



Reading Counts



Classroom Management Review

Emily Tatar

Team Leader – Livonia

Mid semester, tutors recommended that a workshop be held on managing students and any behavior problems that they might be encountering with their tutees. Although most of our settings are typically small groups or partners, students still easily get distracted and find a way to focus their attention on something other than math/reading. Chuck Smith led a discussion session based on this topic and had several helpful tips to managing students and their behavior.

- 1.) Try to focus more on teaching than being a friend to the students. Emphasize accomplishing goals and tasks rather than being nice and worrying about whether or not the students like you.
- 2.) Stick to your word when it comes to consequences. Once students see that you are serious about tutoring and are not willing to put up with negative/distracting behavior, they are more apt to be on their best behavior.
- 3.) Concentrate on positive behavior. Focusing on good actions, especially for students who are consistently distracted, will make the child feel like they are doing well and want to continue to do well.

Continued on page 4



Heather Chirico tutoring a group of students

Ask Rachel – Helpful Hints and Techniques

Rachel Tanchyk

Team Leader – Mt. Morris

Dear Rachel,

A couple of the students I tutor sometimes have trouble following along and get lost when we are reading together as an entire class. Do you have any suggestions?

Thanks,
Julie

Dear Julie,

You didn't specify what grade level you are working with, so I will indicate some modifications you could make at a lower versus a higher level. With kindergarteners, I have seen teachers top unsharpened pencils with cute rubber animals like zebras or lions, and have the kids use the fun tools to guide them, word by word or line by line through a story. If the student is at a higher level, you can always use Popsicle sticks, which are nice because they line right up with each line of text in your Basal reader or chapter book.

continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 **Classroom Management Review**
- 1 **Ask Rachel – Helpful Hints**
- 3 **Winter Math**
- 3 **Holiday Literacy Activities**
- 4 **Math Challenge**

Ask Rachel, *continued from page 1*

Dear Rachel,

I tutor in a kindergarten classroom and students still have trouble with handwriting. Their letters tend to “float” above dotted lines, and slant way below the solid line. How can I help students stay inside the lines?

Thank you,

Erika

Dear Erika,

I work in a kindergarten class as well, so I have seen many cases of slanting and floating letters. In reference to the large lined paper kindergarteners learn to write on, I like to draw clouds above the dotted lines, and grass below the dotted lines. I tell students that letters aren't meant to “fly in the sky” with the birds and the clouds, but they are meant to stay grounded. The picture has proven to be very effective with discouraging “floating” letters. To discourage slanting letters, one can put two rulers, one below and one above each solid line, so slanting past those boundaries is impossible.

Dear Rachel,

I am in charge of a guided reading group. Most of the time, they are assigned to read from their leveled readers, which the students aren't too thrilled by. Usually the kids just read, taking turns, paragraph by paragraph, which gets very boring. Is there anyway I could make the reading more interesting?

Thanks a lot,

Alyssa

Dear Alyssa,

One thing you can do during reading can be is to adopt a “catchphrase.” One catchphrase I've seen used is “popcorn.” One child reads for awhile and when they want to hand the role of reading to another person, they yell “popcorn,” and then the student's name. Another thing you can do is to have students stop reading anywhere they want to, for example, in the middle of a paragraph, or even in the middle of a sentence. That way, your students really have to make sure they are following along in the reading. The next student will then pick up where that student left off.

Dear Rachel,

I want to do something nice for my students before the holidays, and to let them know that I enjoyed working with them this semester. Any suggestions for something I can do?

Thank you,

Caroline

Dear Caroline,

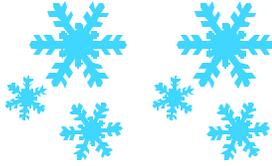
It is always nice to write a student a nice card. Make sure you personally address it to the student, it makes them feel special and valued when you are writing directly to them. Do not mention anything pertaining to a student's cultural and/or religious practices like “Merry Christmas.” Many schools are now outlawing such curriculum in schools during the holiday season, if you can believe it! If you want to say something about the holidays in your card, make it something generic like “Happy Holidays.”

Ideas and Activities

Winter Math!

Heather Chirico

Team Leader - Geneseo



~ Everyone loves snowmen! ~

Here's a fun activity to do with your students when its cold outside that will help them identify shapes.

Materials (per child):

- 2 Paper plates
- 1 yellow triangle (small)
- 5 black circles (small)
- 3 pipe cleaners
- Cotton Balls
- Scissors
- Glue
- Stapler

Directions:

- Give each child 2 paper plates and tell them to cut one large circle out of one of the plates.
- Staple the small circle to the top of the larger circle (to make a snowman's body and head)
- Have the children decorate their snowman - the triangle is the nose, two circles for the eyes, three circles for the buttons, one pipe cleaner for the mouth and two pipe cleaners for the arms.
- Finally they can decorate the whole snowman with cotton balls.
- On the back of the snowman, have them write all the shapes they see!



Winter Holiday Literacy Activities

Brandi Daniels

Team Leader - Dansville

Winter presents opportunities for numerous literacy activities! There are many activities to do even if your school does not celebrate the holidays in the classroom. Remember that if you decide to do holiday related activities you should represent all of the winter holidays so you do not exclude any of your students. For a webquest about winter holidays celebrated around the world visit

<http://www.sites4teachers.com/links/redirect.php?url=http://teachers.teach-nology.com/themes/holidays/hanuk/>

Observed from December 26 to January 1, Kwanzaa celebrates African traditions and values. The holiday focuses on the principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. You can explain Kwanzaa to your students and have them complete a related writing activity.

❖ **Kwanzaa Writing Activity:**

Kwanzaa is a time when families of African descent celebrate their heritage with special traditions and ceremonies. Have students write descriptions of special traditions or ceremonies they celebrate with their families.

❖ **Bookmarks:** Books are often given as gifts at Kwanzaa. You can print some bookmarks to color and give as gifts for your students at <http://www.billybear4kids.com/holidays/kwanzaa/bookmarks/set1.html>

❖ **Kwanzaa Placemats:** Have each child create an mkeka (em-kay-kah), a special place mat used during Kwanzaa ceremonies. An mkeka can be made from straw, ribbon, cloth, or paper, and it has three colors: black, red, and green. The stripes represent tradition, history, and the future.

<http://www.cstone.net/~bry-back/holidayfun/matt.html>

Continued on page 4

Holiday Literacy (Continued from page 3)

- ❁ **The Meaning of Kwanzaa Match-up:** Go to http://www.eduplace.com/monthlytheme/december/pdf/kwanzaa_xword.pdf for the Match Up Game and http://www.eduplace.com/monthlytheme/december/pdf/kwanzaa_xword_key.pdf for the Answer key

Another holiday celebrated during the winter months is Christmas. Christmas, celebrated on December 25th, is when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. There are many secular traditions associated with the holiday as well. Here are some Christmas related literacy activities to do with students of all ages.

- ❁ **Letters to Santa:** Students who celebrate Christmas enjoy writing letters to Santa. This is a great opportunity to get your students writing and teach them letter writing format.
- ❁ **Christmas Story Prompts:** Go to <http://www.abcteach.com/Christmas/prompts.htm> for some great Christmas story prompts to get your students writing. With younger students you could write a story as a group.
- ❁ **A Christmas Wish for the World:** If your students could have Santa and Rudolph bring a special Christmas present for the world, what would it be? Have students color these pictures. Then have them write (or write for them) a special Christmas wish for the world.
- ❁ **135 Ways to Say Merry Christmas:** **Acholi** - Mot ki Yomcing Botwo Me Mwaka Manyen **Adhola** - Wafayo Chamo Mbagá & Bothi Oro Manyeni **Aeka**- Keremisi jai be **Afrikaans** - Geseende Kerfees en 'n gelukkige nuwe jaar You can find 131 more ways to say Merry Christmas at http://www.sites4teachers.com/links/redirect.php?url=http://www.teach-nology.com/teachers/lesson_plans/holidays/christmas/

In the winter, many Jewish families celebrate the eight nights of Hanukkah. They give gifts, play games, eat traditional foods, and light the Hanukkah lights. Hanukkah tells the story of how a supply of oil that was supposed to last for one day kept a light burning for eight days. Some Hanukkah related literacy activities are:

- ❁ **Hanukkah Crossword Puzzle:** To find a great Hanukkah crossword puzzle, visit <http://www.sites4teachers.com/links/redirect.php?url=http://teachers.teach-nology.com/themes/holidays/hanuk/>
- ❁ **Hanukkah Story Books:** The Geneseo library has numerous story books about Hanukkah that you can share with your students. One great book to explain the holiday to your students is called The story of Hanukkah as retold by Amy Ehrlich.
- ❁ **Hanukkah Printables:** For a ton of Hanukkah print outs, such as word searches, games, and mazes visit <http://www.teacherplanet.com/resource/hanukkah.php>

A final winter related literacy activity that could be beneficial to the community as a whole is to write letters or make cards for our soldiers and/or elderly in nursing homes. This time of year can be especially difficult for both groups of people and a card or a note from a student can have a big impact.

Classroom Management (Continued from page 1)

- 4.) If the problem with a student is their lack of attention span, set time limits for goals to be met. For example, if the student starts a math problem and continually pauses to look around or daydream, challenge them by allowing 30 seconds or a minute to finish the problem they are working on.
- 5.) Take a physical break instead of just a mental break. Sometimes we might suggest to our tutees to take a break with a deep breath or some other method to re-focus their attention. Instead of doing this, it might be more engaging for us to have our tutees stand up and spin around 3 times or do 5 jumping jacks and then sit down and begin again. This is an attempt to stop and start with a fresh attention span ready to get things done.

Math Challenge

Heather Chirico –Team Leader Geneseo

Challenge students to put their addition skills to work as they fill in the missing numbers so each row, column, and diagonal adds up!

- The missing numbers are integers between 0 and 9.
- The numbers in each row add up to the number at the right of the row.
- The numbers in each column add up to the number at the bottom of the column.

The numbers in each diagonal line add up to the number to the right and above or below the diagonal.

				13
6				17
			1	11
8		0	3	13
7	2		4	22
24	18	9	12	17