

# Thumbnail Learning

The Thumbnail Newsletter for Teachers

A helping hand at the touch of a button!



**‘The influence of a good teacher can never be erased.’ —  
Unknown**

You’re approaching the end of a school year. Give yourself a pat on the back! It’s been a rollercoaster, exhilarating, frustrating, exhausting, but remember all that you’ve achieved.

**‘Teachers believe they have a gift for giving; it drives them with the same irrepressible drive that drives others to create a work of art or a market or a building.’**

– **A. Bartlett Giamatti**

Okay, just a few weeks to go. Here are our top tips for making the most of them.

**Preserve some energy** so you don’t collapse in the first week of the holidays.

[Loads of teachers get a cold the minute they break up.]

Here’s how:

-Put the emphasis on the kids doing more and you doing a tiny bit less. The key is to avoid building up a pile of marking so plenty of oral activities. Devise assignments that go across a number of lessons to reduce your prep time.

**This is a great time to get them doing an oral project.**

**Some suggestions for you:**

1. Students research a topic in the library and present an oral report to the class.
2. Hold a formal debate. [Students chair; make speeches; participate]
3. Working in small groups, students ‘hot seat’ [interview] a character from a text they have studied this year. They can do this with a range of characters or take turns to be in the hot seat. ‘Lady Macbeth, do you think your husband would have murdered Duncan without pressure from you?’

4. Students direct and act a small scene from a play they have studied; or dramatise a scene from their reader.
5. Post-it note challenge. Students write down a question about the subject, and challenge other students to answer. Two rules: they must be able to answer it themselves! And everyone must take part.
6. Give them a practical scenario to plan. Like your town is going to host a rock festival. Students form small groups to plan the event and everything to do with it, like closing roads, catering, playlist etc.

7. Jabberwocky words. Read the poem; kids make up portmanteau words.

8. New words dictionaries. Kids make a list of really up to date slang/current text speak and produce a guide.

9. Students write and illustrate [stick men are fine] a story for pre-schoolers. [Tip: order one of our preschool books as an example to show them.]

10. Reading challenge: hold a readathon. How many books can they read in a week's lessons? [Plenty of Thumbnail Books to add to your book box!]

11. Analyse an advert: who are the target audience? Who is being represented? Is that positive or negative? [For example, are men portrayed as stupid? Or kids as pests?] Would they buy the product?

12. Students invent a brand new product and storyboard an advert for it.

13. If students have access to their phones, produce a five-image photo story with captions.



14. Students create a board game based around their class reader. Eg. Oliver Twist: Oliver and the Artful Dodger make their way round London, while avoiding Bill Sykes, the police etc

**15. Don't forget that many of our Thumbnail Books come with sets of PowerPoints and photocopyable resources that do a lot of the preparation for you. A real boost to your end of term teaching!**

16. Students review their year. What went well? What did they enjoy? What didn't go so well? Ask them to set three targets for themselves for September... and that goes for you too.

**Finally, Do yourself a big, giant favour!!** [Future you will be so grateful]

**Plan the first two weeks back in September.** Keep your notes where you can find them! Get hold of all the books and stationary that your classes will need, suitably labelled, like 'Y7 Notebooks.' Book computer rooms and library sessions now if you can.

**Write a brief thank you note to the office staff, the tech guys and the caretakers.** [They can and will make your life so much easier next term...]

**This month's word family:**

Spelling secret to remember: letter **i**

Finish [finished; finishing]

Finite

Infinite

Infinity [and beyond to the holidays!]

Happy holidays!

Sarah and Roj.

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