



Building a Teacher's ToolBox

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Below you will find an activity that I created in my mini-grant, “Using Newspapers in the Classroom”. This activity is one of the most fun activities that I have done with my class. In this activity, you look for an article in the newspaper that you know will generate much conversation. I have included the article about the mother who is pregnant again with her 19th baby, as well as expecting her first grandchild. I would suspect that much conversation will be generated with this article! I have included the directions on how I have used this activity in the class as well. I hope that this article generates much conversation, and helps to build community within your class.

Huh? News: Predict, Read, and Formulate an Opinion

Objective: to comprehend what is written in the news article, make inferences about why it happened, and then write a reaction to the article.

Materials: highly interesting article that makes the reader go, “Huh”?

This was one of the best classes that I have ever had in regards to class participation and group involvement. It began quite simply enough. I had read in the paper about a boy, 6 years old, who had gotten up, got himself ready for school, made his lunch and ate his breakfast, and then left the house with the plans of taking the minivan and driving himself to school! He had to return to the house since the minivan was locked. He got the keys and went back to the minivan. He got in the minivan, put it in reverse, and started off to school. The boy drove erratically for about 6 miles, when the police started to follow him. The boy did not stop for the police or pull over since he did not know he needed to do this. Eventually after being followed for some time, the boy went off the road and crashed the minivan. He was not hurt since he had not been driving too fast. The police got out of the car and they were completely shocked when they saw who was driving the vehicle. The boy was able to give the police his information and they all returned back to his home. When they got back home, the police and the boy found his mom still asleep in her bed. That was the end of the article, but just the beginning of my class!

I have never had a class with such lively discussion, banter, laughing, and debate. Not one student in the class could

believe that the mother was not arrested for child endangerment or some other such thing. We went around and around debating this. We talked so much about how this boy of six was able to do so much, wake up on time, make his lunch, prepare his breakfast, and so on. My son is six, and he could do those things, but there is no way that he would not wake me up in doing so. At six, a boy is not that quiet to be able to sleep through all that work!

After we debated this article, we wrote about the boy and how capable he was and why that was so. We also wrote about why the mom was able to sleep through all of this and reasons why.

Many parents who are students were kind in their rationale, such as she must work a lot of hours, or works the third shift, or is a single mom, in addition to all of the previous ideas.

Younger students were not as kind in their thinking. They labeled the mom a drug addict or an alcoholic that was “sleeping off” their drug of choice.

These types of article don’t come along very often, but when they do, “scoop them up” because from my experience they are priceless!

Mother with 18 children all with 'J' names is pregnant again - and is expecting grandchild... to be christened

A couple with 18 children all with names beginning with 'J' are to welcome another baby into the family – but this time the child will be christened with the letter 'M'.

Michelle and Jim Bob Duggar, who revealed they are expecting their 19th child in March, will next month receive their first grandchild - Mackynzie Renee.

Their eldest son Josh and his wife Anna, both 21, will have the baby girl just nine months after his most recent sibling, Jordyn-Grace, was born.



America's biggest brood: The Duggar family near their home in Springdale, Arkansas

‘We are so thrilled,’ said Michelle, 42, of Springdale, Arkansas.

While Jim Bob, 44, a businessman and former state legislator, added:
‘This never gets old. We are so grateful for each child.

‘We are looking forward to our first grandbaby and our 19th child.’

Josh, who was home schooled and brought up as a devout Christian, said:
‘I think it is going to be awesome, it is going to be great.

‘We have been looking forward to the arrival of my little girl and to now
get to celebrate for my parents, it’s a wonderful thing.’

He said he hoped to follow his parents’ lead in having many more
children – but did not say whether they would also have names starting
with the same letter or not.

Anna and Josh live with his parents in the debt-free house they built
themselves along with twin siblings Jana and John-David, 19, Jill, 18,
Jessa, 16, Jinger, 15, Joseph, 14, Josiah, 13, Joy-Anna, 11, twins Jedidiah
and Jeremiah, ten, Jason, nine, James, eight, Justin, six; Jackson, five;
Johanna, three, Jennifer, two, and Jordyn-Grace, eight months.

Their lives are featured on a reality TV show called 18 Kids and
Counting.

Despite being pregnant 18 times before, Michelle says this pregnancy
came as a shock.

‘I was in Weight Watchers with Jim Bob and I wasn’t losing any weight,’
she said. ‘I couldn’t figure it out. I was doing what I should. And the
baby, who was nursing, was fussy. I kept thinking, “This isn’t right. She
isn’t teething, she doesn’t have an ear infection. I’m not cheating on my
diet, I should be losing weight.” Then, I put two and two together and
wondered if I could possibly be pregnant.’

‘I told Jim Bob and he couldn’t keep it in, he was so excited,’ she said.

‘The kids were outside playing on a water slide and he gathered them together and had to share the news. There was all this screaming and yelling.’

Michelle has now been pregnant 147 months of her life, with five more to go.

The Duggar’s, who feed their brood by spending £1,250 a month, or \$1821.88 in American money, also claim that they have changed an estimated 90,000 nappies, or diapers, and do approximately 200 loads of laundry a month.

When they got married, they thought they’d have two or three children.

Not wanting to have a child immediately, Michelle went on the birth control pill as they waited three years to have their first child, Josh, who is now married and expecting his first child.

After Josh was born, Michelle went back on the pill.

She got pregnant anyway and suffered a miscarriage, which her physician told them was probably caused by the pill.

As conservative Christians, they decided after that to ‘let God decide’ how many children they would have.

They adhere to a movement called Quiverfull, whose members take seriously the biblical exhortation to be fruitful and multiply and believe that every child is a gift from Providence.

All the children learn to play the violin and piano and the older children help raise the younger ones.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1210530/Jim-Bob-Michelle-Duggar-expecting-19th-child--grandchild.html>

Writing Suggestions

”The work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives, and the dream shall never die.”

~Senator Edward M. Kennedy, in his concession speech at the 1980 Democratic National Convention

This quote was listed on the front page the day after Ted Kennedy died. The quote asks the reader many questions within its context of the “work”, “cause”, “hope”, and “dream”. Your students could brainstorm what all the parts to this quote means to them.

Below are some guiding questions that I thought of to use with this quote.

- ❖ Who said this?
- ❖ When would the person that you are thinking of have said this quote?
- ❖ Tell the students who said the quote, and when the quote was said.
- ❖ What does it mean within the context in which it was said?
- ❖ When would you use this quote personally? What would the cause be? The hope? The dream?
- ❖ In general, what might a cause be that this was said for?
- ❖ In general, what might the hope be?
- ❖ In general, what might the dream be?

Chinese Fortune Cookie

“The only man who never makes mistakes is the man who never does anything.”

I find fortune cookies to be great essay starters. I got this fortune cookie last weekend, and it really made me think of the beginning of the school year, and how we can put our students' minds at ease immediately by letting them know that mistakes will happen, but that we can learn from them. This fortune certainly lets us know this. I just wanted to share this with you, since this fortune might make a great beginning class writing idea.

Scramble and Unscramble

In this activity, the student will unscramble the word given and place it in the unscrambled column. This activity can be used in small groups on one of the first nights of class to help build community within the classroom.

Scrambled	Unscrambled	Scrambled	Unscrambled
itme		ivrre	
fsto		nghti	
utrck		ayd	
cwonl		omor	
clcko		epople	
nsoei		chrhuc	
nmaial		ssteri	
bbya		ppaer	
okob		cta	
dgo		asgrs	
ucle		rtpi	
ilsly		inocme	
onet		oontacr	
rsuelt		mteer	
abskte		mpac	
gdera		tepelnoeh	
mvoei		oudns	
ergat		jbo	

