

About Lisa Whitling



Lisa Whitling teaches in the Battle Ground School District. She has explored life by spending extended time in Brazil and Australia, as well as traveling to China, Cuba, the Norwegian Arctic, and many other places. Her career path includes working on fishing boats, in retail management, non-profit entrepreneur and many other career learning opportunities. Teaching presents a wonderful opportunity to integrate her life experiences into illustrative examples that enrich the curriculum in her classes. A big thank you goes to her parents who encouraged her solo travels throughout the world and taught her about money management.

Tracy Godat, FEPPP Executive Director, sat down and asked Lisa some questions about her teaching experience and here is what she had to say.

TG: What helped you decide to be a teacher?

LW: I came from a family of teachers and said I would never teach. However, while I was working at a university, I saw the bad decisions students were making relating to debt. So, I thought if I could teach them about good decision-making in high school, their career paths would be more flexible after college. One August, I met with an administrator for an informational interview and was hired to teach high school technology and business classes an hour later!

TG: What is the most rewarding thing about teaching?

LW: Seeing kids accept data driven opinions. Having kids learn how to determine what is a factual resource, how to evaluate a resource and possibly change their mindset as well as being more open minded to other peoples' opinions.

TG: What are all the different courses you teach or have taught?

LW: Intro to Marketing, Advanced Marketing, Business English, International Business, Student Store, College in the High School Intro to Business and Street Law.

TG: How have you seen that these courses have changed students' lives?

LW: The great thing about all of these classes is they allow us to have a conversation about what makes a successful life. Street law in particular is very practical so you can talk about things that impact their everyday lives such as common legal issues. It is easy to add personal finance into all these classes because they all have money related coursework associated with the idea of doing business or being an engaged citizen.

TG: Tell me about feedback from students years after they are in your class?

LW: One student I had that is graduating with an AA and diploma has already invited me to his college graduation. I see the successes students have long after they leave my class. One student in particular thought he did not need marketing and is now a marketing manager for Amazon! It is wonderful to see them use what they learn to become successful adults! They learn about pathways that are available for them and how to take advantage of opportunities or careers that they had not considered. It is great fun to see them in the "real world" to find out how they are using their education!

TG: Any words of wisdom for new teachers?

LW: I have a saying on my blackboard "Tell them why". Always start your class by telling them why the information for that day is important, it helps them make the connections.