

# FEATURE TEACHER

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## Holly Hill

4th Grade, Shady Spring Elementary



### **What is a challenge you have faced teaching in during a pandemic in 2020?**

There have been so many challenges this year, but I'm blessed to be part of a great hard working school family that's always willing to reach out and help one another in any way.

The biggest challenge I have faced during 2020 would have to be not being departmentalized. When students become 4th graders switching classes and having different teachers is what they look most forward to. We did get to start the year out with teachers moving, but that quickly changed when we had to focus on the safety of our staff and students. We have a great 4th grade team here at Shady. We have created "subs" within our own classroom when it comes to subjects we are teaching based on other teacher lesson plans. The kids get a kick out of this! All in one day I'm Mrs. Hill, Sub Mrs. Shrewsberry, Sub Mrs. Sutton, and Sub Mrs. Campbell. Through the mask you can always see them smiling.

### **How do you support building a positive and safe online learning environment for your students?**

I create a positive and safe online learning environment for my students with providing positive feedback and having a great attitude.

I was once told that if you take each letter in ATTITUDE, count the location of each letter in the alphabet, then add those numbers together you get 100! I have used this every year since then with my kiddos, but it's also important for me, as a teacher, to remember this as well. Kids feed off of our attitudes in any situation. I always try to see the good in any situation for my kids.

As a 4th grade team we provide positive feedback whenever we can! Writing a small note on an assignment or a comment on Schoology. I try to always include a little note to place in student graded paper folders.

### **Do you have a super awesome success story from 2020?**

My biggest success story from this spring to now is being part of a great School Team that all came together to be able to adapt to this new way of teaching. Being patient and having consistency is key. We help each other, offer each other our help, or give advice to help fix a solution. Some days we are faced with a change in expectation or having something else to add to the list.... but in the end we are one. WE ARE A TEAM!

### **What do you do to encourage online classroom participation?**

As a 4th grade team we reward the class who has the most participation in our Friday TEAMS meeting. We reward them with small little things like extra game time on MobyMax, Minecraft, or time on an

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educational App. We also play a game like Kahoot, but with students answering in the chat box on TEAMS. The questions are gathered up from concepts used during the week from Math, ELA, Science, and Social Studies. We also threw some FUN ones in there as well. Our kiddos LOVE to type in the chat box and look forward to this each Friday.

### **Parent Communication... What's working for your families?**

Messaging through Schoology and using a weekly grading folder. My team and I also have provided emails, and phone numbers as options for communication as well. Our 4th grade team has a Facebook page that we utilize for important information and upcoming dates.

Our 4th grade parents are AWESOME! They always reach out when they need assistance. I do believe when our school created the "Cheat Sheets" it helped a lot of parents with navigating the different platforms and Apps being used everyday. As for all of us, this is a learning experience. Patience and consistency is KEY.

### **What methods have been effective in teaching during a pandemic?**

First off using a "To Do" List for kids and parents. Our 4th grade team sets these up easily for students and parents to use as a checklist as they complete their assignments.

Our kids love to use Notability to complete in class and remote learning assignments. I use Notability, as well in class for instruction and resources. Notability also makes creating a "recap" lesson video so easy to present and keeps information neat and organized. Did I mention the Apple Pencil? Using the pencil is a game changer! It works well within Notability.

As part of student's remote work there are "recap" lesson videos posted for students to watch before completing homework on remote days. This allows for students to be independent and review material from in class learning and not feel so overwhelmed or out of place when completing remote work.

As a school, we created "Cheat Sheets" for our parents. These were paper packets we sent home to help navigate through our platforms and programs we are using as a school.

### **Share something positive about teaching in 2020.**

The most positive thing about teaching this year so far has been seeing my kiddos! They love to be in the classroom with their teacher and classmates. I feel with smaller groups it allows time for one-on-one instruction for learning new concepts. I have never been more excited to see the learning "light bulb" be ignited each day from my learning kiddos.