

## WEEK 25

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**

#### **Vacation Reports**

"After long vacation breaks, I hand out large post-it notes to my students and they write down something they did and where they went over the vacation. I draw a long line with hills and flatlands. Then I have students post their 'notes' to the 'map,' and we find out who traveled the farthest and what they did. I establish two far away places I suspect students visited -- for me it's Mexico because I teach Spanish -- so students can fill in between. Some illustrate their drawings beside the note with an identifying landmark. Then we share orally. This activity can work in the primary as well as secondary language, ESL classes, and as a social studies sponge."

### **Content**

#### **Silent Reading Baskets**

"My students used to waste a lot of their silent reading time picking out their books so I purchased a plastic basket for each student. When my students arrive in the morning, it is their job to pick out silent reading

books before the day begins. They place the book in their basket that stays in their cubby until it's time to read. No more time wasted on picking out books! Their library books are also placed in these baskets, so it cuts down on library books being misplaced."

## **Getting Organized**

### **Color Coding Lesson Plans**

"I have found it helpful to color code my lesson plans which I prepare a week in advance. I use a yellow marker to highlight the unit, chapter and lesson headings as well as objectives and the core curriculum standards being emphasized that week. The lessons themselves are not color-coded, but as I complete each one I use an orange marker to show what has been completed. It keeps me on track and a substitute can see just where to begin a day's work."

## **Managing Your Classroom**

### **Changeable Seating Chart**

"I have a great tip for making a seating chart. In middle school, we have so many students whose seats and classes constantly change that I found this to be a big help. I laminate an 8 1/2" X 11" sheet of colored paper. I then set up the chart with removable labels with the students' names at the location of their desks. As their seats change, the labels can be easily moved to a new location on the chart. I also place this inside of a 3-ring sheet protector. I can then use an overhead marker to mark absences, incomplete work, or any other notations for the day over the student's name. This makes recording a simple end of the day task!"

## **Relationships**

### **Displaying Credentials**

"Lawyers do it. Doctors do it. Educators should do it! No, I'm not talking about making a lot of money! I'm talking about prominently displaying educational degrees and professional certificates. Displaying one's credentials will help you appear professional and legitimate. It's very impressive and reinforces to the public the amount of effort it takes to become a teacher and to maintain certification."

## Using Technology

### Annual Class Album

"At the beginning of each school year, I request a blank video tape to be sent to school along with the typical school supplies. Once a week, a parent volunteer videotapes each child reading a book of choice onto the child's personal tape for approximately three minutes. In addition, I take digital pictures of our activities throughout the year. I put these pictures to music and download them on all the children's tapes to be taken home on the last day of school. It's essentially a class album of their entire school year. The students love having their pictures taken and the parents enjoy having a window into their child's classroom. It's amazing to see how much each child grows and to rediscover all the activities that have been packed into one program."

### NEA Member Benefit of the Week:

To make sure you receive all the benefits you are entitled to as an NEA member, please add [NEA\\_Member\\_Benefits@NEAMemberBenefits.com](mailto:NEA_Member_Benefits@NEAMemberBenefits.com) to your address book. Thank you.

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NEA Member Benefit Article of the Week:

# Beat the Winter Break Cold

Date published: Thursday, December 10, 2009

*By Amy Paturel*

Americans contract a whopping 1 billion colds every year. And educators are especially susceptible since they're constantly exposed to sick kids, germs and end of semester stress. As soon as winter break starts, your immune system goes on vacation and you end up in bed.

“The period right before winter break is fraught with excessive work,” explains Amy Hendel, PA, health coach, medical expert and author of the forthcoming book *the Four Habits of Healthy Families*. “You’re staying up late, signing off on work that has to get done before the winter break and you’re not eating healthfully because you’re constantly on-the-go.”

But what if you could forgo the sniffing, coughing, stuffy head, fever stuff and get through the end of the semester—and winter break—unscathed? Experts claim that with a little rest and a lot of prep, you can give your immune system the juice it needs to stay well through the season. Here's how:

## **Sleep**

Extra rest allows you to focus all of your energy on boosting your immune system and staying healthy. Can't take off work right before the end of the semester? Try slowing down your regular activities. Rather than hitting all of the holiday parties, shopping until you drop and baking like you're Martha Stewart, try relaxing and reading a good novel. "Parties and holiday festivities can be stressful in themselves if they're done to excess," says Tom Houston, M.D., clinical professor of Family Medicine and Public Health at the Ohio State University. If you're worn out from holiday activities, your immune system takes a hit.

## **Eat**

The easiest way to boost the immune system is to load up on healthful foods—and fruits and vegetables are at the top of the list. "Color is an indicator of healthful phytonutrients, so it's important to eat a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables," says Hendel. Along with adding fruits and vegetables to your dietary equation, you might consider cutting out some of the sugar. Studies suggest that between 75 and 100 grams of refined sugar (about 2 12-ounce cans of soda) reduce the ability of white blood cells to engulf foreign bacteria by forty percent. Having trouble avoiding the buffet table? Drink more water. Not only will it curb your appetite, but drinking mostly clear liquids can also help flush out any toxins that are preying on your system.

## **Exercise**

"This is not the time of year to drop exercise," says Hendel. "Exercise boosts immunity, so you really need to get 30 minutes of brisk activity 6 days a week." You don't have to do all 30 minutes at once, but you do need to find an activity that gets your heart rate up. The theory: If you raise your core body temperature (through exercise) you might actually ward off viruses and bacteria (they don't do well in a warm environment). The caveat: You have to use the exercise advantage before you get sick. "If you're sick, your body has already raised its core temperature to fight off the cold and exercise could make it worse," says Hendel. What's more, too much exercise can negatively impact the immune system and result in more frequent illness.

## **Supplement**

Experts argue that it's best to get the vitamins and minerals we need from food. Unfortunately, a lot of people are skipping meals, eating on the run and missing out on vital nutrients. "Supplements can be helpful as long as they're not used in place of a good diet," says Julie Wood, M.D., family physician and medical director of Goppert-Trinity Family Care in Kansas City, Missouri. And while the jury is out on whether supplements like vitamin C and zinc can help prevent a cold, many experts argue that most people aren't getting the recommended amount of these nutrients at the start. Hendel recommends supplementing with 500 mg of vitamin C, but some experts argue that higher doses can more effectively stave off the cold. As for zinc, studies show that it can help reduce the duration of a cold by three or four days (try taking one zinc gluconate lozenge like Cold-EEZE every two hours when you feel a cold coming on).

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