

Poolville Elementary School *The Monarch Metropolitan*

September 13, 2020: Edition XXV - Getting 'Word Wise'!

A Letter From the Editor: *Rhyme Time Ready...Prime Time Students!*

Today's edition of *The Monarch Metropolitan* has me reflecting on something the first principal I ever worked for would say when she wanted us to spend more time reflecting on our teaching practices. The statement went something like this:



"If Cinderella's shoe fit perfectly, then why did it fall off in the first place?"

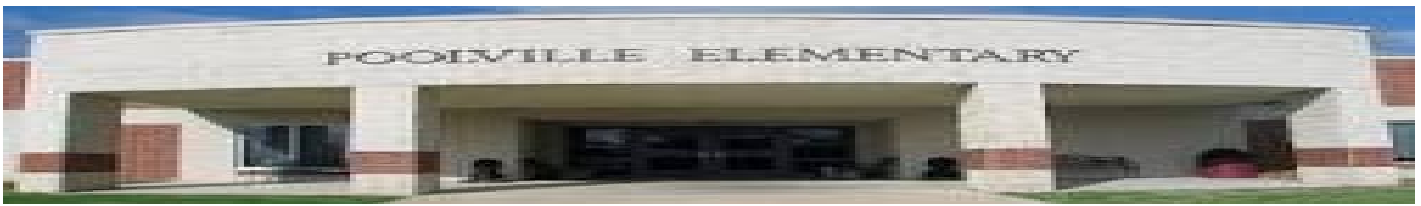
The first time I heard these words was in a grade level testing meeting. My class had just concluded a benchmark test, and I was extremely excited. The students averaged a 92%+ mastery level for six weeks worth of mathematics material.

My principal offered the saying to challenge and grow me in order to assist the other 8%. In education, every child counts. Success is required for 100% of the students 100% of the time.

I left her office determined to reach 100% mastery for all students on the following six weeks benchmark. I began researching practices and perfecting new research-based ways to increase student success.

This gave birth to "Rhyme-alongs". This term describes the idea of teaching through jingles, songs, and raps to aid student information retention and application levels. It's fun, easy to master, and produces immediate results in a classroom.

As a proof of concept, I asked each member of my household to create a "Rhyme-along" for you.



tongue falls out!

Dawson (Age 9) = I have a little dog that is short and stout. If you tip him over his



it is for you!

Griffin (Age 14) = Roses are red. Pizza sauce is too. I ordered a 'large' and none of

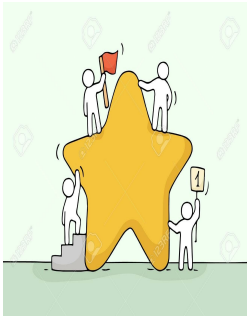


Michael (Age 21...my Marine) = The last to know, the first to go! Semper Fi, do or die!



sleeping in class!

Lori (Don't even think about it!) = Your teacher has shaken you to awaken you...No



Jason (Age Unknown) = Let's turn our can'ts into cans and our dreams into PLANS!

Here are the five simple steps for creating your own 'Rhyme-along' magic.

1. Start with a short list of concepts you want students to know.

The first step to creating a good jingle is to write down all the important concepts you want your students to know about a particular topic.

Here is an example I observed once during a walkthrough when the class was learning about prehistoric art:

Cave paintings are the earliest known art form.
Art functioned as a first "language."
The cave paintings are proof of the artist/story teller's existence.
With those three things in mind, I came up with:

"Uga Booga, Uga Booga, cave man art;
Leaving their marks sure was smart!
Art's the first language, this we know;
Because it's from 38,000 years ago!"

2. Write down all the vocabulary words that accompany your topic.

Another way to spark an idea is to create a vocabulary list. Not only will this help you find potential rhymes, but it will help remind you to include important words you want students to remember.

3. Keep it short and sweet.

The whole purpose of a jingle is to get a message across in a short time frame. It's no different in the classroom! Short compositions with six lines or less work best.

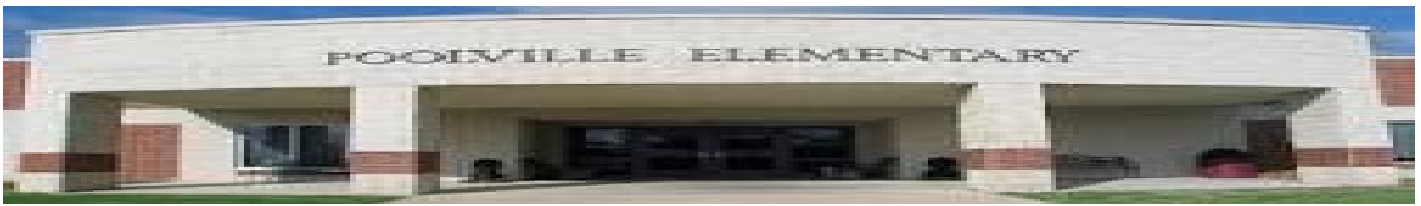
4. Add movements and actions to keep it fun.

Adding movements or actions for kinesthetic learning helps students to remember the words. To teach students one of these rhymes, I simply perform it for them a few times and then have them join me. It keeps it fun and exciting!

5. Get your students in on the action!

After students are familiar with the concept of using jingles and rhymes to learn, invite them to try and create some of their own. You could do this as a whole group activity with younger students or have older students work with partners or in small groups.

Here are a few more examples:



Abstract Art...

Pol-lock splashed! Pol-lock splashed!
Made his art move really fast.
Start and stop!
Drip and drop!
It all be-gins with a simple thought.
Pol-lock splashed!

Ancient Egypt...

Hiero – glyphics!
They're terr-ific!
Egyptian writing, how EXCITING!

Classical Greece...

Three little columns all in a row.
Doric is plain. Now you know!
Ionic has a spiral;
Corinthian's all fluff;
Draw all three; there's no rush!

Impressionism...

Monet was a man;
An artsy kinda guy.
He painted the water;
The wind, and the sky.
IM-PRESS-ION-ISM is what it's called;
He was paintin' kinda fuzzy;
And havin' a ball!

Conclusion:

It's no secret jingles are catchy for a reason. Putting words to music makes them easier to understand. It provides a hook for easier memory retrieval. So why not use the same method in your classroom?

I've seen this approach work well at both the elementary and secondary level. It's truly a wonderful (and super fun) tool to help your students retain important information. I can't wait to see how this works for you and your students.

Let's capitalize on this creativity. Let's take research-based risks. It takes a village in the teaching world. I am grateful to be part of yours!

Let's change our practices. Out with the old, in with the NEW!

Let's use RESEARCH to fuel Monarch LEARNING!

Good luck!

- Jason Cheslock