

TIPS AND TOOLS FOR TEACHERS



Happy Teacher Appreciation Day! Look inside for printable teacher tools, tips for educators, and a game just for you.



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SIX WAYS TO CAPTURE KIDS' ATTENTION IN THE CLASSROOM

It's happened to every teacher—in the middle of a carefully planned lesson, you catch students daydreaming, drifting off, or getting distracted. Kids lose interest for all sorts of reasons, but luckily, it's easy to redirect attention back to your lesson with some simple tricks. Combat glazed eyes and disruptive behavior with these six teaching tips.



1. Cultivate a Culture of Learning

Foster an environment where learning is exciting and asking questions is the norm. Find challenging yet attainable goals for your students, then concoct creative ways to help your kids achieve these goals. For instance, if you're reviewing a social studies unit, have students compete in a *Jeopardy!*-style trivia contest.



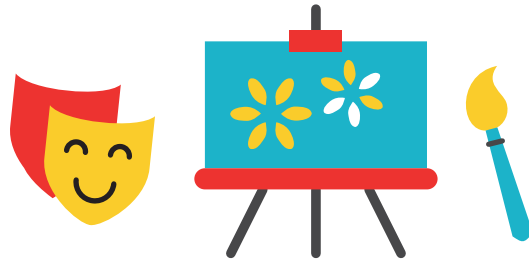
2. Keep It Relevant

Students are more invested in learning when they are actively involved in the process and their interests are incorporated into the curriculum. This could involve hands-on activities, longer-term projects, or group assignments. Student engagement is further increased when students are able to relate to the material. Teachers should help students draw connections between the material and real life situations.



3. Shared Success

Students are able to increase their academic achievement and engagement in school when they get teacher support. This support involves more than just telling students how great they are. Encourage students of all levels when they show academic growth and improvement. Teachers should also work on gauging their student's strengths and weakness and finding areas to improve.



4. Increase Involvement

Schools and teachers should work on increasing parental involvement in their child's education. Parents are much more willing to be involved if they see the school as a welcoming and inviting environment. Getting parents into schools to volunteer is great, but they can also offer support in the home by monitoring homework assignments and encouraging class attendance.



5. Safety First

Students need to see schools as their safe haven. Students who do not feel safe at school have difficulty concentrating in class and absorbing any of the material. Schools can create a safe environment by consistently enforcing school disciplinary action, having a support staff that is accessible to students, and providing violence prevention programs.



6. Extra Practice

Extracurricular activities allow students to form strong support systems among their peers and teaching staff. Students who are more exposed to these structured activities are more likely to be engaged in class. After-school activities can include sports teams, volunteer events, or clubs.

BENEFITS OF FAILURE: WHY MAKING MISTAKES IN SCHOOL IS A MUST

By Cindy Donaldson

When we're small children, our mistakes are applauded. Our falling-down attempts to walk for the first time are cheered by our parents, giving us the courage to get up and try again. At this age, the world teaches us that failure is merely part of the journey to success. But when we get to school, mistakes become a bad thing. Answers are right or wrong, and the risk-taking that used to be rewarded is now punished, and we learn to stick with safe answers. Unfortunately, this black-or-white thinking doesn't encourage learning. Instead, it fosters a fear of failure and discourages ingenuity.

Mistakes are a valuable part of the learning process, and allowing children to make mistakes is the best way to combat a culture of perfectionism. Innovation and discovery can only be fostered if we give children the freedom to fail. Schools can build resiliency by emphasizing exploration over correctness. Here are some of the classes in which we should expect and reward failure:



Science

Many important scientific discoveries, such as penicillin, Post-It notes, and x-rays are all by-products of experiments that went 'wrong.' Adam Savage, the star of the science-experiment-filled show Mythbusters, said, "The cultural idea of a scientist is someone who sets up an experiment and then when it doesn't happen the way they expected says, 'Oh my experiment is a failure.' No scientist actually thinks like that. Any experiment that yields data is a viable experiment. Information is key, not what you expected the outcome to be."



Math

Teacher Jerry Brodkey has a great response to students who offer incorrect answers in his math class. Instead of saying, "That's wrong," he'll say, "That's interesting. How did you get your answer?" By supporting his students when they take a chance, Mr. Brodkey encourages them to keep trying. And by talking through mistakes out loud, Mr. Brodkey helps other students who may have made the same error.

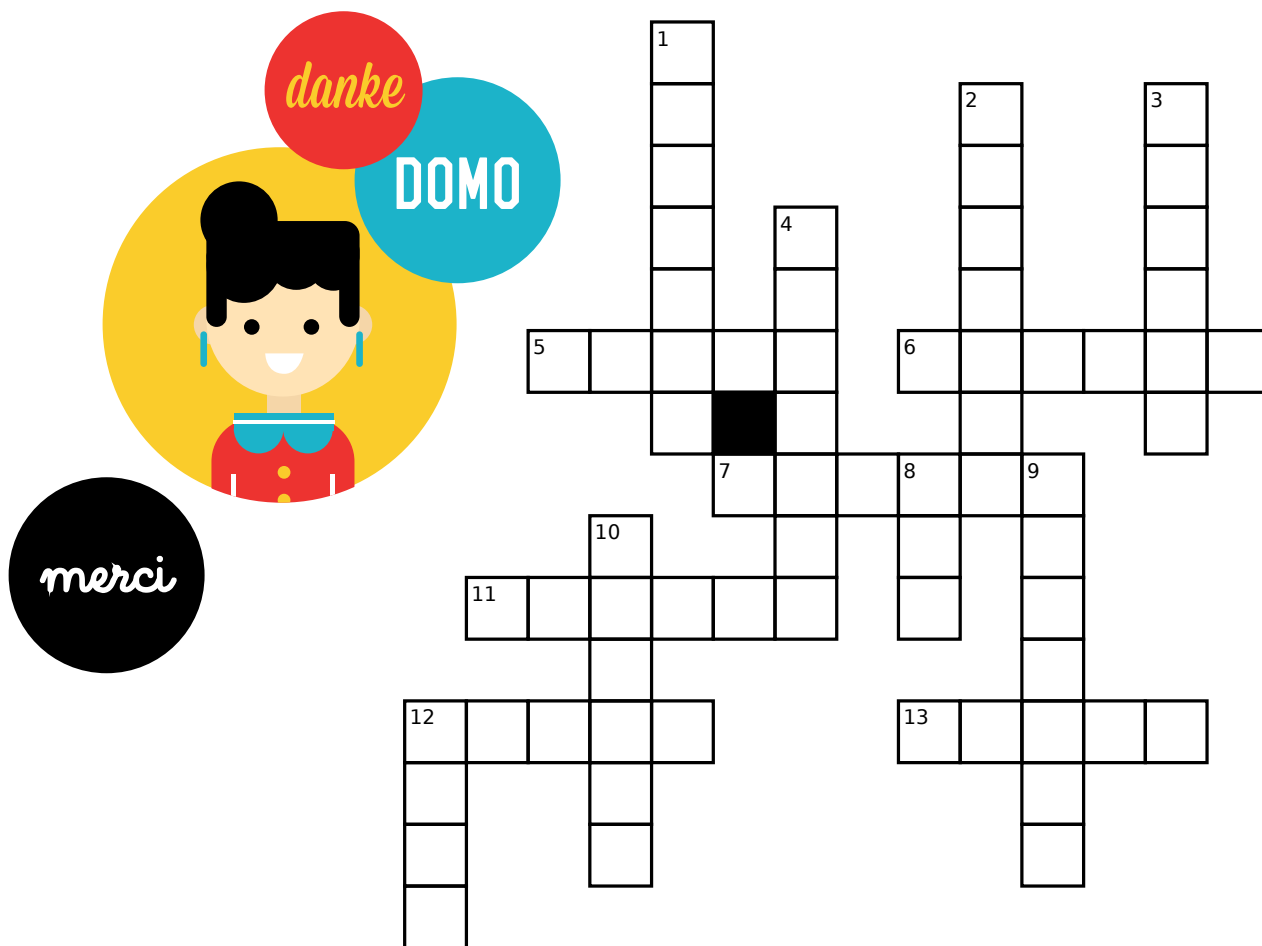


English

English class should be a place where students learn to find their voice. Yes—proper grammar and spelling are critical for good communication. But no great author ever succeeded because of his talent with the Oxford formatting style. The best writers rise to the top because they've learned to tap into their imagination and express their feelings. Children should be reminded that it takes practice to find one's style, and that they'll write

HAPPY TEACHER APPRECIATION DAY!

Thank you for your dedication to your students, your community, and to education. To show our gratitude, we want to say thanks—in 14 languages!

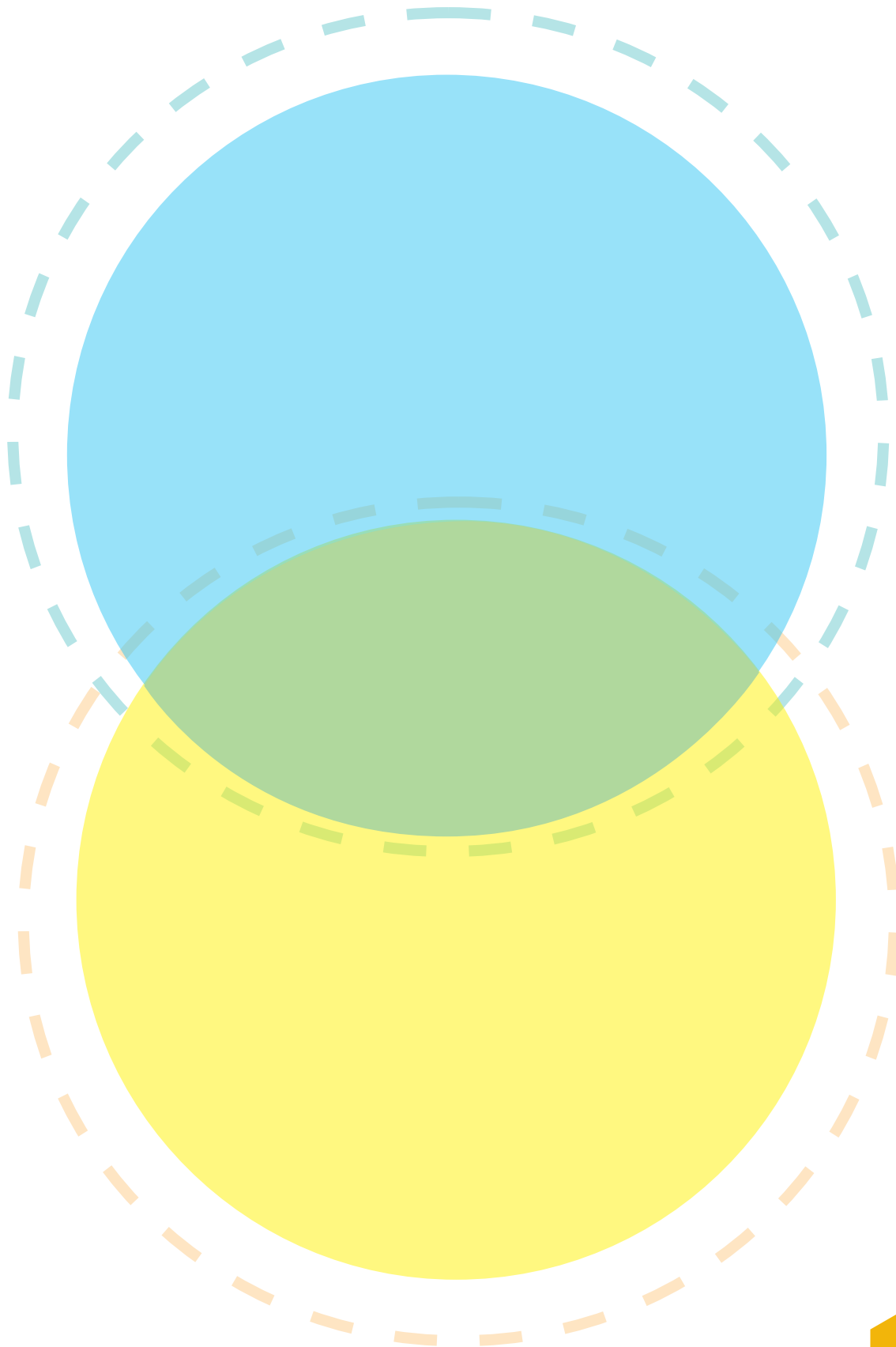


- | Down: | | Across: | |
|------------|---------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. Tagalog | 8. Danish | 5. Croatian | 12. German |
| 2. Russian | 9. Arabic | 6. Mandarin | 13. French |
| 3. Italian | 10. Afrikaans | 7. Finnish | |
| 4. Spanish | 12. Japanese | 11. English | |

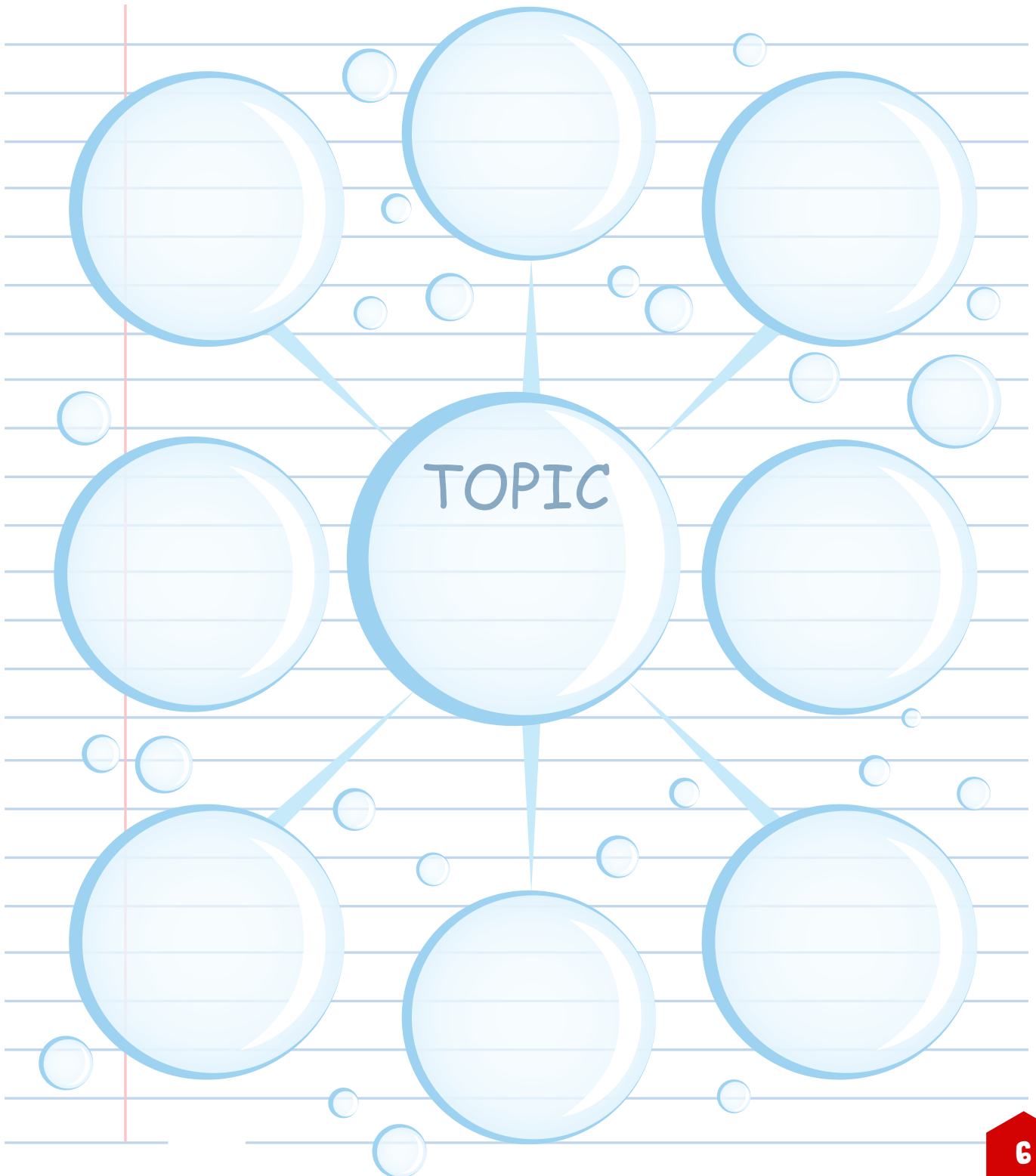
Answers Down: 1. salamat, 2. spasibo, 3. grazie, 4. gracias, 8. tak, 9. shukran, 10. danke, 12. domo, Across: 5. hvala, 6. xixie, 7. kitos, 11. thanks, 12. danke, 13. merci

VENN DIAGRAM GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Compare 2 different stories (or characters) to see how they are similar or different.



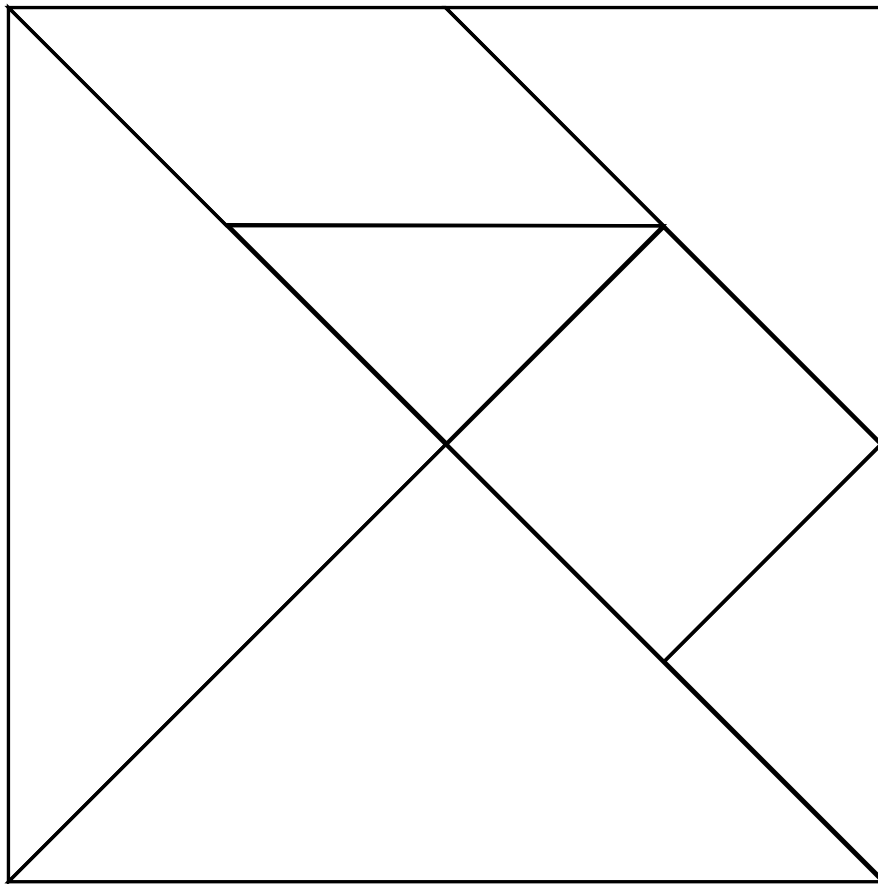
BUBBLE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER



COLOR A TANGRAM TEMPLATE

Tangram is an ancient Chinese geometric puzzle where a square is cut into seven pieces that can be arranged to create different figures.

Objective of the puzzle: To form a specific shape using all seven pieces, which may not overlap.

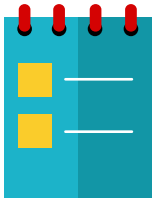


1. Print this pattern on cardstock or thick paper so it can be reused.
2. Cut out the pieces with the help of a parent.
3. Print out a tangram pattern card.
4. Ask your child to use all seven of these pattern pieces to recreate the picture on that pattern card.

TIP: Once your child learns to create the figure using a pattern card, ask him to create it again on plain paper, without using the pattern card as a guide.

NOTES PAGE

Use the page to keep notes or jot down any words you come across while reading that you'd like the definitions of. Then if you look them up you can write down what you learn.



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, spanning the width of the page.

LINED HANDWRITING PAPER



A large area of lined handwriting paper with multiple rows. Each row consists of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. A vertical line is present on the left side, and another vertical line is on the right side, creating a central writing area.



WRITE AND DRAW PAPER

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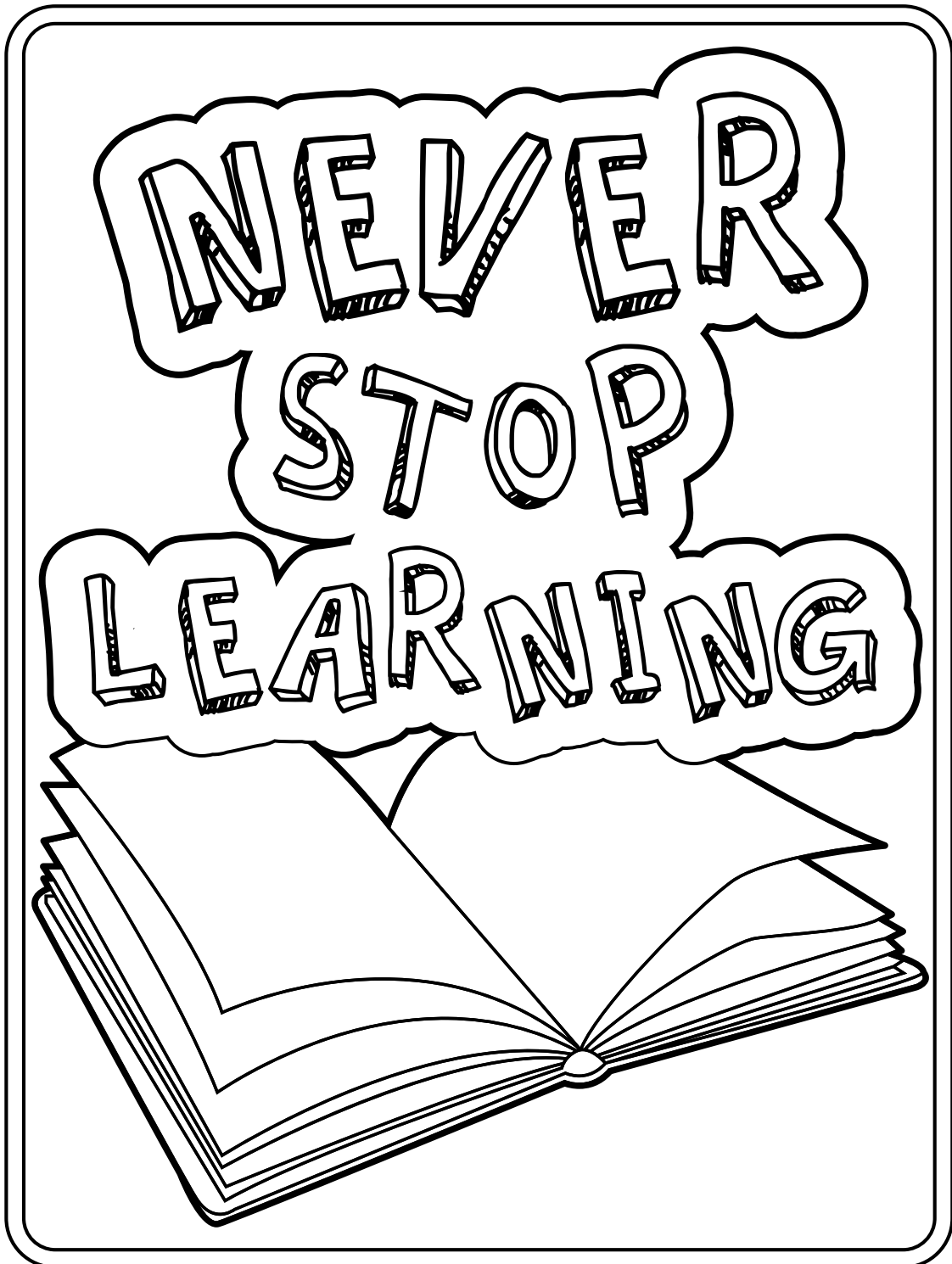
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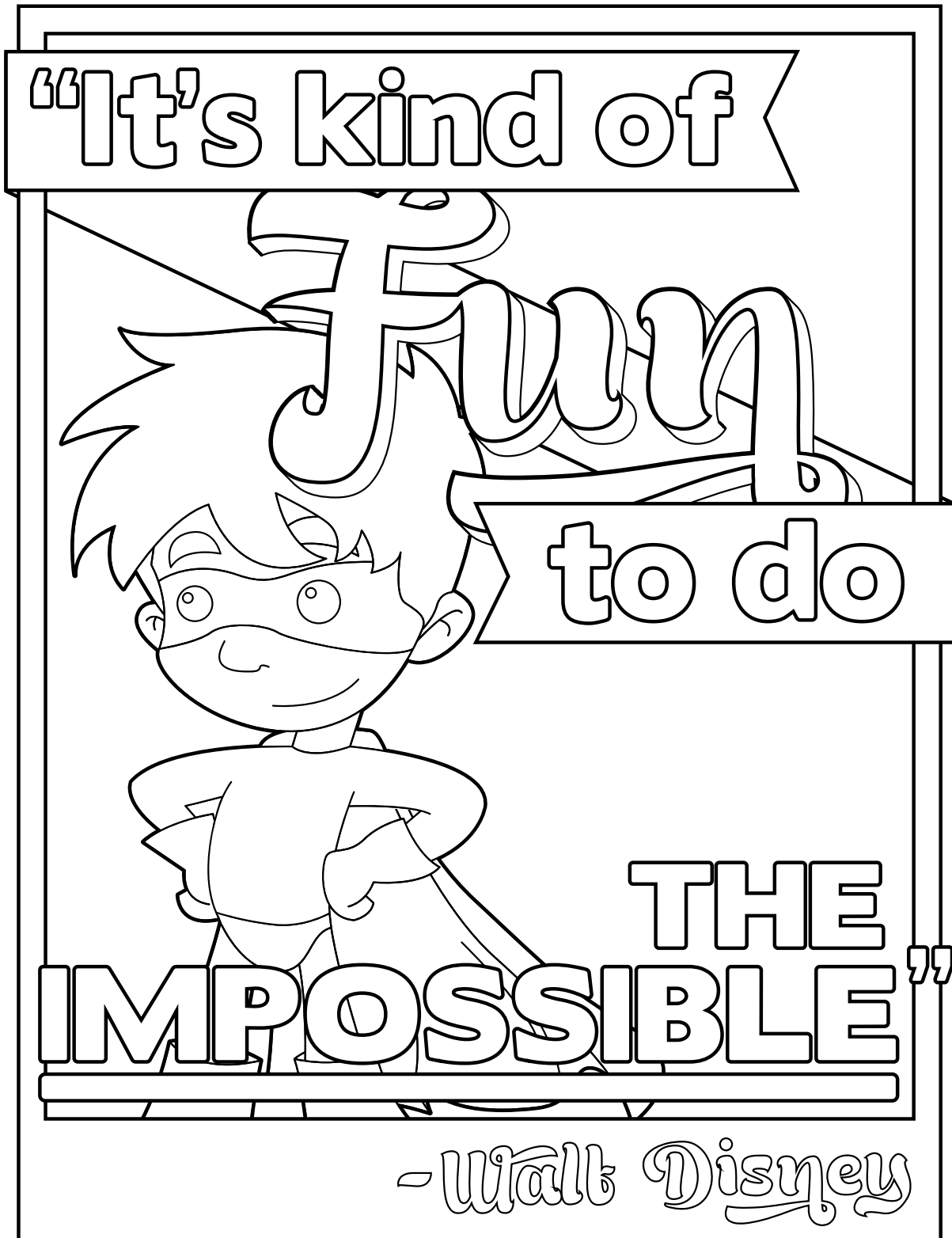
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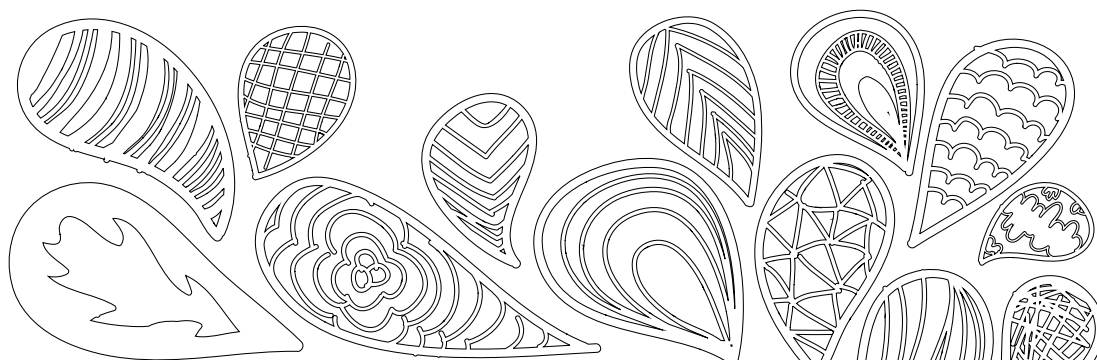
NEVER STOP LEARNING



WALT DISNEY QUOTE



I LIKE NONSENSE...

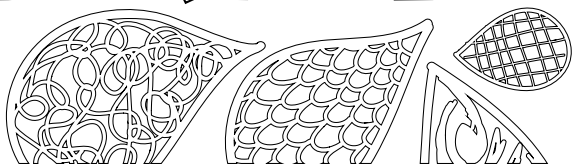


I LIKE

NONSENSE

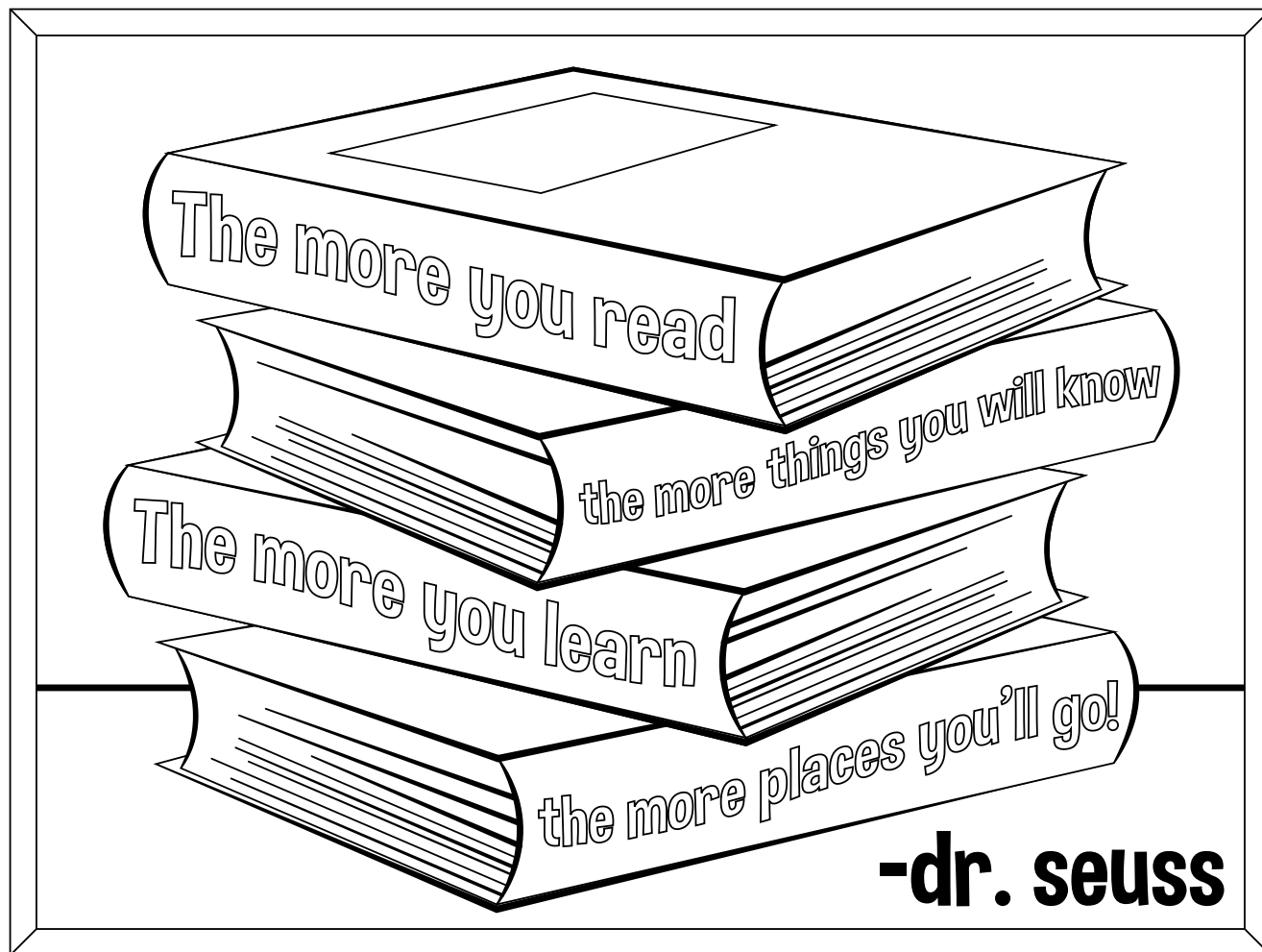
it wakes up the

BRAIN CELLS



dr. seuss

THE MORE YOU READ THE MORE YOU KNOW



SUCCESS QUOTE

YOU ALWAYS

— pass —

FAILURE

ON THE WAY to

SUCCESS

Mickey Rooney