

Teaching at Nei-Li Primary

Gregory Belback

Mr. Greg from the north eastern area of the United States: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is an educator who has taught various subjects for the last eleven years in Taiwan. Presently he is teaching English at Nei Li Primary School in Taoyuan City.

Lovely Hometown-Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Mr. Belback comes from Pittsburgh. It is one of the cities in Pennsylvania. Located at the confluence of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers, Pittsburgh is known as both "the Steel City", and as the "City of Bridges." Pittsburgh is famous for: it's sports teams (Pirates, Steelers and Penguins), scenic views (Mt. Washington), people (Andy Warhol, Andrew Carnegie, Gene Kelly, Wiz Khalifa, Nellie Bly) and universities (Carnegie Mellon, Pitt).

Life experience, Education and time in Taiwan

Being in Taiwan for over 14 years, Mr. Belback has been working in the field of education. He has bachelors of arts (B.A.) from St. Francis University, Loretto PA, and acquired a master's degree (M.A.) from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He has taught at public and private schools in Hsin Chu City and in Taoyuan City at the High School and Elementary school level.

Teaching at Nei Li Primary

Nei Li Primary has an interesting acronym that reflects the attitude we facilitate and instill into our students. It is based off of the word ENJOY.

"The vision of **ENJOY** an abbreviation from: Excellence, Nature, Joy, Optimism and Youth. The letters stand for the essential elements of our bilingual courses:

Excellence- Both students and teachers are always immersing students

in English every day to achieve excellent communicating skills and grant students the greatest level of exposure to English as possible.

Nature- The school is providing authentic situations for students to learn in natural contexts.

Joy- Teachers are planning and designing entertaining activities for the class to boost learning interest and effectiveness.

Optimism- The students are cultivating active learning habits, positive attitudes, behavior and a liberal mindset.

Youth- The school is establishing an energetic and youthful environment for everyone to have the best learning experiences.”

Teaching at Nei Li Primary has been a through experience that always has new twists and surprises. It is a joy to work with students and develop their English abilities and expand their knowledge of culture. They ENJOY concepts that are new to them. Helping students learn via technology and group based work are the methods that the students ENJOY. They have been employed throughout my current courses this semester. Utilizing these methods helps weaker students cultivate their understanding of English via peer work with students who have greater abilities. They really ENJOY learning in this way.

For example, in my Health class students regularly participate in station learning activities. Station learning activities use students who have greater abilities to help and facilitate learning in weaker students through peer based activities that get students to interact with one another in English. A select group of students are designated as leaders. The weaker students have to go and see the leaders and practice a given sentence pattern or vocabulary. They must get approval from the lead students to verify that they have made, learned, improvement with the given vocabulary or pattern. Students really ENJOY going to from station to station to visit the multiple, chosen peer leaders, to work with and practice their English.

The excitement for learning is always generated when we use the iPad tablets in class. This semester alternating weeks focus on utilizing technology in the classroom. We always have an interesting lesson based around the current content of the course and the follow it

up with a fun interactive group activity on the tablets. The joy is overwhelming when they ENJOY the class. Students complete various on line activities, surveys puzzles, memory games, and interactive diagrams to reinforce the content of the course.

Another example, in my Window to the World (W.t.Ot.W English) (or W.o.W.) courses, students are always exposed to different cultures. Students have recently learned about different daily activities and time zones. Different things are being done by everyone throughout the world at any given moment and it corresponds directly to the relative time they are experiencing. “Little Einstein’s” in the making. We made time zone related clocks that cultivated students STEM skills. The clocks have different corresponding images and places to allow them glimpse into the world they are learning about. These places are far from them but much nearer than they know. Students were then encouraged to ask each other what the other was doing in a given place at a given time on the clock. It was fun. They EJOYED it.

Currently, in my Performance class, students are learning about the story the Emperor’s New Clothes. This is a cumulative lesson that students are practicing the Mime skills that they have been acquiring since the beginning of the semester. As we go through the story we are acting out each stage and section of the story through mime. Students always enjoy being able to express themselves and create new elements of the story via their mime performances that are not always so orthodox.

It is truly a joy to teach here at Nei Li Primary school. It is not always easy and takes a lot of work. But the outcome and goal of helping students become bilingual is an important one that shouldn’t be forgotten or overlooked. Every student is important, and of value, in this project and we need to value our students and strive to help all of them, especially the weakest.