



Mr. Barge's Instructional Tip of the Week!

Pivoting and the Importance of Planning

Not sure what brought me more stress last week... The moment when I poured myself a bowl of Fruity Pebbles (please don't judge) only to open my fridge and realize that we were out of milk or the moment when I tried to access some online resources during a lesson only to see that dreaded blue circle endlessly spin. Obviously, one has quite a bit more importance (you make the call). Anyway, as educators, we are always faced with challenges and unexpected occurrences. Certainly, the pandemic showed us all the reality, and importance, of being able to pivot at a moment's notice.

This week, we faced some internet challenges citywide. Many of us are dependent upon the internet for our lesson materials and there were many moments when the stress was felt throughout the community due to these unforeseen circumstances. That is why planning is so important for effective pivoting. For many, accessing materials from our Google Classroom or Google Drive has been part of our practice in the post pandemic world. I can definitely see the value of the Google platform for teachers and students. For some dinosaurs like myself, I put my powerpoint and materials on a flashdrive which can help to address the spotty internet issue (I also have to admit, I refuse to throw out my overhead transparencies – Someone may have to explain to our younger teachers what an overhead projector is- lol). The point is, if you have a well thought out lesson plan, your questions, tasks and clear objectives should make that unexpected pivot easier and less stressful. In a moment when I couldn't access something from my Google Drive, I was able to use my lesson to write a quick timeline on the board as a reference, read a series of quotes to the class and ask some pivotal questions that I had planned. In many classrooms, there are also document cameras (ELMOs) as well.

A few weeks ago, Physical Education Teacher and Wrestling Coach, Dariusz Mikolajczak, asked if he can observe my class and then possibly teach an American History lesson because he wanted to teach his student teachers that, at times, we all have to make adjustments and pivot. Mr. M. did a pretty amazing job teaching my AP American History class. All of that was dependent on planning. Whether you are a beginning teacher or a twenty-year veteran, you will always face moments where you will have to unexpectedly pivot and rely on good, sound planning to get you and your students through the moment.

BTW ... And in case you were wondering, water does not really go with Fruity Pebbles. That will be the last time that I turn to Tiktok for any guidance when I have to pivot (just sayin').

Enjoy your professional learning experience with your 3M colleagues this week.

Have a **FANTABULOUS** week!

... because at Edward R. Murrow High School, we **CARE** about our students!