

GIFTED AND TALENTED SERVICE NEWSLETTER

By: Kelli Tebbe



February/March 2015

“STRENGTH: A river cuts through a rock not because of its power but its PERSISTENCE” - Unknown

LAYING LOW AND KEEPING IT SIMPLE

I know how busy everyone is right now so my plan is to give you some simple ideas to think about and hopefully some uplifting activities you can do with your students in the classroom.

As the year quickly winds down, stay focused on the **positives** you see in your students as they have no doubt *grown leaps and bounds this year* with your *guidance* and *patience*. Take time to reflect on all that you have accomplished this year and consider the possibilities that lie ahead.



“COMMON CORE AND AMERICA’S HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS”

This easy read, outlines some important considerations to keep in mind as we move forward in planning instruction and programming for our high achieving students.

The Fordham Institute has released this report, which you can download [here](#).

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH MARCH MADNESS

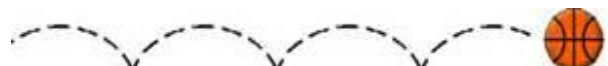
“You can feel the frenzy of Cinderella stories and brackets busting. The Big Dance. The Road to the Final Four. Call it what you want, but for three weeks, the nation turns its eye to the NCAA tournament, falling in love with underdogs and holding its breath on each buzzer-beating shot. Hoops hysteria begins on Selection Sunday, the night when millions are glued to ESPN, waiting to see which 68 tickets will be punched to the Big Dance.

As teachers, we should create the same excitement, hope and drama in our classes.”

In an article by Brian Sztanik, a literature teacher from NY, find all the how-tos to add this engaging idea to your ELA classrooms. Everything from creating the brackets to forming groups and voting is explained. Along with tips to incorporate this real world idea it into math and social studies classes as well.

In his [article](#), Brian reminds us to “be creative. The brackets are just a context for student engagement -- it makes students look forward to class each day.”

Resource:
["March Madness Meets AP Lit"](#) by Brian Sztank.
www.edutopia.com, 2014.

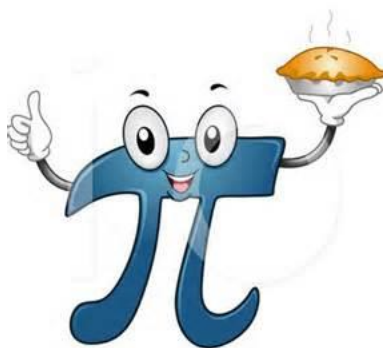


DON'T FORGET TO CELEBRATE PI DAY WITH THESE FUN ACTIVITIES

Pi Day is coming on March 14, and the annual celebration offers a great opportunity for students to explore pi and math-related concepts! ([Pi Day 2015 is extra special too](#), thanks to the aligning of the calendar.) Of course, there are plenty of great teaching resources online to help your class celebrate Pi Day, so we thought we'd help you sort through them all.

Here are a few favorites from around the web, starting first with an interesting music-related pi lesson, "What Pi Sounds Like," which was produced by musician Michael Blake. This video is a fun resource that can help students of all ages get excited about pi. Happy Pi Day!

- [San Francisco Exploratorium Pi Day Activities](#): Without the Exploratorium, official Pi Day celebrations might never have happened. In 1988, Exploratorium physicist Larry Shaw started the tradition, and it was finally recognized by Congress in 2009. The Exploratorium highlights some great hands-on activities on their Pi Day page, with links to useful pi-related resources.
- [Happy Pi Day, TeachPi.org](#): TeachPi hosts a trove of Pi Day resources, featuring fun classroom activities, Pi Day-inspired music, and other fun learning ideas. There's plenty here to keep students engaged and learning, on March 14. Check out the [activities section](#) for a bunch of great learning ideas.
- [Scholastic Pi Day Teaching Ideas](#): Scholastic produced this list of plans for three different grade spans: preschool - grade 1, grades 2-3, and grades 4-6. The page features interesting information about the history of pi, ideas for activities and a link to a [web application for exploring the music of pi](#). Another great Scholastic resource is: "[Writing With Pi](#)."
- [PBS LearningMedia Pi-Related Resources](#): PBS LearningMedia features a great collection of geometry lessons related to pi on their site. These aren't specifically for Pi Day, but they're especially relevant on March 14. Plus, for more math and pi-themed lessons, OER Commons has [curated more than 100 resources](#) from a variety of sources.



illustrations of.com #1094785

[What Is Pi, and How Did It Originate?](#): *Scientific American* dug deep into the history of pi in this article, offering an insightful look at the origins of the mathematical constant.

(continued)

(continued)

[TeachersFirst's Pi Day Resources](#): TeachersFirst offers this great roundup of pi-themed lessons and resources from around the web, focused primarily on high school. Included in the collection are some general math resources, like Simpsons Math, and they all come from a variety of great sources.

[Pi-Related Resources, Joy Of Pi](#): Author David Blatner is a pi fanatic, and his website Joy Of Pi features tons of useful and interesting information. Included on the resources page are links to sites that can help you learn the history of pi, how to calculate pi, and mysteries about the number.

Source:

"7 Classroom Resources for Pi Day" by Matt Davis. www.edutopia.com, 2015.

DI VIDEO SERIES

The following includes several short video clips outlining some myths and suggestions on how differentiated instruction fits into the classroom. In each video, known guru, Carol Tomlinson addresses common misunderstandings and tips to be success in using DI in the classroom.

[Two Misconceptions about DI](#): How DI can lead students to success on standardized testing and DI is effective for all types of student learners.

[A Misconception About DI](#): DI is not an "extra" thing to do in the classroom.

[A Rationale for DI in Today's Classrooms](#): Why it is imperative we use DI in today's classrooms

The two videos below are from teachers who have found one way to make DI work in their school.

[Academic Success for All Students: A Multi-Tiered Approach](#): Grades K-5

[Reaching All High School Students: A Multi-Tiered Approach](#): Grades 6-12



ATTENTION STEM TEACHERS:

NASA has stepped up to meet the needs of science and STEM students and teachers alike, offering two websites for age-grouped students. Both sites offer resources for teachers, too, to complement the science activities.

These are the two sites:

***StarChild, A Learning Center for Young Astronomers** (*students under age 14*)

<http://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html>

Teacher/classroom resources include activities and related booklets

***Imagine the Universe!** (*students age 14 and up*)

<http://imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/home.html>

Teacher/classroom resources include lesson plans and an array of activity booklets, posters, and other materials

If you teach science to children or are a parent to students who might benefit from a deeper understanding of science, these sites are excellent resources.