

My Inspiration

By Jodi Horton

Award Winner

Surgoinsville Middle School

Hawkins County

A school worker who has inspired me? Hmm... that's a tough one. I think I'll settle on... Mr. Scism. Mr. Marty Scism, or "Scism" as we all call him, was my 7th grade science teacher and has been my most inspiring teacher so far. He is funny, interesting, good at his job and always teaching us something new.



Now when I say "funny", I mean HILARIOUS! He would always tell funny jokes and pull pranks on us when we least expected it. Once it was a boring day in his class and we were all nearly asleep. All of a sudden, he smacked a meter stick on his metal desk. It sounded like a gunshot! We all nearly jumped out of our desks, and everyone either gasped or yelled. Another time, he found a sound on the internet, a sort of "twang". Whenever we misbehaved that day, he would play that sound and say that we just gave him another gray hair. He was always doing funny things like that, and each day he chose someone to "pick on" or use in his jokes. Oftentimes, it was either my cousin Emalee, my friend Naquilla or me.

He was also very interesting. He was always telling some story about himself or a story his son had told him or a story...you get the idea. Not all the stories were relevant to the subject of Science, though. Once he told us the story of when he and his son were fishing for crappie and his son said they shouldn't be called that. When Scism asked what he thought they should be called, his son replied "I'd call them yummys." He was also always showing us something interesting on the internet. He showed us a video of the Japanese tsunami and how the nuclear reactors almost had a meltdown. He also showed us pictures of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster with all the abandoned homes and birth defects. On a lighter note, he showed us the world's strongest cheerleader and a country with Star Wars characters on its currency, among other random factoids.

He is very good at his job. He uses pictures and videos found on the internet along with the textbook to teach us about the topics. Once, he used a video of a car crash to teach us about momentum and inertia. We also did a lot of experiments. We got to look through the microscopes at rocks or plant cells. Once, we even got to make our own marshmallow bugs to learn about hereditary traits. He let us learn at our own pace without too much pressure to

keep up with the others. I never had any trouble keeping up and got good grades. The schedule was constant and easy to keep up with.

He was always teaching us something new. Every week we would start a new topic. He would even teach us something irrelevant and useless just because it was interesting. Did you know Topeka, Kansas changed its name to Google for a day to try and win a free trial of Google fiber? I do because Mr. Scism taught me! Did you know that hand sanitizer burns so hot that the flame is invisible? I do because Mr. Scism taught me! As you can see, Mr. Scism taught us not only what we were *required* to learn, but what we *wanted* to learn.

These are the reasons that Mr. Marty Scism was and still is the most inspiring teacher that I have ever had. He is always cracking jokes, pulling pranks, telling stories and teaching us what we needed to learn right alongside of what we'll never use.