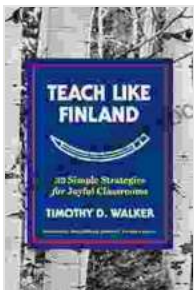


Teach Like Finland: 33 Simple Strategies for Joyful Classrooms

Finland has consistently ranked among the top countries in the world for educational achievement. Finnish students consistently score high on international standardized tests, and they are known for their critical thinking skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. This success is largely due to the emphasis that Finnish schools place on creating joyful and engaging learning environments.

In her book *Teach Like Finland: 33 Simple Strategies for Joyful Classrooms*, Pasi Sahlberg, a Finnish educator and researcher, shares some of the key strategies that Finnish teachers use to create such positive learning environments. These strategies are simple to implement and can be adapted to any classroom setting.



Teach Like Finland: 33 Simple Strategies for Joyful Classrooms by Timothy D. Walker

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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In this article, we will explore 10 of these strategies and provide examples of how you can use them in your own classroom.

1. Trust Your Students

Finnish teachers have a high level of trust in their students. They believe that students are capable of learning and that they want to succeed. This trust is evident in the way that Finnish teachers interact with their students. They treat students with respect and listen to their ideas. They also give students the freedom to make choices and take ownership of their learning.



- **Give students choices:** Allow students to choose what they want to learn about, how they want to learn it, and how they want to demonstrate their understanding.
- **Let students make mistakes:** Mistakes are an opportunity for students to learn. Create a classroom environment where students feel comfortable taking risks and learning from their mistakes.
- **Be there for your students:** Let your students know that you are there for them to support them and help them succeed.

2. Value Play

Play is an important part of learning. It allows students to explore their creativity, develop their imaginations, and learn through hands-on experiences. Finnish teachers incorporate play into their lessons in a variety of ways.



- **Use games and simulations:** Games and simulations can be a fun and engaging way to learn new concepts.
- **Encourage students to create:** Let students create their own projects, presentations, and games.
- **Provide opportunities for free play:** Give students time to play freely with each other and with toys and materials.

3. Teach Through Inquiry

Inquiry-based learning is a teaching method that encourages students to ask questions, investigate problems, and come to their own conclusions. This type of learning is highly effective because it helps students develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and communication skills.



- **Ask open-ended questions:** Questions that have more than one possible answer encourage students to think critically and explore different perspectives.
- **Provide opportunities for students to conduct research:** Let students research topics that interest them and present their findings to the class.
- **Facilitate class discussions:** Class discussions allow students to share their ideas and learn from each other.

4. Focus on Collaboration

Collaboration is an essential skill for success in the 21st century. Finnish teachers encourage students to work together on projects, assignments,

and presentations. This type of learning helps students develop communication skills, teamwork skills, and problem-solving skills.

- **Assign group projects:** Group projects give students the opportunity to work together and learn from each other.
- **Facilitate class discussions:** Class discussions allow students to share their ideas and learn from each other.
- **Create opportunities for peer review:** Peer review gives students the opportunity to give and receive feedback on their work.

5. Provide Feedback

Feedback is an essential part of the learning process. It helps students to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and it provides them with guidance on how to improve their work. Finnish teachers provide feedback to students on a regular basis, both formally and informally.



- **Give specific feedback:** Feedback should be specific and actionable, so that students know what they need to do to improve.
- **Provide feedback regularly:** Feedback should be given on a regular basis, so that students can track their progress and make adjustments as needed.
- **Be positive and encouraging:** Feedback should be positive and encouraging, so that students feel supported and motivated to improve.

6. Create a Positive Classroom Culture

A positive classroom culture is essential for student success. In a positive classroom culture, students feel safe, respected, and supported. They are

also more likely to be engaged in their learning and to achieve their full potential.



- **Be a positive role model:** Teachers should be positive and enthusiastic about teaching and learning.
- **Create a welcoming classroom environment:** The classroom should be a place where students feel safe and respected.
- **Build relationships with students:** Get to know your students and their interests.

7. Encourage Student Ownership

When students have a sense of ownership over their learning, they are more likely to be engaged and to achieve success. Finnish teachers encourage students to take ownership of their learning in a variety of ways.

- **Give students choices:** Allow students to choose what they want to learn about, how they want to learn it, and how they want to

demonstrate their understanding.

- **Let students make decisions:** Give students opportunities to make decisions about their learning, such as how they want to group themselves for projects or how they want to present their findings.
- **Provide opportunities for student leadership:** Give students opportunities to lead class discussions, peer review, and other classroom activities.

8. Celebrate Success

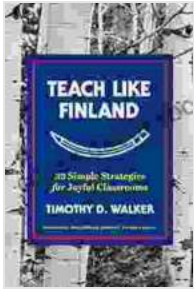
Celebrating success is an important way to motivate students and to help them to feel good about themselves. Finnish teachers celebrate student success in a variety of ways.



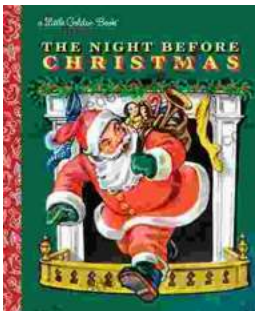
- **Acknowledge student effort:** Acknowledge student effort, both big and small.
- **Give positive feedback:** Feedback should be specific and actionable, so that students know what they need to do to improve.
- **Provide opportunities for students to celebrate their own success:** Give students opportunities to present their work to the class,

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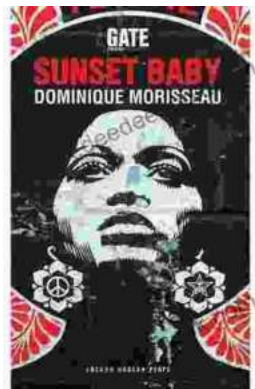


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