

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- Your decisions now impact your future.
- How would I change the world?
- Small, obtainable goals.
- Staying healthy in 2010.
- Finding a hobby you enjoy.
- A story to remember.

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# 2010 ~ An Exciting New Year!

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## A New Spin on New Year's Resolutions

January is a time for renewed focus and setting goals that will bring positive changes in the new year. Common New Year's resolutions are frequently associated with personal improvement; for instance, "I'm going to lose weight" or "I'm going to exercise daily." The turning of a new year offers a starting point for goal setting and planning behaviors that hopefully bring positive results.

Educators commonly begin the new year by asking their students to discuss, write and share personal resolutions: "I will eat vegetables" or "I promise to study." Negative words are avoided like "don't" or "won't." Resolutions are made with a sincere desire to make changes for the better.

## A Classroom Promise

Our classroom bulletin boards are frequently crowded with individual New Year's resolutions. Try creating a huge banner that reads "In 2010, WE WILL." Write the letters in "We Will" vertically. After each letter, make a classroom promise.

**W**- We will do our best on tests.

However, the sincerity and best intentions of students often falls by the wayside as the year progresses. Unfulfilled New Year's resolutions are almost an expectation.



Put added sparkle in 2010's New Year's resolutions.

tation.

To increase the effectiveness of resolutions and perhaps create better results, ask students to

make a list of what they know they won't do coupled with what they'll do instead.

- I won't grab for the bag of cookies; I'll grab a piece of fruit instead.
- I won't come home and sit down in front of the television; I'll take a walk or ride my bike instead.
- I won't wait until the night before to study for a test; I'll begin to study several days before.

By making connections between positive and negative behaviors, students are more likely to remember their "resolution" on a daily basis.

**E** - Everyone will complete their homework assignments.

**W** - We will encourage and empower one another.

**I** - I will not forget that I belong to a team.

**L** - Let's work together to make our school a great place to learn.

**L** - Learning will be our focus in 2010.

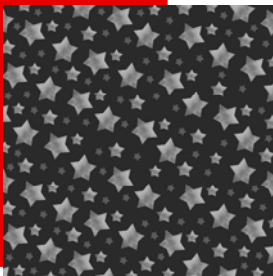
While individual resolutions and goals are certainly valuable, team and classroom goals are strengthened by the mutual interests of the entire class.



Our decisions today  
impact tomorrow.

*“With Louis Braille  
as an example,  
what one change  
could you make to  
impact the  
future?”*

Reach for  
the stars in  
2010.



## What's in My Future?

The word January comes from the Latin name Januarius. Januarius is derived from the Roman god Janus. Janus was the god of day and light and was also known as the god of the beginning of things. Janus is often pictured as a god with two faces, allowing him to look back on the past and to look ahead to the future at the same time.

People all over the world celebrate the new year in different ways but regardless of how we

celebrate, we all have our past to remember and our future to look towards.

Ask students to list key words exhibiting their past: *played sports, took piano lessons, made good grades, studied for tests, completed my homework, made friends, etc.* Some students may view their past more negatively: *I haven't always done my best in school, my grandparents died, my dog was run over by a car, I don't like school.*

When students have written a generalized picture of their past, ask them to look to their future. What do they see? *I will become a basketball player in highschool, I will graduate with honors, I will have a new dog named Chuck, etc.*

Remind students that although the future is sometimes uncertain, we can always make it more positive by setting obtainable goals and making thoughtful decisions.

## A Powerful Change

January 4th is celebrated for the birth of a man by the name of Louis Braille. Why is Louis Braille's birthday worthy of celebration? Take a guess.

Louis Braille (1809-1852) was born in France and blinded at the age of three when there was an accident in his father's saddle-making shop. During this time in history, students who were blind usually did not

attend school; however, Louis Braille was the exception. As a student, Louis developed a system of raised dots that represented the letters of the alphabet, helping blind people to read. Today we refer to this system of communication as "Braille."

Ask students to contemplate the power of Louis's invention. How were lives significantly

changed? Think about the thousands whose abilities and talents could now find expression.

With Louis Braille as an example, what one change could you make to impact the future? What would you do for human-kind that you would be long remembered for? Ask students to discuss how one person's efforts can positively impact the entire world.

## Just Another Week in January

Beginning this January, ask students to set and work towards a goal each week. Choose from some of the following key words:

- go (I will go to the public library this week.)

- meet (I will meet and make a new friend.)
- learn (I want to learn a new language.)
- make (I will make a card for my grandparents.)
- read (I will read about and study a historical figure in our nation's history.)

- focus (I will focus on smiling more when I'm walking in the hallways.)
- friend (I will be a better friend to others.)
- goal (I will set a goal of making straight A's this semester.)

Extend the activity to February if time allows.

# Stay Healthy!



With winter comes the cold and flu season, and with that in mind January is the perfect time to concentrate on staying healthy through observing good habits. We can avoid infecting others by staying home if we are running fever or have been sick during the night.

**If you must cough or say “Ah choo!”, a tissue or elbow should cover you!**

In order to stay well, it’s important to practice good hygiene like washing our hands.

When we wash our hands, we should always use

soap, warm water and scrub to our wrists, reaching between our fingers and underneath our nails. It’s important to keep our hands away from our face (eyes, nose, mouth).

When you’ve dried your hands in a restroom, use the paper towel to hold the door handle. With your

foot or elbow, keep the door open and throw your paper towel in the trash. Avoid touching places where a lot of hands have been.

Healthy eating habits also contribute to avoiding illness and keeping your immune system effective.

How else can we fight germs (bacteria and viruses)? What should we do when we cough or sneeze? If we are not feeling well, what are good foods to reach for? What are foods to avoid? Why are liquids important?

## National Hobby Month

January is National Hobby Month. A hobby is something you do because you enjoy it; you find it relaxing and interesting. Painting, singing, sports, collecting baseball cards or other objects like shells, rocks or stamps, craft work or building models, playing games, or taking care of your pets can all be hobbies.

After a long day at school that may have been disappointing or frustrat-

ing, a hobby can help you relax and forget your troubles ~ at least for a little while.

Begin the new year with a determination to either find a hobby or to learn more about a hobby you currently enjoy. Visit the library to find books on your hobby and ask others what their hobbies are. You may realize you have something in common with someone which can

make your hobby more enjoyable as you share your knowledge and skills.

A hobby doesn’t have to cost money. The things we often do in our “free time” are the things we most enjoy doing - reading specific kinds of books or making favorite foods.

**“January is National Hobby Month.”**

## An Enjoyable Tale

Charels Perrault (1628-1703) was born on January 12th and is best known for writing stories that became popular first in France and then around the world. These stories are referred to as the Tales of Mother Goose and include *Sleeping Beauty*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Cinderella*, and *Tom Thumb*.

What has made these tales classic works of literature? Are there lessons to be learned in the stories told? What makes the characters memorable?

Thinking of the characters and the lessons learned in each tale, create a story that could have been included in the Tales of Mother

Goose. Remember that main characters who are likeable are often believable. In other words, they have strengths and weaknesses which make them real to the reader.

Think of a lesson you could teach another by using a story.

**He did not play well but he tried his best because he loved to entertain.**



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**Daphne Morris, M.Ed., met Trevor Romain in 1992 when he visited a school as a guest speaker. Impressed by Trevor's profound and meaningful impact on students and educators, Daphne joined The Trevor Romain Company in 2006. A former elementary school principal, Daphne holds two Master's degrees in education.**



## Resources:

Creative Teaching Press. January. California: Creative Teaching Press, Inc., 1990.



*Happy New Year from  
The Trevor Romain Company.  
May 2010 be a year enriched with joy in learning  
in your classroom, school, district and community.*