

40 open-ended, customizable  
**PUZZLE STRIPS**  
for practice with *any* skill

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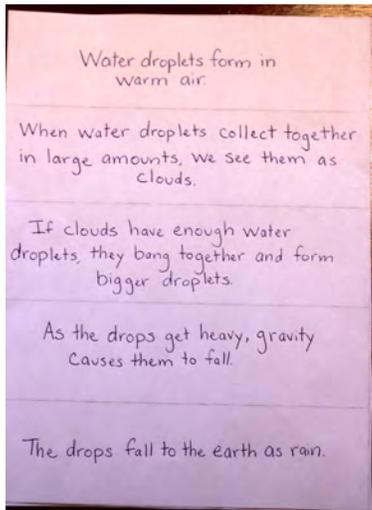
Thank you so much for my respecting the work I put into this product and for cooperating with these guidelines!

You can email me at [info@truthforteachers.com](mailto:info@truthforteachers.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

Angela  
TruthforTeachers.com

## Student-created puzzle strips

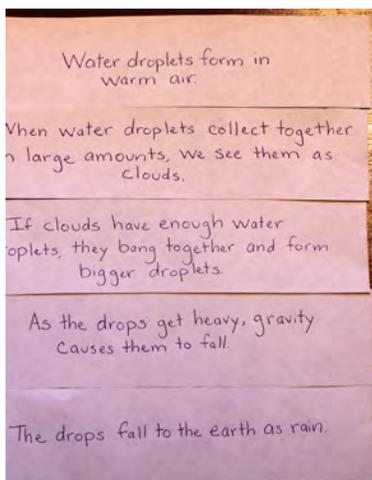
1. Students write text on the strips.



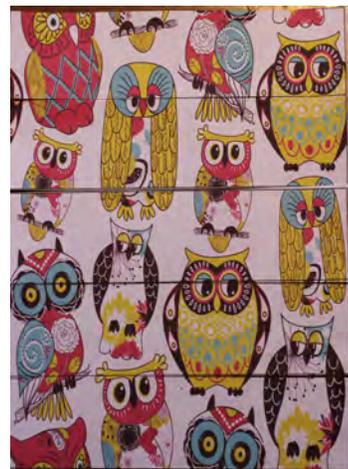
2. Students cut strips apart.



3. Partners trade and put each other's strips together.



4. Flip the strips over. Correct answers will form a picture!



**Perfect for centers, workstations, review activities, and cooperative learning!**

## 2 ways to facilitate student-created puzzle activities

### Have kids make their own one-time use puzzles

Choose a puzzle strip picture and print or photocopy one for each student. Have each student flip his or her copy over and lightly trace the solid lines, which should be slightly visible through the paper. Students can then write in the information for each strip and cut them apart. For younger students (and with thicker paper that students can't see through), it may be easier to have students cut the strips apart first, put the puzzle together so the strips are in order, then flip the strips over to write the text on the back.

To play, students can mix up the strips they created and pass them to a partner to put together. When the partner thinks he or she has put the strips in order, she or he can flip them over to the picture side to see if the answers are correct!

### Have kids make their own re-usable puzzles

Choose a puzzle strip picture and print or photocopy it onto card stock or other heavy paper. Make just one copy if you want it to be used in a center, or copies for each student if you want to use the puzzles in small or whole group activities. Laminate the puzzles. Cut apart and store in a manila or regular envelope, plastic baggie, or folder.

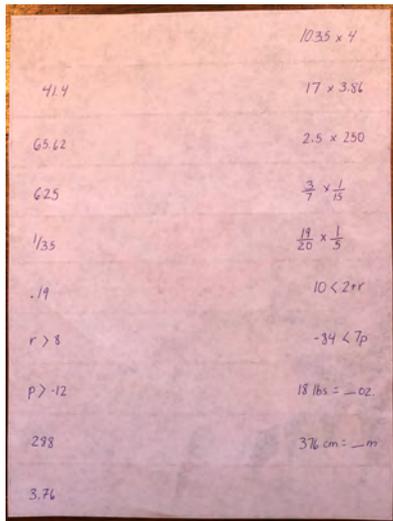
Have students take the strips out of the envelope and assemble them to make the picture. Then have them flip each strip over in place (so they're still in the correct order) and write on the back of the strips using Vis-à-Vis markers.

To play, students can mix up their puzzle strips and trade them with a partner. When each partner thinks he or she has put the strips' text in the correct order, she or he can flip them over to the picture side to see if the answers are correct!

Afterward, have students remove the Vis-à-Vis marker using a squirt bottle full of water and a paper towel. Or, students can keep their writing on the strips and place the strips in a center/workstation for other students to use throughout your unit of study.

## Teacher-created puzzle activities

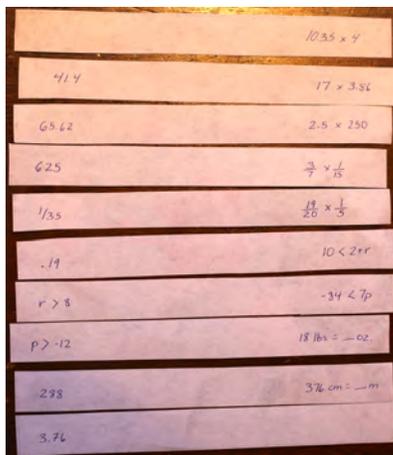
1. Write or type on the strips.



2. Cut apart.



3. Students put the strips together.



4. Students flip the strips over.  
Correct answers will form a picture!



**Perfect for centers, workstations, review activities, and cooperative learning!**

## 3 ways to make teacher-created puzzle strips

### Create a handwritten review/assessment activity

Choose a puzzle strip picture and print one copy. On the back, write the information you want on each strip. Make double-sided copies for your class.

To play, students cut apart the strips, mix them up, and put them back together in the correct order. After checking their work, they can glue the strips onto a piece of construction paper and explain their thinking. Use prompts such as, “How did you know which order to place your strips?” and “How can you prove your answers are correct?”

### Create a typed review/assessment activity

*(link removed for product preview)*

Print one copy of the puzzle picture. Open [this template in PowerPoint](#) and type directly into each section of the blank puzzle. Print it. When you make photocopies for your class, make 2 sided copies with the puzzle picture on the front and your typed page on the back. Directions for student play are the same as above.

### Create a re-usable center/workstation activity

Print out one copy of the puzzle picture, preferably on card stock or other thick paper. On the back, write in the information you want on each strip. Laminate the page and cut apart the strips. Store the pieces in a manila or regular envelope, plastic baggie, or folder.

To play, students can turn all the pieces text side up, put them in order, and then check their answers by flipping the strips over to see if they create a picture. Have students reflect on their work in their journals if desired, or create their own puzzle strips as an extension activity.

## Ideas for use in math

5
10
15
20
25

### Sequencing numbers

Place one number on each strip and have students skip count to put them in order. You could also have students order fractions or decimals from least to greatest. Ordering whole numbers is great place value practice if you choose similar digits (such as 635, 654, and 754.)

27 + 31 =
58    42 + 85 =
127   18 + 64 =
82    55 + 91 =
146    .

### Computation practice

Write a math problem on the right of a strip and the answer on the left of the strip beneath it. Give students parameters for making their own, i.e. two digit addition problems or four digit division problems. You could also mix up the operations, include algebraic thinking equations, math vocabulary terms/definitions, etc.

Read to see what the problem is asking.
Determine how many feet are in a mile.
Multiply the number of miles times the number of hours.
Subtract the product from 4,000.
Estimate to see if the answer makes sense.

### Word problem strategies

Have students order the steps in solving a type of math problem, or explain how they solved one particular problem.

## Ideas for use in reading

First, Sara discovered her sweater was missing.
She asked her friends, but no one had seen it.
She cleaned her whole room and couldn't find it.
Then she asked her mom.
Finally, she discovered it was in the washing machine!

### Retelling a story or text

Write one event from the text on each strip. Using sequence clue words like “first” and “last” will make the retelling easier.

A desert is place that receives very little rain.
It's a myth that all deserts are hot.
Many deserts get quite cold, especially at night.
The lack of rain means animals and plants must have special adaptations.
The plants and animals in deserts are interdependent.

### Main idea and summarizing practice

After reading a text, have students write a summary, placing one sentence on each strip. Remind students that the main idea of a text is not always in the first sentence! Encourage students to think about the placement of each sentence in their summary and how the meaning changes as the strips are rearranged.

	butter
fly	camp
ground	sand
castle	lady
bug	

### Word work

This example shows compound word practice: students order each strip so the text on the right matches the text on the left of the following strip (butterfly, campground, etc.) You could also do this with vocabulary terms/spelling words and their definitions.

## Ideas for use in writing

<b>The</b>
<b>red</b>
<b>bird</b>
<b>flew</b>
<b>quickly.</b>

### Composing a sentence

This puzzle reinforces capitalization, punctuation, parts of speech, and grammar skills. It's also great for emerging readers as well as English language learners. Have students experiment: How does the meaning change when the words are rearranged? What other words could be substituted?

<b>Every student should have a laptop for completing school work.</b>
<b>If they don't have access to a computer, I believe schools should provide the laptop.</b>
<b>Firstly, it makes doing homework more efficient.</b>
<b>It also makes it easier for students to conduct research.</b>
<b>There are so many advantages to having laptops that schools can't allow students to go without.</b>

### Writing a paragraph or essay

Help students practice using topic and conclusion sentences appropriately, supporting their arguments with evidence, and sequencing their ideas.

<b>is not</b>
<b>isn't    she is</b>
<b>she's    could not</b>
<b>couldn't    I have</b>
<b>I've</b>

### Grammar practice

Have students use the strips to review contractions, prefixes/root words, and other grammatical principles.

## Ideas for use in social studies

<b>Atlanta</b>
<b>Fulton County</b>
<b>Georgia</b>
<b>United States</b>
<b>North America</b>

### Demonstrating geographical relationships

Help students understand locations by sequencing from town/city to continent.

<b>The Declaration of Independence declares all men are created equal.</b>
<b>The importation of slaves is banned.</b>
<b>"Uncle Tom's Cabin" is published by Harriet Beecher Stowe.</b>
<b>The Supreme Court decides the Dred Scott case.</b>
<b>Abraham Lincoln is elected to the Senate.</b>

### Sequencing historical events

Students can glue the strips on another sheet of paper and write down the dates for each event to create a timeline.

<b>capital</b>
<b>Washington, D.C</b> <b>national bird</b>
<b>eagle</b> <b>flag colors</b>
<b>red, white, blue</b> <b>famous statue</b>
<b>Statue of Liberty</b> <b>.</b>

### Topic associations

Make sets of strips for social studies concepts you have studied, such as one set for each country or ancient culture. Write a category on the right side of each strip and the answer on the left side of the strip below it. Put 2 or 3 sets of strips in one bag and have students sort them.

## Ideas for use in science

egg
tadpole
metamorph
frog
frog lays eggs

### Describing a process

Younger students can draw a picture of each step of a scientific process such as a life cycle, while older students can write a complete sentence describing it.

life
domain
kingdom
phylum
class

### Showing relationships between terms

Have students write an animal's name and complete the biological classification for it on a 10 strip puzzle. You could also have puzzles for two different animals in one bag for students to sort out.

We wondered what causes some items to attract magnets.
We formed a hypothesis.
We observed different objects' response to magnets.
We recorded and analyzed the data.
We drew a conclusion based on our observations.

### Retelling an investigation

Emphasize the scientific method, or simply have students tell what they did in a science experiment.

## More ideas

Take your HW folder out of your backpack.

Hang your backpack on the hook.

Put your HW folder in the teacher's inbox.

Sharpen pencils.

Begin morning work.

### Reviewing classroom routines/procedures

Have students sequence the steps for morning work, dismissal, heading their papers, and so on. This is a good beginning of the year activity when you're teaching a routine, but also useful mid-year when you change procedures and to review expectations when students need reminders.

John can't find a partner to work with.

He asks a friend, "Will you be my partner?"

The friend says no.

John says, "Okay, maybe next time."

John asks another friend, "Will you be my partner?"

### Social stories/reinforcing social skills

Students who struggle to read social cues or get along with their peers may find this sort of logical activity very helpful.

Read the question.

Circle the key words.

Underline what the question is asking.

Read the answer choices.

Cross off any incorrect answer choices.

### Test-taking skills

Have students sequence the steps in answering multiple choice questions, solving problems on tests, or identifying key information in test questions.

## About the Image Choices Plus Ideas for Saving Ink/Paper

The image on the puzzle you choose does NOT need to be related to the skill practice—in fact, it's often more fun for students to discover a completely unexpected picture!

I have selected mostly seasonal and school subject-related images for the puzzles because those have a broad appeal to all types of students and can be re-used for all different purposes. There are also some images with mosaics or other patterns that are very versatile.

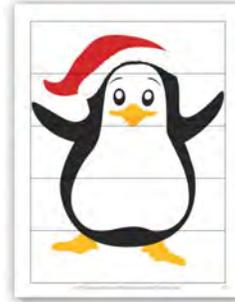
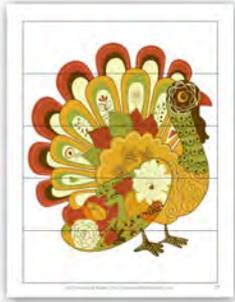
If you use the puzzle activities once a month with students, you can select a puzzle related to that month's season or holidays. This provides a nice consistency for students (they will already know how to complete the activity) and still provide a thematic or seasonal tie-in. If you already use seasonal center activities with students, these puzzles will be an easy way to change out your materials.

I have tried to select images that use fewer dark colors and incorporate white space in order to save ink. You may find it's cheaper to print the puzzle strips at your local office supply store. You can also print the puzzle images in black and white and have students color them in however they choose.

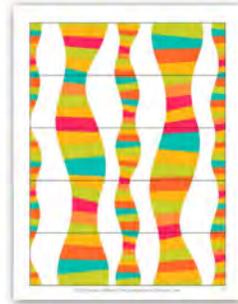
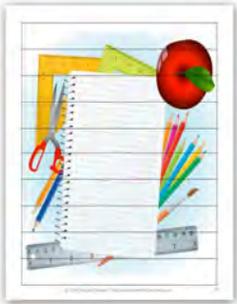
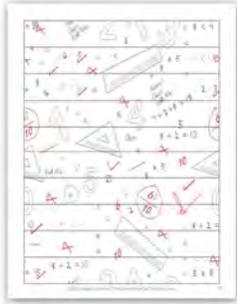
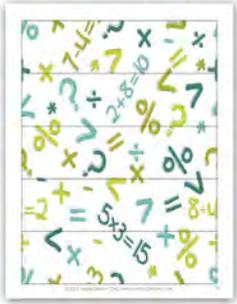
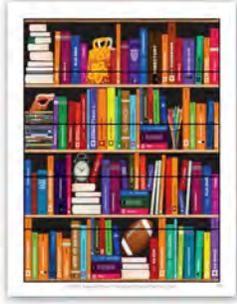
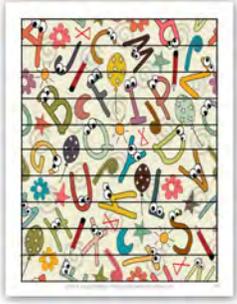
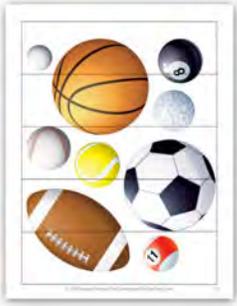
You can save ink and paper by creating re-usable puzzles (laminated and written on with Vis-à-Vis markers). Keep in mind that you don't necessarily need a class set of puzzle strips if you are creating them for use in centers or workstations.

Blank puzzle strips are included at the end of this document. You can have students draw their own pictures related to your unit of study or any topic they choose!

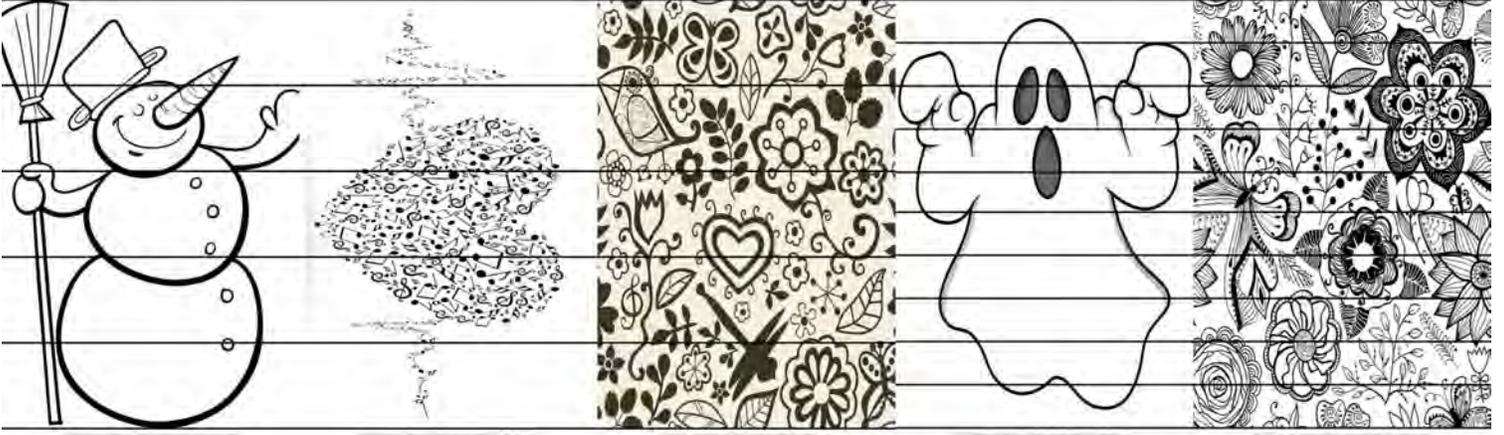
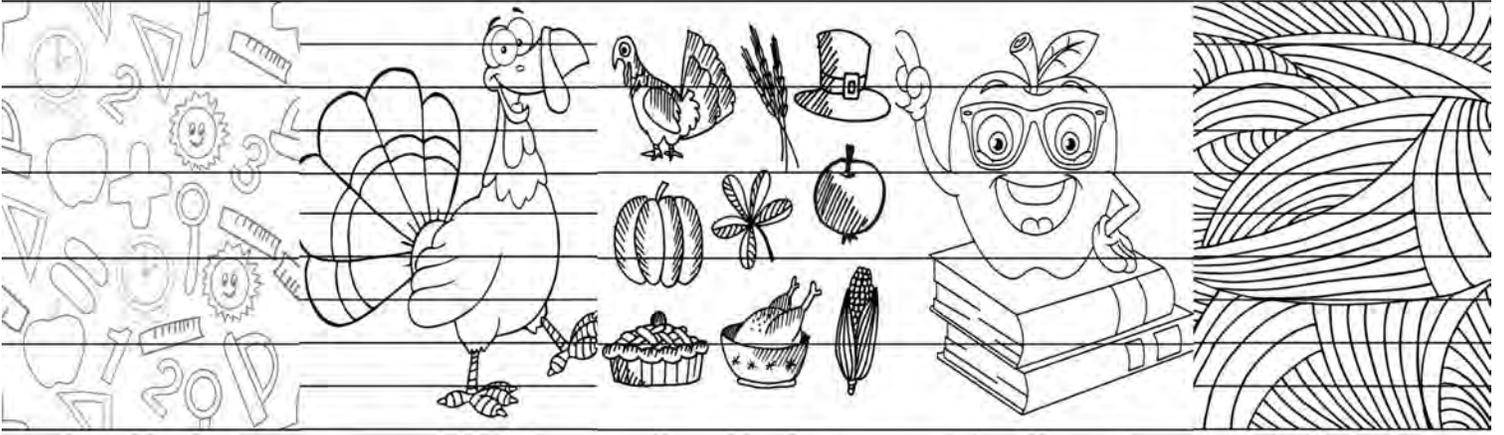
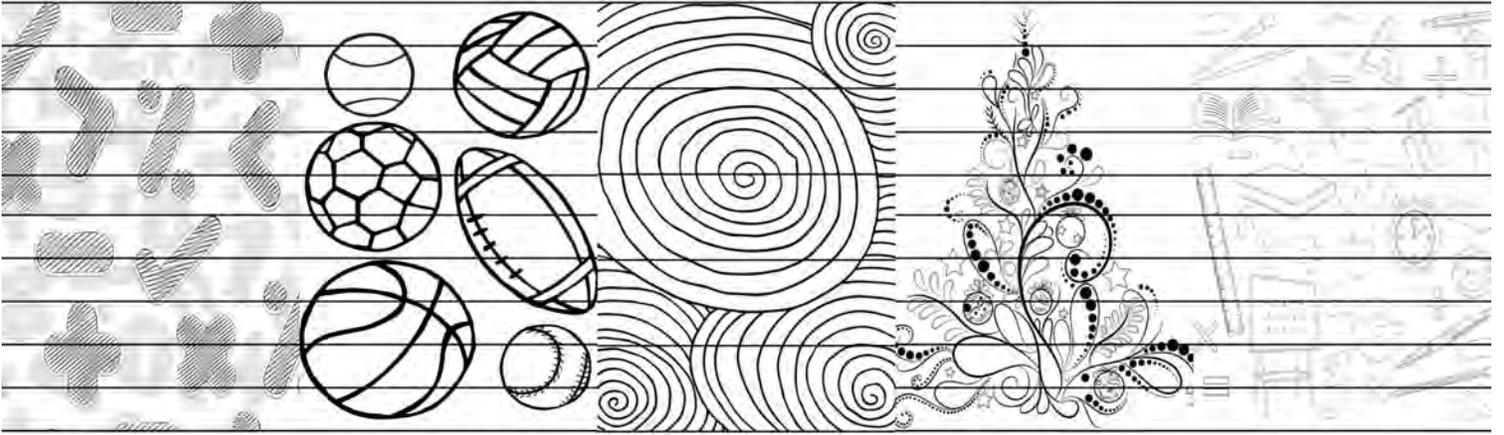
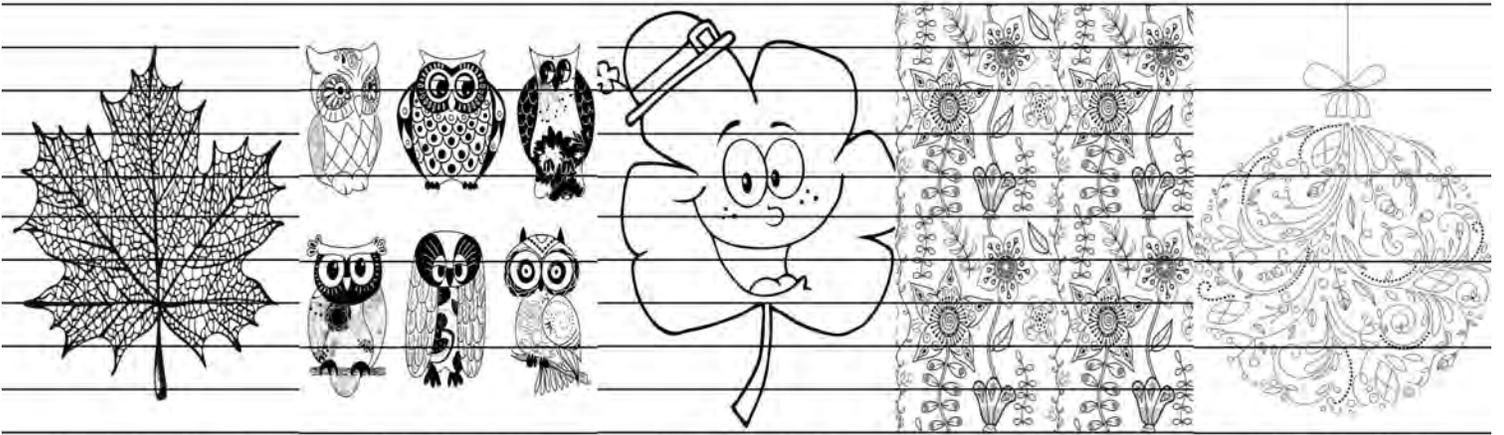
# Puzzle Pictures: Some with 5 sections, some with 10 sections



# Puzzle Pictures: Some with 5 sections, some with 10 sections



# Black and White Pages





## BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE...

I'm **Angela Watson**, the creator of this resource. I'm a National Board Certified Teacher with a masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction, and have 11 years of classroom teaching experience and over a decade of experience as an instructional coach. I currently work as a Productivity and Mindset Specialist in the area of educational consulting. In practical terms, this means I author books, design curriculum, and provide professional development services. Everything I do is centered on sharing more effective, efficient, and enjoyable ways of teaching and learning!

I founded my website ([TruthforTeachers.com](https://www.truthforteachers.com)) in 2003 to connect with other educators. You can now find thousands of ad-free articles and resources there from me and our K-12 teacher-writer's collective.

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