

CATCH-UP FRIDAY: A BAND-AID ON A BULLET WOUND FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS?

by:

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Ah, Fridays. There's a buzzing excitement in the air; everyone's looking forward to the weekend! But for teachers and students, a dark cloud often hangs over this pre-holiday paradise – catch-up Friday.

On the surface, dedicating time to tackle unfinished business seems noble. The reality, however, paints a far less rosy picture.

Let's face it: most students will be mentally on vacation by Friday. They're picturing themselves at the beach, not buried in textbooks. The prospect of spending this precious time solely focused on reviewing past material – something they might ideally prefer to do at home, on their own terms – feels like a punishment, not a learning opportunity. This lack of intrinsic motivation makes focusing on past lessons an uphill battle. It's like trying to teach a mosh pit theoretical physics.

But here's the real kicker: Catch-up Friday often complicates the entire week's lesson. Time spent rehashing past concepts eats into the planned lessons for the day. This boils down to a constant game of catch-up, where we rush through new content to stay on schedule. Students, already yearning for the weekend, become even more disengaged if they feel valuable learning time is being sacrificed for review.

Now, I'm not advocating not doing the Catch-up Friday program. Addressing lingering confusion has merit. But wouldn't a more targeted approach be more effective? Short, focused quizzes or individual consultations during breaks could be more productive than a forced group review session.

Let's remember the missed opportunities. With their joyful mood, Fridays are prime real estate for igniting curiosity! Imagine the spark of a captivating science experiment or the lively debate sparked by a thought-provoking discussion. Catch-up Friday, in its current form, can hold back these opportunities for exploration and engagement. It transforms a day that could be filled with intellectual discovery into a monotonous review session.

So, what's the solution? Perhaps a well-defined week-long plan with clear deadlines and expectations could minimize the need for dedicated catch-up time. Encouraging students to take ownership of their learning and seek help proactively throughout the week could also be a step in the right direction.

Ultimately, the goal is to strike a balance. Let's leverage the enthusiasm of Fridays to enrich new learning experiences while still addressing knowledge gaps. Shouldn't Fridays be a springboard to the weekend, not a constant reminder of what we couldn't quite reach? Ideally, Catch-up Friday can evolve into a more dynamic session that supports, not replaces, the joy of discovery that learning can bring. However, the current iteration often feels like a band-aid on a bullet wound for teachers and students. It might help, but it doesn't address the root cause of the problem. Let's work together to find a solution that fosters a love of learning, not a sense of Friday dread.

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