

LMSA Newsletter

Spotlight on... "Hooking" Your Students



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Teacher's Toolbox

Getting students motivated and interested in learning subject matter is important in ever curriculum area. Studies show that the more invested a child becomes in an activity from the beginning, the more he/she will retain of the lesson.

The challenge to teachers in this entertainment-oriented generation of students is how to make lessons fun and exciting to create student buy-in from bellringer to lesson closure. Creating stimulating "hooks" to begin a lesson has long been a focal point for teachers. Below are some tried and true suggestions that have increased student enthusiasm and attention in middle school classrooms.

Optical Illusions

Great for a lesson on point-of-view, or math lessons involving lines or shapes. Web recommendation:

www.123opticalillusions.com

Video

Video clips catch the eye of most middle school students and are helpful if humorous or thought-provoking. Web recommendations:

www.teachertube.com — features great power points in many subject areas as well as videos, pies, etc.

www.brainpop.com — some videos require paid membership, but many free resources to browse.

Pictures/Primary Sources

A simple, yet great, hook is to put students into cooperative learning groups and cut up a primary source picture relating to the lesson. Give each student a portion of the picture and have him/her record observations (people, places, objects, etc.) they notice on the back of the picture.

Then, have each student predict what the whole picture will be. Students then discuss with the group their observations/prediction. Final step is to have students make the picture (like a puzzle) and see if any predictions were correct. Web recommendations:

www.eduplace.com/ss/hmss/primary.html

www.archives.gov/exhibits/picturing_the_century/ - click on "Enter Site" & then "Galleries" to see photos from the U.S. this century.

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We're on the Web!

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www.lmsaonline.org

LMSA 2010 Conference

April 21-23, 2010

Hilton Lafayette

"Education"

"Seasoned With Middle School Spice"

Keynote Speaker: Mark McLeod

Are you doing something innovative, exciting, or interesting in your classroom or school? SURE YOU ARE!

Submit proposals online to LMSA by March 25, 2010 to share your ideas with other middle level professionals.



Grants, Awards, Opportunities

Most of us end up with no more than five or six people who remember us. Teachers have thousands of people who remember them for the rest of their lives. ~ Andy Rooney

LMSA Outstanding Teacher Award

Do you know an outstanding teacher? Someone who goes above and beyond the call of duty to ensure student success? If so, log onto www.lmsaonline.org to find out more about this award!

Recipient wins the following: 2011 LMSA conference registration/hotel accommodations, Classroom Performance System, Dell laptop, and a document camera.

Deadline to apply is March 26, 2010!

LMSA Scholarship

\$1000 scholarship will be awarded each year to a high school senior entering the field of education. Nomination forms can be found on the LMSA website.

Deadline to apply is April 9, 2010!

Young Heroes

LPB and the Rotary Club of Baton Rouge created the Louisiana Young Heroes Awards. This award honors students in grades 7-12 who have excelled in the classroom/community or who have shown great courage in overcoming adversity in their own lives.

Previous Young Heroes have overcome physical handicaps, raised money for charity, cared for family members, assisted hurricane victims, and even saved lives.

Nomination information/forms can be found at www.lpb.org/heroes.

Race to the Top (R2T) is a highly competitive federal competition that will award \$4.35 billion to a select group of states that have demonstrated their capacity and willingness to implement major reforms in their school systems. The funding is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). For more information, please visit the [Louisiana Dept of Education](http://www.louisiana.gov) website.

Recommended Reads

Editor's Choice

Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult (Fiction)



For more on the novel and school resources on bullying and school violence prevention, go to: <http://www.jodipicoult.com/nineteen-minutes.html>

Professional Reading

Readicide by Kelly Gallagher

Read-icide n: *The systematic killing of the love of reading, often exacerbated by the inane, mind-numbing practices found in schools.*

Leader Reads

6 Secrets of Change: What the Best Leaders Do to Help Their Organizations Survive and Thrive by Michael Fullan

Teacher's Toolbox... A Selection of Helpful Hints *for* Teachers, *from* Teachers

Writer's Un-Block

To help students who are struggling to come up with ideas for writing topics, label a shoebox as "Topic Tools". Fill the box with a timer/hourglass and some inspirational objects to help the student jot down thoughts. Student can set timer for 2-3 minutes & generate as many ideas as possible. Some box filler suggestions:

- Stress Ball
- Shaped Notepad
- Magazine/Pictures
- Inspiring Quotes
- Student Snapshots
- Blocks

Put It to Music

Oh, Composite!

(Sung to the tune of "Clementine")
Oh, composite, oh, composite,
Many factors do you have.
Many factors make composite.
Oh, composite, you're not prime!

Group Tips

If you find students off-task during group work, try keeping them on their toes. At the end of the task, have students share their birthdates with each other. Then, call on them to give the group's findings according to those dates. (Ex: Student with birthday closest to today's date will share information.)

End Alphabetical Discrimination

Instead of calling roll from top to bottom (alphabetically) try "waking up" your students by calling it in reverse. Not only is it an attention-getter, students who are usually last will appreciate the small gesture.

Recycle Milk Jugs/Caps

To create student/teacher friendly craft supply carriers, cut the top portion of a gallon milk jug off leaving the handle intact. You can then put markers, scissors, rulers, etc. in the jug for creative projects and supply mobility. Milk caps are also great to use when in need of small circles to trace (Ex: The inside of a Thinking Map Bubble Map). Wash caps & save in a Ziploc bag for many students to have the tracing template.



Some of us will do our jobs well and some will not, but we will all be judged on one thing: the result. – Vince Lombardi