

**How We Teachers Handle the COVID-19 Crisis Will Leave a Lasting Impact.**

**This is how we cope.**

*Staying afloat while learning remote #5*  
By Kiara Visser

The challenges brought by online learning have been pretty significant. Going from teaching in a classroom where everything you need is at hand, to a spare room, dining room table or veranda, with nothing but a laptop, has meant a need to improvise and adapt. But this is what teachers do every day.

It's also made us reflect and hopefully in some way we're better for it.

There is nothing we love more than walking into our classroom every morning to a room of empty desks, knowing they will soon be filled with faces we have come to love. This is why so many of us teach. The human connection. The joy, laughter, and giggles as well as the tears, frustration, and excitement. We love nothing more than the interactions that we have with our students everyday. Educators love this.

**WE love this!**

None of us has ever done something like this to such a scale. I doubt many educators around the world could say they have. This is not simply a case of setting some online homework as you might do on a regular basis. The ongoing changing situation has meant that the methods used in week 1 (and the panic of how can do this?) have evolved over time to try and ensure quality learning while maintaining some kind of work-life balance.

Once we got past the simple practicalities of online learning, our minds moved on to the bigger questions. How much work is enough? Do we set so much work that no student could ever run out? Do we set a minimal amount ensuring everyone can be certain to complete? Is there a happy medium? The answer is (drumroll) there isn't necessarily a happy medium. The expectation of students, teachers, management and parents are going to vary greatly, and that's to be expected. Whatever we do will never satisfy 100% of the people involved, 100% of the time. Eventually, we've come to a realisation that that is perfectly fine. If not, we're unlikely to survive online learning.



## HERE ARE SOME LESSONS WE HAVE LEARNED:

### 1. DON'T BE A SLAVE TO THE SCREEN

Work-life balance is hugely important. There were days where some teachers were beside their laptop for 15+ hours a day as they wanted to stop their inboxes from piling up. This is unsustainable; we now try to keep a regular routine.

### 2. ACCEPT THAT NOT ALL STUDENTS WERE MADE EQUAL

Like us, students are coming at this from a range of circumstances. Some will struggle and some will fly. We have had to give consideration to this and be flexible with deadlines and expectations. In saying this, there has to be a limit. We can't now be marking work from weeks ago and we've had to be clear about this.

### 3. REACH OUT TO OTHER TEACHERS

We are fortunate enough to have spent some of the past eight weeks in the company of other teachers (albeit mostly remotely) going through the same situation. It proved a healthy outlet to vent on the frustrations as well as sharing what was working. There are currently more teachers trying to cope with this situation around the world than we could ever imagine.

### 4. SHOW STUDENTS THEIR WORK MATTERS

Not every piece of work requires detailed feedback. But it's simply not always a case of tick and flick. The best uptake by students has been after feedback has been given or contact made with home, (both good and bad). Students will get bored of online learning, but we've found they stay engaged the more feedback we give. Just like the classroom.

### 5. SEE THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY

How many times in your life have you wished for more time to do something? We are all guilty of this. Well, now we have it. There will be times that we feel we have much, much less. But as we become better accustomed to the situation, it is becoming easier. We have to ensure a reasonable amount of time every day for ourselves and our families (and high-fives to Teacher parents, I salute you!).

<https://www.impactteachers.com/how-teachers-can-cope-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-online-learning/>



**Hopefully we will all look back on this one day (maybe not with fondness) and realise we were part of the biggest educational experiment in history and all from the comfort of our homes. And we survived!**