



## 100 Reasons

Remember our 100 Reasons for Adventist Education campaign? In June, we began this initiative to solicit responses to compile into a marketing campaign for K-12 Adventist education. We want to know what people's most compelling reasons as to why Adventist education matters. Why did you go to an Adventist school? Why do you send your child or grandchild to an Adventist school? What are the highlights, the best parts of Adventist education? We planted the seed for it *here* in the June issue of *Connection* and have also been requesting responses through our Facebook page, at campmeetings, and in churches. We've received responses from teachers and parents and church members and students all over the country. As educators, we feel like you might have one of the best perspectives on the value of Adventist education and we want to make sure that you have a chance to submit your reasons by the August 31 deadline. Those who submit at least three reasons will have their name entered into a raffle for a \$100 Amazon gift card and other prizes! Please visit the survey now and send us your thoughts! You may also email us directly at [crae@lasierra.edu](mailto:crae@lasierra.edu), subject title: 100 Reasons.



# The Desk

## New Teacher 411

Did you know recent research\* has shown that between 40-50% of new teachers will quit within the first five years of teaching? Teaching has been described to be an occupation that "eats its young." I had to laugh when I first read that but then shook my head knowingly as I thought back to my first year of teaching. As much as undergraduate programs seek to prepare education majors for running their own classroom, there still remains an enormous learning curve that all new teachers face that first year.

Given the rate of teacher turnover across the country as well as the demographics and dynamics of our own Adventist educational system, there is a good chance that you have a first year teacher on your campus this year. You have the opportunity to make a huge impact on this educator's life. The success – or failure – of this first year could drastically alter the path of his/her career.

Knowing this responsibility you have, how can you help that teacher survive – and even thrive! – this first year? What tools can you equip them with to ensure a higher likelihood of success?

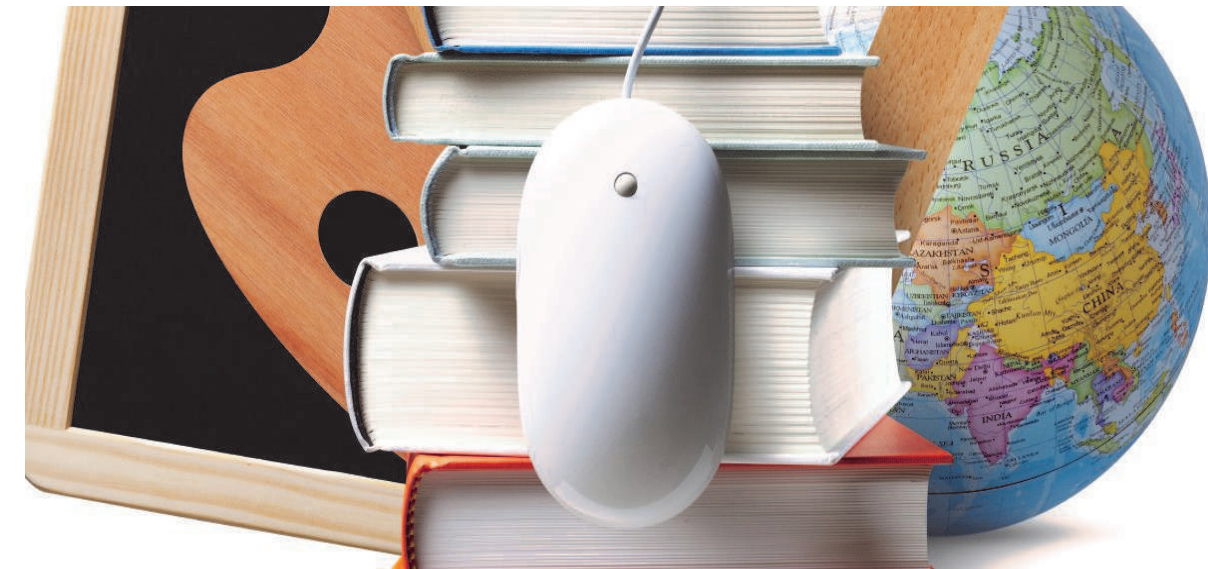
**Create a care package.** Fill a small basket with things that you think a new teacher would appreciate. This is something you could do on your own or ask your Home and School parent to assemble. Basket items could include: a map of your town, notes and well wishes from the other staff, microwave popcorn for those late nights at school, gift cards to restaurants in the area, classroom timer, personalized keychain, or things with your school

**Check in regularly.** We know that you already have 17 things on your daily to-do list that you *don't* get to, but we cannot stress the importance of checking in with your first-year teachers on a consistent basis. More often than not, they will not have the time or energy or initiative to seek you out themselves and only through consistent contact prompted by you will you see and hear how they are doing and have a better idea of how to help.

**Mentor match.** Is there an effective, seasoned teacher on your staff who would be willing to mentor the new teacher throughout the year? While a supportive administrator is helpful and necessary, it is also invaluable to have the perspective and encouragement of a peer or colleague. Encourage your mentor teacher to meet with the new teacher regularly and support him/her to this end by providing the mentor teacher with time to do so. Explore ways of reducing their supervision load or arranging an hour of aide time to offset the additional responsibility of mentoring.

Remember – you have been *gifted* with a new teacher – a passionate educator who is full of innovative ideas and thoughts and dreams! By being intentional about the way you are supporting this new teacher, you are making a priceless investment that will be repaid a thousand times over as he or she becomes a confident, poised educator and continues the important work of sharing Jesus with children

A monthly newsletter filled with practical, research-based articles for K-12 educators across the North American Division



## A Note from the Editor

Welcome to the 2015-2016 school year! Whether you were spending time with family, taking classes, attending the General Conference in San Antonio, TX, or catching up on projects at home, we hope that the summer rejuvenated you and that finding this new issue in your inbox is an exciting reminder that the upcoming year is about to begin.

Before your campus hums once again with the sounds of children talking, laughing, learning and playing, we want you to take a few moments to consider our theme for this month: *connect*. My young daughter was working on a connect-the-dots picture the other day and after spending a great deal of time on the project, she threw her crayon down in frustration and complained, "I did all this connecting, and it doesn't look like *anything!*"

We certainly hope that isn't the case when we connect and reach out to people, don't we? We want our time and energy and intention to be significant and to *look like something* when we're done. In fact, we launched the *CRAE Connection* one year ago precisely because of this theme, this desire to *connect* with K-12 educators around the country – to bring you new and relevant ideas for your classroom, share interesting research that can be applied to your teaching, and provide a space for you to connect with others who are doing what you're doing.

And so we challenge you with this idea as you begin this year. You have before you a clean slate, a brand new school year in which to teach, touch, and inspire those who come through your doors and onto your campus. How will you connect with them? What can you do to create a sense of community in your classroom and amongst your school family? How can you fully engage your students, your staff, your colleagues and your parents?

In *the Chalkboard*, we've compiled a convenient list for elementary educators to connect with their students and parents during that crucial first week of school. Over at *the Locker Room*, look for ways to engage your students through your specific subject. And finally, for our administrators at *the Desk*, we'd like to draw your attention to some ideas for connecting your staff together and forming a strong team that will face the school year as a united front.

Blessings on you during these last moments of preparation for the next ten months! May God's hands reach out and strengthen the connections that you seek to make with all those you meet.

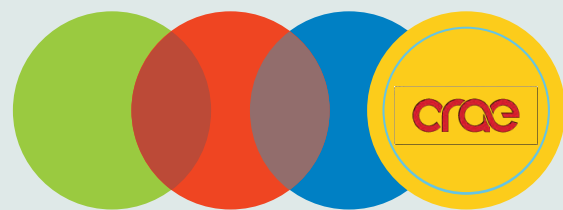


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## The Chalkboard: notes for the elementary educator

### New Beginnings

Have you ever attended a birthday party and watched as the celebrated child opened presents? Can you remember that moment when he or she reached the last present in the stack – often the largest or most beautifully wrapped? The collective breath that's held, the quivering excitement in the room, the whispered guesses about the contents of the box, and the almost palpable tension? What pressure! What anticipation! What delight!

And here you are – about to unwrap and dive into that first week of school! What a gift! This first week holds so many opportunities for connecting, for getting to know your new class, and for laying the foundation for a successful school year.

We've scoured the internet and compiled a list of fantastic ideas that even the most veteran educator should check out! They all include creative and interesting ways to connect with

both your new students and their parents.

#### Getting acquainted

- Silhouette art<sup>1</sup>: A neat way for students to share themselves through this art project (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

- Index card houses<sup>2</sup>: Great activity that provides prompts for students to write about and then engages them in building a fun structure (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

- "Can't" funerals<sup>3</sup>: I love this idea of compiling a list of "can'ts" and holding a funeral for them! While we often seek to focus on the positives, I think that allowing for time to identify the things that are holding us back is valuable, especially when followed up with critical reflection on what we can do about those things. (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

- Letters to self<sup>4</sup>: There are countless ways to tweak and adapt this idea, but the general purpose is to engage students in self-reflection as to who they are now – at the beginning of the year – and

who they wish to become. (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

- Wanted ads<sup>5</sup>: Handled sensitively, this could be an awesome activity that really allows students to connect with classmates that they may not have sought out otherwise. (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

- All about me<sup>6</sup>: Some sweet and simple templates for students to fill out to share several facts about themselves. (K-2)

- Bead-glyph<sup>7</sup>: Fun activity for younger kids to identify themselves and find similarities with other students. (K-2)

#### Group icebreakers

- Pipe cleaner challenge<sup>8</sup>: Just a couple household items will get this simple activity going and get kids thinking and working together. (K-8<sup>th</sup>)

- Cup challenge<sup>9</sup>: Really intriguing group activity that will require collaboration and creative thinking. (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

- Jenga conversation starters<sup>10</sup>: Jenga seems to be making a comeback these days! I've seen these wooden blocks at baby showers, weddings and now classrooms! What a fun way to elicit responses from students. (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

#### Parent connections

- Google Parent<sup>11</sup>: With more and more of your parents so connected to technology, it only makes sense for teachers to harness the collaborative power that technology affords and channel that into ways of connecting with parents. This link provides some good – but simple – ways of using Google in the classroom and with parents.

- Back-to-School Night<sup>12</sup>: One of the largest events of the year, Back-to-School Night requires a great deal of planning, organization and thought. This handbook has a general, but comprehensive list of suggestions to make your Back-to-School Night successful.

1) [www.mrsbrownart.com/powerpoints/Silhouette%20Self%20Portraits.ppt](http://www.mrsbrownart.com/powerpoints/Silhouette%20Self%20Portraits.ppt)  
 2) [panickedteacher.blogspot.com/2015/06/first-week-activities-all-about-me.html](http://panickedteacher.blogspot.com/2015/06/first-week-activities-all-about-me.html)  
 3) [www.nea.org/tools/tips/Class-Funeral.html](http://www.nea.org/tools/tips/Class-Funeral.html)  
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# The Locker Room: Notes for the Academy Educator

## Connecting with Teenagers: Can it be done?!

My husband is an academy choir teacher and takes his students on a large tour every spring. The presence of a group of teenagers in tuxes and performance dresses walking through a mall or an airport generally garners curious stares and double-takes. A conversation often ensues and when he tells them what he does for a living, he usually gets a horrified stare. "You mean..." the person stammers, unable to conceal their disbelief. "You... you get on planes and buses and vans, sleep on gym floors, and spend 6 straight days *with 60 teenagers*. . . voluntarily???"

While there are many who wouldn't believe that connecting with teenagers was within their capabilities, we know that it's not an impossible task for **you**. You are the Algebra I teacher who has attended countless vespers and music programs and beach days. You are the chemistry teacher who willingly dusts off your own high school tux or once-worn bridesmaid dress to attend the Christmas banquet that your students labor over each year. You are the AP English teacher who *enjoys* the company of adolescents and invites your class to your home for an end-of-the-year brunch and study session.

These connections that are so sweetly nurtured and cultivated in elementary school is just as important – if not more so – at the high school level. Despite their oft-times prickly exterior, teenagers need to know their teachers are rooting for

them and have their back.

While your high school students may be completely over "Getting to know you" Bingo or classroom scavenger hunts, there are still ways to engage them during that first week of school with critical thinking group activities and projects that allow for connection – albeit in slightly more sophisticated ways.

#### Social Sciences

- Scarce Chairs<sup>1</sup>: A fun economics lesson that will get students thinking and discussing economic terms.
- Ideas for History<sup>2</sup>: Love every single idea from this blogger!

#### Math/Science

- Survival Game<sup>3</sup>: Interesting activity that leads to discussion on theoretical and experimental probability. (Make sure you follow the link<sup>4</sup> to the actual worksheet and template that is provided.)
- Mathematical Autobiography<sup>5</sup>: An "about me" template with a math twist to it.
- 31-derful Game<sup>6</sup>: A cross between Sudoku and Solitaire, this card activity is a fun way to get students engaged and collaborating

#### English

- Tagxedo: If you haven't used this yet, Tagxedo is a fun, easy-to-use website that creates word art. It works not only as a great activity for the first week of school, but also for projects like

this<sup>8</sup> throughout the year.

- Syllabus Flip Book<sup>9</sup>: A different way of presenting your syllabus.

#### Foreign Languages

- There is a list of ideas here<sup>7</sup> that would work well in a foreign language class

#### Music

- Playlist<sup>10</sup>: Students create a playlist that describes them. Even if you don't know the songs, this could be a great conversation starter!
- Sing or Dare<sup>11</sup>: Could totally be adapted for a great high school level game!
- Music Quotes<sup>12</sup>: So many profound and thought-provoking quotes about music out there that could really lead to insightful conversation with your students in discussing your goals for this year and the importance of music.
- Sing-O<sup>13</sup>: I know, I know – this is technically Bingo – the very game I scoffed at earlier as too childish, but I can totally see some high school choir students having a lot of fun with this!

#### General

- This popular Ted talk<sup>14</sup> features Angela Lee Duckworth discussing how it is *grit* and not intelligence that makes a successful student. The presentation has a supplementary quiz<sup>15</sup> to take that measures an individual's grit as well as an article<sup>16</sup> that unpacks this concept even more thoroughly. This could be a significant conversation starter to talk with high schoolers about the importance of perseverance and dedication as this year begins.

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 2) [historytech.wordpress.com/2011/08/19/tip-of-the-week-5-back-to-school-ideas-for-social-studies-teachers](http://historytech.wordpress.com/2011/08/19/tip-of-the-week-5-back-to-school-ideas-for-social-studies-teachers)  
 3) [pamjwilson.wordpress.com/2012/08/07/my-first-day-activities-survival-game-chaos-game/](http://pamjwilson.wordpress.com/2012/08/07/my-first-day-activities-survival-game-chaos-game/)  
 4) [pamjwilson.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/survival-game.pdf](http://pamjwilson.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/survival-game.pdf)  
 5) [mathequalslove.blogspot.com/2014/08/mathematical-autobiography-foldable](http://mathequalslove.blogspot.com/2014/08/mathematical-autobiography-foldable)  
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 7) [palmyraspanish1.blogspot.com/2014/07/10-first-day-of-school-ideas-for-mfl.html](http://palmyraspanish1.blogspot.com/2014/07/10-first-day-of-school-ideas-for-mfl.html)  
 8) [msmichellelouisie.blogspot.com/2013/08/classroom-character-traits-with-tagxedo.html](http://msmichellelouisie.blogspot.com/2013/08/classroom-character-traits-with-tagxedo.html)

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 10) [www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Back-To-School-Beginning-of-the-Year-Free-Playlist-Icebreaker-Activity-1352079](http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Back-To-School-Beginning-of-the-Year-Free-Playlist-Icebreaker-Activity-1352079)  
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 14) [www.ted.com/talks/angela\\_lee\\_duckworth\\_the\\_key\\_to\\_success\\_grit?language=en](http://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit?language=en)  
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