

Episode 51 - Time Saving Hacks

#051 - The holy grail of teaching - a list of time saving hacks!! In this episode I share with you 20 time saving ideas that I have used, seen and discovered. I got very excited researching what other teachers have done and wanted to share some of these with you as I'm all for making our job that little bit easier! I really hope you get something of value out of this episode!

How many times have you wished for a few more hours or even just a few more minutes to finish off a task whether it's in the classroom or outside teaching hours. Some days there's not enough time. I find that teachers are very time poor, but I also find that it's the little things that can make a big difference.

Today I want to share with you some of these little things that I have used which definitely have saved me time. You may already do some of these yourself. There are some, though, that I found online when researching this topic, which I haven't thought to try but now that I have, I will be using them a lot more.

1. Take advantage of the kids in your class. Get students to do things - pushing chairs in, put up displays, hand out books, marking their own work, putting chairs on top of desks / taking off desks, mystery object on the floor
2. Leading up to excursions I would teach kids to number off by doing the class roll, so they would be practised at doing it on the excursion. I have seen teachers take this one step further and have labelled kids' chromebooks, rulers, lead pencils with this same number
3. Turn on the computer first thing in the morning and open all tabs for the day. Better yet have it organised in settings so that when you turn on computer the tabs used frequently always come up automatically
4. Plan a casual teaching day / week at beginning of each term
5. Multi task - eg set students up to typing tournament, Athletics etc while you do admin
6. Be organised so you know where everything is, keep your DESK CLEAR
7. Create a to-do list so if an aide asks what can I do, they have jobs ready to do
8. Multiple copies of kids usernames for apps they may use on their device that students can easily find - as a casual teacher this is a lifesaver, especially in the younger years when they are not familiar enough

9. Train students to place notes etc in an in-tray so they don't have to physically hand it to you
10. Paid platforms for report writing
11. Have your daybook online eg Google slides - cut and paste from your online program. I have found from a casual teacher's perspective that it's a good idea to have a printed version as well so as a casual teacher they can write notes on it.
12. When you have your own class you get to know your students well, so when it comes to marking the roll, glancing across the room you can figure out who is absent. However as a casual teacher, what I used to do was call out names from the roll but found this was tedious and boring for the kids so now I mark the roll by looking at empty desks - you can learn kids' names later throughout the day
13. Have everything planned on a weekly or fortnightly cycle eg any photocopying done, any resources you need
14. Find a home for everything so it easy to find, for other staff members and students eg tubs, shelves, containers and have it labelled
15. I have seen photos of a classroom where a lot of resources needed regularly for Maths were velcroed to the carpeted walls around the smartboard. Resources like metre rulers, paper plates showing fractions like half and quarter, MAB blocks, clock face, ten frames, unifix blocks, laminated number lines. If commonly used resources are right there near your fingertips, it saves a lot of time!
16. Tool kits - a pencil case for each child that contains commonly used resources for Maths eg net shapes, clock faces, counters,
17. Finding pencils, glue sticks, scissors - having lots of spares
18. Choose random students by using paddlepop sticks
19. These ideas came from <https://www.weareteachers.com/instagram-worthy-teacher-hacks/> and I thought they were fantastic, especially for the younger students. Keep paint in old liquid soap dispensers. While we're on the topic of art and craft subjects, what about using glue sponges that sit in a plastic takeaway container instead of glue sticks where lids are often lost or glue is often wasted, especially when kids try and put the lid back on before winding the glue stick back down!! Another thing I haven't tried but can see the benefit of, not that I think it would win any fashion awards but using a teacher apron, where everything is within reach like sticky tape, scissors, marking pens etc

20. I got these 4 keyboard shortcuts from

<https://blog.neolms.com/38-time-saving-hacks-every-teacher-absolutely-needs/>

You may already know about these but I have only found them recently and they are a game changer - so much quicker

CTRL+F: Allows you to find a keyword within your document. For eg if you are checking the spelling of a students name in a report comment this shortcut will highlight the name within the text.

WIN+D: Go from a screen full of open windows to your desktop in one swift move.

WIN+F: Find any and all files and folders on your system.

CTRL+Z: A universal undo shortcut that will take you back to your last command in any program.