face cards are worth ten, aces are one, jokers are zero and all others are at face value. I call

out addition, subtraction, multiplication or division and remind the students to go from left to right as they read. They must write the equation and answer while I count quietly to five. The students have very lively discussions over their responses because they must justify their answers. Often the problems lend themselves to good explanation."

## **Getting Organized**

### **Kindness Club**

"I recognize random acts of kindness in my classroom. I write the student's name, date and act of kindness on an index card. I attach all the cards to a bulletin board titled, Miss Sally's Kindness Club. At the end of the year, I take down the cards and mail them to the parents. This is a great way for students to get recognition for being kind to each other."

## **Managing Your Classroom**

### **Wandering Eyes**

"In order to prevent those wandering eyes during tests, I invested \$5.00 for a pair of mirrored sunglasses with a holographic smiling face on each lens. While the holograms smile away to help brighten the day, the students never know where I'm looking, so cheating is not an option. Even better though, I can actually review lessons or complete paperwork at my desk while wearing the glasses."

## **Relationships**

### **Good News Postcard**

"I send a GOOD NEWS postcard to each parent before our first parent teacher conference, detailing positive things about each student. This helps build a positive relationship."

## **Using Technology**

### **Organize With Overhead Transparencies**

"I have eight different classes in a two day cycle and sometimes found it a burden to manage make up work for absent students. Now I put work on overhead transparencies so I can hand the appropriate transparency to a student to copy when he/she returns from an absence. This way the

student gets the work without interrupting the rest of the class. Last year I stored all my transparency assignments in a notebook. Now, as I teach a particular topic, I can use some of my original assignments that I've revised to suit this year's classes. The transparency is very easy to erase and edit. I've also found that tests can be done in the same way with the added benefit of saving on expensive photocopy paper."

## NEA Member Benefit of the Week:

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### **Effective Teaching in Diverse Classrooms**

Experience a self-paced online course that takes you through five phases of implementing a pedagogy, based on the CREDE (Center for Research on Education and Diversity) standards. This award-winning program incorporates extensive video footage throughout that lets you see the pedagogy in action.

*Cost: \$69.00. Length: 10 hours.*

*Graduate credit available.\**

### **Differentiated Instruction for Successful Inclusion**

With its broad-based pedagogical focus, this course covers the topics of classroom management, assessment, curriculum mapping, instructional design, and intervention models. Featuring real-world classroom video clips as well as extensive downloadable text files available to extend your learning, the program provides numerous examples of how to put instructional theory into practice.

*Cost: \$69.00. Length: 17-20 hours.*

*Graduate credit available.\**

### **Conducting the Parent Conference**

An excellent program for both paraprofessionals and educators, this course provides a seven-step interview process for working with parents who seem defensive or difficult. Learn how to create an environment that strengthens the home-school connection and encourages student achievement through partnerships between school personnel and parents. Features excellent videos modeling the suggested behavior and multiple opportunities for application and reflection on the content.

*Cost: \$85.00. Length: 15 hours.*

*Graduate and CEU credit available.\**

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NEA Member Benefit Article of the Week:

## Ring in the New Year with Resolutions that Last

Date published: Tuesday, December 15, 2009

*By Amy Paturel*

As an educator, you're probably already goal-oriented. You create lesson plans, help students achieve set objectives and ultimately see results with their test scores. What if you approached your personal life the same way—by creating your personal to-do list for 2010? Sure, resolutions can be tough to implement (especially when they're not specific), but they also offer a new beginning.

“When a new year comes, any bad habits or unfortunate setbacks seem to be erased and the slate is clean once again,” says Christine Gerbstadt, M.D., R.D., spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association based in Sarasota, Florida. So with your clean slate and the New Year clock officially ticking, here are some resolution ideas for living life more fully in 2010.

**1. Create a To-Do List for 2010.** You probably already have a daily list of activities and tasks—things you need to do to keep your life on track. Why not create a list of to-dos for 2010?

“Having clear-cut and authentic goals is one of the hallmarks of a happy person,” says Caroline Miller, MAPP, positive psychology and goal-setting specialist and author of several books, including *Creating Your Best Life: The Ultimate Life List Guide* (Sterling, January 2009). “You should always have your own list to turn to, live by and be inspired by if you are going to make the most of the time allotted to you in this life.” The first step: Create goals that are meaningful to you. “Everyone has a set of unique dreams locked inside of them, and letting them out into a safe environment is often the first and most important step towards being successful,” says Miller. So whether you want to go skydiving or run the 50-yard dash, get it down on paper, post it on your bulletin board for inspiration and try to make it happen before the year is out.

**2. Meditation.** Since you spend most of your time in a noisy classroom bustling with activity, carving out just 10 minutes of quiet time each day can be just what you need to recharge your day. “Whether you call it meditation, quiet time, reflection, prayer or any other name, taking time out to recharge allows a person to focus, re-center and gain endocrine and neurochemical benefits that improve blood pressure, immunity, cortisol regulation and well-being,” says Gerbstadt. Hate to meditate? Listen to a guided imagery CD just before bed. Guided imagery takes your mind on a mini-vacation so your body can experience the benefits. Even as little as 10 minutes of imagery can lower blood pressure, ease muscle tension, improve heart health, release concerns and boost the immune system—all while you’re snoozing through the CD track.

**3. Exercise.** Amongst running errands, attending late night meetings and trying to unwind after a stressful workday, finding time to exercise can be quite a challenge. But this news might help get you moving: Experts claim that being unfit is as great a health risk as smoking cigarettes. Regular exercise has been shown to help prevent major disease, enhance health and release feel good neurotransmitters in the brain that can improve your mood. We’re not suggesting that you implement a rigorous regime complete with 2 workouts a day, 5 days a week. We’re just encouraging you to find ways to incorporate activity into your day by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking farther away from the grocery store entrance and hoofing it to the corner store.

**4. Boost fruit and vegetable intake.** We all know fruits and vegetables are good for us, and yet most of us aren’t getting enough. “Teachers face an army of germs every day and they need to fight back with the strongest immunity possible,” says Gerbstadt—and that strong defense comes from eating fruits and vegetables. This year we challenge you to strive for 10 servings a day. Eating a sandwich? Load it up with romaine, tomatoes, onion and avocado, along with your turkey or roast beef. Making a casserole or some pasta? Throw some spinach or broccoli into the recipe. Craving a snack? Buy ready-to-eat produce in plastic containers or bags and keep it on hand, place a basket of fruit on your desk, or you can even make your own vegetable smoothies,

suggests Gerbstadt. Just don't drink them out of a can. "The point is to see the real thing in your blender or juicer before you turn on the switch."

**5. Make time for play.** In today's time-strapped society, it can be tough to find time for R&R, much less really playing the way school kids do. "Play is highly correlated with happiness," says Miller. "The teacher who doesn't play isn't going to be able to help the children play—there has to be some kind of role-modeling." Her suggestion: Make play part of your every day routine—like brushing your teeth. And while you're playing, make sure to laugh. Studies show that people who laugh a lot are better equipped to handle stressful life events. So go to a comedy club, see a funny movie or spend time with someone who makes you laugh. Life's a whole lot sweeter when you're having fun!

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