

# TA TALK

Issue 3, January 2016



Leaders in  
Professional  
Learning  
For  
Teacher Aides



Stella Liliendal and Mandy Bell, ATA Directors

## Directors Message

### WELCOME BACK

A very warm welcome to you all in this new school year. We hope you are looking forward to the challenges ahead, as much as we are at Australian Teacher Aide. As you return to work we would like to update you on our plans for 2016.

For Australian Teacher Aide, this year is really important and we have set ourselves some big goals. The first goal is to continue to build an awareness of ATA. We are doing this by meeting with teacher aides, teachers, schools, education departments and other organisations that share our belief about the important paraprofessional role of teacher aides.

Our second goal is to continue to increase our membership across Australia. Already our members include individual teacher aides and training organisations. We know that increased membership means more professional development services for teacher aides, so we will be asking you, our members, for feedback.

To achieve our goals, we will continue to offer our members outstanding value for money by providing you with regular professional development opportunities. You can read more about our new Literacy Support Skills series, in the New Resource section, below.

Lastly, in December, ATA hosted our very first webinar, *3 Steps to Improve Behaviour in the Classroom and at Home*. In our feature article we have summarized some key points from the webinar that you can use both in the classroom and at home straight away.

This year we will also be hosting exclusive member webinars where you will have the opportunity to tell us about the professional development that is important to you. Look out for the posts on MyPLC over the coming weeks.

Lastly, we would love you to help us achieve our goals by spreading the word about ATA.

*Stella Liliendal & Mandy Bell*

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*I would like to thank you for the Webinar conducted today. I found it a wonderful reminder of the strategies which we should all use daily not only in the classroom situation but at home as well. I related to your comment about having young adult children now and wishing I could go back and utilise this knowledge.*

*The timing of the webinar was perfect for me to reflect on the past year and how I could have reacted or handled a situation better. Will be addressing a new approach in 2016.*

*Robyn, one of our ATA members from a large Anglican school*

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### 3 STEPS TO IMPROVE BEHAVIOUR IN THE CLASSROOM AND AT HOME



Behaviour management practices are seen by most schools as the responsibility of the teacher. In our December webinar we explored ways that teacher aides can work within the scope of their support role while making an important contribution to promoting positive behaviour in students.

Here are **three key points** from the webinar that you can use both in the classroom and at home straight away. If you prefer to view the whole program, the recording will soon be available in the members' area on a new page called Webinars.

#### 1. There is no single approach to behaviour that will work with every child

It is helpful to look at the practices that research tells us have the best chance of improving behaviour, most of the time. These principles can be applied both in the home and with students at school. The following theorists have made a significant contribution to modern behaviour management practices:

[Alfred Adler \(1870-1937\)](#) was a world-renowned psychiatrist who was ahead of his time. He is best known for his work in Individual Psychology. Adler said that *the motivation behind all behaviour is the desire to belong*.

[Rudolf Dreikurs \(1897-1972\)](#) built on Adler's work and went on to explain that all behaviour serves a purpose, but sometimes children learn the wrong way to belong. He called these *mistaken goals*.

[William Glasser \(1925-2013\)](#), a leading psychologist in the field of behaviour management, defined behaviour as our best attempt, given the skills we currently have, to meet our needs. This tells us that behaviour is a skill that can be learned.

#### 2. Giving attention to positive behaviour helps children learn appropriate ways to belong

In a classroom, it is likely that you will pay 16 times more attention to students who are behaving inappropriately. At home, you are 16 times more likely to notice when your child is doing the wrong thing compared to the times when they are doing something positive! Focusing excessively on inappropriate behaviour teaches children the wrong way to belong. However, by giving more attention to positive behaviour, you show children that there are more acceptable ways to get attention. You are helping them learn the appropriate way to belong!



## Australian Teacher Aide

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### 3. Descriptive encouragement provides better feedback

Descriptive encouragement tells the child exactly what it is they have done well. It is inclusive, and works equally well for children who excel, as for children who find certain tasks difficult. This enables you to encourage effort, not just the end result. We really like this approach, as it is very easy to overlook children doing the right thing.

### NEW RESOURCES COMING SOON

#### Literacy Support Skills for Teacher Aides

The first topic is **Vocabulary Support**. We chose this topic after talking with schools last year. TAs working with upper primary and lower secondary students told us they were looking for skills to support students with vocabulary. You can apply these strategies with students at any year level. The first program shows you how to introduce reading vocabulary, using Marzano's Steps 1-3. It includes a workbook and a certificate of completion. You will receive an email notification when we upload any new resources.

#### Webinar: 3 Steps to Improve Behaviour in the Classroom and at Home

This webinar explores the important role of the teacher aide in promoting positive behaviour in students. The webinar will provide you with useful strategies that you can use straight away, both at school and at home. This is a must view for all teacher aides and parents who want to promote more positive behaviour in children.

### WHAT'S TRENDING ON FACEBOOK?

We are learning lots about our growing Facebook community through the activity and engagement that is happening every day. Our ATA Facebook page Likes have grown to over 1730. That's pretty amazing, we think. Thank you FB followers!

#### Top Post

The most popular post to date, is a notification we shared recently from Warner Brothers Movie World, Sea World & Wet & Wild. Warner Brothers are offering educators, including teacher aides, free admission in the month of February. This post was seen by over 11,500 people and shared 99 times! We hope some of you get to take advantage of this fabulous offer.



#### Also Trending Well

In just 24 hours, 190 people responded YES when asked if they would be interested in attending a free webinar on Behaviour Support Skills for Teacher Aides. Of course, we went ahead and ran the webinar even though it was just one week out from Christmas.

Yellow and Orange were the dominant colours in our personality test viewed by 2,200 people. It's always interesting to learn more about ourselves, isn't it?

Also trending well was our post on the *7 Cardinal Rules in Life*, which had some great quotes such as *Smile - You don't own all the problems in the world*. This post has been viewed over 2,700 times.

If you missed any of these posts, you can find them on our [ATA FB page](#). *Please keep liking and sharing our page* 😊

## TIPS AND IDEAS

### Mnemonics

No it's not a spelling mistake! If you haven't heard of mnemonics (pronounced nemonics – the 'm' is silent) let us tell you why this is a useful word to know.

Mnemonics is a memory device to help you to remember difficult information such as rules, lists, historical dates and steps in a process, in a way that the brain can easily process, by associating the information with something easy, such as a song, rhyme, action or picture. You have probably used lots of mnemonics without realizing it. For example:

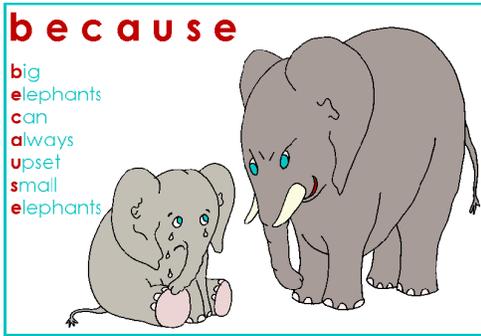


Image from PlagiarismChecker.net

**Music mnemonics:** Did you sing the ABC song for remembering the letters of the alphabet?

**Rhyme Mnemonics:** Do you still use the rhyme, *30 Days hath September*, for remembering the number of days in each month?

**Spelling Mnemonic:** Do you give your students spelling tips such as: 'I hear with my ear', to remember the spelling of *hear* and *here*?

### Use Mnemonics to Learn Names

It's the start of the school year and you are working with new teachers and students. How do you remember all of their names? You have a higher chance of success by using a mnemonic. Here's one you could try:

**Rhythm and Movement:** This mnemonic works best when actually done with students, however as that's not always possible (or the names belong to teachers!). Use your imagination instead. Here's a way to quickly learn names.

Let's say that the names of the new students' are: *Ari, Eva, Tracey and Henry*. Now make up an action that rhymes with each person's name. Here's our example:

**Ari** likes to go on **safari**

**Eva** likes to **eat everything**

**Tracey** likes **trekking**

**Henry** likes to **hang 10**



Here is a fun start of year Getting to Know You activity, for students who don't know each other: Participants:

- Choose something imaginary or real that they like doing
- Describe themselves using an adjective beginning with the same letter as their first name.  
For example: "I'm **Tom** and I'm **Terrific!**"
- Choose a favourite food beginning with the same letter as their first name  
For example: "I'm **Sally** and I like **Sandwiches!**"

Students can share it with their group. You can add tapping, clapping or body percussion to make it even more fun! It doesn't matter if it is imaginary, silly or funny. All the better to remember!