

#DearTeachers


HAPPY TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK!

We hope you'll set some time aside, this week or over the weeks ahead, to enjoy a book, podcast or self-care strategy recommended by a fellow teacher.

Books

EDUCATOR
MORGAN SMITH
RECOMMENDS:

Parachutes
BY KELLY YANG




"'Parachutes' gave me a window view into a section of the Asian community. As a person of color, I know my own examples of being oppressed and judged, but this gave me a glimpse into what racism looks like with another group that is also marginalized. It highlighted racism not just from the Black and white perspective, but as a white supremacy issue."

Podcasts

TEACHER
ERIN JEWELL
RECOMMENDS:

Cult of Pedagogy
BY JENNIFER GONZALEZ



"Cult of Pedagogy is like going to talk to the teacher next door about a problem you're having in class, but that person next door is an expert and gives you research-based answers (with references!). It is a place to find new information, confirms what I already knew, and makes me set a goal for something that I could try in the future."

Self-Care

EDUCATOR
LEIGH RAGSDALE
RECOMMENDS:

We created a Zen Den & Quiet Space where staff can practice self-care through yoga classes, longer lunches and walking staff meetings.

"Supporting our teachers includes [supporting] their mental health and wellness. We had to create spaces for our teachers to unplug throughout the school day and regulate if they needed it. The Zen Den has a tea station, calming music, a couch, essential oils & Himalayan salt lamps. The quiet space is just that. No technology is allowed, yoga mats, no overhead lighting, a small water feature & other calming mechanisms. Our teachers must be well, if we want our students to be well."


EDUCATOR
MARIA ARFANAKIS (GALANIS)
RECOMMENDS:

Keep Going: 10 Ways to Stay Creative in Good Times and Bad
BY AUSTIN KLEON

"I discovered this book during this year's #DitchSummit at a time when I needed it most – in the midst of the pandemic and dealing with so many things. Finding ways to 'keep going' especially in these times when we're dealing with the weight of the world is not easy, but the ideas shared in this book just make so much sense and are truly inspiring and helpful."

TEACHER
LAURA DAVIS VAUGHAN
RECOMMENDS:


The Parker Edison Project
BY PARKER EDISON



"This podcast delves into culture, most of it not education-focused, but still relevant to education in that any authentic discussion of culture helps develop understanding of students and families."

TEACHER
TIFFANY SCOTT
RECOMMENDS:


To me, self-care means journaling and decorating my home.



"We spend many hours intentionally designing our classrooms to support the best student outcomes. It becomes an intellectual home for both students and teachers. I do my best to disconnect at day's end. Decorating my real life home for each season keeps it a happy place I love retiring to each day. It is a part of our family self care plan."

TEACHER
SARAH JACOBS
RECOMMENDS:


Concrete Rose
BY ANGIE THOMAS



"'Concrete Rose' by Angie Thomas sat on my shelf for too long before I picked it up! The prequel to 'The Hate You Give' gives satisfying answers to so many questions I had about Maverick and his past. His love story, his struggle, his pain and his successes are all wrapped up in the beautiful writing and plot and gave me a feeling of wonderful nostalgia. I felt so lucky to get to revisit these characters once more."

TEACHER
EMILY WHIPPLE
RECOMMENDS:

The Popcast With Knox and Jamie
BY KNOX MCCOY & JAMIE GOLDEN



"I love the Popcast. Their mission is to educate you on the things that entertain, but do not matter. It is light-hearted, funny, and helps me focus my mind on something other than work."

EDUCATOR
ALEXANDRA M.
RECOMMENDS:

I encourage all my fellow educators to take a break from their screens and spend some time in nature.

"To take time as educators away from all screens and to live maintains perspective of how students can interact and function within virtual classrooms as they shift from in-person to learn 'in-screens.' This maintained break allows educators to stay reflective of their own digital abilities to be able to stay conscious of learners' needs online and in person."

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Books



TEACHER
SARAH JACOBS
RECOMMENDS:

The Vanishing Half
BY BRIT BENNETT

"'The Vanishing Half' by Brit Bennett was a spectacular story of two sisters torn apart by a heart-wrenching choice. The novel continues to follow their daughters and shows how the consequences of that decision are forever present. The characters and places are so richly drawn that you feel an instant connection to the sisters, and their guilt, love, hardships, and victories are yours as much as it is theirs."

EDUCATOR
MARTIN ODIMA JR.
RECOMMENDS:

Born a Crime
BY TREVOR NOAH

"Trevor Noah is one of my favorite comedians, not just because of his jokes, but because of his ability to share the truth, no matter how hard it is to talk about. Born a Crime is a great book because Trevor Noah delivers a compelling narration of his life and how he got to be where he is now."

TEACHER
KELLY FERGUSON
RECOMMENDS:

Cultivating Genius
BY GHOLDY MUHAMMAD

"This book delivers an enlightening explanation of the history of Black literary groups in the U.S., during times when many Black Americans were deprived of much if not all formal education. The principles of these groups, where members not only developed their reading skills but also critical thinking, knowledge and sense of self are presented as foundational proposals for the sort of Historically Responsive Literacy education we can have in the U.S. – a focus not only on the process but also the product of reading, and the relationship between the reader and the content."

Podcasts



EDUCATOR
CARLA MEYRINK
RECOMMENDS:

Unlocking Us with Brené Brown: Brené with Emily and Amelia Nagoski on Burnout and How to Complete the Stress Cycle
BY BRENE BROWN

"I highly recommend Brene Brown's podcast with Emily Nagoski and Amelia Nagoski, authors of 'Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle'. We often think of stress as something we need to eliminate from our lives by getting rid of the stressors. But in actual fact, even when we remove the stressor, stress is an emotion which lives on in our body, unless we work through it. This podcast taught me so much. It gives the listener specific strategies for working through the stress and, therefore, avoiding burnout. Teachers are working too hard and are dealing with overwhelming anxiety. This podcast can help."

Self-Care

EDUCATOR
DR. ERIKA ROMERO
RECOMMENDS:

My favorite approach to self-care is digging into a fun book.

"As someone who teaches literature, it might seem strange to pick 'read more books' as an approach to self-care. But so much of the time, the reading I do has a pedagogical or research purpose. Getting to just read a book for enjoyment and perhaps discuss it with a fellow reader friend is such a nice change of pace. Sure, it might end up in my classroom or writing later on. But in that moment, all I'm thinking about is enjoying myself by getting lost in a different world for a bit."

TEACHER
MOLLY MCGINNIS
RECOMMENDS:



My go-to self-care is stepping away from work to dedicate some time to my plants and planting.

"Plants and planting are my go-to when I'm feeling overwhelmed or I need a break. I enjoy going to different nurseries around my city and exploring in the fresh air. I've even joined some plant exchange groups where I meet new people! It's a great way to take a break, get outside and explore!"

EDUCATOR
MARTIN ODIMA JR.
RECOMMENDS:

My tips to help detach from work: Give your to-do list a "closing time"; channel your worries into hobbies or projects; go for walks to reduce stress; exercise self-compassion.

"These strategies have been helpful for me and other teachers to reduce burnout. Teachers have a job with literally an infinite number of tasks. There are limits to the amount of compassion and empathy we can give. So, to reduce stress it's important to 'fill our tanks' with tools that have shown evidence to increase our capacity to deal with stress and sustain ourselves for the long term."