NERDING OUT

Embracing authenticity to foster a spirit of inclusion, inquiry, and engagement with students

Dr. Lori T. Meier, Professor
Department of Curriculum & Instruction, Clemmer College
East Tennessee State University
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YOU ARE HERE! YAY!

- Welcome & Introductions
- Session Resources (Link in chat box)
- Mentimeter (Grab your phone!)
  - www.menti.com

01

NERDS ASSEMBLE

Thinking about the ways we are geeky & nerdy

02

GEEKY PEDAGOGY
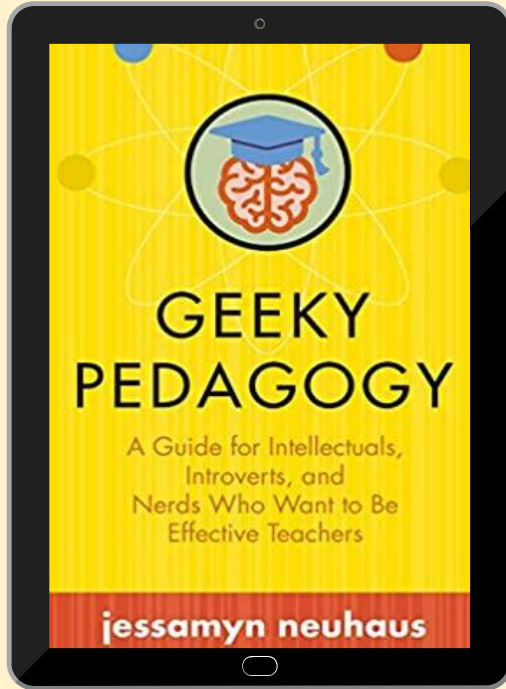
Get cozy with a new book and some guiding questions

03

AWARENESS

Embracing identity & authenticity

04

EXPLORATION

Nerding out about our own teaching and learning

GEEKY PEDAGOGY

A Guide for Intellectuals, Introverts, and
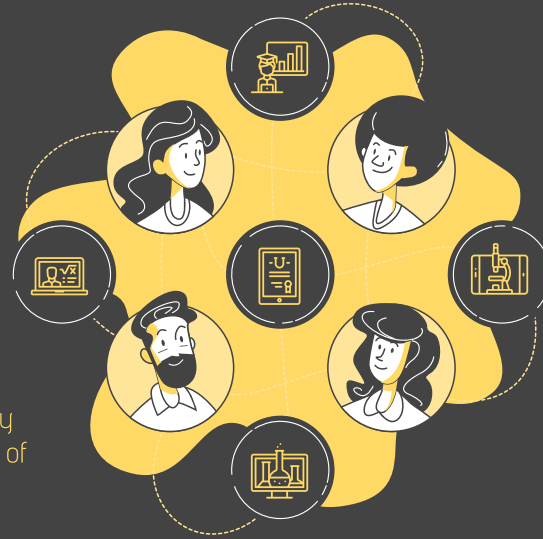Nerds Who Want to Be Effective Teachers

Jessamyn Neuhaus, SUNY Plattsburg
West Virginia University Press

SOME FOUNDATIONS FOR GEEKY PEDAGOGY

These are proudly self-identifying & celebratory uses of the words geek and nerd.

In Geeky Pedagogy, the author uses the term GINs to identify these positive qualities. They are the qualities that make many of us scholastically successful.

Characteristics include: engagement, enthusiasm, expertise, lots of excited details, being wildly passionate about stuff, and maybe even strange, specific stuff.

GINs know so much about their topics! They love knowing stuff. This is an advantage in higher education environments. But there are also some potential challenges.
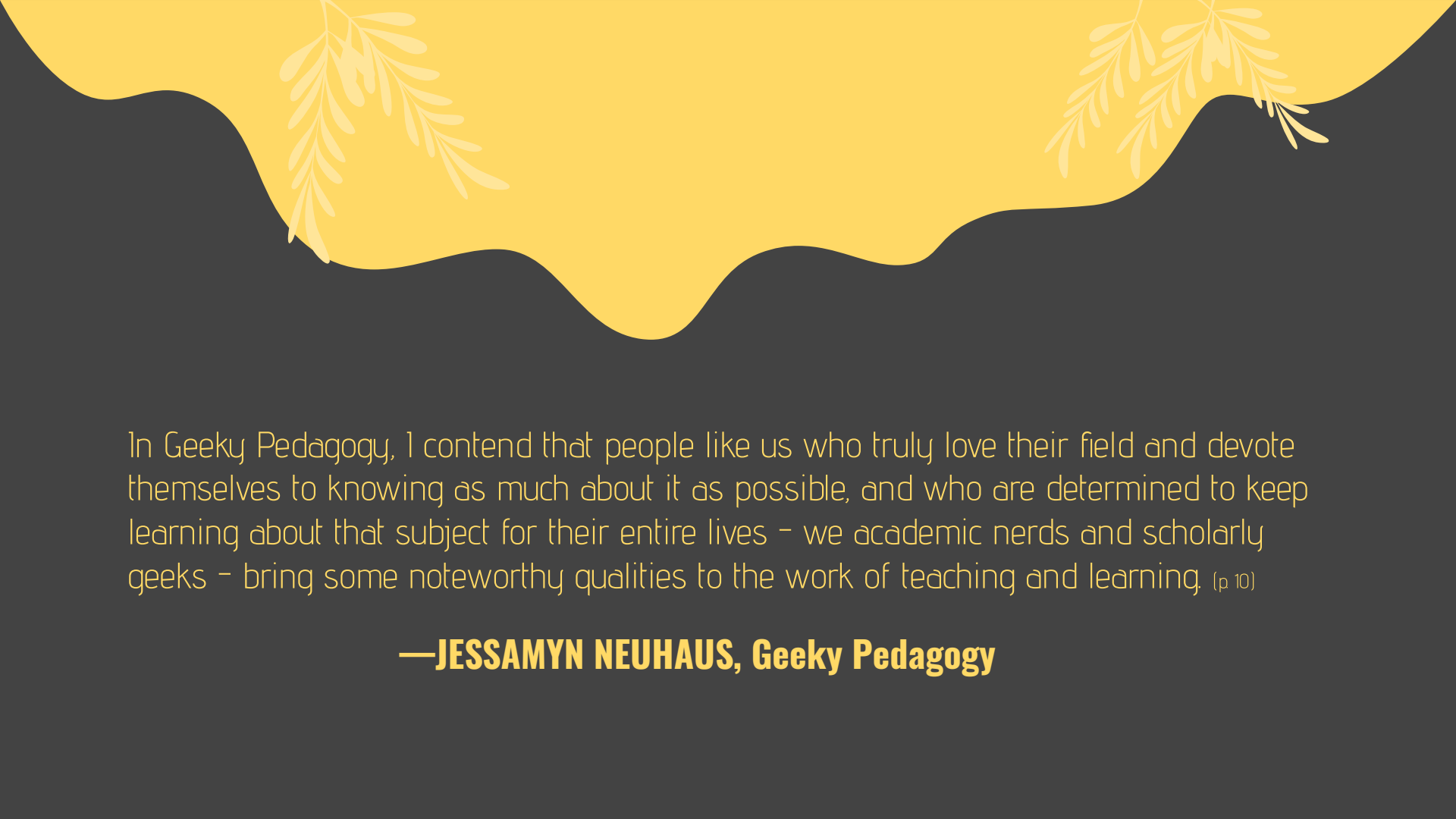
People teaching college classes are usually intellectuals and sometimes a combination of nerd, geek, or introvert Academics and scholars share much overlap with GINs.

We must foster a geek culture of "enthusiastic sharing" in our classrooms. It's not about keeping students out, it's about bringing students in and showing them our authentic love for our stuff (and the real world relationships that will matter to them!)

In Geeky Pedagogy, I contend that people like us who truly love their field and devote themselves to knowing as much about it as possible, and who are determined to keep learning about that subject for their entire lives – we academic nerds and scholarly geeks – bring some noteworthy qualities to the work of teaching and learning. (p 10)

—JESSAMYN NEUHAUS, Geeky Pedagogy

mteverest muppets librarieshavealltheanswers hottea
startrek spaceshuttle harrypotter
papersupplies history preacher'skid airshows
geography carmensandiego twilightzone
nasa smart theology contrary
fieldnotes curiosity cats books atlas librarycard museums
hermionegranger art rockets spacecamp library
school lego playful movies starwars languages
sciencefiction whocaresaboutgrades
countries robots travel nerdy maps birds
weather broadway geology
space socialstudies mickeymouse
introvert Chinesefood

"BEING A GEEK IS ALL ABOUT BEING HONEST ABOUT WHAT YOU ENJOY AND NOT BEING AFRAID TO DEMONSTRATE THAT AFFECTION. IT MEANS NEVER HAVING TO PLAY IT COOL ABOUT HOW MUCH YOU LIKE SOMETHING. IT'S BASICALLY A LICENSE TO PROUDLY EMOTE ON A SOMEWHAT CHILDISH LEVEL RATHER THAN BEHAVE LIKE A SUPPOSED ADULT. BEING A GEEK IS EXTREMELY LIBERATING."

- SIMON PEGG

BEING A GEEK MEANS NEVER HAVING TO PLAY IT COOL ABOUT HOW MUCH YOU LIKE SOMETHING.

SIMON PEGG

via www.wordsonimages.com

STRANGE, SPECIFIC STUFF

Let's create a group wordle about our
own collective strange, specific stuff...

www.menti.com

SOME GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What's Geeky Pedagogy?
- In what ways do we define the qualities of GINs?
- How can our GIN qualities help us or hinder us?
- What do we love about what we teach? Why do we enjoy it?
- How do we embrace our identity and authentic selves in the classroom?
- How do we encourage our students to do the same?
- How might we use our geekiness and nerdiness to our pedagogical advantage?
- How do we use our geeky pedagogy to foster a spirit of inclusion, inquiry, and engagement?
- How can identity tools (like Moll's Funds of Knowledge and Cultural Identity Maps) help us connect with our students?

INTERCONNECTED STEPS IN GEEKY PEDAGOGY

AWARENESS

Working to be fully aware and accepting of who we are, who are students are, the complexities of identity, and the challenges of learning – while understanding that these realities are always evolving.

REFLECTION

Viewing our teaching as an interesting and ongoing intellectual investigation and gathering as much evidence and feedback as possible to consciously and metacognitively explore what's working and what's not; applying the products of reflection to our teaching and learning work; perhaps trying a little gratitude along the way and understanding that reflection is on ongoing process we will do over and over.

PRACTICE

Practice is an activity you undertake on a regular basis at which you hope to keep building skill but accepting that there is no fixed end date and no way you'll ever perfect it and then be done with it. The more we employ the four prior pedagogical practices (along with practice!) the better we'll get at effective teaching and advancing our students' learning.

PREPARATION

Approaching teaching as an intellectual endeavor, putting on our professor pants, and carefully planning for interacting with students and conducting classes in order to best foster student learning in our subject – and understanding that preparation is an ongoing process we will do over and over.

SUPPORT

Finding ways to engage in and learn from the scholarly work on teaching and learning, both in our individual context as well as the field at large; decreasing our isolation in the enterprise of effective teaching, joining a larger conversation about teaching and learning, and increasing our resources for practicing awareness, preparation, and reflection and apply what we've gained and learned to our actual work of teaching and learning – understanding that this is an ongoing process that we do over and over.

IMPORTANT REALITIES ABOUT AWARENESS IN GEEKY PEDAGOGY

- It's important for G1Ns to cultivate our awareness skills. Academia rewards its members for non stop thinking and production. Pie tweet!
- Being fully aware of our present teaching reality and context helps us.
- Embodied identity is important for both faculty and students. This includes understanding how race, gender expression, ethnicity, economic class, sexual orientation, ability, language, bias, etc.. impact both faculty and students.
- Remember that learning is hard. Us G1Ns are uber good at it and we are ninjas of our topics! We improve each year but students are starting out from scratch every time.
- And we aren't just building new roads (neural pathways) ... we are likely jackhammering old (and comfortable pathways) for students and undoing a great deal of "banking" models of K-12 learning. #pedagogicalthresholdconcepts #drmeierruinedthanksgivingforme
- SoTL might have a blind spot about the importance of knowing our students. Previous academic experiences, prior knowledge, generational trends, stressors, lived experience, and contexts. *"Students have this disconcerting habit of being individuals with individual issues and emotions. Like they're human people or something."*
- Know ourselves. Work with what you've got. Model curiosity. Acknowledge your personality. Cultivating awareness of our geeky and nerdy qualities can be helpful and empowering (and remind us of our blind spots since some of it might come easy to us when compared to our students).

Cited from: Geeky Pedagogy
Jessamyn Neuhaus (2019)

TOOLS TO SUPPORT AWARENESS

FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE

Explore your personal funds of knowledge and consider the funds of knowledge that your students bring. Based on the work of Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez (1992) this concept has been expanded over the years. Consider the implications for college-age learners.

- Meet Luis Moll (Click Here to Watch)
- Funds of Knowledge Handout
- Making a Case for a Funds of Knowledge Approach to Teaching and Learning for First-Generation College Students
  (2019 Article from *College Teaching*)

CULTURAL IDENTITY MAPS

Consider ways that you might incorporate elements of cultural identity reflection into your curriculum. What are the bridges between diverse identities, understandings, and your content area? What ways are we limited by our own cultural identity lenses?

- My Multicultural Self from Teaching Tolerance
- My Multicultural Self Bubble Handout

My Multicultural Self
MIDDLE/UPPER GRADES ACTIVITY

Place your name in the center. Choose five different aspects of your identity and write each of them in the identity bubbles provided.

TEACHING TOLERANCE

LORI

Funds of Knowledge

Home Language	*E.g., Arabic; Spanish; Navajo; Italian*	English - but took a lot of French in HS/College
Family Values and Traditions	*E.g., holiday celebrations; religious beliefs; work ethic*	Grew up as preacher's kid - church a BIG deal. celebrate Christmas - interesting theological conflicts
Caregiving	*E.g., swaddling baby; giving baby pacifer; co-sleeping*	mom had in home child care business - lots of free labor!, no kids but very capable auntie
Friends and Family	*E.g., visiting grandma; barbecues; sports outings*	moved a lot, small family - one grandparent big Christmas family. no sports but lots of books/theatre
Family Outings	*E.g., shopping; beach; library; picnic*	disney, pools, campgrounds, church camp! libraries, pretty nerdy but a poor version → plants/space/ rockets
Household Chores	*E.g., sweeping; dusting; doing dishes*	expected - fold clothes, dishes, pets
Educational Activities	*E.g., going to the museum; taking a walk in the neighborhood*	libraries - church office w/ dad - play school church camp - outdoors - 80's nerd/geek
Favorite TV Shows	*E.g., watching Dora; Sesame Street; Sid the Science Kid*	Star Trek Muppets Kid West Wing BBC Crown Disney Goonies ↔ Big Bang Theory Mad men Space Camp SciFi Now Harry Potter
Family Occupations	*E.g., fishing; office; construction; policeman*	CLERGY! daycare, dad divinity DMin College expectations but mom late HS grad - nursing @ 50
Scientific Knowledge	*E.g., recycling; exercising; health*	Cooking painting (house) landscape travel NASA baking build rockets reading stuff! history low stress
	Additional Funds of Knowledge	Church kid geography & maps INTP/INTJ politics social justice foodie

González, N., Moll, L., & Amanti, C. (Eds). (2005). Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities and classrooms. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

BREAKOUT ROOMS

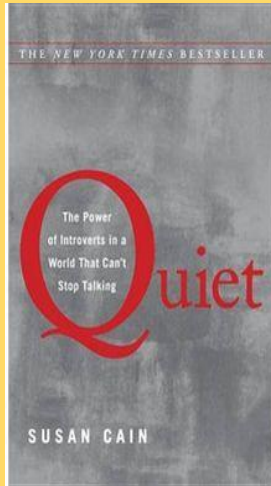Let's breakout into groups and explore
our Funds of Knowledge...

WWW.MENTI.COM

Let's wrap up our thinking ...

SOME OTHER RESOURCES FOR NERDING OUT

https://geekypedagogy.com

A Recent YouTube Video by Jessamyn Neuhaus

https://teachinginhighered.com/podcast/geeky-pedagogy/

Another podcast with Jessamyn Neuhaus

https://www.cultofpedagogy.com

THANKS!