

Literacy Tips



Tips for middle school educators on various topics such as grammar, writing, reading, spelling, vocabulary, cooperative learning and more.

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Tip #84: The End!

This tip is reaching you a couple of weeks before the end of the year. Perhaps you have 8th graders already counting down the days. You probably have your own mental countdown going. The last staff meeting... The last field trip... The last test... The last paper to grade...

This is the last Literacy Tip of the year. It will give you time to plan ahead and prepare for a final activity of the year. It will give me time to finish up my on-going projects.

So what can you do to help students reflect on their learning and end the year on a positive note?

In your tip binder, there are two other end-of-the-year projects you might want to consider: tip # 30 (the triangle project) and tip #57 (the literacy quilt). Both make excellent visuals for tying up the year and putting memories down on a paper in a creative way. This tip brings you a brand new idea called the accordion-scrapbook. No, it has nothing to do with *Step Up to Writing!* You can relax...

Accordion-Scrapbook

This project gives students an opportunity to write a personal note to you, reflect on the year, or write advice to next year's students. The way these letters are displayed is quite unique. Each student's letter is placed in an envelope, and the envelopes are each glued together making a long string of accordion-

folded envelopes. When placed on top of each other, they are bound together by a decorative ribbon taking up very little storage space. You can make a project for each class or make one for the entire team.

Stationary and envelopes can be purchased in school colors, team colors, or decorated using rubber stamps. Students have a chance to individualize their envelopes leaving "their legacy" behind. These projects can easily be displayed in September for new students to read and be used as conversation pieces when former students return for their visits throughout the school year.

So what do you need?

- glue
- envelopes
- stationary
- rubber stamps
- decorative ribbon

And how do you put it all together?

A picture is worth a thousand words, so here is a link to a crafts page that can step you through this simple project complete with photographs.

www.paper-source.com/cgi-bin/paper/ideas/envaccordion.html



Extensions

Hm, and you thought I was done. Wouldn't this make an excellent alternative book report? Imagine dedicating certain chapters to individual students to summarize. Gluing their responses sequentially produces an immediate retelling of the book. Up the ante a bit and give students challenges such as: you may only use up to 10 words and the rest of your summary has to be expressed in a visual way, you must have a significant quote from the chapter and place 3D objects in the envelope, you must write from the point of view of one of the characters in the chapter... Lots of possibilities! I know you will find a way to use this accordion-scrapbook again to enhance a literacy activity.

Enjoy!

(Thanks to Kirsten Davis, South High School science teacher, who brought this craft idea to my attention.)

