

## **FoolProof Teaching Tips**

*By Mike Sheffer*

Here are some lesson ideas and teaching tips that have been developed over the years of using FoolProof at my school, Corning East High School. We use FoolProof in all of our business and economics classes throughout the school year. Some classes use FoolProof as a turnkey program, while others use it as the curriculum base for financial literacy. I hope these tips help in your use of FoolProof in your classroom...

### **Introducing FoolProof in Your Classroom:**

#### **Teachers:**

For the teacher everything you need to get started is on the FoolProof website: [www.FoolProofTeacher.com](http://www.FoolProofTeacher.com). This entire site is dedicated to teachers and how to implement the FoolProof program into your classroom(s). I suggest you review the entire site with paying special attention to the module overview and FoolProof Teacher Guides.

#### **Students:**

Two days before we start FoolProof, I use current event articles from the internet or newspapers on topics that pertain to financial literacy (it is quite easy to find them in today's world) I have the students research the articles and write a short review on how the topic in the article will affect them in their life. This starts the process of getting the students to understand they have the ability to control their financial future.

#### **Article Review Guidelines:**

- Find the article (they like the internet articles the best)
- Read/print article
- Highlight important aspects
- Write a brief article review on how the topic relates to them now or in their financial future
- Report back to the class

#### **FoolProof Pre-Test**

We have an introductory pre-test to assess your students' financial literacy knowledge. The pre-test can be found on [www.FoolProofteacher.com](http://www.FoolProofteacher.com) or in your personal teacher account. This document comes with suggestions on how to use the test with your classes. We have had great feedback on the pre-test in Corning. Try it and let us know what you think.

### **Computer Usage Issues**

All schools are unique. Not every teacher has access to a computer lab for two weeks at a time or even enough computers for the entire class. Sometimes we have to get creative; here are some ideas that may help if you are having computer usage issues:

## **Have a FoolProof Day**

Every Friday (we call them FoolProof Friday's) reserve the computer lab and use FoolProof over a 6-8 week period. It is a reward to your students and you can use the program with any class. If you are teaching a personal finance or financial literacy unit you can use FoolProof as your curriculum. If not, you can use the program entirely turnkey on those Friday's.

## **Laptops in the Classroom**

Schools are now using laptop carts and wireless Internet connections more and more. FoolProof works great with these also. Reserve the laptop cart and off you go.

## **Smart Boards**

If you have limited computer access but have a smart board with sound you can use FoolProof as an interactive learning tool. Log on to FoolProof as an individual user, work through the modules at a pace your entire class can handle. Take the FoolProof tests as a group. Works best in a small class and this method of implementing FoolProof has worked well in special education classes.

## **Internet Monitoring Software**

These work great when you are in the lab and you want to make sure all of your students are staying on task. These systems allow you to lock the specific website your students are working on. We lock in FoolProof and they can only be on that site. These systems also let you monitor the websites the students are on. If you want to instruct your students only to be on FoolProof and you don't lock it in, you can monitor them to see if they follow your instructions. Big brother is watching!!! (That would be you.)

## **Headphones**

Headphones are always an issue. As you may know, FoolProof, to be all it can be, needs sound. Students are usually at different stages in the modules, so using computer speakers is not ideal. Headphones are ideal, but do you have them in your computer lab? This is how we solved the problem:

Encourage your students to bring their iPods and their headphones to class. They work great with the computers. Also, we budget for 100 headphones a year @ \$1.25 each, so for \$125 we are set for the year.

## **FoolProof Tests**

All FoolProof modules have tests. As you know all the tests are graded for you by our software and uploaded to your class database in the teacher section. We use all the module tests as grades and then have a final FoolProof exam grade which is the total of all the individual module grades.

## **Students Who Struggle on the FoolProof Exams**

You might find some students will struggle on the FoolProof tests for various reasons. Here are some suggestions:

- Print the test
- Review the test with the student
- Reset the test
- Retake the test

All this can be done from the class section with your teacher password. It really works when you review the information with the student. Test scores do increase motivation. Also you will have the

time to review the information with the student because all your other students will be working through the FoolProof modules.

### **FoolProof Outside of the Classroom**

Students are not always in the classroom. Your students can use FoolProof from any computer once you have created your class list. This keeps your students up to date with their class. Assign the module your class is working on to the students that are missing class. Here are a few of the reasons I have used FoolProof as a turnkey program:

- Home teaching
- Normal Absenteeism
- Suspensions
- Study Hall use

### **What To Do If A Student Has Already Completed FoolProof**

If a student has already completed Foolproof in another class I suggest you do not have them go through the program again in that school year. The reasoning is that we do not want them to hurry through it again just because they have completed it already in the school year. Financial literacy is too important to their future to rush through.

Here are some suggestions if a student has already used FoolProof in the school year:

- Article reviews (see format above)
- Internet (they love the computer)
- Newspaper financial literacy current events
- FoolProof web article
- Wall Street Journal Classroom Edition

Also, you can research other financial literacy sites to supplement your students who have already used FoolProof in the school year.

If they have used FoolProof in a previous school year, have them go through the modules again. FoolProof is updated on a regular basis with new videos and current information that is important to your students.

Hope all this is helpful. I will be updating all new ideas on [www.FoolProofTeacher.com](http://www.FoolProofTeacher.com) on a regular basis.

### **Please share with us!!**

If you have new creative ideas on how you use FoolProof in your classroom or suggestions on how to improve the FoolProof experience. Send your idea or suggestion to me: [mike@foolproofhq.com](mailto:mike@foolproofhq.com)

I will review all your comments and suggestions and share these with all of our FoolProof teachers on FoolProofTeacher.com.

Thanks for your help.

Yours in education,

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