



# Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Lori Thomas

SCHOOL: Berney Elementary

GRADE: Kindergarten

Q. How do you get kindergarten students and parents ready for school?

A. We start out by having parents bring their child in for a half hour time block by themselves. We do a short assessment with the child and have parents fill out a developmental questionnaire to help us know their child better. This gives parents the opportunity to ask questions and let me know about their child's individual needs.

Q. Why is it important to have kindergarten parents involved?

A. I can't run my program without the help of my parents. I want them to know it is a team approach, we all work together for their child. We want them to feel comfortable walking into the school and being a part of their child's education. The beginning is where we establish a strong foundation and connection with our families.

Q. What are some of the first lessons kindergarten students learn in school?

A. We are teaching expectations and routines. Co-existing is a lot to learn for kids.

Q. What else are your students learning?

A. We are talking about the color green. We brainstormed green things, they made a green frog, they wrote green frog and they are reading that back to me. They are doing a lot of reading, writing and math -- all tied in with colors.

Q. How do you use technology to help students learn?

A. The sound system I use works great for children that are hearing impaired and for children with speech and language delays. When giving directions, I can stand anywhere in the room and all children have the advantage of hearing me as if I was standing right next to them.

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MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM  
LORI THOMAS'S CLASS:



COMMENTS: Berney Principal **David Talley**: "Lori has great strength in building relationships with parents and kids. She makes them feel comfortable at school. Our entire kindergarten team has really focused on student data to improve instruction. They have also maintained the developmental component which is so important."

COMMENTS:  
Kindergarten Teacher **Lori Thomas** says kids just need to be able to come to school, have a safe place to be and have someone love them. Kindergarten takes a lot of patience, understanding, love, and hugs.



COMMENTS:  
Kindergarten student **Michael Ostergren** says he liked learning about frogs and the color green. He said he is learning how to spell words and read. He likes playing with his friends on the playground and thinks Mrs. Thomas is neat.