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Introduction

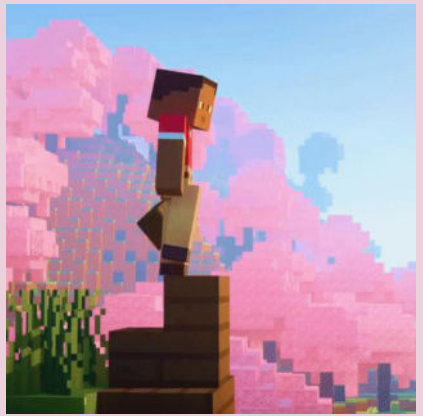
Hi! My name is Tracy and I am getting ready to embark on my 34th year of teaching in public schools. I taught for 30 years in Maryland. I retired and then moved to South Carolina, where I jumped right back in and am preparing for my 4th year here.

Back in March of 2020, when the pandemic hit, we began complete virtual teaching. I knew NOTHING. I wasn't "techy" at all. The following year, I was placed in grade 3. I was struggling with getting students to show up to Google Meet. Necessity breeds invention, right?

At that time, we were required to be “live” pretty much the entire day except for our lunch and planning time. It was quite a challenge. Many of you know first hand!

One day I was having a conversation with a young boy in my class who was habitually struggling to attend. I asked him what I could do to help him be more successful.
He said the slides were boring. I said, “I'll tell you what. If you show up to Google Meet every day this week, and stay for at least half the time, I will make WHATEVER kind of slides YOU want.” He said, “Anything?” I said, “If it’s appropriate for school. He said, “Even if it’s not school related?” I said, “Whatever topic you want.”

He picked Minecraft.



And right there, Student Suggested Morning Meetings were born.

Introduction

Reciprocal Teaching!

Here is my very first Bitmoji Room….for Chase.

The next day when all of the students saw the opening "room" they got very excited. I learned about Minecraft at Lunch during Google Meet, as he showed me how to play. The next thing you know, one of my other students who had a habit of not showing up, popped in. By the end of the month, I had between 80-100% of my 22 students logged in,
EVERY DAY, ALL THE TIME.

Norms

Ideally, these morning meetings should be exclusively for promoting student engagement. The goal is to get them in the door and stay engaged. It is important that students know that you are learning together. If you value what they are interested in outside of school, they will value what you need to teach them, and they will listen and be present. You will learn a lot in the process too. :)

It is very easy to revert back to creating "content" as I have done at times. However, it is important to OFTEN get their input. Constant surveys with general genres keep them thinking.

What new books are they reading? What new movies are out? What new video games are they playing? Where do they like to visit? What sports do they like to watch or play? What foods do they enjoy? WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO THEM?

Planning

The first week of school revolves around my classroom theme, and I keep returning to it throughout the year.

Toward the end of the first week, I tell the students that I have been watching for leaders who have put forth great effort.

I choose 5 (or however many days you have in your next week). I review the genres mentioned on slide 5 and tell them that they have earned the privilege of choosing the themes for the next week. THIS IS HUGE. :)

After they have chosen, I go into my bank and compile the next week.

If I don't have a topic they suggest, I make it.

Planning

One of the leaders is chosen to be the Spotlight Student. Activities for this are embedded into the SEL portions of each week's set.
On this board, I put their name and picture in the middle.

In the clips, the students all write compliment cards for the Spotlight Student, and clip them up there by the end of the week. Then the Spotlight student can take home the cards.

A separate lesson involves learning how to observe, and compliment others.

The Meeting

These are suggestions, not requirements, but in order to get the results you want, the meeting should be done DAILY with fidelity.

Meetings should take between 20-30 minutes, depending on how long you spend on the share out.

- **You can have individual share outs, or you can partner students up with an SEL partner and they can share with their partner. I usually alternate between these. I use Kagan Structures as well.**

(link in speaker notes)

- **The SEL lessons follow a program called Collaborative Classroom's Caring School Community (link in speaker notes), but you can use any SEL program…as long as there's something in there!**

The Meeting

I usually have the opening slide for each day up and open when they arrive. After announcements, students grab their SEL notebooks and come to the carpet. I just follow the slides in order from there. For the poll, I have them move. #1? One side of the room. #2? The other side of the room.
It's that easy. :)

If you have any questions, or you'd like to request a topic, feel free to email me at tkentgload@gmail.com

Remember, these are meant to be socially based, with the exception of holidays and projects.
If you'd like to discuss a content series, send me an email and I'll try my best!

Thank you so very much!! Tracy

www.linktr.ee/TracyDee3

If you enjoy my work and feel like buying me a sweet tea for my time :)

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