

Silly Paperwork

What's the silliest paperwork you've had to fill out?

Answer: We had to fill out a form that asked how much paperwork we have and what it was used for.

BILLIE SPRADLEY
Eighth-grade English teacher
Anniston, Alabama



Answer: While I was off work for maternity leave 20 years ago, a worker's compensation representative arrived at my door and said I was eligible if I filled out the forms. I was answering the usual information until I read: "Explain, as accurately as possible, how and when this injury occurred." I answered, tongue in cheek, and was granted the compensation. My husband said I should have gone into great detail.

KAREN MANDEVILLE
Retired teacher, Clinton Township, Michigan

Bathroom Breaks

What do you do about a student who keeps asking to go to the restroom during class?

JOHN SANCHEZ
Middle school English and journalism teacher
Alta Loma, California

Answer: I keep a booklet for bathroom use and students sign and date it when they go. It has stopped habitual users because I can show it to parents.

TERRI O'DONNELL
San Pedro, California

Answer: I say, "No problem, just make up the time after class."

MICHAL REED
High school teacher
Porterville, California

Answer: When a student has to go, a student has to go, but how do you know? At the beginning of the quarter, I give each student three bathroom passes. I collect unused passes for extra credit at the end of the quarter.

MICHAEL DONELSON
High school English teacher
Upper Arlington, Ohio



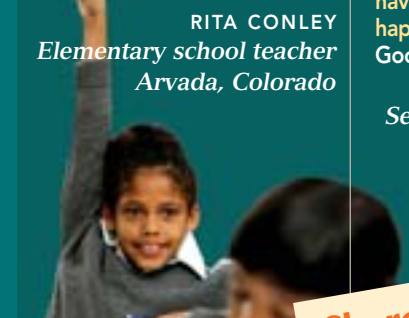
Comparative Poetry

On our Colorado fourth-grade reading exam, the items missed most often are about poetry. We read and write poems, but for this test, students have to compare poems. Does anyone know of good teaching materials for that?

RITA CONLEY
Elementary school teacher
Arvada, Colorado

Answer: Find two poems similar in theme or structure. 1. Show them on the overhead. 2. Make two columns, "same" and "different." 3. Get students talking about the poems by pointing out how each poem falls on the page (typography). 4. How is the message conveyed: Is it subtle? Is it obvious? 5. Does this fit your idea of poetry? Does a good poem have to rhyme? 6. What is happening in this poem? Good Luck!

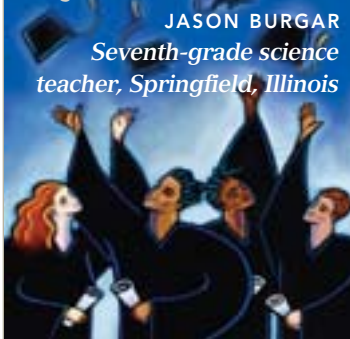
RACHEL DIMASSA
Secondary English and art teacher, South Lyon, Michigan



Master's Degree

I would like to get a master's degree, but I still have a student loan from obtaining my bachelor's. Are there grants or scholarships available to teachers like me? I really don't want to go further into debt.

JASON BURGAR
Seventh-grade science teacher, Springfield, Illinois



Share your wisdom, ask your question!

What's the worst mistake you've found in a textbook?

Send your answers to these or other questions on this page to ajehlen@nea.org. Or, send us a question you'd like to see posted. Please include your name, your job, and the community and state where you work.

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