



Danny Brassell

Providing Superior Presentations that are
“Fun, Meaningful & Memorable”

dannybrassell.com

**Supplemental E-Notes
For Attendees of
SDESP’s Annual Conference
Mitchell, SD – May 5th, 2011**

Caffeine For The Soul!



Creating Readers for Life

Taking notes can be a real drag on learning. It is my hope that these notes contain the informational gems and tidbits that you found to be most useful during my session(s). If you require additional materials, please do not hesitate to email me at www.dannybrassell.com. Thank you so much for attending my presentation(s), and please keep me in mind if your school, district or organization ever needs a great speaker. My goal is to provide superior presentations that are “fun, meaningful and memorable.” Remember: *you* make a difference every day. Thank you for choosing to teach! –Danny ☺

Welcome

Welcome

This is the class –
Who wants to learn,
And read more books,
And make a better TOMORROW!

Bienvenidos

¿Quieres aprender? *Sí!*

¿Quieres aventura? *Sí!*

¿Quieres leer? *Sí!*

¿Qué tienen información? *Libros!*

¿Qué tienen fotos bonitas? *Libros!*

¿Qué tienen cuentos? *Libros!*

A Baker's Dozen of Lessons Learned from the Teaching Trenches

The Role of Inspiration

1. Good parenting is underrated.
2. Teachers make a difference.
3. Passion is powerful.
4. We become who we hang out with.

The Role of Perspiration

5. To each, his/her own.
6. Reading matters.
7. Some days *never* end.
8. flexibility + perseverance = results

The Role of Motivation

9. Seek out a "Mrs. Turner."
10. Your attitude makes/breaks you.
11. Have lots of tricks up your sleeve.
12. Games are good!
13. Tests are lame.

Shameless Self-Promotion

My presentations for the day rely heavily on information that can be found in my books and website (www.dannybrassell.com):

1. Brassell, D. (in press). *Bringing joy back into the classroom*. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education.
2. Brassell, D. (2010). *Dare to differentiate: Vocabulary strategies for all students (3rd ed.)*. Guilford Press: New York.
3. Brassell, D. (2009). *75+ reading strategies: Boost achievement and build a life-long love of reading*. Peterborough, NH: Crystal Springs.
4. Brassell, D. (2009). *A baker's dozen of lessons learned from the teaching trenches*. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education.
5. Brassell, D., & Rasinski, T.R. (2008). *Comprehension that works: Taking students beyond ordinary understanding to deep comprehension*. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education.
6. Brassell, D. (2007). *News flash! Newspaper activities to meet language-arts standards & differentiate instruction*. Peterborough, NH: Crystal Springs.
7. Brassell, D. (2006). *Readers for life: The ultimate reading fitness guide, grades K-8*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Dare to Differentiate: 50 Terrific Teacher Tricks

ENVIRONMENT

1. Create a supportive environment of respect environment (teacher-students, students-to-students).
2. Develop a sense of community.
3. Facilitate an environment where students feel safe to take risks.
4. Promote the development of a broad range of skills and interests, incorporating all senses.
5. Set-up physical classroom for student-centered instruction.
6. Provide purposeful materials and resources.
7. Have high expectations for ALL.

READINESS

8. Allow students to “show what they know” in a variety of ways.
9. Provide students with plenty of time to explore, understand and transfer learning to long-term memory.
10. Permit students time to revisit ideas and concepts in order to connect or extend them.
11. Ensure lessons are developmentally appropriate.
12. Tier activities to provide appropriate level of challenge.
13. Compact curriculum to provide enrichment and challenge.

INTEREST

14. Incorporate creativity.
15. Provide students real choices in what they learn, how they learn and how they demonstrate learning (flexible and varied).
16. Offer real-world challenges that are directly connected to the students’ lives.
17. Offer novel, unique and engaging activities to capture and sustain students’ attention.
18. Use multi-media/technology.

LEARNING PROFILE

19. Focus on students’ learning styles.
20. Emphasize brain-compatible instruction.
21. Recognize and honor cultural diversity.
22. Emphasize student strengths and develop ways to compensate for weaknesses so they do not inhibit what student can do.
23. Permit positive movement (many students learn better on their toes).

Dare to Differentiate: 50 Terrific Teacher Tricks (CONT.)

CONTENT

24. Present the curriculum through interdisciplinary “big ideas” versus disconnected small facts.
25. Plan before, during and after instruction.
26. Negotiate contracts to provide appropriate learning activities for students.
27. Challenge students (i + 1).
28. Create centers.
29. Co-develop standards with students.
30. Clearly state expectations (be specific about requirements).
31. Empower learners! Encourage students to help set and enforce norms.

PROCESS

32. Utilize active, hands-on learning.
33. Allow students to work collaboratively and independently (flexible grouping).
34. Make use of higher level thinking and questioning strategies.
35. Offer students plenty of time for reflection and goal setting.
36. Vary strategies.
37. Consider integrated curriculum, problem-based learning and service learning.
38. Balance teacher-chosen and teacher-directed activities with student-chosen and student-directed activities.
39. Help students understand group’s shared needs for success, to belong, to trust, the future, etc.
40. Monitor student progress constantly.
41. Aim high; scaffold weaknesses.
42. Teach for meaning; not rote.
43. Be flexible (with time, space, materials and groupings)!
44. Teach strategies explicitly so student has “easy way out” of tough spots.
45. Collaborate with parents, resource specialists, etc. It takes a village!

PRODUCT

46. Provide opportunities for projects, creativity, problems and challenges.
47. Focus on student growth.
48. Initiate student-maintained portfolios and assessments with varied and original products.
49. Support students in creating products for real events/audience through public displays and performances.
50. Emphasize quality of thought and expression vs. accuracy.

Eight Principles of a Differentiated Classroom

Principle #1

- The teacher is clear about what matters in the content area.

Principle #2

- The teacher understands, appreciates and builds upon student differences.

Principle #3

- Assessment and instruction are inseparable.

Principle #4

- All students participate in respectful work.

Principle #5

- Students and teachers collaborate in learning.

Principle #6

- The teacher adjusts content, process, and product in response to student readiness, interests, and learning styles.

Principle #7

- Goals of a differentiated classroom are maximum growth/continued success.

Principle #8

- Flexibility is the hallmark of a differentiated classroom.

Book Picks for Differentiating Instruction

Dryden, G., & Vos, J. (1999). *The learning revolution (2nd ed.)*. Rolling Hills Estates, CA: Jalmar Press.

- An invaluable resource, filled with wonderful inspirational quotes, challenging activities (e.g. visual puzzles, word puzzles, etc.) and cool examinations into how the brain retains information (e.g. learning how to count to ten in Japanese).

Gardner, H. (1993). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.

- The basis of multiple intelligence theory, this book is an absolute MUST for all teachers in the 21st century. A great example of how to theory put into practice.

Tomlinson, C. A. (1998). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms (2nd ed.)*. Arlington, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

- There is no differentiated instruction discussion without mention of Carol Ann Tomlinson. Bow to her, as she is the guru.

And just for kicks...

Phillips, K. (2006). *It's all about me: Personality quizzes for you and your friends*. Palo Alto, CA: Klutz.

- Many of the fun interactives that I used in my presentation (e.g. examining your thumbs to look at your level of confidence) come from this fantastic book, one of my favorites from 2006. Keep in mind that the book was written for teenage girls but includes a variety of activities that the handy teacher can adapt for use with boys, parents and colleagues.

Differentiation Songs

The Differentiation Diddy

(to the tune of "Do Wah Diddy Diddy," lyrics by Danny Brassell, © copyright 2007)

There I was just about to teach my class
Singin', "Do what I say. I'm the teacher. Yes, indeed."

Then my students looked at me en mass
Askin', "Do what you say? Are you kiddin'? We can't read."

They looked stressed (looked stressed) -
They looked bored (looked bored) -
They looked stressed. They looked bored...
They were not a happy hoard.

I had kids of all sizes. They were different, every one.
Singin', "do you want to teach a standard or me?"

They asked, "Why is school always work, and no fun?"
Sing this: "That is not the way that school has to be!"

I said, "Yes!" (said "yes") -
You're all right (all right) -
I said, "Yes!" You're all right...
Now our future's lookin' bright.

Our class is now happy, and we learn a lot more.
'Cuz we each are different, and we learn differently.

When others critique us, we just shut-our-door.
And we play. And we sing. And we think critically. YEAH!

Teachin' Has Got You!

(to the beat of "Waddlyacha," lyrics by Danny Brassell, © copyright 2007)

Teachin' has got you. Teachin' has got you.
What do you do? What do you do?
(repeat...and do not forget all the hand movements)

It's the craziest job. There's quite a lot to it.
I don't know how I'm gonna get though it.
I like the job. It's the job I like best.
I love teaching my students at school! *(faster)*

Differentiation Songs (CONT.)

The Newspaper Song

(to the tune of "The Facts of Life," lyrics by Danny Brassell, © copyright 2006)

You take the good. You take the bad. You take them both, and there you have: a newspaper. A newspaper.

There are sections for business reports, entertainment, news and sports. A newspaper. A newspaper.

It has everything! You can buy the car of your dreams! It has classifieds and movie times, stories showing local crimes.

You...you...You can share it with your friends, and learn the facts of life!

Web Resources

1. www.coolquiz.com: you HAVE to go to this site to check all of the wonderful activities designed to stimulate students' various problem-solving skills (using a variety of intelligences).
2. www.mindjet.com: this is the one that allows you to create awesome semantic maps (free subscription for the first 21 days).
3. www.inspiration.com: for grades K-5 it is known as "Kidspiration;" this software enables teachers to develop a number of wonderful graphic organizers to stimulate students' interests in various activities.
4. www.eduplace.com: for those who like the security of "paper-in-hand" worksheets, this site will save you hours you used to spend creating Venn diagrams, K-W-L charts, etc. from scratch.
5. www.internet4classrooms.com/di.htm: a fantastic site database of links to additional great sites for differentiating instruction.
6. www.lazyreaders.com: my FAVORITE website on the Internet (maybe it is because it is my website). Ranked #1 by Google under "book club recommendations," this site will expose you to a wide variety of books for all ages that do not take years to finish. Reading progress builds confidence!
7. drawapig.desktopcreatures.com: for those of you who enjoyed learning about your personality based on your drawing of a pig, check out this site to quiz your students (keep in mind that Danny altered some of the findings to accommodate teachers for this presentation).

Some Ways to Differentiate Content

Here are just a few ideas on how teachers can differentiate content for their students. For more thorough examples, please consult Carol Ann Tomlinson's works. I cannot recommend her writing strongly enough. ☺

- Reading Partners / Reading Buddies
- Choral Reading/Antiphonal Reading
- Flip Books
- Split Journals (Double Entry – Triple Entry)
- Books on Tape
- Highlights on Tape
- Digests/ "Cliff Notes"
- Notetaking Organizers
- Varied Texts
- Varied Supplementary Materials
- Highlighted Texts
- Think-Pair-Share/Preview-Midview-Postview
- Etc.

Some Ways to Differentiate Process

Here are just a few ideas on how teachers can differentiate process for their students. For more thorough examples, please consult Carol Ann Tomlinson's works. I cannot recommend her writing strongly enough. ☺

- Fun & Games
- RAFTs
- Cubing, Think Dots
- Choices (Intelligences)
- Centers
- Tiered lessons
- Contracts

Some Ways to Differentiate Product

Finally, here are just a few ideas on how teachers can differentiate product for their students. For more thorough examples, please consult Carol Ann Tomlinson's works. I cannot recommend her writing strongly enough. ☺

- Choices based on readiness, interest, and learning profile
- Clear expectations
- Timelines
- Agreements
- Product Guides
- Rubrics
- Evaluation

Quotes & Excerpts

Here are some quotes and excerpts I included in this presentation. Please keep in mind that the authors retain full copyright to their materials, so these materials cannot be reprinted without permission from the authors themselves. I have included these excerpts for educational purposes only:

- Whenever a teacher reaches out to an individual or small group to vary his or her teaching in order to create the best learning experience possible, that teacher is differentiating instruction.
 - Carol Ann Tomlinson
- To learn a particular concept, some children need days; some, ten minutes, but the typical lockstep school schedule ignores this fundamental fact.
 - Marilyn Hughes
- When a teacher tries to teach something to the entire class at the same time, chances are, one-third of the kids already know it; one-third will get it; and the remaining third won't. So two-thirds of the children are wasting their time.
 - Lilian Katz
- The biggest mistake of past centuries in teaching has been to treat all children as if they were variants of the same individual and thus to feel justified in teaching them all the same subjects in the same way.
 - Howard Gardner
- Remember jigsaw puzzles: they're much easier when you can see the whole picture first.
 - Gordon Dryden

Quotes & Excerpts (CONT.)

- Learning is most effective when it's fun.
 - Peter Kline
- The art of teaching is developing into the art of teaching children to teach themselves.
 - Helena H. Wallenberg and Michael S. Bogolea
- I keep six honest serving men,
they taught me all I knew:
Their names are What and Why and When
and How and Where and Who.
 - Rudyard Kipling, *The Elephant Child*
- If there were only one truth, you couldn't paint a hundred canvases on the same theme.
 - Pablo Picasso
- All children are born geniuses, and we spend the first six years of their lives degeniusing them.
 - Buckminster Fuller
- If there is anything we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves.
 - Carl Jung
- DO or DI: Chances are, you're already doing it.
 - Danny Brassell

If I Had My Child to Raise Over Again

by Diane Loomans, "Full Esteem Ahead"

If I had my child to raise all over again,
I'd finger paint more, and point the finger less.
I'd do less correcting, and more connecting.
I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes.
I would care to know less, and know to care more.
I'd take more hikes, and fly more kites.
I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.
I'd run through more fields, and gaze at more stars.
I'd do more hugging, and less tugging.
I would be firm less often, and affirm much more.
I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.
I'd teach less about the love of power,
And more about the power of love.

Thinking About Ongoing Assessment

Assessments ain't just tests. When differentiating instruction, you need to consider the students needs. The same can be said when assessing students' mastery of content. A number of product resources can be used to reveal the true "learning profile" of students. Here are some tips...

Student Data Sources

- Journal entry
- Short answer test
- Open response test
- Home learning
- Notebook
- Oral response
- Portfolio entry
- Exhibition
- Culminating product
- Question writing
- Problem solving

Teacher Data Mechanisms

- Anecdotal records
- Observation by checklist
- Skills checklist
- Class discussion
- Small group interaction
- Teacher – student conference
- Assessment stations
- Exit cards
- Problem posing
- Performance tasks and rubrics

Take Our Test!

to the tune of "Be Our Guest" from Disney's Beauty and the Beast; lyrics by Danny Brassell, © Copyright 1994

Take our test! Take our test! Put your name above the rest.
To the right you write the date there. Who would ask for any less?
Use a pencil - make it sharp. You are now ready to start.
Read directions very slowly, One by one, part by part.
You'll do great! You'll impress!
You are heads above the rest.
And remember you're the student who's the best.
You're the smartest one. Now come and have some fun.
Take our test! Take our test! Take our test!

** Danny shares all the movements with participants at the workshop, or you can check it out on youtube.com.*

Ten Secrets to Waking Up Lazy Readers

1. Interest drives reading.
2. Different strokes for different folks.
3. Technology is our friend.
4. Peers and parents matter.
5. Get comfortable.
6. Access counts.
7. Book Talks work.
8. Make instruction rich & engaging.
9. Good writers are good readers.
10. Reading should *always* be fun.

Goals

By the end of this session, we will have:

1. Discussed hurdles many struggling & reluctant readers face;
2. Reviewed ways to incorporate technology into our reading programs; and
3. Examined ten secrets to sparking an interest in reading for our struggling & reluctant readers.

E-mail additional inquiries via my website: www.dannybrassell.com

Turning Struggling Readers into Passionate Ones

Why don't people read? There are two reasons. First, there is a thing called "illiteracy," which means that they cannot read, and then there is a thing called "alliteracy," which means that they will not read. Both are paralyzing, but I argue in this workshop that there is no such thing as illiteracy. Rather, I believe that students exhibit different degrees of literacy. Struggling and reluctant readers are not illiterate, but they would benefit greatly from teachers' assistance. Therefore, this workshop aims to show teachers how to: utilize play in a way that encourages reading for fun; identify strategies that help struggling readers and motivate reluctant readers in their classrooms; and create an environment where students take pride in their classroom libraries.

What's the Problem?

Three ideas:

1. Today's alliteracy rate is alarming. Kids are choosing not to read.
2. Gerry Thomas ruined America (he invented the TV dinner)
3. *Time* magazine needs to do a better job of picking its "Person of the Year." Why not give it to Oprah Winfrey, J.K. Rowling or Dolly Parton? These three women have had a HUGE impact on reading.

1. Interest Drives Reading.

Riddle:

What was your favorite textbook as a child?

If a student has a spark (or better still, a fire), a curiosity about a topic, learning is more likely for that student.

- Carol Ann Tomlinson (2001)

Too many students view school like prison.

If there is anything we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves.

- Carl Jung

Teachers need to plant seeds in students' minds that blossom into a life-long passion for learning.

What does that mean?

Presentation matters

Pro-Choice: let kids choose whatever they want to read. As long as they are reading, they are in good hands.

It is only reading when we choose to do it for ourselves.

Make sure to buy books written by Will Hobbs, my seventh-grade reading teacher. Will is the author of several award-winning books, including *BearDance*, *The Maze*, *Jason's Gold* and the one I mentioned in my presentation, *Crossing the Wire*.

2. Different Strokes for Different Folks.

The biggest mistake of past centuries in teaching has been to treat all children as if they were variants of the same individual and thus to feel justified in teaching them all the same subjects in the same way.

- Howard Gardner

DO or DI: Chances are, you're already doing it.

- Danny Brassell

One size does not fit all!

Book Picks for Differentiating Instruction

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3. Technology Is Our Friend.

Virtual Fieldtrips

If your students cannot see the world, your job is to bring the world to your classroom! Take a virtual fieldtrip anywhere, like:

artsedge.kennedy-center.org: The Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.)

metmuseum.org: The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York City)

playmusic.org: discover the sounds of different orchestra pieces

Anchor Activities

- Anchor activities are on-going assignments that students can work on independently throughout a unit, a grading period, the semester, or longer.
- Anchor Activities provide meaningful work for students when they finish an assignment early, when they first enter class, or when they get “stumped.”
- They extend and tie into the content.
- They allow the teacher to work with other students. Here are some websites I use for cool anchor activities:

webquest.org: allows students to create incredible units of study.

scholastic.com: provides materials for students, teachers, parents, administrators and librarians (invaluable resource for putting all those players on the same page).

pbskids.org: all of the children’s shows on PBS have their own websites, easily linked from this great site.

Just for Boys

booksforboys.com: provides book recommendations for boys of all ages.

boysread.org: ditto.

guysread.com: ditto (this one is operated by children’s author Jon Scieszka).

Some Good Book Picks

acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown: The Children’s Literature Web Guide, a Canadian site with a wonderful database of recommended books.

ala.org: The American Library Association provides lots of great reading recommendations.

rif.org: Reading Is Fundamental provides reading lists that have been created by kids for kids.

hanswilhelm.com: children’s author who has made his out-of-print titles available for FREE downloads online.

lazyreaders.com: the absolute best site on the Internet (it’s mine), providing cool, short book recommendations for all ages.

Technically Speaking: Utilizing Effective Internet Resources

By the end of this session, we will have:

1. Examined how to utilize computers for instructional support;
2. Determined how to maximize Internet tools designed to assist students in literacy;
3. Reviewed Internet resources for teachers, students, parents and administrators; and
4. Discussed at least 100 excellent free resources available on the Internet.

The Starting Point

- My focus is always literacy.
- Good teachers differentiate instruction and accommodate all learners (ESL, special needs, etc.).
- Good teachers integrate content throughout their lessons.
- Technology should help us teach better; it should not be a burden.
- How can we use technology to help us teach better?

** Please note that these notes cover Danny's full-day technology training for K-12 teachers*

Did You Know?

One of my favorite Internet tools is YouTube.com, which host millions of videos, including a growing database of sample teacher lessons. One video that moved me in particular, <http://youtube.com/watch?v=GES3um1HYcM>, reveals a lot of interesting tidbits in under six minutes, including:

- The number of text messages sent each day exceeds the population of the planet.
- According to former Secretary of Education Richard Riley, the top ten jobs that will be in demand in 2010...did not exist in 2004.
- The U.S. is 20th in the world in broadband Internet penetration (Luxembourg recently passed us).
- Nintendo invested more than \$140 million in research and development in 2002 alone. The U.S. federal government spent less than half as much on innovation in education.
- One of every 8 couples married in 2007 met online.
- There are over 106 million registered users of MySpace (as of Sept. 2006). If MySpace were a country, it would be the 11th-largest in the world (between Japan and Mexico).

I. Tools for Teachers

How Can We Use the Internet in Teaching & Learning?

- Virtual library search engine
- Graphics
- Utility programs (e.g. gradebooks)
- Professional info (e.g. credential regulations, standards, grants, jobs, etc.)
- Document Retrieval (e.g. public domain books, poetry, song lyrics, etc.)
- Virtual fieldtrips
 1. www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org The Kennedy Center
 2. www.metmuseum.org/ The Metropolitan Museum of Art (NYC)
 3. www.playmusic.org teaches students instruments in orchestra
- Lesson plans
- Simulations & games

Portal Sites (Lesson Plans, etc.)

1. www.aolatschool.com lesson plans
2. www.marcopolo-education.org rated #1 by *Edutopia*
3. www.education-world.com lesson plans
4. www.teachervision.com lesson plans
5. www.teachnet.com lesson plans
6. www.teach-nology.com lesson plans (how to integrate technology into lessons)
7. www.teachercreated.com lesson plans
8. www.canteach.ca lesson plans (Canada)
9. www.lessonplanspage.com lesson plans
10. www.4teachers.org lesson plans
11. www.lessonplanz.com lesson plans
12. www.buildingrainbows.com/CA/ca.home.php lesson plans (broken down by grade)
13. www.about.com/education lesson plans (this site is on the rise)
14. www.edhelper.com lesson plans + units (with a \$19.95 annual fee for best features)
15. www.esl-lounge.com ESL lessons (if you need further ESL suggestions, email me)
16. www.kinderart.com arts-based lesson plans
17. www.hubbardscupboard.com wonderful kindergarten teacher personal site
18. <http://www.teachingheart.net/> AWESOME teacher personal site
19. www.educationindex.com Education Index (Weasel Coffee House Chatroom)
20. www.eduref.org Educator's Reference Desk (encyclopedia for teachers)

More Cool Stuff for Teachers

1. www.reacheverychild.com shows teacher resource links
2. <http://www.sitesforteachers.com/> shows most popular sites for teachers
3. <http://w.webring.com/hub?ring=teachersnet> teacher's links to favorite K-12 sites
4. <http://i.webring.com/hub?ring=teachkids> teacher's links to favorite elem. sites
5. <http://www.kididdles.com/mouseum/> full-text songs/nursery rhymes/lullabies
6. www.internet4classrooms.com great reproducibles (e.g. certificates, flashcards)
7. <http://www.ed.gov/free/index.html> gov't sites that offer free materials for teachers
8. www.stepstoliteracy.com teacher supply store (material ideas)
9. <http://edweb.sdsu.edu/courses/edtec670/Cardboard/Matrix.html> AWESOME games with accompanying standards-based lesson plans
10. www.cited.org Center for Implementing Technology in Education offers a number of free resources for educators
11. www.dominguezonline.csudh.edu CSUDH offers several free online courses
12. <http://ocw.mit.edu> MIT OpenCourseWare allows you free MIT course access
13. <http://searchlight.utexas.org> free teacher professional development resources

Help with Literacy

1. <http://www.alphadictionary.com/ww/goodwordjr/> great vocabulary games
2. www.edsitement.neh.gov shows curricular areas diff. gov. sites address
3. www.readwritethink.org expert-reviewed lessons
4. www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown great children's literature web guide
5. <http://www.eduscapes.com/ladders/> AWESOME links to materials for Caldecott & Newbery winners
6. www.ala.org lots of great recommended reading lists
7. www.cbcbooks.org more recommended reading lists
8. www.guysread.com recommended books for boys (sponsored by Jon Scieszka)
9. www.carolhurst.com summaries of all the books she has reviewed (1000s)
10. www.janbrett.com wonderful author site with useful teacher links
11. www.hanswilhelm.com Hans has placed the full text *and pictures* of over 100 of his out-of-print books on this site
12. www.lexile.com shows readability level of texts
13. www.us.penguinroup.com Mad Libs!
14. www.justriddlesandmore.com riddles and jokes
15. www.kids.mysterynet.com kid mysteries
16. www.funbrain.com/idioms kid games for learning idioms
17. www.bookends.org literacy non-profit
18. www.wonderofreading.org literacy non-profit
19. www.rif.org national literacy non-profit with recommended reading lists

Help with Math/Logic

1. www.aimsedu.org/puzzle/index.html puzzles
2. www.aplusmath.com downloadable flashcards
3. www.funbrain.com/cashreg money conversion game
4. www.greylabyrinth.com puzzles
5. www.enchantedmind.com puzzles/tangrams
6. www.mape.org.uk/activities great sorting games (e.g. fairy tales)
7. www.illuminations.nctm.org/ expert-reviewed lessons
8. www.c3.lanl.gov/mega-math/ math activities
9. www.themoneymammals.com economics for kids
10. <http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html> math sorting games
11. www.learner.org/teacherslab more math games
12. www.library.rider.edu/scholarly/rlackie/sci/ math & science explained for laypeople

Help with Science & Social Studies

1. <http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/eds/tools/> science resources
2. www.nsdsl.org science lessons
3. www.education.jlab.org science lessons (reviewed by teachers and kids)
4. www.funbrain.org/who great game (match inventor with what s/he invented)
5. www.games.funschool.com more science matching games
6. www.ology.amnh.org/ science taught by passionate experts
7. www.quest.nasa.gov/about/ #1 hits/day ever (Mars landing)
8. www.weather.com/ weather maps/patterns
9. www.congress.org write Congressional officials
10. www.digitalhistory.uh.edu history from multiple perspectives
11. www.econedlink.org/ great civics site
12. www.eyewitnesstohistory.com sort of like E.R. Murrow's "You Were There"
13. www.nationalatlas.gov atlas
14. www.usacitylink.com info about cities in America
15. www.sheppardsoftware.com place state in correct place on map
16. www.mapquest.com maps
17. www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions Indiana Jones adventures for kids

WebQuests

- WebQuests are internet-integrated assignments that require students to use online resources in solving a problem that is presented in a role-playing scenario. This portion of training will give you practice in:
 - Understanding the components of a WebQuest
 - Identifying models and samples for use with your classes
 - Creating WebQuests to complement your instructional program
 - Evaluating and adapting existing WebQuests for classroom use
- So let's get started:
 1. Let's understand WebQuest better by taking a look at a few in your content area and analyzing their parts. To accomplish this, you'll need to visit the Matrix using the following link and search for examples in your subject area and grade level: www.webquest.org/search.
 2. Use the two drop-down boxes to select your grade level and subject area, and then click the button labeled "Search Matrix."
 3. You should be presented with a list of WebQuests that other teachers have created in your subject area that they have used with their students. Read the summaries and click on any of them that seem interesting to you. What will appear next is that teacher's Webquest.
 4. This is a good opportunity to learn the parts and purpose of a WebQuest. First, you should notice that each project asks students to solve a problem of some sort using resources that the teacher has identified for them.
 5. Next, you will see that a teacher has constructed a scenario that places his or her students in roles that need to work together to create a specific product.
 6. Finally, the teacher should have conveyed the assessment standards that will be used to evaluate each groups output (usually in the form of a rubric).
 7. Use the attached pages to take notes on the six components (introduction, task, process, resources, evaluation, conclusion) that make up a WebQuest. Pay particular attention to how the teachers set-up the problem-solving scenario and how they direct their students to proceed in fulfilling the tasks that they've created for them (www.webquestcomponents.wikispaces.com).
- Did some of the sites seem "better" or more effective than others? Were the objectives clearer? Did the teacher state the student procedures more precisely? Was the assessment more closely aligned to the task? Etc.

II. Tools for Students

- Let's go to www.professorgarfield.wikispaces.com. Read about how Jim Davis has created a wonderful K-8 literacy site for students, and then follow the link to www.professorgarfield.org.
- Practice:
 1. Listening (Music Bot)
 2. Drawing (Art Bot)
 3. Phonics Games (Fishing with Phonics & Orson's Farm)
 4. Reading (Reading Ring)
 5. Writing (Comics Lab)
- Younger students benefit from audio websites, like www.storylineonline.net by BookPals & SAG.
- Listen to "Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch," read by H. Elizondo.
- Here are some more great educational websites for students...

Student Websites

1. <http://funschool.com/> lots of games (too many ads, though)
2. www.kidinfo.com/ homework help
3. www.ajkids.com kid search engine (kid-friendly sites)
4. www.factmonster.com kid search engine (kid-friendly sites)
5. www.sunsite.berkeley.edu/KidsClick! kid search engine (kid-friendly sites)
6. www.yahooligans.com kid search engine (kid-friendly sites)

III. Tools for Parents

- How Can We Use Computers to Enhance Communication with Parents, Students & Colleagues?
 1. E-mail
 2. Listservs
 3. Chatrooms
 4. Discussion Boards
- Parents/friend
- $24/7/365=8,760$ hours in a year
- $6/5/180=1,080$ hours in an average school year
- $8,760 - 1,080 = 7,680$ hours students are not with teachers
- translation: we need parents on our side

III. Tools for Parents

- Take 5 minutes to create a weekly bulletin for parents. Do not get too fancy; just use an MS Word document. If you'd like, you can tell parents about WebQuests and or the student tools we have discussed (esl-lab, storylineonline, pbskids, professorgarfield).
- Copy the text of your newsletter.
- Go to www.google.com. Most people just type in the box and ignore the words around the box like "Language Tools."
- Click "Language Tools" and paste your text in the box marked "Translate text."
- Choose a language from the language box below (there should be approximately a dozen languages that can be converted from English). Click "translate."
- To the right of your original text, you should see your English text translated into another language.
- Go to the area below marked "Translate a Web Page."
- Type in my favorite website, ww.lazyreaders.com, and choose a language to the right.
- Click "translate," and be impressed.
- Are ESL parents going to criticize your grammar or admire your gesture?
- Danny's law
- Note that most major search engines (e.g. AltaVista) offer free translation tools.

Wikis & Other Websites

- WikiSpaces includes a great online tutorial, so do not stress about remembering everything we talk about today.
- Let's go to www.wikispaces.com. Click on "Introducing...Your Space" under "WikiSpaces News." Then click on "tours," which is highlighted in green in the center of the page. The tutorial is only approximately 10 minutes, and includes:
 1. Introduction
 2. Personalize Your Space
 3. Files and Pictures
 4. Notification and RSS
 5. Personal Settings
- Look at all the useful tools we can create to help communicate with parents, as well as students, colleagues, etc.
- Here are some more cool websites for parents:
 1. <http://mothergoose.com/> Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes
 2. <http://readingrockets.org/> parent resources, recommended reading lists
 3. www.refdesk.com one of the best online encyclopedias
 4. www.answers.com answers to tons of questions

IV. Tools for Administrators

- The IRIS Center develops and provides online materials to faculty of pre-service school personnel and to professional development providers for in-service training with the intent of improving the learning of students with disabilities in inclusive settings.
- The IRIS website rocks! Some of the benefits include:
 - ✓ Broad variety of available materials
 - ✓ All materials are FREE!
 - ✓ Instructional strategies presented in IRIS materials are research-based
 - ✓ Tons of features (e.g., Web Resource Dictionary, Film Search Tool, Online Dictionary)

Let's check out IRIS: www.iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu. Play around with it, as it is a great professional development tool to help teachers and administrators meet the needs of all students.

Danny's Dirty Dozen

Finally, here are twelve of my favorite websites for teachers:

1. TechTrek: www.techtrekers.com (wonderful teacher resources)
2. WebQuest: www.webquest.org (teacher/Student created units)
3. Scholastic: www.scholastic.com (great resources for kids, teachers, parents, administrators)
4. PBS Kids: www.pbskids.org (great resources for teachers, kids, parents)
5. The Discovery Channel: www.discoveryschool.com (great resources, including the free word find puzzlemaker)
6. EdSelect: www.edselect.com (wonderful literacy links and thematic units)
7. Gateway to Education Materials (GEM): www.thegateway.org/ (TONS of lessons)
8. Storyline Online: www.storylineonline.net (celebrities read aloud award-winning books)
9. Professor Garfield: www.professorgarfield.com (great comic strip creator)
10. Starfall: www.starfall.com (free downloadable books/activities)
11. Jim Trelease's Website: www.trelease-on-reading.com (read aloud info)
12. The Lazy Readers' Club: www.lazyreaders.com (the BEST site on the web...great for cool, short book recommendations)

4. Peers & Parents Matter.

It is the 21st century. The term “parent” means different things in different households. Some children have one mommy, others have none and others have two; some children have a foster mommy, or they are being raised by an auntie or grandparent or older sibling. The point is that whoever the authority figure is at home, that is the student’s parent. You need that person on your side.

- Parents=friend
 1. $24/7/365=8760$ (hours in a day/days in a week/days in a year=hours in a year)
 2. $6/5/180=1080$
 3. $8760 - 1080=7680$
 4. Parents are with kids 7 times longer than teachers.
- Children whose families are involved in their education:
 1. have higher achievement levels
 2. exhibit more positive attitudes and behaviors; and
 3. have higher graduation/college enrollment rates.
- Teachers that encourage greater parent & community involvement:
 1. have higher morale
 2. receive higher ratings by parents;
 3. receive more support from parents; and
 4. their students outperform peers in other classrooms.
- Regular communication:
 1. keeps parents informed about curriculum goals & classroom activities; and
 2. reinforces the parents’ roles as partners in their children’s education.
- A good web resource for teachers and ESL parents?
 1. Google (all search engines, for that matter) has free translation tools when you click “Language Tools.” This enables teachers to send home parent communications in parents’ primary language.
 2. AltaVista’s “Babel Fish” (babelfish.altavista.com/) is one of my favorite translators, as it also allows anyone to translate entire web pages into different languages.
- Remind parents to play games with their children. Games are a great way of teaching a variety of skills, and they are essential in children’s language development.

Tips for Parents to Help Their Child Succeed in Reading

- Read aloud to your child every night for 10 minutes.
- Obtain a library card for your child and make frequent trips to the library to check-out books.
- Read for fun in front of your child. Talk about the books, articles and letters you read.
- Follow a written recipe and cook with your child.
- Eat dinner with your child and discuss your child's activities from the day.
- Point to signs, license plates and other written materials while out driving.
- Turn on the "closed-captioning" on your television.
- Reward your child with books, magazine subscriptions, etc.
- Show your child how to surf the Internet.
- Teach your child to put down uninteresting books.

If I Had My Child to Raise Over Again

by Diane Loomans, "Full Esteem Ahead"

If I had my child to raise all over again,
I'd finger paint more, and point the finger less.
I'd do less correcting, and more connecting.
I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes.
I would care to know less, and know to care more.
I'd take more hikes, and fly more kites.
I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.
I'd run through more fields, and gaze at more stars.
I'd do more hugging, and less tugging.
I would be firm less often, and affirm much more.
I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.
I'd teach less about the love of power,
And more about the power of love.

Including Parents/Volunteers in Your Classroom

- Celebrity Readers
- Halloween Assembly Line
- Home Depot Sheet Rock
- The Share Our Strength System
- Workshop suggestions
- Language assistance
- Ask for Parent Input constantly
- Things to Remember
 1. We each have a unique contribution to make.
 2. Our involvement will vary over time as the demands of our life shift or we acquire new skills.
 3. When choosing what role to play, consider what will most benefit your child, your family, your classroom.

Effective Parent Communication Tools

my second year

- 7 calls/night
- 3:1
- 1 walk home/day
- 1 homework pact/every Monday
- 1 "invited" presentation/last Tuesday of month
- 1 guest reader/every Wednesday
- 1 newsletter/every Thursday
- 1 parents' meeting/every other Friday
- Crazy? 0 discipline problems
- good tricks?
 1. the board by the door
 2. student-led conferences
 3. the letter you can't read
 4. Post-it motivation
 5. Parent tapes
- Now Websites/Email

Tools That Support Children's Progress, Particularly in Reading

- Reward Students with Reading Time
- Get Students Library Cards
- Closed-Captioning on TV
- Get Students on Junk Mail Lists

Ten Ways Parents Can Help Their Children Become Better Readers

- #1: Eat dinner with your children and discuss *their* days.
- #2: Eat dinner with your children and discuss *your* day.
- #3: Encourage your children to think about events.
- #4: *Read aloud* to your children.
- #5: Provide your children with writing materials.
- #6: Encourage your children to watch TV programs that have educational value.
- #7: Monitor how much TV your children watch.
 - Go OUTSIDE
- #8: Monitor your children's school performance.
- #9: Encourage your children to read independently.
 - guns or butter?
 - Air Jordans or books?
- #10: Continue your personal involvement in your children's growth as readers.

Increasing Parent & Community Involvement

One Hour a Week

The Six-Blocks Program

** taken from my book "Readers for Life: The Ultimate Reading Fitness Guide, Grades K-8" (Heinemann, 2006)*

Talk with your student	Talk	Picture Read
Read Aloud	Partner Read	Writing/ Games

I designed a simple program for parents, community volunteers and older siblings/peers to use when working with students for one hour a week. Each box represents 10 minutes, and the order is purely suggested. Some boxes may take longer. As students' attention spans tend to wander, I advise volunteers never to spend more than 20 minutes on any one activity.

I have found that with a little guidance and limited training, anyone can learn how to utilize basic literacy strategies to assist struggling and reluctant readers. This component of any reading program is usually most effective because it encourages one-to-one interaction (I have often trained upper elementary and middle school students to work with lower elementary school students).

A more detailed explanation of each component ensues.

Six Blocks Program, 1: Talk with Your Student

DIRECTIONS: Get to know students by asking them about themselves (and telling them about yourself). You can make notes in the boxes below or allow students to write/draw answers. The point of this activity is: (a) to make students feel more comfortable with you and (b) to learn about students' interests so you may find appropriate reading materials.

WHO DO YOU LIVE WITH?	HOBBIES
FAVORITE FOOD	FAVORITE SUBJECTS
IF YOU COULD GO ANYWHERE, WHERE WOULD YOU GO?	FAVORITE BOOK
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?	OTHER INTERESTING THINGS ABOUT YOU

Six Blocks Program, 2: Book Talk

- Pick out a variety of books (your local children's librarian can help you select 15-20 unique titles).
- "Sell" the books without giving everything away. You are like a waiter trying to unload every last item by making them all sound enticing.
- Make sure all of your books are enticing. When you come across a "clunker," tell your student.
- If you speak students' primary language, find some reading materials in that language so they can practice in English *AND* their primary language.

Six Blocks Program, 3: Picture Read

- Select a cool book with pictures that tell the story (again, you can ask your local children's librarian for suggestions).
- Share the book with your student. Ask them to look at the pictures and tell you what is going on. Do not read the words.
- Ask "pointed" questions so that your student describes specific items you want them to observe.
- Review what student has observed, and read the story. Now read the words.

Six Blocks Program, 4: Read Aloud

- Reading aloud to children is the single-greatest thing you can do to enhance a child's literacy.
- Regardless of language, kids that are read aloud to perform better in reading than kids that are not read aloud to. Read aloud to students in English. Read aloud to students in their primary language.
- Ask questions.
- Act out what you read. In other words, make the story come to life.
- For more tips, buy Jim Trelease's fantastic book, *The Read Aloud Handbook*.

Six Blocks Program, 5: Partner Read

- Countdown (e.g. 1-2-3).
- Read aloud together. Partner points to words.
- Student signal (e.g. tap on shoulder). Student points to words and reads aloud solo.
- If student stumbles on a word, give student a chance to guess word (e.g. count to 5).
- Give clues (e.g. sounds like, rhymes with, look at picture, context, etc.).
- Partner signal. Resume reading aloud together.
- Repeat reading until student can read solo.

Six Blocks Program, 6: Writing/Games

Writing Ideas	Literacy Game Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍ Design a new book cover ✍ Draw your own pictures of sequence ✍ Create your own “environmental print” ✍ Write a sequel/different ending ✍ What would you have done? ✍ Create a song about the book ✍ Silly Sentences ✍ Make lists ✍ Write a skit ✍ Journal ✍ Create your own trading cards ✍ Translate text into another language ✍ Create a game based on book ✍ Poetry ✍ Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🍏 Scrabble 🍏 Word jumbles 🍏 Environmental print “words before your eyes” 🍏 Hang-person 🍏 Memory 🍏 Synonym Squeeze 🍏 Word banks 🍏 Crosswords 🍏 Word parts 🍏 Mad Libs 🍏 Sniglets 🍏 Idiom pictures 🍏 Sentence mobiles (cut out pictures & create sentence) 🍏 Boggle 🍏 Etc.

5. Get Comfortable.

“Let kids read where they want, when they want with whomever they want.”

– Danny Brassell

Great classroom libraries appeal to the...Senses (keep all senses in mind)

Physically Attractive Settings

A great classroom library has:

- 300-600 books
- Wide range of reading difficulty
- Permanent “core” collection and regularly replenished “revolving” collection
- Variety of genres
- New books with appealing covers
- Attractive, inviting setting

Children are more likely to visit classroom libraries and actively participate in them when they are physically attractive. A number of design features have been identified:

Partitions

Bookshelves or other barriers on at least two sides help to set the library apart, giving children a sense of privacy and providing a quiet, cozy setting for reading

Ample space

There should be room to accommodate about 4 or 5 children at a time

Comfortable furnishings

Pillows, carpeting, bean bag chairs, plants, and flowers all help to create a comfortable atmosphere for reading

Open-faced and traditional bookshelves

Open-faced bookshelves display the covers of the books, and naturally attract children to the library; traditional bookshelves, carts, and baskets hold multiple copies of books for children to read to each other

Literacy displays and props

Book posters from the public library, an author’s display, message center (for favorite reviews of books), listening corner, puppets, and flannel board encourage children to use the library in many different ways — for quiet reflection and reading, reenactments of stories, and conveying messages to one another

From: The importance of the classroom library by Susan B. Neuman

Available: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/paperbacks/articles.htm>

Building a Classroom Library From Scratch

I am teaching my first year of second grade in an inner-city school. There are no books, and the classroom stench could wake-up a person in a coma. Bullet holes and graffiti cover the windows. The tile floor is crumbling, and the roof leaks whenever it rains. Fortunately, it does not rain much, but the heater blasts constantly – even though it is 80 degrees outside. Room 12 looks as if it has not been cared for since the 1950s.

More than anything, I want my seven-year-old students to love school. I want them to think their classroom is cooler than Disneyland. They need a place that offers sanctuary from the crime-infested and trash-filled streets that encompass this neighborhood. I am a beginning teacher with very little money, but I decide that I am going to make a classroom library that will excite even my cynical principal.

Getting books. The first thing I ask my students to do is to start writing as many stories as they can think of so that we may put their books in our new library. After we create lots of books on our own, I walk to my local library and tell them about my classroom's predicament. The Friends of the Library gladly donates hundreds of outdated books and *National Geographic* magazines. They also take down my name and telephone number and tell me they will call me whenever they have leftover books to spare after a book sale. I give all of my friends empty boxes and ask them to collect used children's books at their offices from their co-workers.

The hand-written notes from my students go a long way, and we receive hundreds of used and new books this way. I call area newspapers and ask if they can help us, and each newspaper provides daily editions for each of my students at least twice a week. Finally, I create a list of telephone numbers for my students to call so that they may receive free catalogs in the mail. Soon, all of my students receive personalized mail on a daily basis from department stores, tour companies and sports teams. They excitedly tell me about all the mail they receive, and they often bring it to school to show off to one another.

Making a comfortable environment. In one dreary corner of the room, our class covers up the windows and walls with blue butcher paper. The kids draw and cut out various animals that they would see in the ocean, and they glue their animal pictures to the butcher paper. On the ceiling I have stapled a banner that says "Read With Me, Under the Sea." I have duct taped a carpet to the floor here. All I had to do was ask a local carpet store if they had any extra carpet, and they have provided us with carpet samples that all of us can use to sit on the floor individually, as well as a huge piece of carpet that the store had left over from a recent construction project.

Building a Classroom Library From Scratch (CONT.)

I drive to the Salvation Army, Goodwill and Thrift Store and ask them each if they could help my classroom. All provide me with old cushions, pillows and stuffed animals, and it only costs us a thank-you letter and an invitation to visit our classroom library. I ask the cafeteria workers if I can have old milk carton crates, and pretty soon our library corner has nearly 20 crates stacked as bookshelves. A couple of my students' fathers even donate some boards and cement blocks to act as additional shelves.

Reading time. Our favorite parts of the day are spent in the library. I try to read aloud three stories a day there: the students select a new book, I always read an easy picture book and we vote on a favorite passage from a chapter book. The students can lie on the carpet, sit with their buddies or stand up when I read to them. They ask questions, tell me which parts are their favorites and recommend books that they enjoy. After each read aloud, I provide students with about 10 minutes of time to find books and read on their own.

We have an old tape recorder and record player, and we play our favorite classical and jazz pieces during our free reading time. Some students read alone, others read with their buddies and some read in small groups or next to me. Maribel likes to read under a table with Michelle; Juanito likes to read aloud to stuffed animals. All of my students tell me their favorite part of our class is reading books and hanging out in our classroom library. We usually read after recess or lunch because it calms us down before returning to lessons.

Faith in others. Building our classroom library has renewed my faith in humankind. There are so many generous people out in the world that never take credit for anything and never have stories written about them. I have asked complete strangers for various classroom materials, and without hesitation I have received countless offerings of support. To my students, I explain that it is our responsibility to be kind and do good deeds since so many good deeds have been granted to us. To my fellow teachers, I encourage everyone to ask for assistance if they need it. Many teachers may feel under-appreciated, but this project has taught me that teachers continue to receive the respect and support of our communities. Our children benefit when we all work together.

From: Brassell, D. (2005). Building a classroom library from scratch. *Teaching K-8*, 35 (4), 56-57.

6. Access Counts.

1. **Environmental Print:** it does not matter what one's SES is. Point out to students and parents all the print that surrounds them in their communities.
2. **Make Time to Read:** teachers cannot control the home environments of their students, so it is essential they provide time for pleasure reading in their classrooms.
3. **Get Cool Things to Read:** it is great if a teacher provides students with plenty of access to books, but make sure the books are of interest to students.
4. **Different Reading Materials:** Some kids just don't like books. Make sure to provide a variety of reading materials, like magazines, newspapers, menus, brochures, comic books, trading cards...etc.
5. **Ghost Stories:** make sure to use a flashlight when you read ghost stories. I also prefer to recite them chorally with students (a lot of students find "strength in numbers").
6. **Rain Gutter Bookshelves:** purchase rain gutters and hinges from a hardware store and install them on your classroom walls. Rain gutters make great bookshelves that highlight book covers (thank you, Jim Trelease).
7. **Computers:** mark my words that computers are going to be big some day; allow students to use their computers to read as much as they want.

Great Classroom Libraries Provide...ACCESS.

got books?

Here are some ideas to ensure plenty of print in your classroom:

Newspapers

Most major newspapers have education representatives who can arrange for each of your students to receive free newspapers each week delivered to your school. In addition, newspaper education representatives usually provide packets of lesson-planning ideas & ways for teachers to incorporate newspapers into their curricula.

Service Organizations

Almost every community boasts a variety of service organizations, such as the Rotary Club, Optimists Club and Lions Club. Churches, temples and veterans' organizations like the American Legion are also good places to ask for book donations.

Great Classroom Libraries Provide...ACCESS. (CONT.)

Non-profits

A variety of national non-profit organizations specialize in providing books to teachers and students in need, including Reading Is Fundamental, First Book and Rolling Readers. There are many local agencies that also provide resources. For example, in Los Angeles, The Wonder of Reading (www.wonderofreading.org) creates school libraries, and BookEnds (www.bookends.org) donates books directly to teachers. Reading Is Fundamental (www.rif.org) operates nationally.

Bookstores

Major book chains offer up to 20 percent off on books for teachers, and many will donate damaged copies to teachers. Also great for promotional materials.

Thrift Stores/Salvation Army/Goodwill

These stores have always supplied me with a ton of reading materials for free or at greatly reduced prices when I described the lack of resources at my school. You'd also be surprised how far a handwritten thank-you card from your students can go with cementing long-term friendships with businesses.

Garage sales/businesses

I have learned that by identifying myself as a teacher, I almost always receive extra benefits. Most people at garage sales will donate or greatly reduce the price of books for teachers. I have also found that many businesses will donate materials they do not need. For example, since my students did not have a rug to read on, I asked various carpet stores for any leftover carpets or samples that they had. Not only did I receive enough carpeting for my classroom; I received enough to carpet every classroom at my school!

Post Office/AAA

Whenever a person moves and leaves no forwarding address, the post office holds that person's mail for a period of time. I once asked my local post office if they would give me any unclaimed magazines, and they provided me with hundreds. Additionally, many AAA offices (American Automobile Association) will donate used maps, pamphlets and tour booklets to classroom teachers. Think of local agencies that are willing to give documents to your classroom (e.g. one teacher asked her Congresswoman to donate copies of bills and press releases to her classroom, and the Congresswoman even came to the class to read to students).

Great Classroom Libraries Provide...ACCESS. (CONT.)

The Friends of the Library

Almost every library has a Friends of the Library (FOL), and most FOLs hold annual book sales. My father is a librarian, and I learned at an early age that the books that are not sold are often dumped because libraries do not have sufficient space for all materials. Most FOLs receive hundreds of *National Geographic* donations, and they are glad to pass these along to teachers.

Junk mail/college info

I used to get my students to telephone various companies and ask to be put on mailing lists. Soon, students were receiving loads of mail on a daily basis. Best of all, I called several universities and received a ton of free materials for my students to read.

Make Your Own

Hey – if you lack resources in students' primary language, what better way to interest them in books than to allow them to make their own books. After they write stories, songs, recipes, etc. in their own language, they can work with a buddy and translate the text. A great way to involve parents, too!

When seeking donations, remember two important things: (1) you need to ask and (2) have your class write a thank-you card for any donation. Don't let a lack of funding prevent you from upgrading your classroom library!

The Role of Rewards in Reading

- Candy, cookies or cash? NO!
- PRAISE: cheap & under-utilized
- Books
- Bookmarks, erasers, tablets, pencils, etc.
- Secret notes to parents
- Choice (giving students' responsibility)
- Blue bucks
- REMEMBER: Anything worth doing does not require bribery. Reading should be a reward, not a chore. ☺

7. Book Talks Work.

You have to SELL books to your students like “Crazy Eddie” on television. Expose your students to great books with weekly book talks. Books discussed during our session include:

Anansi, The Spider, Gerald McDermott

A Long Way from Chicago, Richard Peck

The Last Apprentice, Joseph Delaney

The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy & Other Stories, Tim Burton

Salt in His Shoes, Deloris Jordan

A Weed Is a Flower, Alik

Grandpa’s Teeth, Rod Clement

Mighty Jackie, Marissa Moss

Encyclopedia Prehistorica: Dinosaurs, Robert Sabuda & Matthew Reinhart

The Grapes of Math, Greg Tang

The Truth About Poop, Susan E. Goodman

Guinness Book of World Records, Norris McWhirter

Bat Boy Lives!, David Perel

The Rest of the Story, Paul Harvey

8. Make Instruction Rich & Engaging.

“If things seem under control, you’re just not going fast enough.”

- Mario Andretti

Every time we read aloud to a child or class, we’re giving a commercial for the pleasures of reading.

- Jim Trelease (author of *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, trelease-on-reading.com)

storylineonline.net: read-aloud website sponsored by the Screen Actors’ Guild that highlights celebrities reading aloud children’s books (all videos provide closed captioning, too).

132 Strategies for Teaching Reading

There are a plethora of ways to teach reading (I will try to only list interesting ways, as many boring methods have been endorsed by standardized, adopted reading programs). My suggestions are research-based, classroom-tested and teacher-approved. You can also find more detailed discussions of these and other strategies in the outstanding book *Readers for Life: The Ultimate Reading Fitness Guide* (Heinemann, 2006) or *75+ Reading Strategies: Boost Achievement and Build a Life-long Love of Reading* (Crystal Springs, 2009). – DB ☺

1. Make time to read.
2. Find a cool place to read.
3. Get cool things to read.
4. Get different types of items to read (books, magazines, menus, cereal boxes, etc.).
5. Freedom of choice (allow kids to select what they want to read).
6. Read aloud.
7. Be read aloud to.
8. Use context cues.
9. Teacher book talks (the salesperson technique)
10. Discuss readings with friends (literature circles).
11. Read in stereo (partner read).
12. Popcorn read, without the stress.
13. Picture read.
14. Repeat readings.
15. Find stories with characters who have names of your students.
16. Read easy books.
17. Facilitate cross-curricular themes.
18. Read tough books.
19. Read ghost stories with a flashlight.
20. *Read to a stuffed animal.*
21. Read with funny voices.
22. Make sounds for different characters when a story is read aloud.
23. Ask students to guess the ending.
24. *Ask students to write the sequel.*
25. Allow students to perform as different characters.
26. Dictate stories.
27. crosswords
28. Ask students to write their own books.
29. Create classroom big books.
30. Ask students to guess what story is about based on title and cover.
31. Use Big Books and follow text with finger.
32. No book reports or tests. Lots of questions.
33. *Reward students with reading time.*

132 Strategies for Teaching Reading (CONT.)

34. Create an awesome classroom library.
35. Read while students read.
36. Take students to the public library and make sure they all get library cards.
37. Ask parents to turn-on closed captioning on their televisions.
38. Scavenger Hunts!
39. Ask students to brainstorm as many things that they can think of that require reading. Whoever can think of the most gets a free book.
40. class labels
41. Call your local newspaper and ask for classroom editions so all students have newspapers to take home.
42. Song lyrics
43. Rain gutter bookshelves
44. *Celebrity readers*
45. got computers?
46. *Get students on junk mail lists.*
47. Ask students to write silly questions that they can put into a hat. As an end-of-day incentive, teacher or student draws a question and answers questions as wisely as possible.
48. Book baskets readily available at student desks so they can read when they finish activities early.
49. Environmental print
50. *Allow students to create their own sniglets*
51. analogies
52. idioms
53. Follow instructions/recipes
54. Teach clues (e.g. initial/final sound, rhymes with, look at picture)
55. Context cues
56. K-W-L Plus
57. Dictionaries
58. Mad Libs
59. Concentration
60. Hang-person
61. Scrabble-grams
62. Cliff drawings (sequence of events)
63. Coded messages
64. Speed reading for informational texts (headings, subheadings, highlighted words, chapter summaries)
65. Nursery rhymes/fairy tales
66. Find stories about your students' culture, environment, etc.
67. Author invitations (Hot Seat)
68. Favorite book character dress-up day
69. Readers' Theatre

132 Strategies for Teaching Reading (CONT.)

70. Guided Reading
71. Word jumbles
72. Shared Reading/Choral Reading
73. Songs and Chants
74. lots of different types of poems
75. Revisit, reflect, retell
76. Role play
77. Books on tape/listening centers
78. Book Buddies (reading volunteers)
79. Leap Frog
80. Reciprocal teaching (summarize, question, clarify, predict)
81. jokes & riddles
82. Venn diagrams
83. Comic books
84. Semantic webs/maps
85. Compare and contrast characters, stories, etc.
86. Keep a journal about what you're reading (learning log).
87. Share letters/messages/notes
88. Have students create book covers and bookmarks to promote books.
89. Student-made word cards.
90. Word walls (with words)
91. Morphemic analysis (create words with affixes and roots)
92. Class check-out system with student librarians
93. Bingo! (with words, characters, stories, etc.)
94. Sentence construction zone (pocket charts)
95. Magnetic letters, silly puddy, etc. (don't forget your kinesthetic learners)
96. Puppets/stuffed animals
97. Morning meeting/announcements
98. pen pals
99. Charades
100. dioramas
101. Pattern books
102. Student-created alphabet cards with pictures & realia
103. Classroom newsletters/cards/invitations
104. Ask students to create math word problems.
105. Classroom responsibilities (have students monitor attendance, group points, etc.).
106. Grocery lists/day planners
107. Student-created directions (e.g. "Treasure" maps)
108. Find words that (e.g. start with "j," have two syllables, rhyme with "can", etc.
109. Total physical response (e.g. clap the number of syllables in pumpkin, etc.)
110. word finds

132 Strategies for Teaching Reading (CONT.)

111. Class-generated list of why they like to read
112. *Slug Bug, and other games from the car*
113. word wheels (e.g. letters of alphabet + word endings like “-an”)
114. chapter books
115. student-created plays (e.g. ghost stories, folk tales, legends, etc.)
116. Show-and-Tell
117. Keep personal teacher-student diaries for all students.
118. student-maintained portfolios
119. Allow students to audiotape themselves reading stories.
120. “shine the spotlight” (using light from overhead projector, shine spotlight on students willing to announce their favorite parts of a story)
121. Résumés/job applications/mock interviews
122. Ask students to discuss how different characters would react to different situations (e.g. What if the Little Red Hen had help?)
123. 3-2-1 Strategy (3 things you learned, 2 interesting things, 1 question you still have)
124. Discuss concepts about print
125. Jigsaws
126. Modifying the text (e.g. put into your own words/Cliff Notes)
127. Classroom mailbox
128. *“The People’s Court”*
129. “Fishing for information” (wading pool and toy fishing poles)
130. Rewrite stories into students’ current environments (e.g. Little Red Riding Hood in Los Angeles)
131. “A million words” (keeping track of amount of text class reads)
132. “line” reading

9. Good Writers Are Good Readers.

professorgarfield.org: brought to you by Jim Davis, the creator of “Garfield,” this site boasts a number of wonderful activities for teachers to use with students. My favorite is the “Comic Strip Creator,” which allows students to create their own three-panel comic strips.

sixwordstories.net: blogging is all the rage in classrooms, but I like to teach my students to walk before they run. Get your students excited about writing by asking them to create stories that are ONLY six words long. This makes writing much more tolerable for students – the same reason I love to use poetry and newspapers with students.

Ideas for Creating a “Poetic” Classroom

1. Surrounded!: Put poems all around your classroom.
2. Chants: Chant poems about the weather & other subjects.
3. Treasure Hunts: Search for poems around the room and read with a partner.
4. Show & Share: Ask students to bring poems to class that they can share
5. Interactive Poetry Wall: Students write poems/add to others’ poems.
6. Post-It Poems: Small words for small post-its; great for onomatopoeia.

Poetic License: Using Poetry to Assist in Language Acquisition

Poetry can be effectively used to help students understand common homonyms:

Basic Rhymes

I walked over there, and saw that they’re there: a big group of Teddy bears. But when I went there, I saw kids on a chair, and they said that the Teddies were theirs.

Cinquain

(5 lines: 2-4-6-8-2 syllables on lines)

It’s here
where I best see
the giant redwood tree
that uses its branches to shade
all things.

Haiku

(3 lines: 5-7-5 syllables on lines)

My mother just sent
a beautiful perfume scent
that cost only three cents.

Acrostic

(first letter of each line spells out a word phrase or name)

A loud man
Laughed aloud
Outside
Until the Host Said
“Don’t laugh. It’s not allowed.”

Limerick

(5 lines, 2 rhymes with an a-a-b-b-a beat)

There once was a doctor named Lloyd.
Many people tried to avoid.
He had little patience
for most of his patients,
and that’s why he’s unemployed.

Poetry Centers

- Illustration Station
- Choral Reading Station
- Observation Station
- Beautiful Language Station
- Listening Station

Why Use Poetry?

- Poems are *succinct* - less intimidating than books.
- *Poetry allows us to share feelings, experiences and visions.*
- Poetry enables us to discover the power of words.
- *Poetry helps us expand our vocabularies.*
- Poetry allows us to look at details of the world in new ways.
- You can find a poem to match every mood.

Ideas for Sharing & Publishing Poetry

1. Anthologies: Take student poems and create a class anthology that everyone takes home.
2. Picture Books: Turn poems into picture books and donate to lower grades.
3. Sidewalk Poems: Write poems in chalk on sidewalks outside classroom/school.
4. Senior Shares: Take poems to senior center and perform for residents.
5. Coffee House Night: Turn classroom into a “coffeehouse” and invite parents to attend student poetry readings.
6. Spread the Word!: Take a neighborhood walk and post poems in key places throughout community.
7. Picture Perfect Poems: Find pictures that begin with a certain letter (alliteration) & create poems to present to community.
8. The Fashion Runway: Students distinguish poetry styles like fashion trends.
9. Association Chain: Quick improvisation that requires rhythm.

What Do You Know About Newspapers?

- *Did you know...a roll of newsprint is 10 miles long and weighs 2,650 pounds?*
- *Did you know...the base ingredient in newspaper ink is soybeans?*
- *Did you know...the white space between columns of print is called "the alley?"*
- *Did you know...seven out of ten teenagers ages 12-17 report they read a newspaper at least once a week, and 47 percent say the newspaper is their main source of news and information?*
- **FIND OUT MORE. GRAB A COPY OF MY BOOK *News Flash! Newspaper Activities to Meet Language-Arts Standards & Differentiate Instruction.***



Why Use Newspapers?

1. Newspapers contain practical vocabulary and are great tools for modeling clear, concise writing.
2. Newspapers are inexpensive.
3. Newspapers give *everyone* something to read: news, sports, entertainment, weather, comics, editorials, etc.
4. Newspapers can be cut, marked, clipped, pasted, filed and recycled...and no one will flip out.
5. Newspapers build good reading habits that will last a lifetime.
6. Newspapers bridge the gap between the classroom and the "real" world.
7. Newspapers are *extremely* flexible and adaptable to all curriculum areas and grade levels.
8. Newspapers deal in what's happening here and now, providing motivation for reading and discussion.
9. Newspapers are an adult medium that students of all ability levels can be *proud* to be seen reading.
10. Newspapers make learning *fun*!

What Makes a Good Newspaper Article?

- Is it informative?
- Is it interesting?
- Is it true?
- Is a picture necessary?

10. Reading Should *Always* Be Fun.

We Like Reading!

(clapping)

We like reading!

Yes, we do!

We like reading!

(point to others)

How 'bout you?

Literacy Shout

(hand on hips)

What about? What about? What about our literacy shout?

(mimic turning pages)

Read! Read! Read! Read!

(bounce around in a circle...like Santa's belly laugh)

Write, write, write, write, write, write, write, write!

Let's Start Reading

Let's (clap) –

Start reading!

(slide) R-E-A-D-I-N-G...

Let's (clap) –

Start reading!

Let's Go!

Let's go!

Let's go!

L-e-t-s g-o.

Let's

(clap-clap, clap-clap)

go!

(clap-clap, clap-clap)

Reading & Reading Comprehension

At its heart reading refers to the ability to comprehend or make meaning from written text. A dictionary definition of the word *read* states that it is the ability to examine and comprehend the meaning of written words. Comprehension, then, is at the heart of any conventional definition of reading.

The National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000) identified five essential components of reading:

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics
- Vocabulary development
- Fluency
- Comprehension

Motivation

What good is it teaching students *how* to read if they never *want* to read?
higher interest = better comprehension

Five Reading Essentials (according to Danny)

- Desire
- Choice
- Comfort
- Conversation
- Time to Read

What Do Proficient Readers Do?

Reading comprehension can be taught by showing children what proficient readers think about as they read, and teaching children to use those same strategies themselves. - Keene & Zimmerman (1998)

The Seven Habits of Proficient Readers

- Activating background knowledge
- Visualizing
- Questioning
- Inferring
- Determining importance
- Synthesizing
- "Fix-Ups" (Monitoring for meaning)

Types of Comprehension Instruction

Current studies demonstrate that when students experience explicit instruction of comprehension strategies, it improves their comprehension of new texts and topics. - Hiebert, et. al. (1998)

Seven Types of Instruction (as identified by NRP, 2000)

Graphic & Semantic Organizers

Question Answering

Question Generation

Text Structure

Summarization

Cooperative Learning

Comprehension Monitoring

Engaging Student Interest

Here are some ideas to engage your students' interest in reading:

Idea #1: Reading Necklaces

Students earn beads for each book read that form a chain they can take home at end of year.

Idea #2: Green Light: Go

Students create "traffic light" stickers that warn students if a book is worth going for, so-so or not worth it.

Idea #3: Read to a Stuffed Animal

Students get to teach their stuffed animals how to read better.

Idea #4: Australian Pete & Co.

Vary the way you read books to your students (act like others).

Idea #5: Campfire Interactive Reads

Create class stories that require audience participation.

Idea #6: California Jones

Ask students to describe "mystery objects" and determine what they are used for.

Engaging Student Interest (CONT.)

Idea #7: The Book Fairy

"Special" books placed on students' seats with personalized notes attached.

Idea #8: Mystery Reader

Send secret invitations to parents to come read to child's class.

Idea #9: Musical Chairs Reading

When music stops, read the book on chair you sit in.

Idea #10: Dueling Banjos

Recite a poem/short reading passage in a number of ways (e.g. echo, volume, opera, etc.).

Pre-Reading Comprehension Strategies

You Make the Call. As an "anticipation guide," give students a brief reading passage to capture students' interest in a topic. Try to take short passages from the text itself or texts that describe similar situations (e.g. newspaper and magazine articles). Make sure to choose something that is "catchy" that makes students eager to read the full text (the activity should work in the same way that a movie trailer builds anticipation to see a movie).

Idea Survey. Provide students with a checklist of statements before they read a passage, and ask students to mark an "X" beside the statements that they agree with. Three to five statements are usually enough (you can also allow students to look back on this survey and see if their opinions have changed after reading a selection).

Jackdaws. Also known as mini-museums, jackdaws can contain any number of items, from maps to food to music to jewelry to clothing to household appliance to photographs and more. When teachers create a jackdaw by collecting items, they have a concrete way to talk with students about a topic for which the students may not have much background knowledge or experience.

The Vinnie Barbarino Technique. Before reading the first section of any chapter, ask students to mentally or in writing turn a chapter heading, subheading or boldface term into a question, using "why, how, what, when, where, who?"

Pre-Reading Comprehension Strategies (CONT.)

Nostradamus. Ask students to make predictions everyday (e.g. what do you think is going to be on the lunch menu today? What do you think tomorrow's weather will be?) By emphasizing to students that predictions are just careful guesses, teachers can encourage students to use predictions as a useful strategy to help them better understand what they are reading (and students must not worry about making incorrect predictions, as predictions are simply educated guesses).

True or False. Before reading, ask students to look at different elements of a story (e.g. pictures, title, headings, cover, etc.) and ask themselves if they believe what they are going to read is based on imaginative or realistic events.

Lex I. Con. Also known as a "vocabulary self-collection strategy," introduce 5-7 target vocabulary words, and ask students to brainstorm the words' meanings in small groups. Often, students with various backgrounds can deduce what new words mean based on their prior experiences.

Multiplex. Show target vocabulary words in multiple contexts.

During Reading Comprehension Strategies

Audio-Assisted Reading. Provide students with a recording of the passage using a tape or computer recording of the passage. The reader receives the same assistance as in choral and paired reading, reading the text while simultaneously hearing a fluent rendering of the same passage.

Questioning the Author. Active reading involves students in creating dialogue with the author, striving to reformulate what the author is saying and then extending it. This involvement encourages students to concentrate and think about what they are reading. Students read a selection of text and answer questions such as: (1) what is the author trying to tell you?, (2) why is the author telling you that?; (3) does the author say it clearly?; (4) how could the author have said things more clearly?; and (5) what would you say instead?

Think Alouds. By vocalizing how they infer, how they reread, how they create visual images, how they check predictions, and how they adjust their reading rate to match purpose and material, teachers can model for students the value of self-talk as they read.

During Reading Comprehension Strategies (CONT.)

Check Me Out. As they read, students should monitor how much they understand. One way they can do this is by asking themselves questions like: Does this make sense? If it does not make sense, encourage students to use a fix-up strategy (e.g. reread, look back, read ahead, restate in your own words, etc.).

Stay On Target (a.k.a. Margin Notes). When students' thoughts drift away from the text, they need to become more active with the text by reading a paragraph at a time and writing in the margin items like the main idea, their inferences, whether they agree or disagree with a point the author makes, etc.

K.I.S.S. (Keep It Simple, Silly). To find the answers to their questions, encourage students to read only a short section, one paragraph to one page, depending on the difficulty of the text. For students to ever determine the "big idea" of what they are reading, they must first master putting together the little ideas.

Reader Breather. Also known as the "3-Minute Pause," encourage students to occasionally stop reading, reflect on concepts and ideas that have just been introduced, make connections to their prior background experiences and seek clarification.

Paint a Picture. Students must realize that reading is an active, cognitive process involving more than physically looking at the printed words. It involves looking at the meanings and ideas behind the words. As students read they visualize what they read.

Post-Reading Comprehension Website Resources

professorgarfield.org: brought to you by Jim Davis, the creator of "Garfield," this site boasts a number of wonderful activities for teachers to use with students. My favorite is the "Comic Strip Creator," which allows students to create their own three-panel comic strips.

sixwordstories.net: blogging is all the rage in classrooms, but I like to teach my students to walk before they run. Get your students excited about writing by asking them to create stories that are ONLY six words long. This makes writing much more tolerable for students – the same reason I love to use poetry and newspapers with students.

Post-Reading Comprehension Strategies

Post Reading Discussions. Through the process of talking about the passage with others, sharing your perspective and getting the perspective of others you are able to gain a deeper understanding of the passage. Whether this discussion is called literature discussion groups, book clubs, book bistros, etc., the aim of the activity is to give students an authentic forum and structure to discussing meaning. Students answer questions, and they also ask questions. Here are some assigned roles that can work well in getting started with literature discussion groups:

Discussion leader: Leads discussion/encourages participation.

Summarizer: Begins the discussion with a summary of the reading.

Text-to-Life Connector: Shares and discusses text-to-life connections found in the passage.

Text-to-Text Connector: Shares and discusses text-to-text connections.

Questioner: Finds and shares interesting and provocative questions that emerge from the passage.

Imagineer: Leads a discussion of interesting images in the passage.

Predictor: Leads discussion about upcoming events in the next section of the text.

Architect: Examines the structure of the passage; comments on and asks questions about the clarity and underlying structure of the text.

Sentence Finder/Word Wizard: Finds and leads discussion of interesting sentences and words found in the passage.

Critic: Provides overall evaluation of the passage – was it worth reading? Asks classmates to give a thumb up or thumbs down on the piece.

Text Transformations. Allow students to transform the text they have read into another written form or genre, e.g.:

Prequels and sequels. Tell the story that occurred before or after the original story.

Change the gender. What happens when the gender of the main characters changes?

Change the time. How does a story play out in a different time period?

Change the location. What happens when a story that originally occurs in the country, is transplanted to a city, beach, mall.

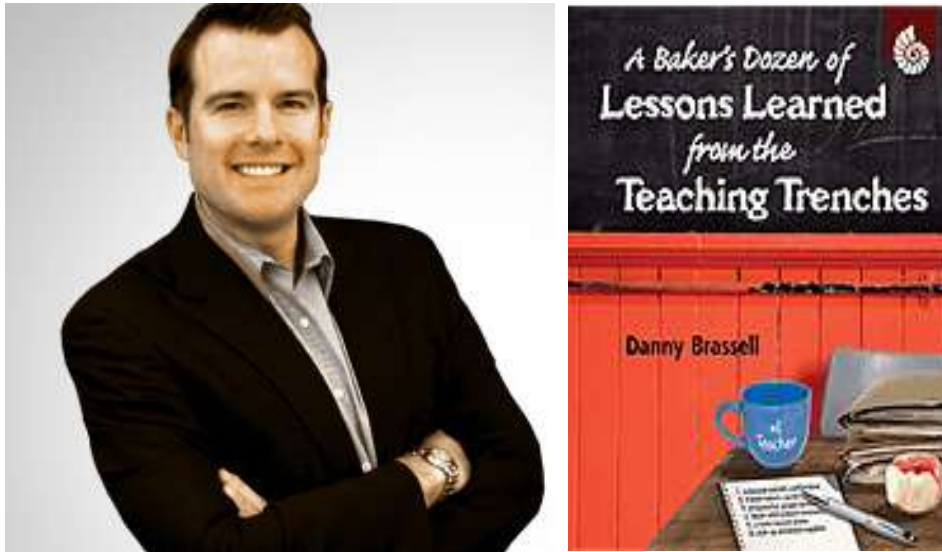
Alter the problem or key focus of the original story in some form. Change a description of a very bad day into the description of a great day.

Change the point of view. Try rewriting a story from another character's point of view. Write the story in the voice of that character.

Change the genre or text type. Rewrite a story as a script, the headline story in a newspaper article, an advice column, a radio commercial, a narrative poem, series of journal entries.

Bring Dr. Danny to Your School!

Please think of me for your next event, as I strive to present superior presentations that are “fun, meaningful and memorable.” You may contact me via my website at www.dannybrassell.com/contact. All the best! – Danny ☺



Meet Dr. Danny www.dannybrassell.com

Danny Brassell is a Professor in the Teacher Education Department at California State University-Dominguez Hills. He is an experienced classroom teacher who has worked with students ranging from preschoolers to rocket scientists, and he has published numerous articles and nine books, including *A Baker's Dozen of Lessons Learned from the Teaching Trenches* (Shell, 2009). A reformed reluctant reader now dedicated to creating passionate readers, he founded the Lazy Readers' Book Club, www.lazyreaders.com, Google's #1-ranked website for cool, short “book club recommendations” for all ages. Using humor, music and games, Dr. Brassell has motivated audiences across the country to create cultures in homes, schools and businesses that stimulate innovation through widespread reading.

To find out how you can book Danny to speak at your organization, call (310) 243-2436 or e-mail him via www.dannybrassell.com/contact.

Subscribe for free today to the Lazy Readers' Book Club, your reading time manager. Each month you will receive ten book recommendations for all ages, with no books over 250 pages. Also, books and other items purchased from Amazon.com through links from the lazy readers.com website will directly benefit BookEnds, a nonprofit organization devoted to increasing children's access to books and community service awareness.

Stimulating Workshops

My "Weapons of Mass Instruction" speaking engagements for teachers, administrators, parents and students range from 20-minute keynotes to two-day seminars, and I speak on a variety of topics for all ages. Here is a sampling of some of my most popular workshops:

1. 75 Reading Strategies in 75 Minutes

Discover 75 ways to get your students to read! Danny demonstrates fun activities you can use throughout the day to motivate and inspire your students to become more proficient readers. You'll learn how to transform your classroom into a literacy center. And, discover the secrets to helping all students develop a lifelong passion for reading.

2. Accelerating English Language Learners' Literacy Skills

Boost vocabulary. Improve reading skills. Accelerate language acquisition. Join Danny to discover helpful tips, valuable strategies and outstanding children's literature you can use to enhance the literacy skills of your English language learners. Plus, you'll explore how to promote greater cultural understanding in your classroom by building on the varied backgrounds of your students.

3. Sparking Students' Imaginations

Improve your students' problem-solving and creative thinking abilities. In this innovative session, Danny shares outstanding activities you can use to challenge your students to think outside, inside and all around the box. Best of all, you'll learn how to incorporate brain teasers, riddles and games into your daily routines to enhance your students' imaginations.

4. Motivation: Helping Students Achieve Success

Equip your students with a burning desire to learn! In this interactive session, you'll explore what motivates students to achieve success in the classroom. Danny will share ways to increase student productivity and build confidence. And, you'll learn how different motivational theories can help you to understand and diagnose motivational issues.

5. Boosting Literacy with Newspapers

Create a months worth of lessons from a newspaper! In this engaging session, Danny demonstrates dozens of ways you can use newspapers to meet language arts standards while making reading and writing enjoyable experiences for students. You'll explore how to create lessons with newspapers across all of the content areas. And, you'll learn how to incorporate newspapers into daily routines.

6. Nothing But Poetry!

Improve literacy skills with poetry! In this session, you'll learn dozens of poetry activities designed to enhance your students' literacy development. Plus, discover how to incorporate poetry into your daily lesson plans to captivate students' interest and create a passion for reading.

7. Songs, Games & Morning Meeting

Wake up your students with countless songs, games and activities! In this highly engaging session, you'll discover a wealth of super activities designed to motivate your students and get them excited about learning all day long. Best of all, you'll leave with a variety of ways to incorporate music and motion into your daily routine.

8. Turning Struggling and Reluctant Readers into Passionate Readers

Discover great ways to motivate your struggling and reluctant readers to read! Danny demonstrates strategies and books designed to help you increase interest in reading – both in school and at home. And, you'll explore dozens of titles in a variety of genres you can use in your classroom right away.

9. Vocabulary Strategies for All Students

Learn how to improve reading skills through stronger vocabulary. Join Danny to learn innovative ways to support vocabulary growth beyond a solid foundation of read-alouds and sustained silent reading time. You'll learn strategies that build on your students' prior knowledge. And, you'll explore a variety of engaging activities to support strong vocabulary.

10. Dare to Differentiate: 50 Terrific Teacher Tricks

Reinvigorate your passion for teaching! Join Danny in this eye-opening session to learn 50 terrific tricks successful teachers have used to stimulate students' interest in learning. You'll learn how to incorporate standards without sacrificing fun. And, leave with new songs, games and activities you can immediately put to use in your classroom.

11. Books for All Occasions: Creating Readers for Life

Finding just the right books to inspire students to read can be a challenge, but it does not have to be. Join Danny as he shares his insights on a wide range of books for every grade level that are sure to be a hit with all of your students. You'll leave with a list of popular titles plus scores of exciting strategies you can use to motivate every student to read.

12. Keep It Real! Jumpstarting Literacy with Nonfiction

Stimulate all students' interest in reading with outstanding nonfiction books! You'll learn how to find great books and ways to integrate them across the curriculum. Plus, Danny shares over 100 nonfiction titles you can use right away!

13. Comprehension That Works!

Comprehension is what reading is all about! Learn how to foster students' comprehension by showing them how to: focus on relevant information, interpret it and integrate it with what they already know. You'll learn how to create an instructional environment that promotes risk taking and involves students in a variety of real reading situations – and meets standards. Your students will learn to focus on meaning as thoughtful readers.

14. Boys and Books

Learn how to get even your most reluctant boy readers excited about books. Join Danny as he reviews popular titles and strategies, which he has used successfully with struggling and reluctant boy readers. You'll walk away from this engaging session with loads of practical, ready-to-use materials.

Invigorating Keynotes

I speak on a variety of topics for all ages. Make sure to contact me with your organization's specific needs:

1. A Baker's Dozen of Lessons Learned from the Teaching Trenches

It takes a special person to be a teacher. Every day presents new challenges, and our attitudes and expectations shape our success. Join Danny as he shares a fast-paced, humorous and motivational keynote designed to show you how you make a difference in the lives of your students. From teaching preschoolers to rocket scientists, Danny shares his own trials and tribulations in the classroom as well as why he loves to teach. You'll learn his secret to good teaching and leave feeling invigorated.

2. Bringing Back Joy Into the Classroom

Teachers are "kid-people." They do not teach for the pay or daily accolades from society; they teach because they care about kids. The standardized testing craze has terrified students and led many great teachers to quit. Come join Danny as he reminds teachers of their importance in the every day development of children. He'll remind you how to laugh, sing, dance and play in order to bring the joy back into your classroom.

3. DO or DI: Differentiating Instruction So All Students Succeed

Students watch our every move. The best teachers constantly set high expectations, attempt new things and never let the threat of embarrassment and failure stand in their way. Join Danny Brassell as he shares a fast-paced, humorous and inspirational keynote designed to share his observations of the traits the best teachers he has encountered over the years and how to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all your students. Train your students how to welcome new opportunities and challenges, recognize but not submit to fear and, above all else, to believe in themselves.

4. Waking Up Your Lazy Readers!

Get ready to move! Discover great ways to motivate your struggling and reluctant readers to read, as Danny demonstrates strategies and books designed to help you increase interest in reading – both in school and at home. Plus, learn about effective, FREE web-based tools you can use to enhance your students' reading attitudes and aptitudes.





Danny Brassell

Providing Superior Presentations that are
“Fun, Meaningful & Memorable”

dannybrassell.com

Testimonials

You probably do not know who I am, or what kind of speaker I may be. To assist you in your selection, I have included a sampling of testimonials from schools, businesses and organizations that I have received over the past two years:

“Danny Brassell has the unique ability to motivate and inspire while still delivering a meaningful educational message. He received rave reviews from our entire staff.”

*Dr. Wayne Babcanec, Superintendent
Norwalk City Schools
Norwalk, Ohio*

“I had so much fun I didn't realize how much I was learning. I was motivated, energized, humbled, and educated - sometimes within the space of a deep breath.”

*John Overturf, 5th & 6th Grade Math Teacher
Rayford Intermediate School
Aldine, Texas*

“The comments from the evaluations were outstanding. Personally, in my 41 years as an educator, I say Danny is one of the very best...something for every one: Pre-K–12th grade. He was super!”

*Bernice M. Wright, Executive Director of Instruction
Lee County School District
Bishopville, South Carolina*

“‘Look! It’s a bird, it’s a plane. No, it’s Super Dan!’ If you want to dazzle your staff with Danny’s amazing ability to engage an audience and provide the information they need to understand the process of reading, deliver tried and true instruction in their classrooms, and experience first hand the power of motivation in learning, then don’t hesitate to call on Danny Brassell. Danny has worked with our staffs on several occasions this year and we’ve been very pleased with his work.”

*Janice DiVincenzo, PreK-12 Literacy Coordinator
Waukegan Public Schools
Waukegan, Illinois*

“Dr. Danny's presentations were engaging, full of energy and fun...but most importantly they were immediately useful for the classroom teacher.”

*Richard P. Pierucci, Ed.D., Associate Superintendent
Norris School District
Bakersfield, California*

More Testimonials

“Danny’s enthusiasm was contagious and his personal experiences made the presentation informative and relevant. Some people may find it daunting to energize and motivate a large group of administrators after completing statewide testing, but Danny ‘knocked our socks off.’ We were ready for any challenge after listening to his inspiring presentation.”

*Robert L. Wagner, President
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals
Ocean City, Maryland*

“Nothing could have been better for our teachers to start the year off on a positive note. Danny engaged and motivated all of our teachers from pre-K to high school, first year to 30 year vets, with stories from the classroom and life. His energy and passion for literacy generated a standing ovation and is something our teachers still talk about.”

*Robert Schwartz, Chief Academic Officer
ICEF Public Schools
Los Angeles, California*

“...more than a workshop, more than a presentation – an educational event! Danny’s energy and enthusiasm are awe inspiring, and if you’re not inspired by what he has to say, you are in the wrong profession. Kids are first and foremost on his agenda and his ideas are powerful – a must see for all staff! Singing, dancing, and laughing – we can’t be talking about school, or can we? With Danny Brassell at the helm, absolutely! I have rarely been to a more engaging professional development opportunity where I could actually bring back useful ideas to help my struggling and reluctant readers. A ‘must see’ if he is in your area!”

*Jack Costello, Senior Literacy/ELA Staff Development Specialist
Questar III BOCES Office of School Improvement
Castleton, New York*

“Danny Brassell is an engaging and energetic presenter. His information and activities are research-based and applicable across all grade levels and content areas. There is never a dull moment during his workshops. Danny even had the high school coaches engaged and singing along with him during one activity on a hot, summer afternoon.”

*Marilyn Brown, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment
Taft High School
Taft, California*

“Danny Brassell was a breath of fresh air for Roswell, New Mexico! He put the twinkle back into our eye, the hope back into our hearts, and the smile back on our faces. He also gave us practical ideas for strategies that we can use right away to help our students be all they can be. We can't wait until he comes back!”

*Muriel DeGanahl, Director of Instruction
Roswell Independent School District
Roswell, New Mexico*

“I left feeling motivated, energized and renewed! Danny’s practical passion is infectious and something that ALL educators must experience! I am confident that I can make a difference in the lives of the students I teach. Thanks, Danny!”

*Melissa Baker, Title I Lead Extension Teacher
Bridge City Elementary School
Bridge City, Louisiana*