

REMOTE TEACHING: ENGAGEMENT

MfA

For master teachers
of math and science

Enrichment/Flexible Fridays

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At the beginning of the pandemic, AnnaMarie noticed the ease by which she and other teachers were giving work to students to a burdensome level - the mindset of 'getting through the material' was burning everyone out, and engagement in classes were going down. This prompted her and others at her school to think about how to have a space to celebrate the other ways of thinking about content, and to reset the expectations we have about our work remotely.

"I had started, when we went into remote learning, I just gave my students as much work as possible, like trying to keep it normal, whatever that meant. And I learned that it was too much work."

► How did AnnaMarie address student engagement in order to avoid feelings of burnout?

AnnaMarie started the idea of Flexible Fridays - places where math was addressed, but where student engagement was the driver. It may have been a set of puzzles or to discover a place on Google Earth. Eventually, the school extended the idea and turned it into Enrichment Fridays, which allowed time for advisory groups to meet over a rotating enrichment topic among the content teachers. This gave time for groups that had built a community over the rest of the year to meet again, and to explore an interesting tangent in the content.

"I did hear from other schools that they did something similar in that Fridays became not necessarily a content day, but some other type of day. So I think this just naturally happened. People were like, we're exhausted. We need to find a way to make this fun again."

► To start enrichment or flexible days try following these two pieces of advice:

1. Take an advisory mindset - students feel more engaged when they know that you are starting with the goal of forming student connections, instead of layering it on top of your curriculum. AnnaMarie would use a website that had what 'national' holiday it was, and would build from there.
2. If you can, don't do this alone! AnnaMarie found that enrichment or Flexible Fridays were more successful when her school collectively agreed on having a space where teachers could see their students tackling topics across all content areas. It also lessened the work - departments could rotate Fridays.

"So one of them was national 'make your own pizza day' or something. And there was a website where you could make your own pizza. And then we had students post that on slides and we shared that. Once we started doing this, it started to actually feel like advisory again in school and not like this 'thing'."

Thursday June 11, 2020
"Virtual Senior Trip"



Assignment:

Use the "I'm Feeling Lucky" button on [Google Earth](#) to see where it takes you for a "virtual senior trip" & share something new you learned about your location on the G-class Discussion.



Enrichment Activities:

1. Check out the [2020 Minecraft Education Challenge](#)
2. Check out the [Breakthrough Junior Challenge](#)
3. Check out [Brilliant.org's 100-Day Challenge](#)
4. Work on the [Noetic POW](#) or [MathCounts POW](#)
5. Office Hours today @ 1PM

Enrichment on the day of the senior trip gave AnnaMarie's students an opportunity to "explore."