

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THE # SIGN?

Our beloved pound sign has morphed into a hashtag. And we are putting it to good use with #WhatTeachersDo.

By Anthony Carabache

Have you heard of Rip Van Winkle Syndrome? It gets its name from a short story called “Rip Van Winkle,” written by American author Washington Irving and published in 1819. It tells the story of a man who falls asleep in the Catskill Mountains of New York, only to wake up 20 years later. Essentially, the man slept through the entire American Revolutionary War and then found himself in a world that was quite alien. Sound familiar?

The Hashtag

Fast forward to 2015 and consider Twitter – a revolution of sorts, and the most popular social media network on earth. It is hard to believe it has only been around for nine years, and particularly popular in the last five. It was during this incredibly short time that we began losing touch with the # sign, or pound sign, the hardest working of all telephone buttons. This # sign has now evolved into something called the hashtag.

Simply put, the hashtag is a breadcrumb for the explorer, a signal for the curious, and a beacon for anyone who is lost in the river of information that is Twitter. Its origins are actually highly technical in the world of programming code, but in our world our beloved # acts as a guide toward shore, a dock or even a fireside chat that gives a breath of calm and focus in an otherwise distracted medium.

At OECTA, we decided to create our own breath of calm just for teachers, one that talks about the intangibles we often forget about in the world of teaching. We have started the hashtag #WhatTeachersDo and we invite you to share the warmth of this unique fireside chat with us.

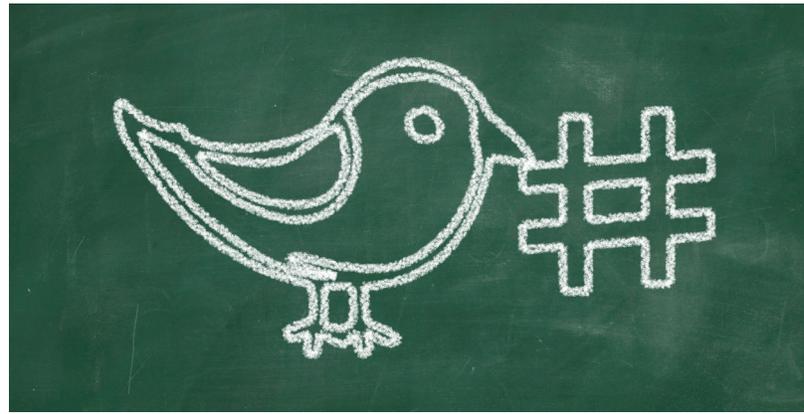


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What is #WhatTeachersDo?

#WhatTeachersDo is meant to be about the little things we do that make a difference in our school communities. It is meant to be a place of sharing where we can show each other that news doesn't always have to be negative. It is meant to bring to light just how beautifully we touch the lives of students. It is a small opportunity to demonstrate our passion for what we do.

Whether it's a Band-Aid on a skinned knee or taking a phone call from a teary parent – these are the stories that drive our passion. It's the little things that matter to our students; it's the little things that keep us up at night thinking about them; and it's the little things that bring our students back to our classroom doors years later.

#WhatTeachersDo celebrates the little things that make teaching unlike any other profession on Earth.

How to #WhatTeachersDo?

Twitter is a wonderful source of self-directed professional development. If you have never used it before, it is worth the five minutes to sign up. There is a short tutorial on YouTube that is available by searching the following terms in Google: How To #WhatTeachersDo. There, you will find a five-minute lesson showing you how to participate.

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