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The Cluttered Desk

Volume 1 Issue 4

“A master can tell you what he expects of you. A teacher, though, awakens your own expectations.” – Patricia Neal

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#### IN THIS ISSUE

=> RESEARCH LINKS – HUMOR IN THE CLASSROOM

=> HUMOR - OVERHEARD IN THE CLASSROOM

=> FEATURE ARTICLE - PAPERWORK PILE-UP

=> END OF THE YEAR ACTIVITIES LINKS

=> FEATURE LESSON

**1, 2, 3 Math Fonts** just got better! The original fonts have been improved and refined, and we have added new fonts, including Beans, Counting Tiles, more Clocks, Dice, Dominos and more! Check out **1, 2, 3 Math Fonts** at [www.justusteachers.com](http://www.justusteachers.com), the newest way to add graphics to your worksheets, flashcards and posters with no cutting and pasting!

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RESEARCH LINKS – HUMOR IN THE CLASSROOM - How you should use it, when you should use it, and why should you use it anyway?

Send in the Clones

<http://www.uark.edu/misc/tfscinfo/news597.html>

Prescription For Learning

[http://hiwaay.net/~kenth/diane/column/p\\_081899.htm](http://hiwaay.net/~kenth/diane/column/p_081899.htm)

Why Use Humor in the Classroom?

<http://www.cte.iastate.edu/newsletter/november98/humor.html>

Humor In The Classroom: Cultivating Camaraderie To Maximize Learning

[http://www.abbottcom.com/Humor\\_in\\_the\\_classroom.htm](http://www.abbottcom.com/Humor_in_the_classroom.htm)

Handling Humor in the Classroom

[http://cted.inel.gov/cted/spectrum/september\\_1997/gn-humor.html](http://cted.inel.gov/cted/spectrum/september_1997/gn-humor.html)

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#### OVERHEARD IN THE CLASSROOM

On a 1<sup>st</sup> grade playground, a crying boy ran up to his teacher, clutching his arm and pointing to another boy.

"He bit me on the arm!" the first boy cried.  
The second boy replied "I didn't bit him, and it wasn't on the arm!"

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## FEATURE ARTICLE

### Paperwork Pile-Up

By Christopher Norman

Of all the tasks that teachers must perform, the major and the menial, the puny and the profound, I hate grading papers the most. I'd rather do bus duty, detention and 7 parent conferences a week than grade papers.

I don't really understand this intense dislike I have for grading. I KNOW that it is important, and it's not like it is really that hard to do. In fact, it's kind of like doing the dishes or the laundry... do it daily and you never have to worry about unexpected visitors. Unfortunately, my principal has walked into my room more than once to find me half-buried beneath a toppled pile of facts tests, while my students were building a scale model of Stonehenge with stacks of old homework.

I usually cart everything home to grade. All I can say is that it is a good thing I have a van. And it usually only takes 2 trips! Once I have it all at home, I chase everyone out of the living room and begin the sorting process. I make new piles, sorted from smallest to largest.

Pile A: Completed assignments.

Pile B: Incomplete assignments.

Pile C: Assignments with no name.

Pile D: Assignments that I have no intention of giving a grade and don't understand why I assigned in the first place.

I tackle these piles in reverse order, starting with Pile D. I methodically file way every scrap of paper. By "methodically" I mean "wad up in a great big ball", and by "file away" I mean "find a garbage bag big enough to hold it all". 55-gallon contractor bags usually do the trick.

With Pile C, the challenge is to identify the owners of work with no name. I majored in Elementary Education. I should have gone to detective school. I have had so much practice in handwriting analysis, I could set up shop with almost any carnival in America. The pay is about the same, and the clientele is more likely to listen to you.

The incomplete assignments of Pile B have to be handled delicately. I like to return them to the students for them to complete, and I always add an encouraging note. Something like "I could have grown corn in the time you had to complete this assignment! If you move any slower you'll be going backwards!"

Finally, around midnight, I start to actually GRADE the papers. You know, I am pretty sure that I teach in English, but I am not entirely sure what language my students are learning in. I majored in Elementary Education. I should have majored in Greek. Is that a "6" or an "8"? Maybe it's the symbol for pi!? It doesn't really matter, the question was "Who invented the cotton gin?"

At last, I grade the final paper. I place the now much smaller pile of papers into my bag to return to school. Basking in the glory of a job well done, I suddenly realize that morning has broken, and my students will soon be completing more work for me to grade. But I've learned my lesson, and I have a plan to keep a major pile-up from happening again. From now on, we are just going to go on more field trips.

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End of the Year Activities Links

Awards and Certificates

<http://www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-6076.html?detoured=1>

School Memory Book

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/books/schoolmemory/>

Wind Up Learning as the Year Winds Down: Activities for the Last Days of School

[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_lesson/lesson184.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson184.shtml)

Summer Word Searches

<http://kidsdomain.com/holiday/summer/word.html>

End of the Year Thoughts

<http://abcteach.com/MonthtoMonth/June/endofschool.htm>

Memorial Day Numbers Reproducible

[http://www.teachervision.com/tv/printables/0876285671\\_249.pdf](http://www.teachervision.com/tv/printables/0876285671_249.pdf)

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LESSON - Check out this link for a great fraction lesson using pattern blocks!

<http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/Patterns/notes.html>

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WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!! Do you have a lesson, link or funny story that you would like to see here? We welcome your submissions! E-mail us at [ezine@justusteachers.com](mailto:ezine@justusteachers.com)

Did you enjoy this issue? Pass it on to your friends and coworkers! E-mail us and let us know your thoughts! We look forward to hearing from you!

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