

Kristine Brickner

I am an educator who takes learning in the classroom as opportunities to see and understand our world outside of school. These opportunities include changing our room into an Arctic adventure, a bat cave, a surgical room, and even an airplane that transports our class to different places around the world. This grant would provide resources for a richer learning experience on our crazy adventures. It would also provide a link from school to home resources which could be used for many more years to come.

“Standing out from the crowd is the only way to guarantee your message is received in a culture that is increasingly distracted and where attention spans are plummeting. If you feel your message is important, and I do, it is worth the effort to go to any lengths to make sure it is successfully delivered” (Burgess, 2012, pg. 56). This quote sums up my transformation about becoming an educator. I always felt I was bad at history. I never fully understood or retained the information. This quote switched my thinking about how I do not hate history rather I hate the way it was taught. I wish I had classes that transformed my thinking and I should hold this same belief for my students. My goal is to turn a negative personal experience into a positive transformation. I find the memorable experience and amplify it! So many times, we focus on the negatives and feel burned out and this in turn shuts down our enthusiasm switch. I need to always be “on” for my students. They deserve nothing less.

Students need to have that exhilaration of being able to “enjoy the process of becoming” (Sullivan and Glanz, 2006, p. 30). I believe that the students’ ownership of their environment is a crucial aspect to successful learning. When the classroom is transformed into a meaningful learning experience, learning is fun and unforgettable. I provide traditional and differentiated elements into my classroom and I “unconditionally accept students as they are, and expect them

to become all they can be” (Tomlinson, 1999, p.10). I take their excitement and channel it through activities that are engaging and challenging. It is amazing watching them grow and change with a simple switch of their learning environment. If I had a stethoscope, real to life xrays, my body action cards, the first grade STEM idea book, leveled science readers, a map that teaches rug, and passport books from FriendsOffice, I could take our integrated language arts with science and social studies activities to a more real-life experience level. These supplies would also benefit classes for many more years to come.

I want to build a strong parent-teacher relationship which will create a memorable and meaningful learning experience for each child. Parents are ultimately their child’s first teacher. I want to instill a confidence in parents that these new rigorous goals we want these students to achieve are attainable through fun and interactive games. If I had dice and wipe off dry erase pockets for each student from FriendsOffice, I would host a math night for parents to demonstrate how they can use these tools year after year to help strengthen their math skills. Having a strong math foundation in the early years helps create a confident problem solver as they grow.

My teaching pedagogy provides a nurturing yet enriching learning environment. I value the communication with parents, colleagues, and administrators to ensure that I am offering the best education possible for each student. Students in my classroom grow socially, emotionally, and academically. These resources would provide meaningful real-life learning experiences that these students will never forget. I am teaching for the future and they are ready to change the world!

## References

- Burgess (2012). *Teach Like a Pirate: Increase Student Engagement, Boost Your Creativity, and Transform Your Life as an Educator*. San Diego, CA: Dave Burgess Consulting, Inc.
- Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2006). *Building effective learning communities: Strategies for leadership, learning, & collaboration* (Chapter 2). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.