

Nazarene Educators Worldwide



THE NEW

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To embrace, encourage, and empower through a network of Christian educators.



Nazarene Educators Worldwide
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CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE



Contagious Leadership By Lance Howard, Vice-President of Nazarene Educators Worldwide

Being a school leader can be a challenging assignment. The fate of the school hangs on your leadership skills, and your sense of awareness of this reality can be daunting. So, how you lead will be one key to the success of your school.

As a school leader, I have regularly told my staff that it is important for us to **cheerlead** to the destination versus **nag** to the destination. Our leadership style for staff and students will determine the type of climate and culture that your building exudes. This is a challenging reality and one that requires regular attention to both what and how we say things to our students, parents, and staff.

In a recent article from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (<http://www.ascd.org/publications/newsletters/education-update/sept16/vol58/num09/How-Your-Leadership-Is-Contagious.aspx>) this leadership reality is explored. The idea revolves around the concept of "you get what you give." If you are excited, encouraging, and focused, you will see more of this energy returned to you. However, we are all aware of leaders or individuals who exude the opposite. Their negative energy brings their oppressive spirit down on a school, grade level, or classroom like a dense fog.

So here's our challenge: set a goal to be a positive leader who displays characteristics that reflect both the joy of the Lord and the capability to raise the positive tide in your building/classroom. We can set a path for the school year that will bring encouragement to our peers or follow the path that leads to negativism and discouragement. To close this article and my review of the impact of leadership, let's quote some Robert Frost (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/resources/learning/core-poems/detail/44272>): "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I- I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

Are the Children "Life Ready"? Submitted by Melodee Simmons, Preschool Representative

We are in a new school year. The children are adjusting to the daily routines and getting to know their teachers and new friends. There is so much to look forward to in the coming year.

The children will be refining their fine motor skills for writing and cutting. They will be learning their ABC's and 123's, and refreshing their memories of colors and shapes. They will need all of this knowledge to get ready for their school careers. Many parents look at these activities as school readiness. Parents want their child to be academically ready for school. Often, they don't think of the more important aspects of school readiness. I call those aspects "life readiness."

We have the privilege of helping prepare these little children for living life. We need to teach them to share, follow directions, show empathy for others, take turns, and listen when others speak. They will need to learn all of these actions. These attitudes and skills will serve them well in school and later in their adult life.

Parents often don't realize we are teaching these attitudes and skills through our daily activities. They see a lot of what we do as just playing. (Continued on page 4.)

Homework – Helpful or Harassment????

Marilyn J. Dominick, Retired Public Educator

Recently, a second grade teacher in Texas made news by announcing that she would not be assigning homework in this school year. She cited research that shows no decisive benefit to the practice of homework. She made her students' day by saying in a letter to parents that the only work students would be bringing home would be work that was assigned during the school day, but, for some reason, did not get completed.

She went on to urge parents to spend time each evening doing things that ARE proven to have a positive impact on student success. She listed a few – having dinner as a family, having good discussions, and getting plenty of rest and good nutrition.

So, is she right?

I say yes and no. For many years, I have doubted that homework has the value usually attributed to it. Yes, practice is a good thing, but do teachers assign too much practice?

Having served as a public educator in poor schools and more affluent schools, I have come to conclude that homework needs to be adapted to individuals and groups of students. In any case, homework should NEVER consume the majority of the after-school hours. If a middle school or high school student has four or five teachers and each assigns 20 – 30 minutes of homework each night, it is just too much! Breeding discouragement over the work load and often the difficulty of the work may cause some students, even the majority of students, to shut down. Once this happens, we rarely get them motivated about school again.

Instead, let's assign a brief assignment that students could possibly do in 5 – 10 minutes and could share with an adult.

Then, there are the children who are not so blessed to have parents who sit with them at the kitchen table and offer help and support during homework time. Sometimes, there is no kitchen table!

It is clear that poverty and ethnicity are the two biggest factors in school success, or lack thereof. Families who are struggling need a different approach to school work. Assigning tons of homework does not serve these families well. Many of these parents did not have a positive school experience themselves, and the last thing they want to do is spend time doing school work. In this case, homework may even be harmful to the relationship between parent and child, and parent and school.

There is no simple answer to my question. But, I urge all of us to revisit the issue of homework and then do what works well for our students.

Let me know what you think at mjdominick77@gmail.com.



The Dreaded Duty

By Becky Ramsey, Christian School Representative

In all my years of teaching high school English, there is one task that I always dread. That task is teaching composition construction in the classroom. While writing is something I love, transferring that passion to my students has always presented a problem. I know that writing is an individualized skill, and teaching writing concepts to an entire class presents a challenge.

Writers come to our class at different levels. Students who have been avid readers tend to be better writers because they mimic the writers they have read in the books they consumed so avidly. Because I read nonstop as a child, writing seemed to come very easily for me. I do not remember a teacher really teaching me how to write. I just followed the example that I had seen in the books I had read. I did have an excellent writing teacher in high school whose style I somewhat mimic. Yet, I have developed my own style of teaching writing from thinking about how I personally learned to write or the steps I take when I write.

Before I thought through the whole writing process as a teacher, I sometimes had a problem teaching the same skills to my own sons. (Continued on page 3.)



The Dreaded Duty

By Becky Ramsey, Christian School Representative (Continued from page 2.)

There were times when I was sure that neither of my sons could have come from my loins because they did not enjoy writing as much as I did. For while I enjoyed writing, I did not enjoy teaching writing because of the challenges this field brought. Therefore, the following steps are what I do to reduce the challenge.

Many teachers avoid teaching composition because this field is extremely time-consuming. Properly grading a set of essays will take much more of a teacher's time than a set of grammar or literature tests or quizzes. The subjectivity and the necessity to make comments and to give examples on how to correct the errors take more time. Also, where there is usually one right answer to a quiz question, there may be multiple ways to go about improving an essay.

Something that has helped me to approach essay grading more positively is to start corrections sooner and work in "smaller bites." As I teach a particular essay, we go paragraph by paragraph. I critique their rough drafts as they write a section rather than waiting to check their essay after they have finished it. By critiquing a paragraph rather than an entire essay, the grading time is greatly reduced. Plus, I learn the students' typical types of errors sooner, and we can address them in class. Hopefully, they will avoid those errors in future paragraphs.

This process becomes what I call the "learn as we go" process. While I may not catch every error as we go through the critiquing process, students learn their common writing flaws and begin to self-critique, a technique which is half the battle of the composition process.

The next step of the writing process is teaching students that they need to refine their writing. Most students want to attempt the "Once and Done" method of writing, especially in our microwave society. No student wants to perfect a process. Therefore teaching the rewrite stage is always necessary to young writers. I make it a graded step of the process. If a teacher does not "reward" the student with some type of a grade, that part of the process usually does not happen.

Here are the steps:

1. The students take a clean, corrected copy of the critiqued essay and color-code their topic sentences and their summary sentences.
2. They show me where they have inserted transitional words in each paragraph to incorporate cohesion.
3. They highlight at least one sentence in each paragraph to show they have used sentence variety to create an interesting dialogue within the paragraph.
4. They show me the words they have improved with a thesaurus to avoid overused terms, repeated words, or common nouns or verbs.
5. They must highlight where they have created literary devices within their text and title to emphasize important points or themes within their essay similar to what they read in literature. We talk about the similes, metaphors, and alliteration that classic authors use to point out their themes. We note that we also want to become the type of writer who helps a reader know what we feel is significant about what we are saying. By grading these improvements, the students realize the importance of this process. The more we can get the students to refine their writing, the more pleased they will be with the final product.
6. The last step of the writing process is the final draft. My students look at me and ask, "We have to write it again?" I just answer, "You have to?" "You get to!" "You get to perfect your paper!"



Now the teacher needs to beg his or her individual school or district for a program such as Turnitin.com or something similar. This program is an electronic program that allows a teacher to grade essays online and makes the grading so much easier. A teacher can pre-load comments and will not have to write the same comments over and over. This system also checks for plagiarism, a problem which is rampant and needs to be addressed within the classroom.

While taking these steps does not make essay-grading my favorite part of teaching high school English, I did not quit this year either. Maybe that accomplishment was my greatest!



Are the Children "Life Ready"?

Submitted by Melodee Simmons, Preschool Representative (Continued from page 1.)

They don't see the benefits the children are gaining while they are interacting with each other through their play.

We need to educate the parents in all the benefits the children get from their play time. In my preschool, we have posted in each activity center an explanation of the areas of learning that take place while their child is playing in that center. The teachers use these to help the parents see all the areas of learning that the children are receiving while playing in each area.

In the Construction Center, besides learning geometry, they also learn cooperation, trial and error, planning, cause and effect and much more. Each center allows the children to experience and practice many things that will benefit them for their entire lives.

We also feature an aspect of learning in our monthly newsletter.

Take every opportunity to show the parents all that their children are learning while they are "just playing." I recently had a parent who said, "I can do that at home," when I explained what his child was learning while playing with shaving cream. The dad never knew something so simple could be used to teach his child so much.

Our job as preschool teachers goes beyond teaching the children. It reaches out to educating the parents. Use the opportunities that come each day to help the parents see the way to teach their children through the everyday activities we and they do with them.

If you would like a copy of the Activity Center Learning Explanations, I would be glad to email you a copy. Contact me at melodee.simmons@yahoo.com.

THE 2017 KIDS REACHING KIDS MISSION OFFERING PROJECT

FOR REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT CHILDREN CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE



FOR OUR KING

MATTHEW 25:40

THE KING WILL REPLY... ANYTHING YOU DID FOR ONE OF THE LEAST IMPORTANT OF THESE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF MINE, YOU DID FOR ME.



DID YOU KNOW HALF OF THE 50 MILLION PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD TO FLEE THEIR HOMES IN RECENT YEARS BECAUSE OF WAR, VIOLENCE, PERSECUTION, OR DISASTERS ARE CHILDREN?



DID YOU ALSO KNOW THAT YOU AND THE CHILDREN OF YOUR LOCAL CHURCH OR MINISTRY CAN DO SOMETHING TO HELP THEM?

THE 2017 KIDS REACHING KIDS MISSION OFFERING PROJECT, FOR OUR KING, WILL BE RAISING MONEY TO HELP CHILDREN IN EVERY WORLD REGION WHO ARE THE INNOCENT VICTIMS CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS SITUATION.



TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT CHILDREN WHO DESPERATELY NEED YOUR SUPPORT, VISIT

WWW.KRKNAZ.COM



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