

Lessons Learned from the Bunny Teacher

Monday, April 4, 2016

Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.
Benjamin Franklin



I just spent an exhilarating (and exhausting) week in New England collaborating and presenting with my friend Phyl T. Macomber, who has invented the very best method for teaching I have ever seen in my 40 years in Education. (You know that I love to learn about an write about ALL things Education!) Phyl has written a book The Power of T.H.E. P.A.C.T. (That stands for: Technology helps Easy and Practical Adapted Curriculum Teaching.) The book and the format are a 4-step framework for academics, life skills, and social language content, and the design is so simple that it is brilliant!

Students Learn About, then Read About, then Write About, and lastly, Talk About. The two things that make this format so great : it is consistent and predictable! Each module is color coded, and as one of Phyl's students with autism told her: "When I see the color, I know which part of my brain I need to use!" Students "get" the way it works, and all teachers know that students crave routine! Because students know (and embrace) the format, they focus more on the learning, and isn't that what we want students to do?

Those teachers using T.H.E. P.A.C.T. cover more information in shorter periods of time as well, and learners perform well. T.H.E. P.A.C.T. also aligns with all of the Common Core standards- seamlessly. Please allow me to share some stories from our fabulous week.

Phyl and I traveled to several schools in New Hampshire and Vermont, schools who are using T.H.E. P.A.C.T with much success. Phyl is an advisor for many districts, and I am proud and excited to share some news with you! Phyl and I are collaborating and partnering - T.H.E. P.A.C.T with GRADY GETS GLASSES. Many activities for GRADY are already in place in the iPACT- the app Phyl has created for T.H.E. P.A.C.T - available through Apple.

We were team teaching throughout the week- in special needs classrooms, regular ed classrooms, preschools, and in heterogeneous classrooms of regular ed students and challenged learners. I watched students become ready to learn in a matter of moments-

because they KNEW the format and the steps to learning. Because the format is consistent and predictable, students are actually more ready to learn. And every learner is involved- every time! I loved this line from a 3 year old in a preschool we visited. The child saw Phyl, walked over to the special rug, sat down, and said "First, we do Learn About!" (this was only Phyl's third session in this school, and the child already knew the routine). After a very fun spinner game for the Learn About section, (important vocabulary concepts) I presented the "Read About" section- with GRADY GETS GLASSES. Phyl and I team taught the Write About and Talk About modules- all in about 40 minutes, with 100% student involvement and great success. I observed the same kinds of success with students who had one or many learning challenges, and with bright second graders. (By the way, Phyl has four years of internationally based research to endorse her fabulous product. Check out her website)

Additionally, I attended some training sessions for T.H.E. P.A.C.T. with Phyl, and had the chance to see firsthand the way activities can be created, converted, and cloned. If only this technology would have existed when I was in the classroom! Teacher prep time is so minimal- and so easy! Here is the essence of what I learned this week- and I am so thrilled that GRADY GETS GLASSES is a part of such an innovative program! Take a look, and I feel sure you will want to visit her website. If you are a school administrator, T.H.E. P.A.C.T. may be just the tool you need to turn your school into a high-performing school.

What is T.H.E. P.A.C.T.?

- ✓ Research-Based 4-Step Teaching Framework
- ✓ Bridges the Gap Between General Education & Special Education
- ✓ Provides a Blueprint for Universal Design for Learning
- ✓ Systemizes Instruction for Learners & Teaching Staff
- ✓ Directly Aligned to the Common Core Standards

I encourage you to take a look at the website <http://aboutthepact.com/>



As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions. This post was written with the permission of Phyl Totaro Macomber.

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Visit Dede's webpage for complete details on her award-winning

book, *STUDENT TEACHING: THE INSIDE SCOOP FROM A MASTER TEACHER*. Many colleges have made the book required reading.

Signed copies are available www.dederittman.com Dede is also a national speaker on The Three C's for Classroom success: Confidence, communication, and Creativity; Avoiding Teacher burnout; and many other inspirational topics.

Contact Dede if you would like her speak to your faculty or student teachers. dederittman@gmail.com

I LOVE writing. And I love writing children's books- my newest passion. Although it will be a ton of work, I am looking forward to selling my books. Since I was a secondary teacher, I know that I have much to learn about elementary students, and I will have to follow my own advice and be my genuine self. However, I also know that I am passionate about helping kids who have to wear glasses, and that GRADY GETS GLASSES sends a positive message. I am willing to work hard and do all the things that also made me a successful teacher for 37 years. I remain inspired!

Here is the link to my 15 second Grady Gets Glasses commercial! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=881Z3e34X9s>

Teacher friends- let me know if you want me to read GRADY GETS GLASSES at your school. I am willing to come in to discuss the creative writing process, why writing is important, and personal fulfillment through writing, along with reading my book. I would appreciate the exposure, and I would make signed copies available for purchase in your classrooms following the reading. Please email me at dederittman@gmail.com . The website www.gradygetsglasses.com IS UP AND RUNNING!!!. Signed copies ARE available! Coloring books and Grady plush toys are ordered!

Please like Dede's new page -Grady Gets Glasses- for updates about her children's book. <https://www.facebook.com/gradygetsglasses?ref=hl>