



Just for the ASKing!

by Bruce Oliver



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Bruce Oliver, the author of *Just for the ASKing!*, lives in Burke, Virginia. He uses the knowledge, skills, and experience he acquired as a teacher, professional developer, mentor, and middle school principal as he works with school districts in across the nation. He has written more than 150 issues of *Just for the ASKing!* He is the author of *Points to Ponder* and also a co-author of *Creating a Culture for Learning: Your Guide to PLCs and More..*

Gordon Tredgold of Inspired Results shares ten things that we can say to one another in these trying times to both boost morale and let colleagues know they are valued members of the team.

- What do you need from me to be successful?
- I value your contribution.
- I believe you have the capacity to achieve the results you want.
- Sorry, my fault.
- What did we learn from this that we could use in the future?
- How are you doing today?
- I have complete faith in you.
- How can we continue to do better?
- Great job!
- Thank you!

Quips and Quotes

Now is clearly a time when we need not only words of wisdom, but words of humor. It is of utmost importance that we provide one another chances to smile, to laugh out loud, or simply to pause and nod. I found several items in my personal archives that I feel might brighten your day. Enjoy!



When I was a kid, my parents would always say, “Excuse my French,” after a swear word. I’ll never forget my first day at school when my teacher asked if any of us knew any French.



The dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life. One man, a CEO, decided to

explain the problem with education. He argued, “What’s a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?”

He reminded the other dinner guests that it’s true what they say about teachers: “Those who can do. Those who can’t teach.”

To corroborate, he said to another guest, “You’re a teacher, Susan. Be honest. What do you make?”

Susan, who had a reputation for honesty and frankness replied, “You want to know what I make?”

“I make kids wonder. I make them question. I make them criticize. I make them apologize and mean it. I make them write. I make them read, read, read. I make them spell definitely, beautiful, definitely beautiful, and definitely beautiful over and over and over again until they will never misspell either one of those words again.”

I make them show all their work in math and hide it all on their final drafts in English.”

I make them understand that they should follow their heart. If someone ever tries to judge you by what you make, you pay them no attention.”

You want to know what I make? I *make a difference*. What about you?



You know you’re getting older when a recliner and a heating pad is your idea of a hot date.



How to frighten the new generation: Put them in a room with a rotary phone, an analog watch, and a TV with no remote. Then leave directions on how to use them in cursive.



I decided to make sure my husband woke up with a Big Smile on his face this morning. Now I can’t have Sharpies in the house anymore.





A gas station outside Seattle, Washington, displayed these messages:

- If attacked by a mob of clowns, go for the juggler.
- I child-proofed my house but the kids still get in.
- The first five days after the weekend are the hardest.
- Past, Present, and Future walked into a bar; it was tense.
- They're not going to make yardsticks any longer.
- I went to the Air & Space Museum but there was nothing there.



These statements fall into the category of "Said No Teacher Ever!"

- "I really enjoy faculty meetings!"
- "I sure could use some additional data."
- "I am a huge fan of change."
- "It doesn't really bother me when we move on to something new before we finish the last initiative."
- "Class size is really no big deal."
- "If we get rid of standardized testing, I think it will be a big mistake."
- "I can't wait for my next unannounced observation!"



They say laughter is the best medicine. They lie. It's brownies.



I went down to the paint store to get thinner. It didn't work.



Teaching seems to require the sort of skills one would need to pilot a bus full of live chickens backwards, with no brakes, down a rocky road through the Andes while providing colorful and informative commentary on the scenery.

- Frank Habit





Always be kind. If you see someone falling behind, walk beside them. If someone is being ignored, find a way to include them. If someone has been knocked down, lift them up. Always remind people of their worth. Be who you needed when you were going through hard times. Just one small act of kindness could mean the world to someone.



“Imagine if we walked into the world with the belief that each person was inherently worthy.

Imagine if our goal was to help each other recognize that we are worthy of being loved.

Imagine if we sought to listen more than we spoke.”

- Fred Rogers



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