

# abekamazing

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL | *We make it easy so you can make it amazing.*



*The*  
**PRACTICE-MEMORY-SUCCESS**  
*Connection*

**12**

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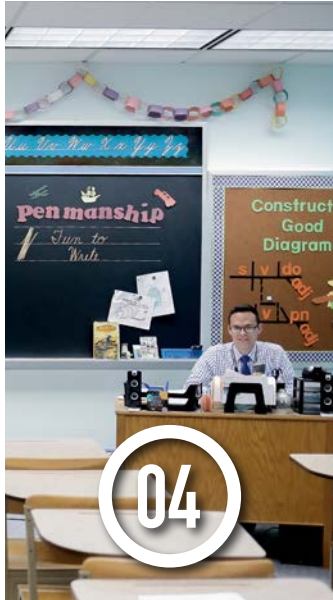
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Abekamazing Christian School, a service of Abeka (Pensacola, Florida), is an extension of our commitment to Christian traditional education in schools and homes. Our mission is to support and equip students, teachers, and parents by providing amazing Pre-K through grade 12 academic resources based upon biblical values.

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# Letter from Abeka

## DEAR FRIENDS,

I remember chuckling to myself years ago when a speaker said, "We don't need prima donnas in Christian education." (I conjured up the picture of a Wagnerian diva performing at the next assembly!) She said it, however, in the context of teachers setting out to build their personal "empires" and hanging onto the "good stuff" for just their use. "If something works for you," she said, "it might work for others so share it." It struck a chord with me. **It was an Aha! moment.**

Besides being a great Scrabble word (and easier to spell than *epiphany*), *Aha* is a perfect name for the moment when we suddenly recognize the importance of something in a way we never have before. Such moments are not always associated with new ideas—but always with new understanding and a sense of discovery.

I remember another Aha! moment. It came when I read research showing unequivocally that **an effective teacher is the most important school-based factor influencing school achievement.**

Aha! There it was. The variable that matters most in your school is the teacher. Other things (class size,


extracurricular opportunities, etc.) may matter—but not as much. I love it that Abeka believes in helping teachers because what teachers know and what they can do make the difference! And knowledge and skill and passion often come via a bit of Aha! sharing, followed by a lot of development, and then years of deepening.

Administrators, is there more that you can purposefully do to support and develop the teachers in your school? They are worth your investment. Teachers, have self-evaluation and prayer revealed areas where you can develop and deepen your passion for your ministry? Please don't keep such wisdom to yourself.



  
Dr. Phyllis Rand  
Senior Editor  
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**Be on the lookout for Aha! moments.**  
In this issue of *Abekamazing*, you'll find some "good stuff" that has worked for others, and we want to share it with you.



Dr. Phyllis Rand's over 40 years of service in Christian education has ranged from being a sixth grade teacher to graduate and post-graduate faculty, and from elementary administrator to Chair of Education for Pensacola Christian College in Pensacola, FL. She has also written language arts textbooks and developed curriculum for Abeka.

# TEACHER'S WORKROOM

KIM SMITH



Welcome to the teacher's workroom, where veteran Christian schoolteacher and popular Abeka presenter Kim Smith shares ideas you can use to make your classroom amazing.

## PERSONALLY SPEAKING ABOUT PERSEVERANCE

Why not spread that catchy perseverance bug around until you have an epidemic of it in your classroom! Be encouraged to know that your great work does double duty—it spreads both knowledge and character!

Kim

# PERSEVERANCE

A character trait that is **caught** as well as **taught**. 

*Perhaps these suggestions, using synonyms for perseverance for inspiration, are things you already do.*

## DILIGENCE: ATTENTIVE CARE

Create an "I care" environment that models attention and diligence.

- ✓ Regularly change bulletin boards
- ✓ Keep clutter to a minimum
- ✓ Post current student work and art for display
- ✓ Return graded papers in a timely fashion
- ✓ Have quick follow-up to student/parent questions

## INSISTENCE: REFUSAL TO YIELD

Keep an "I won't give up" mindset. You have students with varying abilities listening to the same lesson. Take this challenge as a means by which you further develop your teaching skills. How could you be more creative in lesson introductions and explanations? How could you involve more students? How could you ask good thinking questions throughout the lesson? How can you motivate the reluctant learner and further inspire the motivated learner?

## GRIT: INDOMITABLE SPIRIT

Pray "Lord, you have called me to teach. You have chosen me for this grade level/subject matter. You have providentially chosen these students for me. May I do right by them. May I not give up when I am met with a poor attitude or laziness."

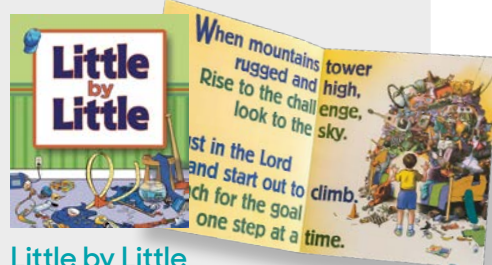
## RESOLUTION: DETERMINATION

Recognize signs of confusion, frustration, and lack of interest in your class. Ask yourself what you could do differently to engage your students better and then seek to do it. This may require asking other teachers for insight, researching, and of course, seeking the Lord's wisdom.

Definitions—American Heritage College Dictionary

 abeka

## GRIT PUT TO MUSIC!



### Little by Little

Visualized Bible Songs

(12½" x 15" approx. size)

For more information, see

[abeka.com/LittleByLittle](http://abeka.com/LittleByLittle)





Create an  
"I care"  
environment in  
your classroom.

Your students  
will catch  
your perseverance.  
And when they  
**PERSEVERE**,  
God can do  
amazing things  
in and through them.



### **STEADFASTNESS: FREE OR ALMOST FREE FROM CHANGE, VARIATION, OR FLUCTUATION**

**Take care of yourself physically.** Being a teacher requires hard work. There will be stress. There will be paperwork. And there will be confrontation—you are dealing with people. But, each of these students (and parents) deserves respect, care, and love. So, get a good night's sleep, eat a healthy breakfast, take vitamins, and exercise as you are able.

#### **Take care of yourself emotionally.**

Keep home life problems out of your classroom. Students should not have to wonder if any given day will be a "bad day" or a "normal" one.

**Take care of yourself spiritually.** Stay in the Word, keep faithful in prayer, and seek wisdom from above.

### **Ready! Set! Go!**

#### **New teachers...**

- ✓ Make your primary goal studying the lesson and preparing to communicate it well.
- ✓ Reserve special lesson highlights to once a week in each subject. You will develop your repertoire as the years go by.
- ✓ Be quick to seek advice and "borrow brains." Frustration will follow you into the classroom if you are not careful!

#### **Veteran teachers...**

- ✓ Resist satisfaction with status quo. If you always illustrate the concept in one particular way, look for a new and improved way this year. **Aim high!**

**abeka**

### **PERSEVERE LIKE A SCIENTIST!**



### **Science: Order and Design**

Grade 7 Science book

Grade 7 Digital Teaching Aids

For more information, see  
[abeka.com/Science7](http://abeka.com/Science7)



You can find more ideas on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/AbekaChristianSchool](https://facebook.com/AbekaChristianSchool)), but we want to hear from you! What's working? What keeps kids hungry to learn? **SHARE YOUR INSIGHTS** by sending an e-mail to [amazingschool@abeka.com](mailto:amazingschool@abeka.com) with the subject line: **WORKROOM**.

# making a DIFFERENCE

## FRONT RANGE BAPTIST ACADEMY

### TIM BOGGS



*Nestled at the base of the Rocky Mountains, Fort Collins, Colorado, is the home of Front Range Baptist Academy. The Academy not only enjoys a beautiful setting, it also has a beautiful story of God's blessing. Administrator Tim Boggs introduces us to the story of a school with small beginnings but steady growth. Wise leadership that looks up to God and out to the people and community it serves has made the difference.*

### THE BEGINNING

Front Range Baptist Academy began in 1985 as a ministry of Front Range Baptist Church under Pastor Ken Stephens. It started small—two teachers and seventeen students (K5-6)—but by its fourth year, FRBA had added 4 additional grades as well as a music program, band, and an athletic program. Preschool for 4-year-olds was added in 1993. God was helping! Students were coming! In fact, this year the academy serves 147 students, K4 -12, in both self-contained and combined classes.

### GOD'S FAITHFULNESS AND BLESSING

Under the leadership of our current pastor, Dr. Jeff Redlin, the beautiful Harmony Building was completed in November 2007. It serves as a home for FRBA during the week and the church family on Sundays. Other upgrades completed what we called Phase I. In place now is a vision for Phase II. In God's timing we will see a new church building that will also house additional classrooms for the academy.

I was blessed to join the growing ministry in July 2013 and lead the academy's advancements in:

### CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY

Our teachers like their new iPads for not only accessing gradebooks,

lesson plans, and communication, but also as a teaching aid. They use Apple TV airplay mirroring for keynote presentations, educational apps, and other online resources. They also use the Abeka Digital Teaching Aids with the great maps, graphs, and animations to enhance their lessons.

### IMPROVED SECURITY

With safety as a primary goal, FRBA has recently updated the exterior doors with electronic control access panels and added security cameras throughout the interior and exterior of the facilities. We were happy to learn that affordable, high-quality equipment can be purchased by even small schools with tight budgets!

Our prayer is to see students drawn closer to Christ and salvation for those in need.

### HIGHLIGHTS

A highlight of each year is the opening revival services for our secondary students. Our prayer is to see students drawn closer to Christ and salvation for those in need. The Lord has been especially gracious to our student body this current year. He has truly answered the prayers of our administration and faculty in working and moving through the lives of our student body.

### FALCON OUTREACH

Improvements take money! Our FRBA families are supportive and generous, especially in their participation in the Falcon Outreach, our yearly fundraising project.



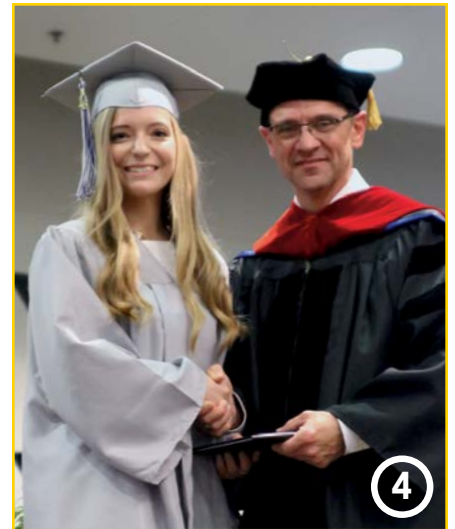
In addition to funding special projects, Falcon Outreach provides the opportunity for every grade to reach out to Fort Collins via planned service projects:

- visiting area nursing homes and taking the residents crafts made by the younger classes; reading to residents; or just visiting and working on projects with them.
- cleaning up area parks and other local organizations.
- volunteering at the local Alpha Center, Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity, and Rescue Mission.

Falcon Outreach is a unique event that blesses both those who serve and those who have been served.

#### A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Our ministry has prayerfully formulated a Strategic Plan that will lead us into the future as God wills. We want to be faithful to God as He has been so faithful to us!



## FRONT RANGE BAPTIST ACADEMY

- 1 Falcon Outreach—visiting area nursing home
- 2 Classroom technology being used
- 3 2017 Boy's Soccer Team
- 4 Pastor Jeff Redlin and a recent graduate
- 5 FRBC Phase II
- 6 New FRBA vehicles



# Why I FORCE MY STUDENTS TO LEARN POETRY

*Despite the Fact That It Will Not  
Be on the Standardized Test.*

By Andy Waddell

Some years ago, at a conference of English teachers, a group of colleagues and I found ourselves in a room by a fire with time to kill. I suggested that each of us recite some poem or speech we had learned in school. I realize such a suggestion is nerdy to an almost unbelievable degree, but these were English teachers after all, and I expected full well that the idea would be taken up with enthusiasm. I pictured not only exclamations as to the beauty of the words, but funny stories of nervousness overcome, childish misreading of famous lines, perhaps even negative comments, such as, "And that is why, to this day, I cannot stand Longfellow." What I did not expect from my young colleagues was their response that they had "never really memorized anything."

## *Is Memorization Outdated?*

I shouldn't have been surprised. Even when I was in school, in the '60s and '70s, memorization was already outdated. In 1956, Benjamin Bloom had published his famous *Taxonomy*, forever relegating memorization to the lowest level of mental functioning.... No longer would apple-cheeked youngsters recite en masse, "In fourteen hundred ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." Why waste time on that arbitrary fact when one can merely pose the question, "Would the world have been better off if Columbus had never sailed across the

*The woods are lovely,  
dark and deep....*

Robert Frost

Reprinted with permission from the Summer 2011 issue of *American Educator*, the quarterly journal of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, and used by permission of the author, Andrew Waddell.

**No longer would apple-cheeked  
youngsters recite en masse,  
"In fourteen hundred ninety-two,  
Columbus sailed the ocean blue."**

Atlantic?" Then, after a brief explanation of who Columbus was, what exactly the Atlantic is, and the obligatory comment that there

are "no right or wrong answers," Junior is off and running at the very highest level of Bloom's taxonomy: *evaluation*....

## *My Third Grade Poem*

The first real poem that I can remember learning in school is Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowing Evening." My third-grade class recited it chorally at a school assembly, each of us clutching in our dirty hands an actual sleigh bell that we shook vigorously on every accented syllable. Every year, to demonstrate the primary of sound over sense in poetry, I recite





**The meaning of the poem would come with time, would settle into our brains quietly like the snow into that dark New England field.**

it for my classes, shaking now my keys in place of the long-lost bells. I mangle the poem, just as I did 40 years ago, stubbing the toe of every iambic foot check to emphasize the sing-song rhythm; then I recite the same words again in a more adult manner to show that the rhythm is underneath the words. I've never found a better way to teach iambic meter, but every year I have students who have stopped listening, so caught up are they in the amazement of my first words, "I learned this poem in third grade." More than a few have flatly refused to believe me. From their perspective, in the post-memorization era, the retention of 16 lines is simply beyond the limits of human capability.

I also use the poem to illustrate something about the meaning of poetry and about the levels of interpretation. I vividly remember old Mrs. Trolinger, in a moment of pause from chanting the poem, saying, "You know class, when I read this poem, I don't just see a man stopping in the woods to think about the woods, I see a man stopping in his life to think about his life." I remember this sentence so many years later because, in third grade, it made no sense to me whatsoever.

**Frost said, "Poetry is what gets lost in translation." It is also what is lost in interpretation.**



The genius of Mrs. Trolinger, a woman I still remember with unmixed love, was her faith that the meaning of the poem would come with time, would settle into our brains quietly like the snow into that dark New England field.

Besides that one offhand comment, no attempt was made to interpret the poem. We were saved from the reductionism of seeking the *main* idea. She had faith in the words themselves, the beauty of the image, and the sound. When we were ready we would see what she meant....

### **Words Buried Deep—Close to the Soul**

When my grandfather was dying, my mother tried to distract him, from the pain of his suffering and from the indignity of the crowded public hospital where he would spend the last few days of his life, by asking him to recite a poem he'd learned in grade school. "I don't remember that," he barked. For my own part, I thought my mother was crazy. Besides having been out of grade school for 75 years, Grandpa suffered from arteriosclerosis, which had made him forgetful, a neighborhood wanderer, a man who couldn't always retrieve his grandson's name or what state he lived in.

"Sure you do, Dad," she said. "Half a league, half a league / Half a league onward." And to my amazement, Grandpa joined in. "All in the valley of Death / Rode the six hundred." Thirty, forty, fifty lines came rolling out of him. His voice deepened; the lines in his face relaxed. He was somewhere else. The words were deep in his mind, close to the soul. As his brain shut down it had inexplicably chosen this to retain alive. Poem after poem, as well as the

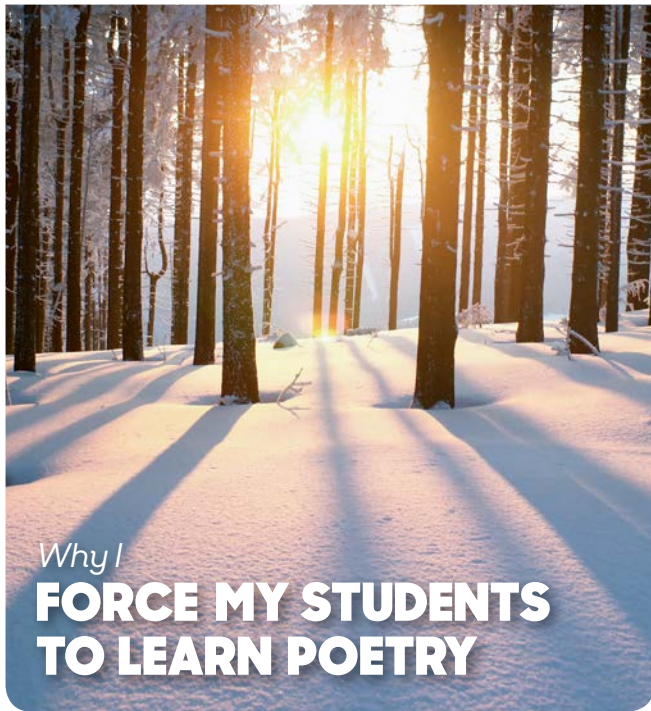
*continued on next page*

**Foremost among  
Words Buried Deep—  
Close to the Soul**

**are the**

**908**

**Scripture verses and  
passages taught and reviewed  
throughout Abeka  
Bible lessons!**



continued from page 9

Gettysburg Address, the Preamble to the Constitution, the 23rd Psalm and many, many others, she coaxed out of him. These words, wedged in by rote so long before, were still active in his fading brain. Though now playing out the last scene of his strange and eventful history, this man who had lied about his age to get in to the Great War, who had spent his working life pushing a mail cart, found that neither wasteful war nor sluttish time could ever dis sever his soul from the souls of those writers, those poets whose words rolled round his head, whose cadences had entered his soul, had become a part of him.

### Thought Is Composed of Words

So often we see education as a series of units leading to an examination, which will in turn prepare students for the SATs or ACTs they need to pass to enter university where, if they pass other examinations, they will graduate and earn large incomes...I am against neither examinations nor practicality....But some nod must be given to a larger idea: that we live through our consciousness, that thought is composed of words, that as English teachers we have a unique opportunity and responsibility to put words into our students' heads—crisp, delicious words, "words opalescent, cool, and pearly," words to entertain and sustain them. **Words they may never forget.**



With Abeka,  
students  
learn  
over 140  
poems  
in grades  
K through 12!



### POETRY EVERY DAY!

Pictured:

#### Poetry for You and Me

Language Arts, K4—See [abeka.com/poetryK4](http://abeka.com/poetryK4)

#### Spelling, Vocabulary, and Poetry 4

Language Arts, Grade 4—See [abeka.com/poetry4](http://abeka.com/poetry4)

#### Vocabulary, Spelling, Poetry V

Recommended for Grade 11—See [abeka.com/poetry11](http://abeka.com/poetry11)

#### Vocabulary, Poetry VI

Recommended for Grade 12—See [abeka.com/poetry12](http://abeka.com/poetry12)

## CAN WE HELP YOU?



**DOES ABEKA HAVE A SERVICE TO HELP ME IMPROVE MY PROFESSIONAL SKILLS?**



Yes we do! Visit [abeka.com/CEU](http://abeka.com/CEU) to discover ways you can be a better teacher or administrator. Dozens of practical presentations and classroom demonstrations (7 new ones added in September) make up our popular Professional Development Library. Topics range from establishing classroom habits and procedures to helping new teachers. **And they earn you CEUs! Best of all, they are free!**



# CREATIVE *High School*

## CLASSROOM

Keep your high school English classroom energized with this simple, creative idea.



Thanks for this winning idea, Katie. A \$100 Visa gift card is coming your way.

interest and energy:  
*slide* them in your classroom



Katie Wiggett generously shares these beautiful teaching slides for a high school grammar and literature lesson. Download these for your use at [abeka.com/EnglishPPT](http://abeka.com/EnglishPPT).



See more **Creative Classroom** ideas on page 18!


Thanks to neuroscience and new technologies, we can peer inside our heads and see what is happening when our brains are learning. It is complicated to say the least. Let's just say that as we take in information, neurons interact and transmit that information to the structural core of our brain and into short-term memory where the information can be integrated with existing information and put into long-term memory. The more those same neurons communicate and create pathways, the more accurate and more quickly accessible are the memories. The opposite is true: when those same neurons rarely interact, the result is a faulty memory or no memory at all.

Apply that to daily life. Do you consciously think about how you brush your teeth or drive to work? Probably not—that information is ingrained into long-term memory. **New skills and new destinations, however, need much more brain work—those neurons have to form new connections and that requires effort on our part.**

We can also apply that information to the classroom. The more we purposefully practice and rehearse new information about history or language, etc., the easier it

FOREWORD BY DAN PETER

# Practice Perfect



*42 Rules for Getting Better at Getting Better*

DOUG LEMOV  
BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *Teach Like a Champion*  
ERICA WOOLWAY  
KATIE YEZZI



*Perfect Practice: 42 Rules for Getting Better at Getting Better*, Doug Lemov with Erica Woolway and Katie Yezzi, Jossey-Bass, 2012.

All content is not necessarily reflective of the views held by Abeka.



becomes for our brains to store it and easier for our brains to recall it. Thus, the connection between practice and memory and learning.

### *How do successful teachers improve their students' learning?*

Studies of master teachers found that successful teachers made a practice of tying new learning to something their students have already learned or experienced. Because long-term memories are formed when new information is integrated with existing memories, teachers work to make that connection. Finding it can make the proverbial light bulb turn on!

Also, successful teachers modeled and guided what the students would be practicing independently. **After all, practicing can impede learning if we are practicing it wrong.** Math teachers who demonstrated and modeled the problems at the board and thought through the problems out loud strengthened their students' understanding and their memory because of the repetition and the engagement of more than one sense. Many also tapped into the emotional side of the brain through challenges, humor, encouragements, and positive examples to which their students could relate. They also asked many questions as a way of finding out if there was a need for more instruction and more practice.

But do students really need so much practice? Master teachers say yes—it is necessary because a good deal of practice (overlearning) is needed to become fluent and automatic in a skill.

### *How do we learn complex tasks?*

Children learn in small amounts at a time. Information overload can swamp any of us! When the teacher or instructional materials break learning down into small steps, there is time to process and make the connections. It may take more time to teach and demonstrate and ask questions and practice and review the small steps, but that is how we eventually learn complex material.

And there you have it. **Beginning learners will conquer even complex concepts over time when teachers break them down into steps.** Adding practice will help put the learning into long-term memory.

## Our students' brains change and grow!

The word for this remarkable ability is **neuroplasticity.**

*Neuro* represents neurons, the building blocks of the brain and nervous system.

*Plasticity* refers to the brain's malleability.

Yes, we now know that brains are not hard-wired at birth. They can be rewired throughout life! New thoughts and skills and memories carve out new pathways.

**Repetition and practice and experience strengthen new pathways.**





# PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

By Kim Smith

Students don't realize that when the school day ends, their teachers' work is really just beginning—studying, grading, phone calls, e-mails, planning, etc., etc. **Help!** This list of suggestions can serve as a springboard for helping teachers prepare for tomorrow but still get out the door today!



All ready for next morning! Seatwork papers in order for students to immediately put in their desks. Papers on tables for morning routine activities.

## READY THE ROOM

The goal is to not spend much time cleaning up the room upon returning from afternoon dismissal.

- Each student completes a checklist before he or she leaves the room.
  - ✓ Books are straightened in desk
  - ✓ Trash in and around desk is collected and thrown away
  - ✓ Writing utensils are sharpened as needed and put away
  - ✓ Coats, lunch boxes, back packs are ready to go
- Students know responsibilities to be done during pack-up time.
  - ✓ Declutter counter spaces
  - ✓ File papers
  - ✓ Pick up trash around the room
  - ✓ Erase boards as needed. (Have the not-to-be-erased work in a different color.)
  - ✓ Put away teaching visuals
  - ✓ Organize learning areas: science display corner, reading corner, art counter

## PULL VISUALS FOR THE WEEK

The Abeka Curriculum Guide provides a list of visuals needed per subject, per day and in the order the visuals are used.

- Select one day a week to pull all of the flashcards and charts needed for the lessons the following week.
- Separate the days with sticky notes or simply crisscross the items. The benefit of doing this is you only have one place to go for all teaching visuals, and it mentally prepares you for the week to come.
- Create or purchase additional visuals desired.



Pulled and prepped for the whole week!



## PREP TEACHING BOARD

The Abeka Curriculum Guide suggests content to put on the board.

- Begin with your first subject of the day. Think through what is going on the board. Is it for student use or teacher use?
- Place the elements in the order in which they are taught. Attach chosen cards (especially if board is magnetized) right beside these elements. This level of organization is very helpful for anyone, but especially for a sub.
- Thinking through how you will use the boardwork is actually preparation for the next day's lesson.



Keep looking for ways to maintain excellence in the classroom while at the same time not face burnout.

**You can do it!**

## DEVISE A STORAGE SYSTEM FOR BOARD BRIGHTENERS AND CONCEPT ILLUSTRATIONS

Teachers are great at coming up with ideas. Look what these inventive teachers do!

Shoe caddies hanging on door organizes Charity Kerr's calendar art.



Pictures of Danielle O'Morrow's bulletin boards are stored with captions for reuse.

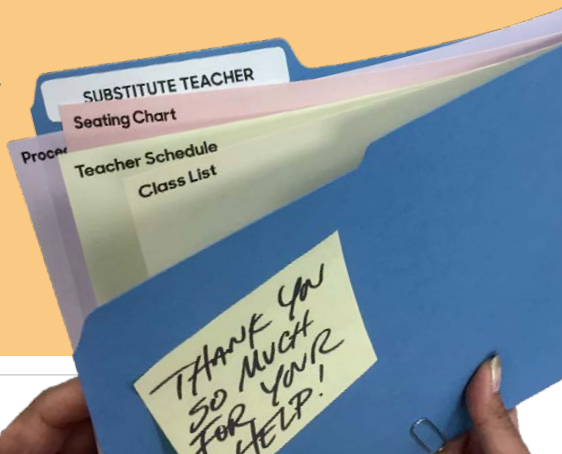
## Planning for a Substitute

### Keep a Substitute Folder



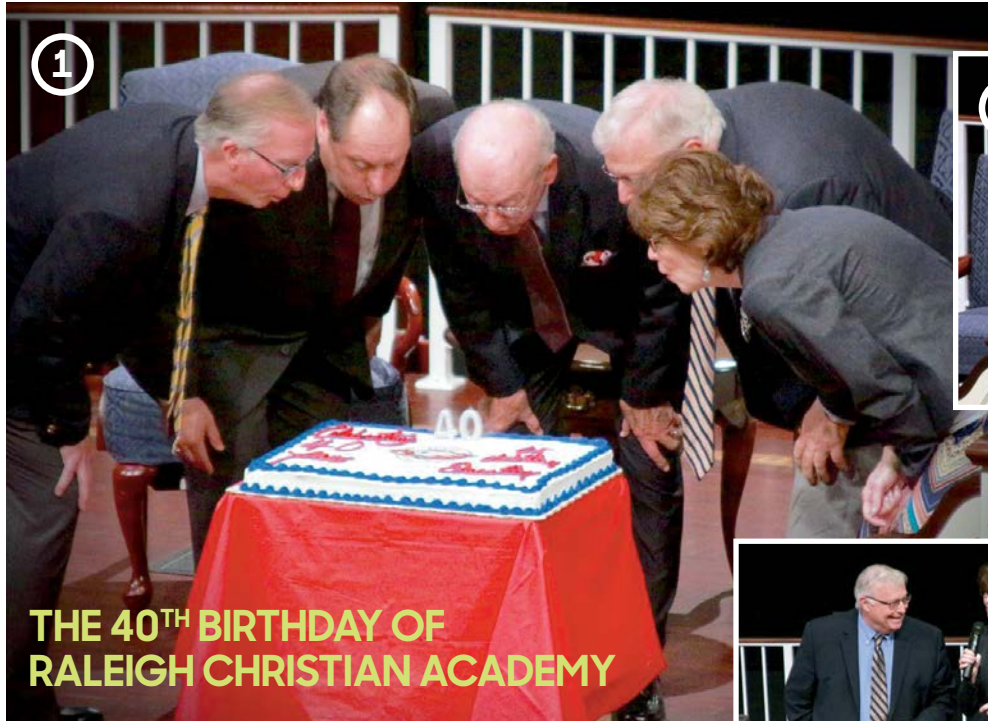
Include:

- Class list—put icons by names of reliable "helpers" as well as "challenges"
- Teacher schedule—include dismissal duty and hall duty
- Current seating chart
- Location of plans and materials
- Procedures—fire drill, snacks, lunchroom, playground, early dismissal
- Important student information—food allergies, medicine, special needs
- Thank you note





# NEWS & EVENTS



## THE 40<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY OF RALEIGH CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

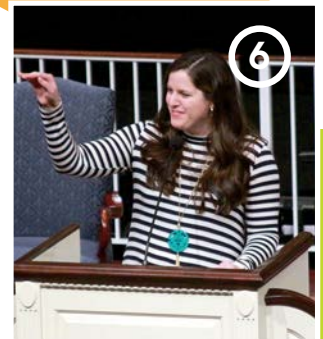
Hearts were full of celebration and gratitude at Raleigh Christian Academy on January 25, 2017. It was not just the 100th day of school; it was the school's 40th anniversary! Students, faculty, alumni, and friends all came to commemorate the occasion and God's goodness.

**1** What is a birthday without a cake? Former and current administration blew out the candles.

**2** Administrator Dwight Ausley led everyone down memory lane and through four decades of history. (Dwight experienced much of RCA's history firsthand. He had come to teach sixth grade in 1981 then became high school principal and eventually the administrator in 2003.)

**3** The first two teachers hired to teach at RCA, Richard and Gwen Tippett, joked that teacher meetings were held in the car on their drive home as the two paired together to teach seventeen students during that first year. Mr. Tippett became RCA's first administrator.

**4** Dr. Randy Cox, former pastor of the sponsoring church, reminded everyone that starting a brand new Christian





## MAKE NEWS

How has God blessed your school?  
We would love to hear about it.  
Just send some details to  
[amazingschool@abeka.com](mailto:amazingschool@abeka.com) using  
the subject line: **SCHOOL NEWS.**

school forty years ago "... was a step of faith,  
but indeed a step that we knew God was  
leading us to take."

**5 & 6** Catherine Arcuri Pendley and Brooke  
Dillard Saunders, alumni from past years,  
shared stories.

**7** To highlight the celebration, elementary  
students participated in a commemorative  
poster contest.

The growth of RCA's student body and  
campus was slow but deliberate. However,  
good planning and leadership does not  
explain everything. In Dwight's words, "(The  
occasion) was about the faithfulness of  
our great God. Looking back over four  
decades, God has revealed Himself through  
His goodness in meeting the needs of the  
ministry. Even during times of heartache,  
God's presence has been real. Praise God  
from Whom all blessings flow!"



## WHAT I JUST READ

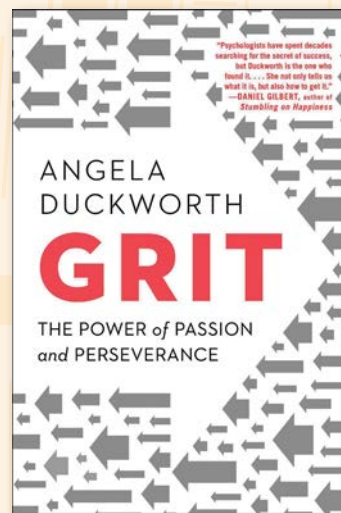
*Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*  
by Angela Duckworth

The word *grit* has become sort of the *soup du jour* in education recently—thanks to best-selling author Angela Duckworth. Her impressive research has convinced her and many others that grit predicts success more reliably than innate talent or I.Q. And, she says, **anyone—man or woman, adult or child—can learn to be gritty.**



Because her research is purely about the *psychology* of achievement, Duckworth admits that it is incomplete. Her definition of grit—a blending of passion and perseverance—makes no room for character education or moral development or the impact of biblical values. Unlike Kim's take on grit (page 4), there is certainly no mention of God's will or His help and blessing—or even opportunities such as the effect of having a great teacher. Grit is simply a self-generated, observable construct.

However, it is refreshingly different to actually read about the benefits of hard work, self-control, resilience, and determination. Not a lot of educational materials use those words today. Duckworth's studies provide quantifiable examples of the benefits of having a sense of higher purpose and pursuing that purpose doggedly. No surprise there. Christ taught us that. He is our example—long before psychology confirmed it!



All content is not necessarily reflective of the views held by Abeka.

Recommended by

**ROB ACHUFF**

Faculty  
Pensacola Christian College



## WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN READING?

Send recommendations or reviews of books that help you as a teacher or administrator to [amazingschool@abeka.com](mailto:amazingschool@abeka.com) with the subject line: **BOOK RECOMMENDATION.**

# CREATIVE *Elementary* CLASSROOM

*Veteran teachers love pouring themselves into their fellow teachers. Look what these veterans have poured out for you!*



## WHAT'S YOUR BIG IDEA?

If you have an idea that other teachers need to see, we want to hear about it. Send an explanation, along with a high resolution photo (>1.5Mb), to [amazingschool@abeka.com](mailto:amazingschool@abeka.com), using the subject line: **CREATIVE CLASSROOM**.

## you've got mail!



DeAnna Walker saves all her extra stickers, happy awards, etc., has the parents of her students address an envelope she supplies at Orientation Day, and periodically throughout the semester fills and mails each envelope. The treasured envelope contains the "prizes" along with a personal note and a student paper showing progress or mastery. And each student reports to the class when his letter, personally addressed to him, arrives. What an ingenious idea! (And parents often join in the fun by donating stamps!)

*Thanks for this winning idea, DeAnna.  
A \$100 Visa gift card is coming your way.*

editor's  
choice  
**WINNER**  
abeka

## play ball!

Catch the beach ball and answer a question about a displayed sentence strip or a spelling word. Julianne Roberts uses transfer letters to create the questions. **What a fun team game!**



### Sentence Strips

50 strips

For more information

see [abeka.com/SentenceStrips](http://abeka.com/SentenceStrips)

The American flag waved beautifully  
in the gentle breeze.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart.



# P in it Down!

Picture cards, clothespins, letter identification, and phonics sounds all work together in this manipulative using...

- Easy-to-make cards with Abeka clip art. In fact, we made one for you to cut out.
- Clothespins in two colors—one color labeled with vowels and one with consonants.

Student identifies beginning consonant or vowel sound. When he finds the clothespin that has that letter, he pins it top left of the card (to represent the beginning of the word). Now try the ending sounds. Continue with other cards emphasizing letter names, sounds, and consonant/vowel identification. For variety, listen for the vowel sound in the middle of a word, or match a capital letter with its little letter. Older students can match special-sounds clothespins to pictures containing those sounds. So many ways to practice visual and auditory discrimination!

I like this way to practice and reinforce letters and sounds.  
—Naomi Sleeth



Use all of these **Abeka Picture Cards** in your classroom! Download them today at [abeka.com/picturecards](http://abeka.com/picturecards).

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