

LAUGH, THINK, AND CRY: REDUCING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP WITH TECHNOLOGY

Session Description:

“There are three things we all should do every day. Number one is laugh. Number two is think. And number three is, you should have your emotions moved to tears, for reasons of happiness or joy. But think about it. If you laugh, you think, and you cry, that's a full day.”

This session highlight the most effective intervention ever used in our district to reduce the achievement gap in literacy: **Take My Teacher Home**. Starts at kindergarten. Low cost. High yield. At home. Podcasting. Results.

- (Something to laugh about): Laugh at how simple and effective this is.
- (Something to think about): Think about how this might work for your students.
- (Something to cry about): The results

Note: Although this project began as a Kindergarten literacy initiative, the concept was successfully extended and adapted later to first grade, high school science, world language, and ELL classrooms. It was also adopted in many other districts in Texas, Oregon, and Colorado—with similar results.

AGENDA

- The Results
- The Building Blocks
- The Secret Sauce: Implementation Fidelity
- The Secret Spice: Take the Teacher Home
- Adapting and Evolving
 - ✓ First Grade
 - ✓ S2P2
 - ✓ Other
- Finding: The Podcasting Toolkit
- Conclusion

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➤ All handouts and other exotic resources for Len’s presentations can be retrieved from the **TIES wiki**.

Take My Teacher Home Quick Data Report (Kindergarten literacy + podcasting pilot)

Twelve students began the initiative on February 1, 2008. The twelve students were chosen based on teacher observation, student need, and language ability; none were performing at grade level, based on BVSD assessments.

Project Results as of May 12, 2008 (less than four months):

- According to multiple district assessments, 11 students are exiting the program at grade level or above.¹
- None of the 12 twelve students are exiting kindergarten with an ILP due to lack of literacy skills.
- In one particular class, 3 of the six students were ESL students. All three students are now reading at grade level in English.
- Two of the children, who are both second language learners and started below grade level, are now in the top ten readers in the class.
- Parents don't want program to end, are pushing to extend the program into the summer.
- Non-English speaking parents are using the podcasts to further their own language acquisition goals.
- Two students were exited out of the ESL program at Kindergarten.
- Teacher reported that the time invested in the Take My Teacher Home Project yielded greater results than any other intervention previously tried over many years.
- Please take time to review our video summary of results:

<http://bvsd.org/iteach/Pages/tmth.aspx> (Click on the VIDEO to load)

This BVSD project was based on an award-winning project from the Eugene, Oregon school district. The approach used and the results achieved in this project² were recently recognized by two prestigious organizations:

Kay L. Bitters Award for Excellence in Technology
in Education PreK-2. (International Society for
Technology in Education) 2007

International Reading Association Presidential
Award for Reading and Technology. 2008

¹. Assessment for this project was based on teacher observation, pre/post tests using the "The Phonological Awareness Test 2" by Lingui systems, and the BVSD district literacy assessment; additionally, teacher-specific methods for "quick check" in-class assessment occurred weekly.

². The "Reading Buddies" project in the Eugene School District used DIBELS as their primary assessment tool. Another related and successful project in the Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD (TX) used the Texas state TPRI assessment.

Take My Teacher Home Mid-Project Report

We are about half way through our TMTH 2009 project. We recently interviewed the participants for a mid- project progress report.

English Mid-Project Group Highlights

- Out of 30 students in the English project, at the half way mark, 16 of our lowest performing students are now at grade level and have exited from the project.
- Of the 16 graduates,
 - **10 are identified as ESL**
 - 7 can identify all letters and sounds (grade level proficiency for mid- year kindergarten)
 - 3 students are 1 or 2 letters away from testing proficient in letter and sound identification
- According to our current measures, of the 16 that have exited, 4 are exceeding mid-year kindergarten reading standards
- Along with 16 new students taking the place of the graduated students, the remaining 14 students are continuing to work with the Take My Teacher Home project.

Individual English Mid- Project Highlights

- One student started the project speaking no English, teacher now reports student is fluent in English
- One student started the project and was not speaking in class at all, teacher reports that student is now fully participating in class.
- Teachers report increase in self -confidence for many participants. TMTH participants now sit near the front of the class, raise their hands when questions are asked of the class and are eager to try new activities.

Spanish Project Highlights

(Due to late arriving books, Spanish project started 2 months late. As a result, only one student has exited the project.)

- In one classroom, 4 students started the project knowing 0 letter sounds. Now, all 4 know more than 20.
- One classroom reports that participants have achieved 7 levels of growth in 3 months
- Teachers report active parent involvement
- Noticeable difference in on task behavior at school for participants
- Noticeable difference in the way students interact with literature. They are talking about what they are reading, connecting with the books they are reading and have a strong feelings of accomplishment about reading that was not present before starting the project.

Teacher Mid-Project Feedback

- All reported smooth sailing
- With experience, lesson creating has become easy
- All report that the kid's success is worth the time and effort to learn the project. All report that they will continue the project next year. Many have ideas about how to expand the project in their school.
- Minor technical issues (faulty equipment and synching issues on older machines) exist, but are not hindering project
- **On a scale of 1-10, 6 out of 8 would rate this as a 10 for successful interventions. The others gave it an 8 because of technical trouble with faulty ipods and synching issues in the beginning of the project.**

“Take My Teacher Home”

Extends the school day for struggling readers
Differentiates instruction
Guided Instruction – I do it, we do it, you do it

Basics of the program:

Plug and Play modules- 3 minutes each total of 20 minutes

- Vocabulary
- Letter names and sounds
- Letter Formation
- Music/ Rhyming
- Phoneme segmentation/ families
- Literature- fiction and non-fiction

Take “Take my Teacher Home” packets every day and return every morning with parent signature

Packets reflect classroom instruction

All students are in same packet tailored for their needs

Listen to same lesson every night Monday- Thursday

Teacher takes 10 second check in each morning when packet is returned

Packets reloaded on Fridays for take home Monday

Teacher Responsibilities	Parent Volunteer	Students
Select materials Create and distribute playlists Monitor progress Follow up with parents Data collection Develop Parent contract Obtain copyright permissions	Reload packets on Fridays Copy materials Laminate materials Color code materials Code bag/ iPod with # Initial set up of iPods Obtain copyright permission	Return bag every morning Take home bag every evening Charge iPod Have mom or dad sign contract

Necessary Equipment

- iShuffles
- iPod video with tune talk for on the spot recording
- headphones
- iPod chargers
- Multiple Hub USB for multiple shuffle loads
- Book Sets
- Teacher Computer
- Software

Process for selection of students:

Must have common assessment tool
Use that tool for selection
Keep group small
Collect data until mid-October and then start
Determine exit process
Assess every two week to monitor growth