

# WEEKLY WISDOM REFLECTIONS: ONLINE JOURNAL

## Getting Started ~ Create a Community of Learners

---

### WEEK 1: GIVE STUDENTS A FRESH START

*I give every student a clean slate and a new start. ~ Meaghan Calkins*

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

Hearing that an entire class is “awful” can be a daunting message to a new teacher.

1. How will you share your positive view of your students’ potential with them?
2. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?
3. What will you keep doing that is good for you?

### WEEK 2: MAKE STUDENT CONFIDENCE YOUR GOAL

*Her beaming smile is an image I will never forget, and a constant reminder of the importance of lovingly pushing students to achieve their full potential. ~ Jessica Concha*

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

Jessica’s message about helping students be more confident is important to your role as a teacher.

1. How will you interact with students who may not be on task?
2. How will you schedule your free time?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 3: CREATE ROUTINES FOR EVERYTHING

*One BIG thing I learned in my career as a teacher is that students come first. Everything else is just stuff. ~ Linda Howard*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Linda spends a lot of time getting to know her students and having them learn about each other.

1. How will you get to know the students in your classroom?
2. Why is this time well spent?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 4: LEARN ABOUT YOUR STUDENTS' FAMILIES

*I learned to modify assignments and talk to students when I noticed them failing. ~ Adam Pelletier*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Sometimes we don't know why students are failing.

1. How does Adam's message inspire you to learn more about your students?
2. Review the school records and talk with the students who may be disengaged so as to learn more about their life outside of school. What did you learn?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 5: TRUST YOUR IDEAS

*These fun events and assignments kept my classroom buzzing with engagement. ~ Lisa Dix*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

There will be times when you have to step outside your comfort zone and do what you think is right.

1. How does Lisa's message guide you to make decisions that are good for you and your students?
2. Are you including your sense of humor in your teaching?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 6: BE A TEAM PLAYER

*I know that when all staff in a classroom are on the same page, students follow classroom procedures.*  
~ Jennifer Barrientos

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

As you read Jennifer's wisdom this week, assess your level of calm with students in your classroom.

1. Do you work in a team and need to align your procedures?
2. How are you intentionally shifting from work to home life?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 7: EMBRACE YOUR MISTAKES

*Now, instead of hiding my mistakes, I encourage students to correct me in class. ~ John Radosta*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

As you read John's wisdom this week, think about the times you have felt vulnerable.

1. How have you managed these emotions?
2. Is there something you need to say *no* to?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 8: FIND A MENTOR

*What I learned through this experience is that relationships matter in teaching, and mentoring is one of the most important ones for a new teacher. ~ Kathi Rogers*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Kathi's message about finding a mentor is an important one.

1. Is there someone at your school who is supporting you?
2. How does your professional dress influence your confidence as a teacher?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

# Gaining Momentum ~ Find Your Strengths

---

## WEEK 9: SHARE YOUR LOVE OF CONTENT

*It didn't matter to me how much help she needed or what grades she was getting; what mattered to me was that she LOVED math!* ~ Brooke Traverso

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Brooke's story gives us another perspective on our role as teachers.

1. How is your love of your content area demonstrated in your classroom?
2. How might you adapt her "freeze" routine to work in your classroom?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 10: INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND SAY SOMETHING POSITIVE

*. . . it was the first time his parents had received good news about him since elementary school, and he thanked me for doing that.* ~ Sam Rhode

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Sam's story about this student who had not received positive reports for years reminds us of the power of teacher feedback.

1. How do you introduce yourself to your parents?
2. What is one positive thing you can say about each student in your classroom?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 11: MAKE A HUMAN CONNECTION WITH EACH STUDENT

*Sometimes it takes work to find a connection with a child, but it is our job to find it.* Meghan Raftery

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

Meghan shared her honest feelings in her story of struggling to like a child in her class.

1. Has this ever happened to you?
2. How did her principal's response influence her next steps?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 12: DISCOVER YOUR STUDENTS' HIDDEN TALENTS

*I learned that when students feel valued and respected as people, they will work harder for us.* ~ Mia Pumo

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

One way to build relationships with our students is to highlight their strengths.

1. How will you intentionally discover your students' hidden talents?
2. Is there a way to integrate your students' gifts into the academic subject you teach?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 13: ACCEPT ADVICE GRACEFULLY

*I was lecturing too much and not involving the students in their own learning.* ~ Diane Mackie

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

In Diane's story, you can see how she was open to her supervisor's suggestions, and because of this, she improved her teaching quickly.

1. How much time do you spend talking in your classroom?
2. How much time do your students spend talking or engaged in activities?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 14: BE COMPASSIONATE

*Our students have stories, and their behavior is a form of communication.* ~ Mary-Margaret Mara

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

As you read Mary's wisdom this week, think about what stands out to you about her change in attitude.

1. How do you get your students to "see" kind actions in your classroom?
2. Have you ever listened to a mindfulness podcast? What did you learn from that experience?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 15: REMEMBER IT TAKES A VILLAGE

*When things aren't working well, I know I can always talk to my students and brainstorm solutions together.*  
~ Alicia Desrochers

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Alicia presents an idea that includes the students and other members of the school community as part of the “village” that is supporting all students.

1. How does this idea relate to you and your image of your classroom?
2. How will you use Alicia's suggestions for management and self-care?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 16: WHEN YOU FALL DOWN, GET BACK UP!

*When you fall down, get back up.* ~ Melissa Carr

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Melissa's story of falling down and being able to laugh about it showed her ability to be in the moment and add some humor to the situation.

1. How do you integrate your sense of humor and laughter into your classroom?
2. Why is it important to teach our students how to assess their own work?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?



# Staying in the Flow ~ Focus on Teaching and Learning

---

## WEEK 17: GIVE STUDENTS THE TOOLS TO SHINE

*My experience has taught me first to see the student as a learner on life's journey and then to ask myself, What does this child need? ~ Sandra J. Brower*

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

Sandra's connection with this young girl completely changed her life's course and the direction of her career.

1. How are your students influencing you?
2. How are you integrating a focus on your students' well-being into your classroom curriculum?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 18: GET HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

*These connections are your lifeline, your continued education. ~ Traci Rizzo*

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

Traci's story about not knowing how to teach something happens to all of us at some point. The key is to reach out and get some help when you need it.

- What area of your teaching is lacking?
- Who could help you?
- What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 19: USE RELEVANCE TO ENGAGE STUDENTS

*Wow. Wow. Wow. I was blown away by the engagement, lack of behavior issues (almost nonexistent during this unit), and pure excitement of the students. ~ Serena Pariser*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Serena's story of taking the time to create engaging, relevant activities gives us a plan for energizing our students and ourselves.

1. What will you do to make your content relevant?
2. How will this motivate those learners who want to know why you are teaching this content?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 20: GIVE FEEDBACK TO SUPPORT STUDENT GROWTH

*The biggest sign of success for me was seeing how this grading shift impacted two students who had struggled in the past. ~ Jenna Monahan*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

The classroom research in Jenna's story illustrated that the new system not only helped students but inspired more teachers to create better ways to show student progress.

1. What's your grading system?
2. Is it helping students grow? How?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 21: USE STUDENT SURVEYS TO ASSESS YOUR TEACHING

*I have made it a point to implement the student voice survey and use it to guide how I run my class and how I implement my lessons. ~ Tyler Brundage*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Tyler's message shows us that by using anonymous surveys throughout the year, we can gather student perspectives and use them to improve our teaching.

1. How would you use a student survey in your classroom, and what questions would you include?
2. What types of activities will you use to minimize disruption at the end of class?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 22: BE YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF

*I had to find my own path. I had to be myself and experience my own journey to be able to develop and grow. ~ Chandra Joseph-Lacet*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

This story is about the importance of bringing your authentic self into the classroom every day.

1. What do you do well? What are your strengths?
2. Where have you grown so far this year? How do you know?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 23: SEE KINDNESS IN ACTION

*On the days I felt pulled too thin to keep going, I saw these precious ten-year-olds come to school each day ready to show kindness no matter what. ~ Sarah Berger*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

We often miss the magic in our classroom because we are paying attention to other details that may not be as important.

1. How are the students in your classes helping each other and being kind?
2. What are the most challenging tasks for you? Do you eat the frog first or put off that difficult, important task for last?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 24: GET TO THE ROOT CAUSE

*. . . we solved the problem by getting to the root cause. ~ Stacey Hervey*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Stacey's story encourages us to maintain our standards even when student success seems almost impossible.

- Who are the students in your classroom that need modified lessons to succeed?
- How will you modify lessons and maintain the rigor?
- What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 25: CHANGE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT YOUR FAILURES

*Plans that “bomb” aren’t the end of the world and don’t need to change my perspective. ~ Maryanne Margiotta*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

We all have lessons that fail. The important message in Maryanne’s story is what we do when the lesson bombs.

1. What do you do when your lesson doesn’t work out as planned? Is it a healthy reaction?
2. What are your favorite *me* time activities, and when do you do them?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 26: HONOR YOUR TEACHING STYLE

*This one small comment from this counselor encouraged me to keep doing what I was doing, and her words have stayed with me throughout my entire career. ~ Erin Jacobson*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Erin’s story demonstrates that we are always being observed by others: in our classrooms, out in the halls, and even on the playground.

1. How do you communicate with your students in public?
2. Who encourages you and compliments you?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 27: GAIN TRUST THROUGH SHARING

*Five minutes a day of open conversation is all it takes for a student to begin to trust you. ~ Nicole Forinash*

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

Nicole used her experience of the flood to connect with her students. Because she was experiencing the same loss, they could see she also understood their pain.

- How do you gain your students' trust?
- What experiences do you have in common with your students?
- What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 28: EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

*When we all know we're in it together, it makes it much easier for all of us to do our part. ~ Pam King*

**Pause. Reflect. Act.**

We cannot control everything, even if we try. Pam's story, while overwhelming, allows us to see the humor in the day-to-day life of a teacher.

1. What are you trying to control? How is that working for you?
2. How do you know when to pick your battles with your students?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 29: APOLOGIZE WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE

*I remember being shocked when he interrupted me to say he was also sorry for what had happened.*  
~ Jaclyn Lekwa

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Jaclyn's story shares her feelings about not getting to the root cause of the situation before she reacted.

1. Is there a student you owe an apology? How might apologizing change your relationship?
2. What are some of your positive reinforcement strategies?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 30: GIVE YOURSELF GRACE

*Learning how to ask for help without feeling shame was the best thing I ever learned how to do.* ~ Cassie Tabrizi

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Cassie's story helps us understand that when we learn a lesson, we also model that learning for our students.

1. Where do you need help right now? Why aren't you asking for help? Who will you ask?
2. What is the favorite treat you will keep in your desk?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

# Closing the School Year With Intention ~ Celebrate Your Growth

---

## WEEK 31: ACKNOWLEDGE STUDENTS PUBLICLY

*After every guest visit, we celebrated and savored the good we were creating together each day. ~ Julia Poole*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

When someone enters our classroom space, we may feel judged. Julia created a way to include the students in a process that allowed them to share their good behavior with others.

1. How do you prepare your students for visitors or observers?
2. Who would you like to observe at your school? From whom do you think you could learn the most?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 32: INVITE YOUR STUDENTS TO GRADE YOU

*The honest input of my students would help me improve my teaching each year. ~ Joan Vohl Hamilton*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

It takes courage to hear what your students have to say.

1. What do you think of Joan's idea to have the students "grade" you? Will you try it?
2. How can over preparing for classes save you time in the long run?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?



## WEEK 33: SEE YOUR SUCCESS THROUGH YOUR STUDENTS' EYES

*The students' recollections pointed out what they found valuable and enjoyable in my class. ~ Nancy Legan*

### **Pause. Reflect. Act.**

This approach of inviting students to write letters to next year's class gives us an insider view of what our students think about their classroom experience.

1. What do you like about Nancy's story and closing activity?
2. How can you stay positive when people around you are negative?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 34: SLOW DOWN AND REFLECT

*As you enter the teaching profession, don't lose sight of the importance of slowing down. Enjoy the journey, and reflect. ~ Tara M. Dexter*

### **Pause. Reflect. Act.**

The end of the school year can be overwhelming. There is so much to do and not a lot of time to do it.

1. How does Tara's message support you in ending the year smoothly?
2. What are your morning and evening self-care routines?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 35: BE A LEADER

*Because of this leadership opportunity, I now see myself as a teacher leader. ~ Megan Martens*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Beginning teachers can be leaders too. You may have experience in areas that can help your school. Don't be shy.

1. What stands out to you in Megan's leadership message?
2. How can you use volunteers to help you?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?

## WEEK 36: FIND REASONS TO CELEBRATE

*Though we were commemorating the end of an era with a simple party, in a larger way, we were showing each other the best of ourselves and what we can do and be. ~ Mike Pelletier*

### *Pause. Reflect. Act.*

Mike's story illustrates the importance of bringing our students together in celebration. Discovering milestones worth noting is one way a teacher can create a community of students.

1. What is worth celebrating with your students?
2. How does Mike's message of focusing on one task at a time resonate with you?
3. What will you do this week to support your growth as a teacher?