

**COURSE TITLE:** VALUABLE LESSONS FOR CRAZY DAYS

**WA CLOCK HRS:** 30

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 3 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 2.00 credits]

**OREGON PDUs:** 30

**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 30

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

All of us hope that we will be able to think on our feet and come up with just the right response when things change before our eyes, and the class time needs a quick fix because something has interrupted our well-designed plans. In this course, many of these crazy interruptions and developments will be addressed with suggested responses. Some of the situations came right out of our textbook, "Stories from Planet Public School" which will add specific scenarios for some of the most vexing problems, and the Reflections section in the book will add to your insights.

You will have a chance to consider some of the most common and some uncommon disruptions of our best-laid plans and can consider what your own most comfortable solutions would be. Enjoy the chance to get out ahead of some of the hardest days that can unexpectedly come around.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

1. had a chance to think about some common and unpredictable classroom interruptions that need a quick response.
2. had a chance to relax and begin to rehearse what they might do if they encounter a similar problem.
3. enjoyed learning the best practices that can get them through some jarring situations.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%

**CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor

numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

## ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

### REQUIRED TEXT

Chapters provide a focus for some of the scenarios for "Crazy Days" as well as a thoughtful plan of action and additional Reflection Questions at the back of the book. For many of us, stories are more indelible than simple directions, and the additional realization that people survive and rebound from the indignities of Crazy Days gives great value to the narratives.

- ***Stories from Planet Public School***

ISBN# 9798865676193

by Mary Ann Johnson

Amazon

ISBN: 9798865676193.

[View Online](#)

### MATERIALS FEE

Text is \$14 on Amazon for the pb and \$8.99 for the digital format.

## ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT

### A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

#### **Assignment #1: Introductions: What are crazy days?**

In your Introduction, talk about your own teaching assignment and your own reasons for choosing this course. Have you already had one of these days? What happened? Or how difficult would it be for you to divert from a planned lesson to deal with something that is emergent? What are your views about changing your plans because of something unexpected, big or little?

Write 2-3 pages to describe your work and your thinking about "Crazy Days" in your classroom.

#### **Assignment #2: A Class of Zombies! (Most of the class is failing or unresponsive)**

One of your classes seems to stop functioning. It looks like lethargy, but there is something that needs to be done! So here are two possible approaches to this problem. The first set activates the group by introducing the use of gamification of an assignment. The second approach addresses the issue of self-motivation when students need help defining their goals, especially if it is getting close to the end of a grading period. Either may be the spark to bring them back to life.

#### **First Possibility: Gamify Your Assignment (Two approaches)**

**One way to gamify your assignments, with very little preparation needed, is to use a FlipHunt. See "Use Fliphunts to Create an Engaging Lesson for Your Class" at [blog.tcea.org](http://blog.tcea.org), and a great example of a lesson plan for 4th grade geometry lesson plan at <http://bit.ly/fliphunt4geo>.** The Flip hunt idea was designed by Kathi [Kersznolwki@kerszi.com](mailto:Kersznolwki@kerszi.com). She designed it as a scavenger hunt (or map) using Flipgrid. She even suggested you let students create the Flip hunt lists. by giving them a curriculum-based topic or just letting them create their own problems.

**Another way to gamify your assignments is to create a competition between class groups OR a race to a prize, using the format of the [Escape Room concept](#)** in which students "unlock" a prize when they get to the answer first (or when finished).

Directions for these activities range from primary math lessons to secondary science/social studies, and literature searches to find answers. If you want props for your own design, they are on lots of sources, including Teachers Pay Teachers, Etsy, and on Google Forms. Finding your own resources is fun. Materials can be found in your own homes, at The Dollar Store, and some fancier things at Amazon if you want a WOW! effect. Here are the sources to show the possibilities:

- 1) <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/how-gamifying-instruction-improved-student-test-scores-in-this-teachers-classroom/2023/10> 4:31
- 2) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mug4qAx8qAk> (Mississippi Connects 2020, mdek 12) 5:16
- 3) [edutopia.org/article/using-digital-escape-rooms-make-learning-fun](https://edutopia.org/article/using-digital-escape-rooms-make-learning-fun) (5-25-22) and [edutopia.org/article/escape-rooms-literacy-elementary-school?](https://edutopia.org/article/escape-rooms-literacy-elementary-school?) K-5 (12-17-22)
- 4) [https://blog.teacherspayteachers.com/escape-room-ideas-and-templates-for-every-classroom/?utm\\_campaign=2024-09-29\\_600\\_Core\\_Buyers\\_Adhoc](https://blog.teacherspayteachers.com/escape-room-ideas-and-templates-for-every-classroom/?utm_campaign=2024-09-29_600_Core_Buyers_Adhoc)
- 5) [teacherspayteachers.com/browse?search=escape rooms free&utm\\_campaign=ERTEST&utm\\_source=KSB](https://teacherspayteachers.com/browse?search=escape+rooms+free&utm_campaign=ERTEST&utm_source=KSB)  
Some free and some low priced beginner games!

I have put some other resources in the Bibliography, both free and commercial.

To design your own game, some of the places to hide clues can include:

- on popsicle sticks with key letter or word on top, so all team members can align their sticks to get the clue
- a message in a balloon with the balloons matching the color of the teams you've created
- on jigsaws broken into pieces, hidden in the room (color backgrounds of each jigsaw to show differences for each group)
- in bags with pictures cut up into pieces
- in origami puzzles when they are put together correctly
- in a word that is decipherable when the right path of a labyrinth is found
- and for younger and simpler games, give one clue to the "lock" with each problem solved in an assignment

**Another way to gamify an assignment uses Flipgrid, with the game approach called Fliphunt.**

**Second Possibility: Help Students Figure Out Their Own Thinking** (especially useful for older students)

Here's the plan to use when many of your students are failing to turn in work or do much during class, but there is still time for them to make the grade. Start by getting them on their feet with a surprising set of facts, and lead them into a look at self-awareness. (The success requires you take the role of recorder for them to take ownership.)

Write a 2-3 page describing any strategies you may already have tried and describe the results. Add an analysis of the two big categories of suggested strategies, describe which would be the preferred choice for you, and why.

OR

Write a lesson plan that you could use based on one of these strategies with directions and preparations needed.

### **Assignment #3: Power Out(r)age: The power goes out, or something else stops regular work**

The winds have increased and power lines are down. A lightning bolt struck a transformer in your area. There is a short in the power to the school itself. When the power lines land on the roads, they are unsafe for students to travel home, so they will be in school for a while. You have lost power throughout the building, and you can't do anything but wait it out. Or it may be something else that stops the chance to do your lesson for the day. So what can you do? As much as you would like to salvage the day, it will be difficult. So here are four directions you could go!

#### Solution #1: Power Outage! Clipboard and (Cell) Phone

The first thing that probably will happen is that everyone will have to call somebody. You may find that, if they can use a cellphone of their own, they will probably all be calling people about the situation. You could give them five minutes to do that before going into the next plan. If they do not have their phones, and they seem to be needing to call home, the clipboard can prioritize the list as to who can make one call at a time to their home, on any phone in the room that is working, including your own. (Giving them a chance to call on your phone would make it easier to set limits.)

The next priority is, surprisingly, everyone will need to go to the bathroom.

You may need to use another clipboard or list for arranging the order of students who can leave the room with a cell phone for a lighted path to and within a bathroom as well as a process to allow for taking turns.

#### Solution #2: Review Games or Stories

You probably will not be able to return to the lesson you were planning, due to both technical and attention problems you will be having. If you want to be a teacher who still wants to use time well, you can ask the students if there was a subject they have already studied that they would like to review again in a review game you have already used or can devise, or do 20 Questions or make up a TF Challenge over a former topic. (Madeline Hunter, the creator of early staff development standards, said that we often forget that favorite movies on tv are often rerun, and probably for good reasons. She suggested you let students do something that they genuinely

enjoyed, such as a review game for a previous unit, or listening to a favorite story again.)

### Solution #3: Prompt a Class Collaboration

Have them create a class seating chart and fill in everyone's name; then turn it in for credit. If a map of desks is hard to draw, have them list people until they have the whole class listed. Students can have each student print their own first names.

Create a class average person composite based on questions you ask them to vote on. If someone in the room can outline a shape of a student, you can fill in the class outline with the answers to questions like these:

What is their class favorite food?  
What is the number of pets they have (and average)  
What is their average shoe size?  
What is the midpoint birthday in the class? Do a line-up by months to find out.  
What is their favorite TV show?  
What is their favorite holiday?

CAUTION: Don't use favorite brands of clothing, because that can cause embarrassment for poorer students.

### Solution #4: Let Students Suggest

If you and your students are not inclined to try to salvage a lot of learning in the situation, you could ask students if they have some ideas for what they would like to do with the time. Is it time for a Class Student Talent Show, a 2 Truths and a Lie about themselves, a game they know how to play that they liked to do for a reward in earlier school days, or a chance to teach each other something like making origami shapes with folded paper. Allow subgroups, if there is interest in several possibilities that sound do-able. You may be surprised at the talent they have but never get to show you.

Check the four solutions. In 250-300 words, describe what you would probably prefer to do with the kids at your grade and/or subject area. Or, if you have ever had a similar experience, tell what you did, and the outcome(s).

### **Assignment #4: Line-ups for People, Stories, Events and Places!**

You are going to have a monthly fire drill, occasional earthquake or emergency drills, and even, possibly, a real evacuation, so you need kids to go outside quickly and remain in an alphabetical order so you can take roll to be sure everyone is out. They are not quick. They are not organized. They want to run around outside instead of waiting for you to take roll. And sometimes, you want a fresh way to help them learn to sequence things, or to find a fun way to review a story, history, places or events. This sequencing activity leads to success with all these possibilities.

#### "Get Started"

If students like to get up and move around, you can also use sequencing activities in almost any subject:

#### "Sequencing Events in Stories, Geography, Science and History"

In 3-5 pages, describe a way you could plan to use "Line-ups" some way in your own classroom. If you can use it right away, describe how it went and how you would adjust it. If you can't use it yet, show it to one or more colleagues and ask the colleague(s) for a peer review, for possible additions or variations. You can write your plan informally or in a lesson plan format, and add your peer review or personal evaluation of how it went in your answer.

### **Assignment #5: "I got gum in my hair!" Gum problems need a gum license!**

Once in a while a problem occurs when a school or classroom rule is broken and causes such a disruption that we need to show that rules are for good reasons. Students rarely have the bigger perspective or awareness of the reasons behind most rules. For an example of a rule that may need to be analyzed, the gum ban may be such an example of the bigger rule that has a real reason for being enforced. Although virtually every school has a gum ban, gum shows up from time to time, and sometimes, all of a sudden. Instead of giving students just the reasons it is needed, try adding a remarkable way around it: making a Gum License an option, if all the students in the school would pay (to pay for cleanup costs!)

Then, when you hear something like this, "I got gum in my hair/clothes/chair/desk!" after you finish dealing with the upset person, here is a lesson plan to build a bigger picture behind the gum rule, and the possible way around it. (Be thinking of other rules children and students may need to examine for the assignment for this lesson.)

- [Big Math Problem](#)

Can you think of another rule that students (or possibly your children) might need to understand in a bigger way? Have you had to explain a school rule that you believe is important? Being careful not to choose a hideous outcome from disobeying the rule, describe your strategy for making children/students aware of the reason for that rule, or give them a choice to see how it would work instead of having the rule.

Write as an essay or a lesson plan of 2-3 pages, including your opinion of the reason for your defense, the details of your explanation, and estimate the success of your plan. If you haven't had such a talk with students at this point, can you think of a rule that you think needs to be reinforced with more information? What rule would you choose, and how would you present it? Write 2-3 pages.

#### **Assignment #6: The Kids Behaved Sub-Par! (Be good to your substitute!)**

Substitutes are with us to bring security to the educational system. It is really important that the students are coached about good behavior when they have a substitute. But, occasionally, you get a summary report from a substitute or some of the students that the substitute was not treated well. What should be done when you return? Consider this a teachable moment.

#### ["What to Do When You Get a Bad Report from a Substitute"](#)

#### ["Cartoon Questions"](#)

Develop your plan in case you may need a lesson on being a good class for a substitute. Write your response in three parts: Part 1 would be your own opening script to your class. Part 2 would be the plan for the class response to the substitute. Part 3 would be your parting words when Part 2 has been done. (If you have actually done such a lesson plan, feel free to write what you did and how it went. And if you would rather write your response in a Lesson Plan format, you may.) Write 2-3 pages.

#### **Assignment #7: "Big Talk:" Rotten Tomato Movie Response (paying little attention during a film)**

You found the right film for the right day, and have prepared your class for the film. It may be a documentary; it may be a graphic or picture book brought to life. You have prepared an introduction and told the class what you would like them to notice and then do after the film. You begin the film.

Some students put their heads down to sleep. Some start writing notes to a friend. Some start distracting their classmates. They are taking a "time-out." You realize all your preparation and plans are being ignored. What can you do?

Open the file below to see an assignment to use for film studies that results in student focus. The idea is to give students a chance to pick a person to focus on and record their impressions for just that focus. The idea is to ask students not to look at everything, but to look at one specific person or point of view in the film. They write a first person summary of what that person is thinking and doing, but to do that, they will have to watch virtually everything that happens to that character or topic of focus.

Watch the Power Point ["Big Talk"](#) to see how it works.

Think of a way you could help students focus on a film by preparing one or a set of "Big Talk" assignment sheets to fit the age level of your students. Describe the graphic you would use, explain what would be the feature film or visuals you would use. What would be the purpose of their focus: for instance, analyzing characterization, point of view, perhaps summarizing the content. If you use the strategy, describe how it worked and/or what would you do differently. Or, if you can use this in the future, make a guess about what it might do to aid in class discussion and content review of the film. Write 2-3 pages.

#### **Assignment #8: Been Embarrassed? What to Do!**

Sometimes in our teaching lives, students will do something that is meant to be teasing or just something like an April Fool's prank that is a silly stunt, but it may make us embarrassed, or, at least, uncomfortable. And sometimes we say something that is a mistake, and we embarrass ourselves! How should we react?

Because we are caught by surprise, we need a quick response that is just right, but it can be hard to relax and just laugh.

For starters, read this article from "We are Teachers" about such situations other teachers have had. Notice that the collection of examples came from teachers who had to laugh at it themselves. They are rather naughty, but kids still laughed.

<https://www.weareteachers.com/funny-teacher-typos/>

Then read the excerpts in our text on the third paragraph on page 19; on the third paragraph on p.21, in Chapter 6, "The Lesson Today is Italy," and Chapter 26 "Last Dance." There is a common theme in all these situations, and it seems to be that most embarrassing situations are best handled by taking a deep breath and laughing or hoping for grace. Kids need to see you being able to laugh at yourself and be a good sport. And sometimes you can show your appreciation for their teasing, knowing that most teasing is an evidence of sublimated affection. And if there is anything that needs a further follow-up, you can do it later when you are more able to think about what you'd like to do.

Write 2-3 pages about your own point of view. Have you or a colleague had an embarrassing moment in teaching? If so, how was it handled? Were you able to survive with your dignity intact? What advice would you give a colleague for handling this kind of circumstance? And if the prank was not good-natured, would you suggest sternness or anger? Explain your thoughts about handling

surprises like this from your own point of view.

### **Assignment #9: Here come the Holidays! Teach Something of Value before November & December Holidays**

Both the November and December holidays can be a challenging season for teaching content. Both key holiday seasons provide a rich opportunity to piggyback holiday themes with important academic and social skills lessons.

Open the following two lesson plan files to see:

- 1) How to use [Thanksgiving Season](#) to teach economic concepts of wants versus needs, see the dangers of excessive "wishes," and end with directions to create a class collaboration poem of gratitude
- 2) How to turn the focus in the classic story "[The Gift of the Magi](#)" from being a good "giver," to learn how to be able to be a good "receiver," starting with an assignment to give compliments and analyze typical (inappropriate responses), and ending with a practice exercise using a [white elephant exchange](#) to practice the skill of responding appropriately, no-matter-what!

Choose one of the holiday strategies (or one for some other holiday) and tell how you would either adapt it for your own students, or how you would bring some important content focus to a seasonal lesson plan. Explain how it would fit the season and the developmental and curricular focuses you think are important. Write 2-3 pages or create a lesson plan that you would be able to use (or have used.)

### **Assignment #10: Will You Write in My Yearbook?**

Many schools end the year with publication of some kind of annual, yearbook, or autograph journal.

When a hardbound annual is produced, prices can be very high. (If online annuals are used, students still face the need to respond to request for comments.) Poor messaging in it can be ruinous in either media. Parents and grandparents can be shocked, and students can be embarrassed or hurt.

And elementary children sometimes just want to be able to write a short message that isn't trite. So, in all of these situations, students have had little practice or expertise. The remedy? Practice writing in a customized proxy!

"Will You Write in My Annual?" link [here](#)

If your elementary students simply need a homemade book for their autographs, you may find an inspiring idea from Kirsten Timmons [<kirsten.a.timmons@gmail.com>](mailto:kirsten.a.timmons@gmail.com) whose "yearbooks" are Class Anthologies comprised of the best stories written by each of her students, and bound as a class yearbook. (She actually has the books officially published by [lulu.com](#), and the PTA pays for a copy for each student.) You can see samples of the stories, covers, and published collection [here](#)

For even younger students, you could create a picture book of an art work by each student, or, if no privacy issues, you could take a small picture of each student and print them as a little booklet on your own classroom printer, for the students to sign for each other on their own page.

How could you prepare your students for a year-end practice for summer send-off's appropriate to your students? Write a 2-3 page summary which could include a lesson plan, or a description of your strategy.

## **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

### **B. LEARNING APPLICATION**

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. ?Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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### **Assignment #11: Handling a "Lizard": Meanness or Bullying in Your Classroom**

How can we respond to a bullying problem in which one of more of your students are either the bullies or the victims? Or both? You need to help them care about each other to feel safe and to do group work or share class discussions.

Simply preaching is usually the least effective strategy. Students become defensive and oppositional. So what can we do to increase our effectiveness? Psychology may point us in the right direction.

Stories seem to be an effective solution. Films and stories can be so effective because they raise the positive emotions in the brain, including empathy, and kindness. We are emotionally aroused and want to intervene. Emotions can open or close the gateway to more rational capabilities. (The rational capabilities are less developed in most students, and they are most affected by emotions, positive or negative.) So trying to access student's reasoning is easier when it comes through an open emotional pathway.

Using the next strategy is best done without telling students your plan. They aren't likely to be resistant and defensive at the outset. An introduction can be low key, introduced as a natural addition to the curriculum, or as a reward for recent hard work. The name of this strategy, (from the classic course Project T.E.A.C.H.), is Issue Conversion.

Here's how it works: Instead of attacking a problem head-on, you convert the problem to an issue imbedded in a story or film that appeals to the students' positive emotions. Or it may reduce a bad behavior to a "despicable" label. Either way, the student follows the power of the story before seeing the connection to a problem you are hoping to solve. For younger children, you may need to make the connection, skillfully, after using the story or film. For older children, you may not need to. Read Chapter 5 in the text, "Lizard," for an example of how such a strategy was used to address bullying. In this chapter, two possibilities were combined, either of which could be an example of using an issue conversion.

Read the information in the Reflection Section of the book, pages 109-110. Notice how both the realia (the \$20 bill) and the story were used in this example.

For elementary students, stories in your library are a great source of SEL materials. Stories with a "belonging" theme are widely available and useful. For secondary students, films like "Renaissance Man" or "Freedom Writers" can show a class how hostile classes came together (but don't preface the showing of the film with your purpose. It seems too manipulative, and can ruin the connections they can make themselves, even very unintentionally). You can make the assignment using "Big Talk" graphics and let students be the voice of any of the characters they would choose. That makes the discussions afterward provide another layer of processing, making it look more natural instead of remedial.

Answer both questions from the Reflection section of Chapter 5 on p. 110, writing 2-3 pages

A) Can you think of any serious problems that might come up in a class that might be addressed with a children's story, (like "The Boy Who Called Wolf,") a movie, or a story you might create? Note that most children's stories have universal morals to reveal.

AND

B) In "Lizard," the teacher also used a concrete metaphor to bring a surprising message. For some students, seeing and witnessing the wasted money was more powerful, even, than the story of Pinocchio. For you, which strategy would have been more powerful? Why?

### **Assignment #12: Finders, Keepers: When someone won't return an object that belongs to someone else**

One of the familiar chants of childhood is, "Finders, Keepers, Losers, Weepers!" It rhymes and sounds so decisive. But sooner or later, someone drops something or has it taken by someone who should give it back, and usually the class knows all about it and wants to see justice.

The remedy modeled here is similar to the issue conversion strategy, in which a similar problem is clothed in a story that helps students feel empathy for the person who has lost something that has been found and should be returned.

But in this example, another option is provided: telling a story about your own life in which you lost something of value and had it returned. (A story, if not about you, about a friend or relative who had the experience.)

Read "Finders, Keepers," Chapter 18 in the text.

In 2-3 pages, answer the two Reflection Questions in the text on page 113:

A) (When) should an emergent problem among students justify a change of plans for the class that day?

B) Which might deliver a stronger moral message to a class: a story or a direct message? What might be gained or lost with either approach?

Answer the two reflection questions for "Finders Keepers" on p. 113 in the Reflection section of the text.

### **Assignment #13: (500 Level ONLY) Code Blue: Something Serious is Happening**

Schools are full of life and drama of all sorts, and as kids pass through your classes, you may witness something bordering on serious or dangerous. You wonder if you can handle something really serious or dangerous well. These events are not part of everyday school life, but when something really serious happens, it can make educators reassess their own resilience and skills.

For elementary students, the threats to a teacher are just as disturbing as the events in the text that chronicle serious secondary situations. Read these two chapters in the text: Chapter 13, "The Bodyguard," and Chapter 15, "Betrayal and Reconciliation."

Then choose to answer four of the six Review Questions among both chapters, writing 3-4 pages:

"The Bodyguard": A) How did this story reveal something about student aggression? (on

Mike's part)

- B) What did it reveal about the power of stories/movies?
- C) What did it reveal about the power of peer wisdom, empathy, and kindness instead of teacher leadership and empathy?

"Betrayal and Reconciliation":

- A) What can teachers do to deal with an immediate sense of "rage" when something insulting and undeserved comes their way?
- B) What does a class that is witnessing such an event need from a teacher?
- C) If a teacher suffers from classroom PTSD, what is a good course of action?

OR

If you have experienced such a situation, explain what happened and what was the outcome. What did you learn about yourself in that situation? What did you learn about your students? Write 3-4 pages.

#### **Assignment #14: (500 Level ONLY) Sign Posts**

Choosing to be a teacher is a very gratifying decision and often provides intrinsic rewards to treasure over a lifetime. Yet, along the way in the career, we can really benefit when we receive a validation that elevates our wisdom and skills, feeds our energy, and adds to our commitment. I call those validations "sign posts." We all need them for growth and insights. In Chapter 16, there are examples of career sign posts that exemplify their value and their power. Understanding the value of sign posts should help promote our own opportunities to give sign posts to deserving colleagues.

Read "Sign Posts" in the text and complete the assignment.

Please write a personal response to the three questions in the Reflection section of the book, on page 113. Write 3-4 pages.

- A) Have you ever received what could be called a "sign post" in your life? How did it affect you?
- B) Which of the validations in "Sign Posts" would have been most appreciated by you as a teacher? Explain your choice.
- C) Looking at the dates across the years, what might be suggested about the importance of Sign Posts compared with usual praise or feedback in a career?

#### **Assignment #15: (500 Level ONLY) Disrespecting A Para-Pro!**

Sometimes you and your students are blessed with the help of a para-professional who can help your students when they are stuck! But your students are not asking for help or accepting it from the para.

They may just really love to have your attention, and yours only, which is not feasible when a lot of students need help simultaneously. In addition, the reasons for refusing help from someone else may be due to some kind of rejection by the students due to a prejudice of some sort.

If that should happen, it calls for a remedy! There are ways to work on the problem that could have unintended consequences if handled without a good plan. One good plan is suggested in the chapter of our text, "Tea with Mrs. Hu," Chapter 22. Read that chapter and respond to the assignment below.

Answer all three prompts in the Reflection section of the text (p. 114.) Write 2-3 pages about your conclusions.

- A) Not every object of prejudice has an amazing reveal like Mrs. Hu. So, do you think any event to get to know someone better would have had a good result anyway? Why, or why not?
- B) If the teacher had spoken to the class directly about what they were losing when they rejected her offers to help, do you think they would have changed their attitudes or behavior?
- C) How might a direct message to the class have affected Mrs. Hu, as well?

#### **C. INTEGRATION PAPER**

Assignment #16: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

#### **SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER**

**(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)**

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
  2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
  3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
  4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
  5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?
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### **INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

### **QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

**Mary Ann Johnson, M.Ed Adm.** has worked with students of all levels, from alternative high school to gifted classes. She has also been a junior high vice principal and is now working with teachers for continuing education in classes, distance learning and building leadership groups. She is a teacher emeritus who has led seminars for educators which focus on developing a quality learner environment for students and for teachers. Her courses are research-based and resonate with user-friendly and energizing content.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

#### **VALUABLE LESSONS FOR CRAZY DAYS**

"24 Escape Room Ideas to Excite Middle Schoolers," by Jennifer Betts, B.A, 3/26/25, TPT Blog Middle School ELA (write to Mary Ann if you have trouble finding it; I will send you a copy)

Ephron, Delia with drawings by Edward Koren, Do I Have to Say Hello? Aunt Delia's Manners Quiz for Kids and Their Grownups, hard copy, 1989, 128 pg, ISBN:0-670-82855-6

( Readily available on two used sites, between \$4.99 and \$5.40 and is often in your school library)

This book uses humor and graphics to deal with selfish or antisocial behaviors for a more delightful and effective approach

"Inovart Puzzle," Blank white jig saw puzzles to provide a prop for your clues to the "locks" for Escape Rooms.  
Available on Amazon.com and a variation may also be available inexpensively at Dollar Stores

[lauracandler.com/engaging-ways-to-introduce-new-content](http://lauracandler.com/engaging-ways-to-introduce-new-content)

Provides 5 suggestions that break the habit of always beginning a lesson by telling about new content with ways you will find really appealing

Lyman, Paige Ellsworth, A Practical Guide to Writing Your Own Clues, Designing Puzzles, and Creating Your Own Challenges, pb, amazon, 2021, 192 pages, ISBN 978-1-5107-5880-3

This book will help you with all the background, options, specific ideas, and a chapter for using the strategies with children.

[npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/#persuade-us-unleashing-the-brain-power-of-narrative](http://npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/#persuade-us-unleashing-the-brain-power-of-narrative), "How Stories Connect and Persuade Us: Unleashing The Brain Power of Narrative" 4/11/20

"When you listen to a story, your brain waves actually start to synchronize with those of the storyteller. And reading a narrative activates brain regions involved in deciphering of imaging a person's motives and perspective, research has found." (This study is based on MRI scans that light up certain parts of the brain while listening to a story.)

Patterson, Jerry L. and Kelleher, Paul, Resilient School Leaders: Strategies for Turning Adversity into Achievement, 2005, pb 175, ASCD, ISBN1-4166-0267-4

[planlikearockstar.blogspot.com/2016/07-planning-for-substitute-helpful-tips.html](http://planlikearockstar.blogspot.com/2016/07-planning-for-substitute-helpful-tips.html)

"Planning for a Substitute: Helpful Tips and a Checklist": A primary teacher provides samples of the props and handouts needed to make a teacher absence into a good day for a substitute and for the class.  
Many ideas would work for any grade level.

"Students Helping Students in a Crisis": [google.com/search? q=students+helping+students+in+crisis+rlz=1C1RXMK-enUS1078&oq=students+helping+students+in+crisis+gs\\_lcrp](https://www.google.com/search?q=students+helping+students+in+crisis+rlz=1C1RXMK-enUS1078&oq=students+helping+students+in+crisis+gs_lcrp)

A list compiled by counseling experts of 11 ways students can be supportive of their peers facing a crisis, and additional ways for teachers to add to the strategies by students

[theteacherscorner.net/classroom-management/line-up.php](http://theteacherscorner.net/classroom-management/line-up.php)

This lesson plan provides 13 delightful ways to teach and enjoy getting students to learn to line up and included ways to keep their attention while in line, if you need that too.