



Student Teaching:

The Inside
Scoop from a
Master
Teacher



Dede Faltot Rittman



DEDE FALTOT RITTMAN

graduated from Edinboro University in 1974 with a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary English and attended the University of Pittsburgh for post-graduate credits. After two years of teaching in the Penn Hills School District, she began teaching English in the North Allegheny School District, a position she held for thirty-five years. In 1993, she created the Introduction to Theater class, and taught both English and Theater. For thirty-two of those years, Dede worked with not only academic students, but also underachieving students and those with special needs. She retired in 2011.

Known as "the Bunny Teacher," Dede affectionately called her students her "bunnies," and one year for her birthday, two of her English classes bought her a real rabbit, Binky Rittman. Dede used bunny stamps and stickers for rewards and incentives, and when students were at home sick and requested homework, Dede wrote each one a personal note, adding a bunny stamp and a lollipop!

Her love of theater and performing landed her at the helm of the North Allegheny High School spring musical, for which she was either assistant director or director for ten years. She also chose the fabrics and designed costumes for the shows, and won a Gene Kelly Award in 1991 for Best Costumes Design for *My Fair Lady*. Dede also

directed the North Allegheny Intermediate Talent Show for many years, and acted as a theatrical advisor to several other school districts.

Dede served on the Executive Council of the North Allegheny Federation of Teachers for many years, and for six years, was a trustee on the board of the North Allegheny Foundation for Excellence, a nonprofit group which funds innovative teaching projects. At North Allegheny, Dede also served on the Project 84 Competency Based Education in partnership with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit; the Krista McAuliffe Scholarship Steering Committee; the Principal's Advisory Committee; and various committees for North Allegheny Intermediate High School Middle States Evaluations. She also sponsored the Dance Club, Calligraphy Club, and worked with Student Council for years.

An avid golfer, Dede coached both Varsity Girls and Varsity Boys Golf at North Allegheny. Since 1980, she has been a member of the Golf Steering Committee of Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League, the governing body for Western Pennsylvania high school sports. Dede is also a volunteer rules official with the Western Pennsylvania Golf Association and chairperson of the Standing Rules for Women's Golf Association of Western Pennsylvania. She plays in numerous tournaments every summer.

Dede always thought she would teach for forty years, but when her husband and best friend, Scott, was diagnosed with stage-four colon cancer in December 2009, she retired to care for him in the final stages of his illness. Scott died in 2012.

After retiring, Dede began her own company, Rittman Publishing, LLC, which places an emphasis on teaching the three C's: Confidence, Communication, and Creativity, whether working with student teachers, special needs students in theater, or those who need one-on-one tutoring.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fall 2014

Student Teaching:

The Inside Scoop from a Master Teacher

Dede Faltot Rittman

Many may think they know how to improve education in this country, but only someone who has spent decades on the front lines can truly help the new generation of teachers develop the skills they need to be effective teachers.

Dede Faltot Rittman writes that those about to enter the classroom must be prepared to serve as a psychologist, a parent, a nurse, a friend, a mentor, a mediator, a confidante, a counselor, and a role model.

It is my daily mood that makes the weather. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. ...it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or de-humanized.

Between Teacher and Child, Haim Ginott

With those insightful words guiding her own philosophy of teaching, Rittman begins where all professionals should—with the basics: be punctual, dress appropriately, practice good hygiene, and mind your manners. Rittman, who also coached high school golf for 33 years says, "In golf and in life, good manners will get you into places that money never will."

As for teaching style, this seasoned educator asks a great deal of her future teachers, inspiring them to be caring, hard-working, good humored, exciting, challenging, respectful, patient, kind, passionate about teaching and, most importantly, good communicators who display unwavering self-confidence. For this, she offers her two biggest secrets: come to class each day well prepared for the lesson you are teaching, and learn how to use your body language and your voice to communicate that you are in complete control.

Student Teaching offers solid information about effective classroom management and discipline, school politics, getting involved in student activities, technology, special needs/inclusion and forging effective relationships with parents.

The true gift of Rittman's book, however, is that her own best qualities—her joy, enthusiasm, respect, fearlessness, and honesty—shine through on every page. If young teachers can learn and acquire these affirmative assets and share them in the classroom every day, imagine the positive impact these new teachers will have on their students!

Student Teaching:
The Inside Scoop from a Master Teacher

ISBN: 978-1-63385-010-1

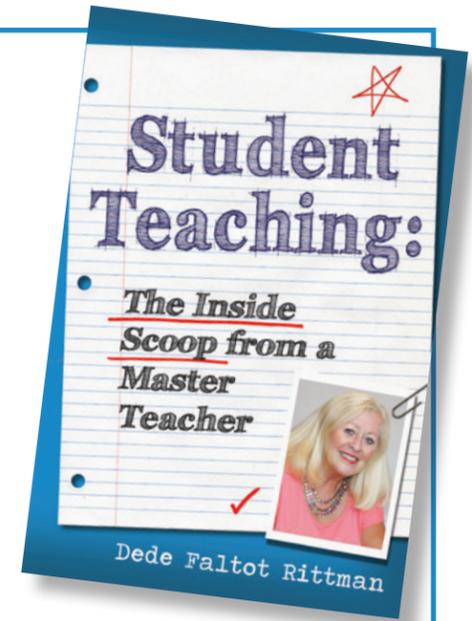
\$12.95

You may contact Dede Rittman at:

412.613.3805
dederittman@gmail.com

WA

WORD ASSOCIATION PUBLISHERS
www.wordassociation.com
1.800.827.7903



Some suggested topics for discussion with Dede Rittman:

What is the greatest hurdle facing student teachers?

Are colleges and universities doing a good job preparing education majors for student teaching?

It seems education today is all about the “common core,” the “test” and “test scores”. What are your feelings about standardized testing?

What do you think about merit pay for teachers?

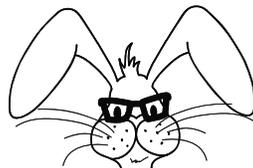
How would your former students describe you as a teacher?

Do you have a favorite classroom story from your 37 years of teaching?

Most people retire to “take it easy” after working all of their lives. What made you decide to write this book?

Why didn't you write this book sooner? Why did you wait until retirement?

What did you like best about being a teacher?



RITTMAN PUBLISHING, LLC

WA

WORD ASSOCIATION PUBLISHERS

www.wordassociation.com

1.800.827.7903

Tarentum, Pennsylvania