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The Cluttered Desk

Volume 3 Issue 2

"Whatever you are, be a good one." Abraham Lincoln

Welcome to **"The Cluttered Desk"**, the semi-monthly newsletter of Just Us Teachers. You are receiving this newsletter because you have requested a subscription. If you have received this e-mail in error or would like to discontinue your subscription, please see the instructions at the end of this newsletter.

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

OK, some of you may have been wondering, "Where has 'The Cluttered Desk' been the last couple of months?" Well, truth be told, we have been tied up creating and adding 11 NEW FONTS to 1, 2, 3 Math Fonts. So now there are 33 fonts in all! The bad news... the price is going to go up June 1 when the new version is officially released. The good news... if you order before June 1, you will get Version 3 at the old price! What a deal! Visit us at www.justusteachers.com for order information.

Well, enough commercial stuff... let's get to the good stuff.

FEATURE ARTICLE

The Performance Appraisal

By Chris Slaughter

There are many things to look forward to as the end of the school year approaches. There is the fact that your students have inexplicably run out of pencils, and can't seem to locate a store that carries them. There's the traditional trashing of the school calendar, when you do well to have at least one day in the week that does not have some kind of award ceremony, assembly, talent show or bomb scare.

And of course, there is your annual performance appraisal, when you see how close you came to your stated goals and objectives. I always make one of my goals "survive", then I am assured of making at least one of them. And if I don't make that one, I probably won't even care about the others.

Anyway, use the Self-Appraisal Checklist below to help you prepare for the real thing with the boss. Read the options available for each category, and circle the ones that best describe you.

Classroom Management

- 1) Your class consistently adheres to your high expectations. Discipline problems are minimal.

- 2) You are extremely strict. The principal is afraid to enter the room without your permission. When you look up from your desk, the goldfish stop swimming.
- 3) You believe students should set their own boundaries, and can decide for themselves which rules apply to them. You are a nut.
- 4) Your approach to classroom management is simple. On occasion, you manage to find your class.

Lesson Plans

- 1) Your lesson plans are detailed, include all necessary materials and are created will in advance.
- 2) Your lesson plans are also prepared ahead of time, as you have been using the same plans for the last 20 years.
- 3) Your lesson plans are often lost in various piles around your classroom, and are written on legal pads, scraps of paper and toilet tissue.
- 4) Lesson plans? What lesson plans?

Attendance

- 1) Your attendance record is spotless, having missed only 1 half-day when you gave birth to your oldest child. You planned summer births for your other children.
- 2) Your attendance is good. You are absent only occasionally, and you always leave detailed instructions for the substitute.
- 3) You miss class often, and you class suffers because of it.
- 4) You miss class often, and no one notices.

Technology

- 1) You are a certified geek. Not only do you keep up with current technology, you are aware of new technology before it exists.
- 2) You are comfortable with widely used technology, having mastered e-mail, PowerPoint, and your schools grade reporting software.
- 3) You know how to turn on the computer, the overhead, and the lights. That's it.
- 4) You fear technology. You go through a case of chalk every month, and have purple-stained hands from your own personal mimeograph machine.

Parent Relations

- 1) You have excellent parent relations. You listen to their concerns, and work with them to find solutions.
- 2) You never receive parent complaints. You taught your students' parents, and they are still afraid of you.
- 3) Parents complain about you often. All but 2 students have been removed from your class, and they are your own son and daughter. And they want to go too.
- 4) You date your students' parents.

Student Performance

- 1) Your students perform excellently on all standardized tests, receiving perfect scores every year. Other teachers hate you.
- 2) Your students perform well on tests, showing improvement each year.
- 3) Your students perform very well on all tests... because you take the tests for them.
- 4) Your students perform very poorly on all tests... because you take the tests for them.

RESEARCH LINKS – SUMMER LEARNING

Center For Summer Learning – The Problem

<http://www.jhu.edu/teachbaltimore/resources/docs/Draft%20of%20Publication%20for%20Media%20Forum.pdf#search='summer%20school%20research'>

Can Summer School Make a Difference in Student Achievement?

<http://www.asbj.com/2000/03/0300coverstory.html>

Summer School: Unfulfilled Promise

http://www.sreb.org/programs/srr/pubs/Summer_School.pdf

Summer Learning Loss: The Problem and Some Solutions.

<http://www.ericdigests.org/2003-5/summer.htm>

END OF THE YEAR ACTIVITIES

NEA: Making the Most of the Dreaded End-of-School Days – Be sure to check out the links at the end of the article.

<http://www.nea.org/lessons/tt030519.html?mode=print>

End Of Year Poems

<http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/songspoems56.html>

Summer Activities

http://atozteacherstuff.com/pdf.htm?summer_learning4-5.pdf

Learning Up to the Very Last Minute

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/instructor/learningtilllastmin.htm>

The Teacher’s Corner – End of the Year Activities

<http://www.theteacherscorner.net/seasonal/endofyear/index.htm>

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

http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr345.shtml

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

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!

Past Issues of “The Cluttered Desk” can be viewed at

http://www.justusteachers.com/Ezine_Archives.html

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Just Us Teachers

justusteachers@justusteachers.com

www.justusteachers.com