

# Another new look

I changed my shorts, erm, **theme** again. I *really* didn't like that last one. I think this one should last awhile, unless I find an annoying bug. I really liked that first theme, even with the no-italics bug, but I couldn't find it again. Well, this one looks pretty good.

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## Last couple days

My last post on my actual experiences with the kids was last week, so I guess it's past time to write about it again. I finished last week as a traveling social studies teacher on Friday. That's right, this district has a separate teacher do social studies for 1st-3rd grades. I'm not sure why. To get started, when I accepted the job online it showed what school the teacher works at of course. The school is located at the far end of one of the further districts from me (read: at least a half hour drive), but this was the school one of the kids in my church group attends so I thought I might see him, and so I accepted it. As it turned out, the system I believe lists the school at which a traveling teacher works at the beginning of the week. However, this was Friday so all bets were off. I actually wasn't aware it was a traveling job when I signed up, so I didn't think anything about it. Now, I was at my Thursday job when I accepted this job (no, I wasn't looking when I was supposed to be teaching so just take those fingers off the keyboard and read on! ☐ ). By the time I got home there was a message waiting for me from the teacher telling me that I would be at a different school in the morning, and yet a *third* school in the afternoon. I wouldn't be at the listed school at all. I am glad I listened to the

message and didn't go to the original school. We all know I have gone to the wrong school before...

To make things short to move on to this week, the day went okay. Second grade was working on tourist booklets for their town, with an attractive front, facts about the town on the first inside flap, and pictures on the rest. Being second grade, they needed help on the spelling of course. Also ideas for facts and pictures. Being the town that had the first store ever in a major restaurant chain, that was prominent on several projects. 1st grade listened to a story on safety. Dinosaur boys and girls were featured in this story. Hmm- so **that's** why dinosaurs became extinct- they broke all of the safety rules! ☐ 3rd grade were learning about Chicago history and we worked on a timeline of major events in Chicago history.

Monday was one of those days of subbing for a teacher who was still in the building. She is a resource teacher for grades 1-4. Of course this was just one day so for all I know she may have 5th and 6th grade students on other days. She had to do some testing so that's why I was subbing for her. There was one first grader who was pulled out three times for this this teacher, and apparently at least once more for another. It would seem he doesn't spend much time in his classroom, at least on Mondays. He was pretty unhappy when I pulled him once right after the other teacher brought him back. I really hope this level of disruption is actually helping him. The morning was spent with three reading groups of different grades, and a push-in where I went to the classroom and worked with small groups of students. They were reading plays (leveled for their reading level of course). Drama can often be favorite moments in teaching and today was no different. In the afternoon I had one pull-out (the first-grader) for math and other than that I was helping out in classrooms as needed. They started the fourth-graders on algebra, using hands-on equations. This is a program using manipulatives on

a “scale” to solve equations by balancing the two sides. I didn’t have any algebra until I was in junior high...

Today as I mentioned last post was a half day for me. Fortunately it gave me time to get assignments for later in the week in my downtime. I had PE at a school that I have had many problems at. It’s an all-year school that actually has classes from 8AM to 4PM. This long day probably contributes to the problems I have had. The first two classes were 4th/5th grade classes. The first class had a new teacher. Actually, the teacher started the year as a first grade teacher (had been one for at least the few years I have known of her). Apparently the 4th/5th grade teacher moved a couple months ago and the school switched the 1st grade teacher and hired a student teacher to replace the 1st grade teacher. I compared two class lists, and it looked like two of the more “lively” students were gone as well, but they might have been moved to another class for all I know. We played speedball in the three classes I had (40 min classes by the way, not 30 min). The two 4th/5th grade classes did very well. The 3rd grade class was a different story. They played like everyone wanted the ball rather than just wanting to play to win. Once one student had possession of the ball, most of the rest of the class surrounded him or her, pretty much preventing the student from doing anything other than handing the ball off to a teammate. After awhile some students just quit playing- this wasn’t a game of good sportsmanship. I actually had to stop the game and have the kids spend the last five minutes sitting down. The nurse came in and yelled at them too (one of the students had run out of the gym to her office toward the end- he had pulled a girl’s hair and then she tried to get him back. Sigh. When I told the gym teacher about the morning (he arrived before I left) he knew right away who that student was...

So, that was my last few days. If you’re still awake, now is the time to leave comments (hint, hint!). Until tomorrow

then.

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## The half-day gamble

I am not really a gambling person, at least where money is concerned. I always tend to lose and it just seems like a waste of money to me. However, when it comes to subbing I do take some gambles. Unfortunately, it hasn't worked out well for me this year. In the past I have had a reasonable ratio of half days turned into full days compared with those I haven't. This year I am on the low side of things. Whenever I get a half day I always try to get a second job for the other half of the day if possible. I think this may have succeeded maybe once this year. To make matters worse, when it's too late to cancel an assignment only *then* do I see full-day assignments show up to mock me. Today was such a day. Think I saw no less than half a dozen such jobs show up this morning. I even saw a half-day assignment for the morning posted. Too bad this was the half of the day I was already assigned.

I tried a few times today even at work. Nothing. Then finally before I came home I came across an afternoon at a nearby school. Yes! Wait, no. It turned out to be a half day for Thursday. Sigh.

What was work today? Or yesterday for that matter since I didn't get around to posting... Well, that's something for another post. Stay tuned.

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# Another couple

One day in heaven, the Lord decided He would visit the earth and take a stroll. Walking down the road, He encountered a man who was crying. The Lord asked the man, "Why are you crying, my son?" The man said that he was blind and had never seen a sunset. The Lord touched the man who could then see and was happy.

As the Lord walked further, He met another man crying and asked, "Why are you crying, my son?" The man was born a cripple and was never able to walk. The Lord touched him and he could walk and he was happy.

Farther down the road, the Lord met another man who was crying and asked, "Why are you crying, my son?" The man said, "Lord, I work for the school system."

And the Lord sat down and cried with him.

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According to a radio report, a middle school in Oregon was faced with a unique problem. A number of girls were beginning to use lipstick and would put it on in the bathroom. That was fine, but after they put on their lipstick they would press their lips to the mirror leaving dozens of little lip prints.

Finally the principal decided that something had to be done. She called all the girls into the bathroom and met them there with the maintenance man. She explained that all these lip prints were causing a major problem for the custodian who had to clean the mirrors every night. To demonstrate how difficult it was to clean the mirrors, she asked the maintenance man to clean one of the mirrors. He took out a long-handled squeegee, dipped it into the toilet and then cleaned the mirror.

Since then there have been no lip prints on the mirror. There

are teachers and then there are TEACHERS.

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## More humor

Again, not by me.

### EDUCATION HUMOR— WORST ANALOGIES USED IN ESSAYS

These are the winners of the “worst analogies ever written in a high school essay” contest

*His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a dryer without Cling Free.*

*Her hair glistened in the rain like nose hair after a sneeze.*

*He spoke with the wisdom that can only come from experience, like a guy who went blind because he looked at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it and now goes around the country speaking at high schools about the dangers of looking at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes...*

*The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.*

*From the attic came an unearthly howl. The whole scene had an eerie, surreal quality, like when you're on vacation in another city and “Jeopardy” comes on at 7 p.m. instead of 7:30.*

*Her eyes were like two brown circles with big black dots in the center.*

*Bob was as perplexed as a hacker who means to access T:\flw.quid55328.com\aaakk/ch@ung but gets*

*T:\flw.quidaaakk/ch@ung by mistake.*

*Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.*

*He was as tall as a six-foot-three-inch tree.*

*Her date was pleasant enough, but she knew that if her life was a movie this guy would be buried in the credits as something like "Second Tall Man."*

*Long separated by cruel fate, the star-crossed lovers raced across the grassy field toward each other like two freight trains, one having left Cleveland at 6:36 p.m. traveling at 55 mph, the other from Topeka at 4:19 p.m. at a speed of 35 mph.*

*They lived in a typical suburban neighborhood with picket fences that resembled Nancy Kerrigan's teeth.*

*John and Mary had never met. They were like two hummingbirds who had also never met.*

*The red brick wall was the color of a brick-red Crayola crayon.*

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## **Shout to the Lord**

Even popular television can do things right from time to time. Apparently American Idol had their final eight perform [Shout to the Lord](#) not once, but **twice**. The first time they changed "Jesus" to "shepherd" presumably to not "offend" anyone (he is our shepherd though!), but the second time around they changed it back! Praise Jesus! The second, good version is below:

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# I feel stupid...

Well, today I was a floater at a middle school, meaning that I would sub for different teachers throughout the day as they went to meetings. When I arrived they gave me a list. Four classes. Were they serious? I thought I had it fairly easy yesterday with five classes (in middle school six is typical, with a planning period, team meeting- subs not invited, and lunch). In this district one period is homeroom, making a total of ten periods of which a sub usually works seven when homeroom is added in. This meant that I had **three** extra periods off! A half-day of work for a full day's pay! Then again, this is me we're talking about. I didn't feel quite right about this so I asked at the office a few times if I was needed elsewhere during these breaks. They didn't have anything as was typical, so it would seem that I would get all the time off after all. However, in the afternoon the teacher I was subbing for for 7th and 10th periods decided she could use me after all to help out while she tried to get some other work done. I stress *tried* because in fact since she was in the room her students still came up to her and asked questions. By the way, they were doing research in the LMC so I mostly babysat as I couldn't answer a lot of the questions since I didn't know all the expectations of the project. Still not bad- a very easy day.

Now, some may think the title of this post applies to the above paragraph since I asked for extra work instead of just saying nothing and sitting in the lounge all day. Well, it always pays to not get on their bad side- I already don't take TA positions which pay about \$30 less per day- and besides, I would have missed the situation I am about to write on. □ Well, what happened was during one of the periods a couple of



students came in who weren't a part of the class. Remember, this was the LMC and not a classroom. That would be very strange if random students just came into a classroom where they were not a part of the class... Anyway, I wasn't aware of this at first and so questioned them when I saw they were not doing the research with the rest of the class. They told me they were here while their class was on a field trip. Were they being punished? Nope. They were seventh graders in an eighth grade math class, and all the eighth grade was on the field trip. Now I thought I was pretty good at math being in algebra in eighth grade, but here they were, two seventh graders in the eighth grade class. And to make matters worse, this seemed to be the top eighth grade math course, algebra 2. That's right, 2. I didn't take algebra 2 until my sophomore year (they split the two courses with geometry in the middle, which I took as a freshman). These two seventh graders were *two* years ahead of where I was when I was in middle school. They expect to be bused to high school next year for math as they apparently were bused to the middle school when they were in 5th grade... I guess if this keeps up they will be taking calculus in their junior year instead of in college, unless they bring themselves even further ahead in the next three years. Definitely two top engineers in the making.

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## Lounge talk

This is going to be short (sandman is calling) but I just wanted to say something about talk in the lounge. Teachers talk about many things of course, like family, current events, the weather, etc. A favorite topic, also of course, is students. How did such and such student behave today? What students are failing miserably? Oh, let me tell you of the

cavity searches I had to do today. Wait- what?!? *Cavity searches??* One of the gym teachers came down to lunch and started talking about this. I have no idea what was being searched for, and didn't get any other details in fact. Fortunately. This was just so off the wall I had to mention it even without complete information. There was also mention of a student who ran out the front door and a teacher who almost ran after her. The secretary told her to let it go and she would call the police. From what I understand she didn't get very far hobbling along in an ankle brace...

Ahh, middle school. And I have another day of it tomorrow, different school fortunately, and it's getting late so goodnight.

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## **Boy saves bus from major accident**

No license? Who cares? Usually this would be a bad conversation, such as an underage child taking dad's car for a spin (my brother has done this before, so has my nephew...). This time however this boy was saving everyone on the bus from experiencing the sudden effects of being hit by a truck. He didn't really drive it, just steered it out of the way. The driver had left to answer the call of nature, but somehow this bus came out of gear and started rolling downhill. This 11-year-old, thinking only of his older brother also on board, chose not to jump off like some others, but instead to save both him and his brother by stopping the bus. [Click link to read on...](#)

# Boy, 11, steered bus to avoid semi

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## Another half day

It happens from time to time that I will only get a half day. Due to the advent of online systems though, it is relatively easy to accept a job and then later cancel when a better one comes up. I don't do that too often, but a half day is one reason I try. Since this half day was for the afternoon I could try even the day of, as long as it's early enough in the morning that they can get another sub easily. As it worked out though no other job was to be found. I was up until about 11 and then woke up just after 6 to try again. Nothing. Finally, at around 7 I decided to give up and go back to bed, mostly due to not sleeping well the last couple of nights. As I write this I am exhausted *again*. I don't know why I usually wait until the end of the evening to write. Oh, well.

So as it worked out, not only was it a half day but it was at probably the furthest school from me, at the opposite corner of one of the further districts. It took me about 25 minutes to get there. It was in one of the mentally impaired rooms, but I knew this at the outset as I have subbed in this school many times. It was easy. Silent reading followed by computer time. Then they wrote a letter to a classmate that had transferred schools (moved I guess) a couple of weeks before. The writing varied, but generally the kids were pretty slow, letters not well-formed- but remember these are mentally impaired kids. One couldn't really write at all, but that didn't matter. It will get sent with the rest to the girl's

new school. After that they went to language lab where it should have been a nice rest for me since it is run by another teacher. Nope- I was told I would be needed in another classroom while their teacher went to a meeting. It was another mentally impaired room. I had worked with several of the boys in that room before, but oddly enough I do not remember ever being in that room. Maybe from last year? I will have to go through my past positions to figure this out. I *do* remember subbing for that teacher in the past so maybe my memory is just bad. Anyway, they cooked some muffins. Well, the boys only got to stir a little, taking turns, but that could be considered a life skill for them anyway. One of the IAs brought them to the lounge to cook in the oven. In the meantime, we played some bingo while waiting for the muffins. The teacher still wasn't back from her meeting by the time the original class was back from the lab, which by the way is simply working with the kids on communication skills in case you were wondering, so the kids actually stayed in the lab a little longer since I couldn't be with both classes and a certified teacher or sub is required to always be in a classroom.

As it turned out the teacher never did come back so I stayed until the end in that one room. I'm thinking the language teacher came back with the other class after a while, but I'm not sure on that. I do know they came back eventually. I pushed one of the wheelchair-bound boys to the bus at the end of the day. It's interesting that at that school there are about a dozen short buses lined up at the end of the day, half of them wheelchair-capable, as the kids come from all over the district. So that was it, end of the day. Until tomorrow folks!