

The T-Break

Information from all over for teachers who are under.....piles of work

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Professional Development

Rearden's professional development division gaining weight

Rearden's Teacher Training Programme has been gaining a lot of weight lately with the amount of sessions offered and the quality of trainers involved in the programme. Two new trainers are introduced this year. David Kirkby from the UK was a huge success at the Science and Maths Educational Conference at the American University of Beirut this past November and John Joseph from Australia is eagerly awaited for his two day talk on the functions of the brain in children and how to best use that knowledge in the learning process. Dee Reid and Cheryl Duquette from the UK and Canada have both given sessions earlier and they are back due to the success of their previous sessions. The plan is to keep introducing new trainers and topics, along with repeats of successful sessions, to a region that is in dire need of professional development for its teaching core. We will always strive to improve the programme to meet the needs of schools and teachers and thereby advance the level of education in our region.

SMEC 2005

Huge turnout contributes to the success of the ninth annual Science and Maths Teaching conference

A huge turnout of participants at the Science and Maths Educational Conference at the American University of Beirut made the ninth annual meeting a success. This year's event was marked by a considerable international presence. Here are some of our highlights:

David Kirkby's sessions were a great success! We heard great things from teachers who attended his talks and even from some of those who didn't!

Guy Simpson, the Export Sales Manager for Heinemann, Ginn, Rigby and Payne Galloway was present on the Friday and Saturday. He happily answered questions and added spirit to Rearden's stand at SMEC.

Congratulations to Tony AbiAtmeh from Antonine Sisters School who won a two way ticket courtesy of Oman Air to Dubai and another entry to one of our teacher training sessions this February in Dubai. Hind Farra from International College and Samia el Khoury from Antonine Sisters School were first and second runner-ups respectively.

We would like to thank all of you who donated money to the Children's Cancer Centre of Lebanon. Your participation in the auction was appreciated and we would like to congratulate Rola Bayram for winning the place value blocks and Katia Lahoud for winning a Rearden Teacher Training session entry.

A special note of thanks and appreciation to the Oman Air administration who have donated an airline ticket for the second year running.

Signs and symptoms of child abuse

The following is a set of symptoms designed to help you identify possible child abusive behaviour. Please note that child abuse is a very serious matter and should be handled by specialists in the subject. If you suspect that a child is showing any of the symptoms listed below, bring it up with your director. The information below was taken from www.helpguide.com - Ed



Some signs of physical abuse

- * Unexplained burns, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object
- * Bite marks
- * Anti-social behaviour
- * Problems in school
- * Fear of adults
- * Drug or alcohol abuse
- * Self-destructive or suicidal behaviour
- * Depression or poor self-image

Some signs of emotional abuse

- * Apathy
- * Depression
- * Hostility
- * Lack of concentration
- * Eating disorders

Some signs of sexual abuse

- * Inappropriate interest in or knowledge of sexual acts
- * Seductiveness
- * Avoidance of things related to sexuality, or rejection of own genitals or bodies
- * Nightmares and bed wetting
- * Drastic changes in appetite
- * Over compliance or excessive aggression
- * Fear of a particular person or family member
- * Withdrawal, secretiveness, or depression
- * Suicidal behaviour
- * Eating disorders
- * Self-injury

Sometimes there are no obvious physical signs of sexual abuse, and a physician must examine the child to confirm the abuse.

Some signs of neglect

- * Unsuitable clothing for weather
- * Being dirty or unbathed
- * Extreme hunger
- * Apparent lack of supervision

Dealing With Sadness And Loss



Blake Campbell

Everyone experiences sadness and grief when separated from loved ones. Healthy grieving is necessary to come to terms with loss. Excessive and prolonged grieving can prevent a child from approaching others and forming new attachments. Responsive teachers and caregivers help children feel more comfortable with expressing sad, unhappy feelings. Here are some suggestions for helping children deal with sadness and loss.

Encourage children to talk about their feelings. The death of a classroom pet, the unexpected move of a child, and the loss of a favorite plaything all provide opportunities to talk about their feelings. Use words such as sadness, grief, sorrow, and loss. Note the following exchange.

Teacher: "Yes, our little hamster, Snuffles, died last night. I know you really enjoyed playing with him, Sandy. How are you feeling right now?" Child: "I feel sad and have a lump in my throat."

Encourage children who are experiencing loss to remember the person or thing that they have lost. Accept the child's need to talk about good and bad memories of the missing person, pet, or plaything. A child might say, "Sometimes Spike used to bark and bite, but he also liked to play catch."

Understand that children may want to talk about other feelings and concerns related to a loss. With the loss of a parent, a child may need to talk about his fear of what will happen to him, how his life will change, and what might happen to the other parent.

Talk about and express your own feelings of sadness. As you talk about your feelings, you might begin to cry. Your honest tears are a powerful message to children that they can talk about sadness and express grief in your classroom too. Your vulnerability also provides children with an opportunity to respond in a caring and loving way to give you support. If the loss is so great that you fear loss of control (the death of a child in your classroom, for example), take the time to share your feelings with an adult friend before talking with the children.

You might say, "I am feeling sad because my best friend is moving away," or "I'm feeling sad because it's the end of the year and this is the last day we will be together as a class."

Provide an accepting atmosphere. Children experiencing loss need to feel free to openly express their feelings of sadness and grief. Be careful to avoid minimizing their feelings by saying things like "It's not so bad" or "Cheer up!" Avoid probing questions that may distract and confuse. Say, for example, "Erin, you feel hurt and sad inside that your dad has moved out. It's okay to cry."

Accept as normal some changes in behavior. For both children and adults, it is hard to leave our

emotions outside the classroom. Each child will react differently to loss. A loss at home may cause some children to have difficulty concentrating. Others may lash out at their friends and teachers. Still others may become very quiet and withdrawn.

Imagine, for example, that one of your children has parents who recently divorced. Before the divorce, he was an independent, active child. But now he seems to cling to you as much as possible, seeking your attention and wanting your approval of everything he does.

Anger can also mask sadness and grief. Children's sadness may emerge only after the anger is accepted and safely expressed. Say, "Sharon, sometimes people act angry when they are really sad and hurt. If you feel angry, you are welcome to pound this playdough. When you're through, we can talk about it."

Recognize when children's grieving requires professional assistance. Recommend that parents seek professional help if their child's grieving becomes a problem for the child. Consider the following questions when reaching this decision.

Is the child pretending nothing has happened? How long have the following grieving reactions persisted? Has the child become physically and/or verbally aggressive? Has the child withdrawn socially from other children? Has the child's schoolwork and concentration declined? Has the child talked about suicide? Our task is to help parents find the strength to admit that qualified professional care is necessary. Somehow we have to reduce the stigma of needing and seeking help.

Reprinted with permission from the National Network for Child Care - NNCC. Smith, C.A. (1992). Dealing with sadness and loss. In Todd, C.M. (Ed.), "Day care center connections", 1(5), pp. 1-3. Urbana-Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service.

Tips for Reading to and with Children in Kindergarten Through Grade 3 (to parents)



Henry Geitzinger

Keep reading to your child even when he can read. Read books that are too difficult or long for him to read alone.

Try reading books with chapters and talk about what is happening in the story. Encourage your child to make predictions about what will happen next and connect characters or events to those in other books and stories.

Talk with your child about reading preferences that are beginning to develop. Ask whether she likes adventure stories, mysteries, science fiction, animal stories or stories about other children. Encourage her to explain

the reasons for preferences.

Talk with your child about favorite authors and help him find additional books by those authors.

Take turns reading a story with your child. Don't interrupt to correct mistakes that do not change the meaning.

Talk about the meaning of new words and ideas introduced in books. Help your child think of examples of new concepts.

Talk with your child about stories using the notions of the beginning, middle and end of the story to organize thinking and discussion.

Ask your child to tell why a character might have taken a specific action. Ask for information from the story to support your answer.

If he wants to read aloud to you from his school book, listen attentively. If he stumbles over a word from time to time, simply tell him what it is. However, if he misses many words in material with which he should be

familiar, consult his teacher.

When she reads aloud to you, don't try to use teaching techniques, such as having her "sound out" words. Instead, enjoy the story together, laugh over it, discuss the plot, praise her for reading especially well, or for figuring out a word for herself.

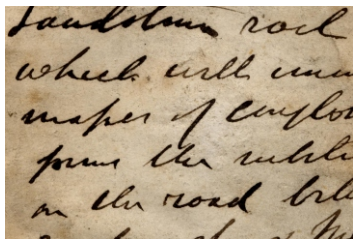
Give children extra opportunities to read. Let them read the directions for that new game or for putting model airplanes together. Ask them to "help you" by reading the cookie recipe or traffic signs.

Introduce the pleasures of the public library. Let him browse. Get a library card for her. Let him choose books that he wants, rather than books you feel he should read. Buy books for children, too, as the basis for a home library of their own.

Set a good example as a reader — read every day at home even if it is a magazine or newspaper.

Make reading fun — a time that you both look forward to spending together.

Punktch, you ate!



Kevin Walsh

Letter-writing is in danger of becoming a lost art. Yet there's really only one way to thank Aunt Grace for sending that Christmas present - by putting pen to paper. The Magazine ran a competition to test how good your writing skills and grammar are. Here are the finalists.

The only chore about receiving gifts is writing the thank you letters.

What to say is the easy bit. How to say it requires more thought. Writing a Christmas thank you letter requires rigorous attention to detail,

especially if it's to be grammatically correct.

Two years ago author Lynne Truss hit the Christmas best-seller list with the book *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*, subtitled "The zero-tolerance approach to punctuation". The title alludes to how punctuation, or a lack of it, can utterly change the meaning of a sentence.

The Magazine, in association with the Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP), challenged readers to write a thank you letter with two meanings. You had to use the same words - or words that sound the same - but change the punctuation.

Here are five of the best. All entries will now be sent to the SfEP, who will pick an overall winner.

DearMother,

In law, there is nothing to make me say thank you, but the quality of your gifts compels me at least to write to tell you how I feel. Thank you so much for the presents! I was expecting nothing more than a token yet, again, you have exceeded even your own incredible standards.

It was a shame you had to stay here for such a short time. I thought I might have coped, but it was unbearable seeing you leave. The relief was immense when I heard we might see you again soon. I wanted to end it all by saying goodbye now. I hope I will not have to say it to you again for a long time. If you have the opportunity to spend Christmas elsewhere next year, please do not.

Muchlove

Matthew

DearMother-in-Law,

There is nothing to make me say thank you, but the quality of your gifts compels me at least to write to tell you how I feel. Thank you? So much for the presents I was expecting. Nothing more than a token, yet again! You have exceeded even your own incredible standards.

It was a shame you had to stay here. For such a short time, I thought I might have coped, but it was unbearable. Seeing you leave, the relief was immense. When I heard we might see you again soon, I wanted to end it all. By saying goodbye now, I hope I will not have to say it to you again for a long time. If you have the opportunity to spend Christmas elsewhere next year, please do.

Notmuch love

Matthew

Matthew Tointon, Alderholt, Dorset

DearSanta,

You really made my year! When I heard you had fallen from your sleigh, I was sad. To see such wonderful gifts lined up under my Christmas tree, my eyes lit up. When I unwrapped your gifts I knew that the spirit of Christmas was still alive. It was terrible hearing about your accident. The best piece of news all year is your safe return. Things yet to come, you say! Christmas is a time to love and share, I disagree with Scrooges. Everywhere Christmas is slowly fading. Thanks for making it so fantastic.

Matt

Dear Santa,

You really made my year when I heard you had fallen from your sleigh! I was sad to see such wonderful gifts lined up under my Christmas tree. My eyes lit up when I unwrapped your gifts. I knew the spirit of Christmas was still alive - it was terrible. Hearing about your accident? The best piece of news all year. Is your safe return a sign of things yet to come? You say Christmas is a time to love and share, I disagree. With Scrooges everywhere, Christmas is slowly fading. Thanks for making it so. Fantastic.

Matt.

Matt Hurst, Southampton

Dear Aunt Agatha,

Sorry it has taken me so long to write telling you how much I liked your Christmas present this year, only I didn't have the time. To take it back and get another would be out of the question! I suppose for you to be so kind shouldn't come as a surprise after what you bought me last year. It was splendid! News about Uncle Brian? Dying to see you again in the New Year. Would be awful to lose touch.

Mark

Dear Aunt Agatha,

Sorry it has taken me so long to write telling you how much I liked your Christmas present this year, only I didn't. Have the time to take it back and get another? Would be out of the question, I suppose, for you to be so kind. Shouldn't come as a surprise after what you bought me last year. It was splendid news about Uncle Brian dying. To see you again in the New Year would be awful.

To lose touch,

Mark

Mark Till, Southport, England

www.bbcnews.co.uk

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Moving out ?
Out grown ?
Moving up ?
Upset ?
Not moving ?
Not growing ?

REARDEN Teacher Recruitment



Rearden Teacher Training

Dubai Knowledge Village, February 2006

Meet the trainers



David Kirkby
Mathematics

David Kirkby presented at the American University of Beirut's annual Science and Math Educational Conference. His two sessions were one of the most popular and once word got around about this engaging presenter and his practical use-them-the-next-day ideas, we ran out of seating space and extra chairs! He will be presenting "Teaching and Learning Mathematics" in Dubai on the 25th and 26th of February.



Dee Reid
Reading and Writing

We are happy to welcome back Dee Reid to Dubai. She will be presenting "Working with struggling readers and writers" covering ways to help students who find reading and writing difficult as well as how to monitor their progress. Her sessions are filled with real life examples and demonstrations as well as insightful ideas.



Cheryl Duquette
Special Needs

Dr. Cheryl Duquette is coming all the way from Ottawa, Canada again this year and it will be great to have her back! Dr. Duquette is the author of "Students at Risk: Solutions to Classroom Challenges" and will present "Working with students with special needs" (also a refresher for last year's "Working with students who are of concern"). This session will help teachers better manage their classrooms, learn how to implement differentiated instruction, planning sheets as well as identify and work with gifted students and students with ADHD and ODD.



John Joseph
"The Brain Man"

More has been learnt about the functioning of the human brain in the last decade than in all the proceeding centuries. Applied to classroom practice, this information affirms many elements of taken-for-granted teaching practices, and challenges numerous others. We are very excited about having John Joseph, the "brain man" himself here this February and March. He will be presenting "Learning with the brain in mind". He has presented this session all over the world and teachers and administrators have learned about the brain develops and learns and the adaptations that must be made our classrooms.

The First Educational Forum

For International Schools

21 - 23 March

Organised by by the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States, in collaboration with the International Curricula Organization, the forum will take place in Dubai. All international schools are invited to attend. More information is available on the official website

<http://www.multaqa-edu.org/english/>

On the light side

A mom and dad were worried about their son not wanting to learn math at the school he was in, so they decided to send him to a Catholic school. After the first day of school, their son comes racing into the house, goes straight into his room and slams the door shut. Mom and dad are a little worried about this and go to his room to see if he is okay. They find him sitting at his desk doing his homework. The boy keeps doing that for the rest of the year. At the end of the year the son brings home his report card and gives it to his mom and dad. Looking at it they see under math an A+.

Mom and dad are very happy and ask the son, "What changed your mind about learning math?"

The son looked at mom and dad and said, "Well, on the first day when I walked into the classroom, I saw a guy nailed to the plus sign at the back of the room behind the teacher's desk and I knew they meant business."

"Dad, can you write in the dark?"

"I think so. What is it you want me to write?"

"Your name on this report card."

A little girl came home from school and said to her mother, "Mommy, today in school I was punished for something that I didn't do."

The mother exclaimed, "But that's terrible! I'm going to have a talk with your teacher about this ... by the way, what was it that you didn't do?"

The little girl replied, "My homework."

The child comes home from his first day at school.

Mother asks, "What did you learn today?"

The kid replies, "Not enough. I have to go back tomorrow."

A teacher was having trouble teaching arithmetic to one little boy. So she said, "if you reached in your right pocket and found a nickel, and you reached in your left pocket and found another one, what would you have?"

"Somebody else's pants."

The teacher came up with a good problem. "Suppose," she asked the second-graders, "there were a dozen sheep and six of them jumped over a fence. How many would be left?"

"None," answered little Norman.

"None? Norman, you don't know your arithmetic."

"Teacher, you don't know your sheep. When one goes, they all go!"

Teacher: Milton, how can you prove the earth is round?

Milton: I can't. Besides, I never said it was.

www.workjoke.com

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