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Simplifying Best Practices to Support Educators

Summer Days Ahead, But Futures to Ponder

Educators, as you prepare to wrap up a busy and full year, do this: ....slow down, take a deep breath, reflect on your year. The end is near!!

Time for summer, a well-deserved break for both you and the learners you taught each and every day. Time to reflect, rejuvenate, appreciate all that transpired during another year hard at work in academia.

But, really, I know how it goes....you won't completely relax. You won't completely forget. Your mind will always be thinking of some small piece of work, the year ahead, the tasks that are coming, the kids you will teach in the year ahead and the challenges you will all face.

Can I give you one thing to kick around in your mind over the summer months? One thing we educators all truly know, but sometimes forget? And, will you promise me that when you return to the classroom in August, you will keep this written at the top of your lesson plan notebook?

- Take your time, take your time, take YOUR time....to really KNOW your kids. Their strengths, their weaknesses, their loves, their fears, their learning styles, their lives. Put the OVERWHELM off to the side, address it little by little, the work will always be there. Without really learning about your kids, how can you authentically and effectively teach them, anyway?

- REMEMBER, authentic means the learning needs to "mean something" to them and their lives. How can we do that unless we find the right way to teach them, only through an understanding of them as a child, not as a "student" in my class. Take a little time over the summer to really think about the learning in your classroom. What can you do to keep your learners' passion alive throughout the year? What can we do to show them that learning is important and worth their time?

Teach them to be curious about their world, build their imaginations, help them learn to persevere, have courage, be self-aware and adaptable. This CAN be done and needs to be done in every classroom, every year.

I know it takes work, and it takes time. It takes true commitment. But, the learning that happens in your classroom will go far beyond the walls in which you teach.

Use some time over the summer to ponder these things. In the fall, you will be ready for your students in a way you never knew you could be.

And, if you need a book to help you teach all these lessons, I have one in mind!
(Just check out Classroom Habitudes, by A. Meiers)

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Jen, I really LOVE this post! The line "Take your time, take your time, take YOUR time....to really KNOW your kids," is SO spot on! We often feel rushed to get through curriculum and basals that st times we forget that we teach STUDENTS, not material. I'm going to share this post with some colleagues as we meet to talk about what's important in reading instruction.

Thanks!!!
-Michelle TG

Posted by: Michelle TeGrootenhuis (Mrs TG) | 07/20/2009 at 02:30 PM

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