



# Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Mike Garcia

SCHOOL: Blue Ridge Elementary

Position: First Grade Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 5 years

Q. What are students learning in your science unit?

A. We are studying clouds. I create fun activities for the students to help them learn the concepts. These activities allow me to observe and see how well they understand the material. Students use shaving cream to draw the three different types of clouds we are studying. The more fun I can make the activity, the more I am able to maximize their learning.

Q. What is your role in the Blue Ridge Platooning program?

A. In the first grade team there are three of us. Jane Froese is the math, Spanish and Language Arts teacher, Berta Herrera-Trejo has multi-grade teaching duties this year. She teaches science, social studies, reading and language arts. I have the science and social studies piece.

Q. What are the content areas students in first grade are learning?

A. I teach science and social studies, but I also want to make sure my students are getting resources for reading and Language Arts that link to science and social studies. We have focused a lot on weather the first half of the school year. We have covered the four seasons and followed up with things we might use and wear during the four seasons. We have talked about careers related to weather, for example a meteorologist. We will soon learn about the water cycle.

Q. Why is it so important in today's world to know two languages?

A. As I was growing up, my parents taught me learning two languages would open a lot of doors in my future. The focus of our school is to give as many students as possible the opportunity to learn two languages. When they pursue career options and look for jobs they will have a better chance of being hired.

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**MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM MIKE'S CLASS:**

I can go back to my school days and remember teachers who I really respected. They would say things that made me feel good. I was able to recognize teaching was something I wanted to do.



**COMMENTS FROM MIKE:**

In our program especially, we have to collaborate on a regular basis. Our first grade team talks daily about what we are teaching and the materials we are using. The kids get more out of our instruction when we work as a team.

I enjoy coaching. I am the varsity baseball coach at Mac-Hi. I have also been involved in their wrestling program over the years.



I grew up in Milton-Freewater and went through their school system. I graduated from Mac-Hi in 1986.

I worked for Louisiana Pacific lumber company before becoming an educator.