

WEEK 4

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

Take It Apart Party

"I run an after school club for my students. I want to use this valuable time on academics, but also know it's important for students to get to know one another. So, once a month to have an after school gathering; this month we had a 'Take It Apart Party.' We collected broken small appliances and on the appointed day, we took them apart. We found the insides of various hair dryers are similar, toasters have springs all over the place, and gears are a wonder in old telephones and mixers. We had such a great time taking things apart that we got back together the next two days to nail our findings together into free form sculptures."

Content

Bedroom Maps

"In order to reinforce map skills, my students write a detailed description of their bedrooms including shapes, sizes, colors and directional relationships between objects in their rooms. After a few lessons on maps, keys and symbols the students create an aerial view map of their room. I display the bedroom maps on the bulletin board and include a zip lock bag with the children's descriptions in the middle. There are only numbers that I can identify on the descriptions so the students don't know who wrote them. During free time, the children can take out a description and try to match it to a map on the board. If the work was done accurately, the challenge shouldn't be too difficult."

Getting Organized

Missing Papers I

"My students are always losing handouts (homework sheets, school notices, skill pages). I always run off three extra copies of each handout and place them in an in-basket. I use the top of a gift box in a convenient spot. If my students can't find a handout at the end of the day, they check the box and don't bother me. I clean out the box about every two weeks. This is a life-saver since the end of the day is hectic enough without having to locate a missing paper."

Managing Your Classroom

Silent Noise

"Particularly useful at the start of the school year or on days near special events when students are talking during introductory instructions, I tell them they can keep talking, just without sound. It usually catches their attention quickly. Then I explain that when so many are talking all at once in the room, it just takes my words away. Trying to figure out the directives is hard when only my lips are moving and it usually gets the class quiet so that I can continue with directives."

Relationships

Scavenger Hunt at Open House

"Each year at the beginning of the year, my teaching partner and I put together a small scavenger hunt for the fourth graders to do at open house with their parents. This activity makes the students real excited about coming to the open house and showing off everything. It allows parents to see all the things you want them to see and really cuts down on those parents who want to turn open house into conference night. The first item on the list is for students to introduce their parents to the teacher and then we add about twelve other things like showing their science notebook, solving a problem, doing an estimation activity together, showing the science table, etc. If students complete the sheet, parents sign it and students return it the next morning, they receive a bonus point. It works for everyone!"

Using Technology

Weekly E-Mail Newsletter

"I e-mail newsletters to my students and their parents. At the beginning of the year, I collect the addresses of all those interested in receiving the newsletter. I send out a quick little newsletter about upcoming projects, tests, homework assignments and any other helpful information every week. Since I have everyone's address in a personal distribution list, all I have to do is hit the send button to communicate with the majority of my students and parents. The responses I have gotten are phenomenal. It has really opened up the communication lines. Parents are up to date with what's going on and feel comfortable asking questions via e-mail. They are very appreciative of the effort to get them involved at the high school level. My students are also able to send me e-mail with questions, suggestions and thank-you's."

NEA Member Benefit of the Week:

Did you know that September is Life Insurance Awareness Month (LIAM)? NEA Member Benefits is helping members understand their life insurance needs. Begin by taking the [Life Insurance IQ Quiz](#) which asks 10 questions to see how much you know about life insurance. After completing the quiz, NEA members can enter for a chance to win one of a hundred \$100 Visa gift cards we're giving away. See the [complete rules](#) for details.

Source: <http://www.neamb.com/home/liamflash.htm> and <http://www.neamb.com/home/liamrules.htm>