



# Friday Focus

## Carter County Schools

### Lights, Camera, Action!

"Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand. This Chinese proverb was popularized by Benjamin Franklin and is now used by many schools as a framework for teaching. Walking into classrooms and seeing students who are actively engaged would make Ben smile! He would be thrilled to see students interacting with their peers, participating in small group activities, creating hands-on projects, and making connections between their studies and real life.

Research shows that students are **not** attentive to what is being said in a lecture 40% of the time. This percentage is much higher for younger students. Knowing this statistic, we must find ways to engage our students in order to increase learning. This sometimes

means that we trade in the worksheets for manipulatives and the textbooks for technology.

As you think about active engagement in your classroom, picture yourself in a student desk. What would being actively involved look like, feel like, and sound like to you? What if you could recreate that for your students? **Here is the challenge:** Make your classroom a place where your students have the best day with the best teacher in the best class where they learn more than they ever thought they could...and make that happen TODAY.

#### Active Engagement in Math

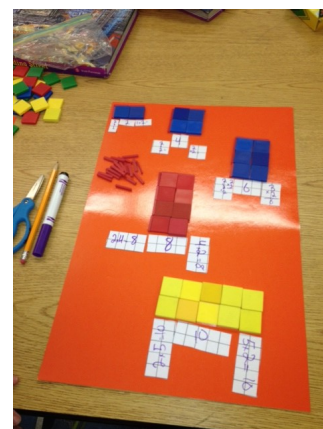
We are working on multiplication and division in 3rd grade. Student engagement was at a high level while working with square unit tiles modeling arrays for 2's. We built arrays, cut arrays, and labeled and framed them with unit bars. (see picture)

It is important to have your students model their ideas in several ways. Lesh, Post & Behr (1987) have proposed 5 different representations for concepts (cited in Van De Walle, 2006 p. 10). They are: Pictures, written symbols, oral language, real-world situations, and manipulative models.

Researchers have found that when students can represent ideas in various ways "there is a better chance of a concept being formed correctly and integrated into a rich web of ideas" (Van De Wahl (2006 p.10). -by Leigh Williams, Upper Tygart Elementary

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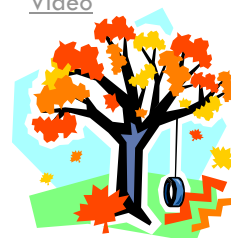
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### What Great Teachers Do Differently

Todd Whitaker's third thing that matters most for effective teachers is "Prevention." He focuses on what effective teachers do when a student misbehaves. He says there is one goal that motivates great teachers in response to student misbehavior: to keep that behavior from happening again. The least effective teacher often has a different goal: revenge—they are often focused on punishing the child.

Whitaker points out that the misbehavior is the past and we must focus on what we have the ability to influence, which is future behaviors. For example, when we work with parents, we hope they will work with us to support their child's future success. We all know that often times parents focus on past grades, past behavior incidents, past teachers, or past school memories from their own childhoods. This is not productive for the child, parent, or teacher.

The same is true for the academic success of each individual child. Once a child treads down the path of academic failure, they find it difficult to change paths. Furthermore, because of his/her individual situation, he/she often feels unmotivated and unsupported to change paths. That is where the most effective teachers and administrators play the greatest role. You must let students know you care, be willing to give them a second chance to complete an assignment, and go that extra mile to make a difference in their lives. The end result will be a successful child, which leads to a future productive community member. Remember: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."