



# Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Kathy Emmert

SCHOOL: Sharpstein Elementary

Position: First Grade Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 23 years

Q. Why are early learning programs so important to students?

A. If they don't get the foundation when they are little, they never have it; they will always be playing catch up. They have to have the building blocks to get to the next step.

Q. What would you tell politicians who threaten to cut K-4 funding enhancements?

A. I would ask them to come live in an elementary school for a week or so, especially in the primary grades, and see what the money is used for. The para-educators and extra help we get is essential. We couldn't do it without them.

Q. Why is the Origo math program so effective?

A. So much of Origo is hands on. There are so many games with Origo. The students don't even realize they are learning. They just ask when they are going to play math games.

Q. What can parents do to get their children ready for school?

A. They need to read to their children every day. Ask them about the story and have them talk about the story. Point out things in everyday life. Sing the ABCs song. Get them used to the idea that the world is much bigger than what they are probably perceiving it is.

Q. What makes Sharpstein a special place for learning?

A. It's a great school. We have children with diverse backgrounds and that is the best way to teach. We have a wide variety of teachers. We have younger teachers who bring new ideas and experienced teachers who have been here a long time. We are always having enrichment activities and learning new things. This is my home away from home and it always will be.

Over

MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM  
KATHY EMMERT'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM KATHY...

Working in groups and pairs helps the students learn from each other. They self correct each other. One of them might use a strategy that the other one picks up on that they would not have thought of themselves.

Students take notes home to their parents to tell them what kind of day they have had. I have an open door policy with parents and encourage their involvement.



Kathy says she is encouraged about standardized grading and believes it will help eliminate gaps students may have in their learning.