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Notes, Notas: A "Trilingual" Education in Words and Pictures

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"NOTES"

"notas"

→ A "Trilingual" Education in Words and Pictures

By Whitney Dykhhouse

"I'm into grilled cheese. Grilled cheese makes me feel beautiful!"
I was born five weeks early on August 17, 1987. As a premature baby, I was a victim of persistent fetal circulation, meaning I couldn't breathe without my mother. Doctors told my family to fear the worst. My grandfather told anyone who cared to ask that I was a little fighter, that I was stronger than I looked and that I would be fine. He was the only one who didn't worry. He's always been my biggest fan, and since I was three, he's been my guardian angel. His memory inspires me to change the world.

Shortly before Labor Day, I still hadn't shown any improvement. The doctors told my parents that, if I didn't improve by that afternoon, I would need to be airlifted to pediatrics at the University of Michigan and that there was an 80% chance that I wouldn't survive the trip.

I did survive the trip. To this day, my mom will tell anyone who asks that I heard what the doctors said, took it as a challenge, and fought to prove them wrong. For the first five years of my life, I proudly wore a button that read "I'm a Blodgett NNICU Graduate!". I still have it. It reminds me that I am a fighter, and that I've already won the hardest fight there is to fight. Now, all I want to do is teach. I want to show a new generation of kids how to fight for themselves and fight for the education they deserve.
The Littlest Fighter

She holds her dreams in the littlest hands,
And holds them tight for fear of forgetting.
She dreams a wish only she understands,
For a world without fear or regretting.
Her smile contagious and her laugh a song,
Eyes that sparkle like stars on a dark night.
She is always carried by arms so strong,
Protected in a blanket warm and tight.
Morning arrives and she yawns as she wakes,
And she sees the rain outside the window.
Soon she is feeling the rain her eye makes,
As the tears traverse her cheek, cool and slow.
As a child I was never told a lie,
Yet the ones you love always make you cry.
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When I was five, I told my parents that I wanted to be a teacher/veterinarian artist/Broadway star. For my sixth birthday, they gave me a chalkboard, toy horses, a set of paints, and a Fisher Price microphone boom box.

They always taught me to make my own choices, try my hardest, and be motivated. When I decided to teach, I knew my mind was made up. And I knew that they would support me in whatever way they could.

They are my best friends. And my heroes.

As a teacher, my ultimate goal is to be a hero myself.
Hey Bug!
Blue!
love,
Andy

TO DO:
- email Grandma
- call Andy re: Friday
- clean room
- RELAX!!

I love Whitney!

luv,
Andy
"The Bag Lady"

I started preschool when I was four. I brought a purse with me, filled with everything from a plastic hamburger to my mother's old powder compact. I brought pieces of my life with me - and that didn't change.

This Christmas, I received a briefcase. My parents told me, jokingly, that it was my first professional purse. "Maybe you'll have a real apple in there instead of a toy one!" my dad said with a smile.

That professional purse will come with me as I enter this next stage in my life, just as my little pink Barbie bag came with me to preschool. Soon, it will carry papers, attendance sheets, and textbooks.

I will still keep it with me at all times. The purse may be different but the dream is the same - I want to change the world.
YENTH

MOM

dAD

PUFFY

ALEX

LOVE
I have had three surgeries in my lifetime in an attempt to correct the congenital lazy eye I've had since birth. After the second one when I was four, the doctors suggested I write or draw as part of the recovery process.

My dad bought me a "Little Mermaid" diary, and I had filled it within a week. I drew princesses, hearts, and stars, wrote nonsensical stories, and told my story. Whenever I look back at the diary, I am inspired to help others tell their stories. The first page is my world, or at least my world in 1991—me, my parents, my stuffed rabbit, my dog, and love. My world might be a bit bigger now, and I'm looking at having my fourth surgery in a few months. But I still love to tell stories. And I can't wait to help a new generation tell theirs.
CERTAIN DOOM!
When I was five, I had just gone to Disney World and had my first exposure to Indiana Jones. A week later, we got home, and I saw a commercial for a movie that would be playing that Sunday on TNT. I convinced my father to let me watch “Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom”, stating that I knew none of it was real because the snakes on the Indiana Jones ride in Florida had been plastic. I still remember what he said to me that day: “You’re gonna be a teacher, kid. How do I know? ‘Cuz you’re 3’3” tall, and you can already explain anything to anyone.”
During the summer of 2007, I volunteered at Shawnee Park Elementary School in Grand Rapids where my aunt teaches preschool. I met Abby, a tiny little brunette with red bows in her pigtails and band aids on her knees. She gave me this drawing and told me I was pretty like a princess. She also said I would be a good teacher one day, and then proceeded to ask me which Teletubby was my favorite.

Abby had had no previous indication that I had planned to be a teacher. But on that day, I knew I was doing something right. To a teacher, the opinion of a child should mean the world.
Kate and Leah Boelkins are the daughters of my high school's orchestra director. The budding actresses had a few child roles alongside me before I graduated, and I babysat them throughout my senior year of high school and my first two years of college. The times I spent with them were predominantly filled with three things: Oreos, Disney Movies, and voice lessons. I taught them whatever I could about life as a young adult, and they taught me how it felt to have a little sister. The last time I saw Kate, she had just turned fourteen and was wearing her first pair of kitten heels. She asked me when I was going to start teaching. "I'll be so proud of you," she said. "You'll be the best teacher of all time."
Whitney,

How is college? We miss you! Come home soon to eat Oreos with us!

Love,
Kate and Leah
Andy Van Allsburg is my best friend. He is studying to be a music teacher, and is one of the most gifted musicians I have ever known.

He always asks for my help when writing papers, and I always am quick to assist. Helping him helps me to learn more about myself, my teaching style, and how I can grow.

With each and every paper that I help him create, I experience a sense of pride that can't be topped. That's the feeling I know I'll feel as a professional teacher.

And I'll always thank Andy for helping me by letting me help him.
The Romantic Era

Take-Home Essay Question #2, Option #1

Music History 3

Dr. Pelkey

Andy Van Allsburg
The romantic period was generally characterized by a focus on passion and imagination, a stark contrast to the logical and rational ways of the classical period that preceded it. Musically, pieces became more complex with the broadening of harmonic structure, while artistically, portraitists used their works to tell a story rather than depict a basic, traditional image. Artists and composers alike struggled with the concepts of superhuman heroism, impossible love, and the destiny of man while embracing the revolutionary culture and social transformations of the time. As Arthur Locke states in his article on the romantic movement within French music, “music is the language of emotion rather than of logic; consequently the changes which influence people’s modes of feeling are most important in the consideration of the changes of musical expression”.

Love and death emerged as prevalent themes within the music of the era, further supporting the dramatic attitudes and passionate styles of the period.

According to the early romanticism beliefs of poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, art does not equal true expression, but is instead merely an approximation. It should in turn reflect one’s own life experiences and interests. Art also reflects deep longing, and is grounded on touch, desire, and finally lust. These beliefs were also underscored by Freud’s beliefs that “beauty” and “desirability” were originally termed one and the same. These beliefs support the theme of love and its prevalence in romantic music, affirming the notions of art as a product of desire. In the passionate world of the romantic era, love was the desire of the everyman. The human condition was prone to passion and dramatic tendencies. Lust and desire were seen as inevitable emotions for every human being, and the music illustrated this. Further, in Robert Lyle’s article on the philosophies of romanticism, the concept of longing is discussed. “...one might say that a romanticist

becomes a romanticist only when he experiences the desire to be different from what he is, when he is filled with longing...” Lyle asserts that longing is in fact the first recognizable element of romanticism, and that longing is in turn summarized by the German word *Sehnsucht*.

Lyle then goes on to discuss death as well, asserting that romanticism cannot be defined solely as a preoccupation with love and death, because these themes can be found directly or indirectly in all art forms. However, the romantic art forms are set apart from the others in their identification of love and death. The true romantic, again according to Lyle, is “always going on a journey, whose goal is death, absorption, eternity”.

Following that belief, love and death have similar implications. To the truly romantic mindset, both mean immortality, a dramatic influence on the world around them. For instance, according to romantic-era novelist Victor Hugo, “to love another person is to see the face of God”. To love is to influence the life of another on an intimate level that can never be compromised, even by the inevitability of mortality. Also, to die is to live eternally in the sanctity of heaven, perpetuating a life lived for God in the sanctified afterlife.

Ludwig von Beethoven has been called one of the most influential musicians in the history of Western music, and is quite possibly the most renowned musician of the romantic era. When observing his life from childhood to later years, it is easy to find evidence of love and death and how they came to serve as principle influences on his works. His childhood was practically void of nurturing love, characterized by an alcoholic father and lack of education. Finally, he was able to begin his studies with Mozart in Vienna at age 17, but was quickly fraught with another disappointment when

Mozart died. Instead, he began his studies with Haydn, and later developed a group of patrons and began teaching others as well. Despite his successes, he was an exceedingly troubled man, suffering from mental as well as physical ailments. He began to lose his hearing during the third decade of his life, which led to his suicidal thoughts. His Heiligenstadt Testament that was found following his death ascertains his conflicting emotions. “My misfortune afflicts me doubly, since it causes me to be misunderstood”4.

Beethoven’s music is shaped by his life, especially his strong emotions, vividly haunting childhood, and troubled later years. The music he produced displays the themes of love and death in its dramatic characteristics and notable stylistic traits that were so common of the period. It was these stylistic devices and characteristics that made his work so influential. These devices included non-traditional harmonic trajectories, rapid tempo changes within movements, and sharp contrasts, for instance stark changes in dynamics. For example, in Beethoven’s String Quartet in C Sharp Minor, Op. 131, mov. 1, the harmony includes augmented triads in measures 14 and 27. The beginning of this piece also includes several non-traditional harmonic progressions. Beethoven notes that the style of the piece is *molto expressivo*, which is particularly characteristic of the romantic period. He takes the music through a wide range of keys, including E minor, G# minor, B Major, A Major, and D Major. In the second movement, there is a strong contrast in dynamics as well as in tempo. A second example is Beethoven’s Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, mov. 1. The piece features an extremely wide dynamic contrast and rapid dynamic changes, ranging from a full orchestra at fortississimo in measure 458 to piano two measures later. This piece also features several poignant moments where the ensemble decrescendos to allow for the showcasing of the wind instruments.

so common of the romantic period. Although death and love were only two of those themes, they were especially notable because of their immortality. True romanticists found both love and death to be immortal concepts, to be celebrated for their dramatically memorable qualities.

"PASIÓN"  "preciosa"

"belleza."

"the new LIFE"

"precious"

"PASSION"

"Beaty"
**Spain** (spän), n. 1. a country in south western Europe, on the Iberian Peninsula. 2. famous for bullfights, flamenco dancing, tapas, fiestas, museums, architecture, the Alhambra, cathedrals, windmills and the Costa del Sol.

Spanish is one of my majors. I have studied it for the past nine years, and I spent last summer studying in Santander, Spain. My experiences there were unbelievable. I learned collegiate lessons, and life lessons right alongside them. I walked past a sign that read “Teaching” everyday as I walked to and from my host family’s apartment. It reminded me why I was there. More importantly, it reminded me how far I’d come and how far I was going.
Theater has been a part of my life since I was three. I have always loved performing, but school always came first. I had headshots taken, landed voice overs and community theater gigs. But backstage, I was always reading, doing math problems, or translating my Spanish homework.

But it was that experience in theater that gave me my confidence. I found my determination there, and I have carried that determination throughout my life.
ANNIE: Pipe down, all of you! Go back to bed! Pepper, do ya wanna sleep with your teeth insida your mouth, or out? (yell!!)

(goes to MOLLY, begins to comfort her) It's all right, honey. It was only a dream.

MOLLY: It was my momma, Annie. W-we w-was ridin' on the ferry boat, and sh- she was holdin' me up to see all the big ships, and then I couldn't find her no more.

ANNIE: Aw, it's all right.

MOLLY: Annie, read me your note.

ANNIE: Again?

MOLLY: Please?

ANNIE: All right. (takes an old crumpled note from her pocket and reads) "Please take care of our little darling. Her name is Annie. She was-

ORPHANS(EXCEPT MOLLY, MOCKINGLY): She was born on October 28th. We will be back to get her soon. We have left half a silver locket around her neck, so that when we come back for her, you will know that she's our baby! (laughing)
I saw my first musical when I was three years old. I still remember how I felt, blue eyes blinking under the bright lights and sitting on tiny knees to be just a bit taller. I wanted to be on that stage, wearing those bright costumes and singing those songs. The smells of stale perfume and grease paint were captured in the red velvet seats, tickling my nose and making me smile. The music was everywhere. It became my dream.

Just before my sixth birthday, I went to my first acting class. Voice lessons soon followed, the first in a long tradition of musical theater training. I loved everything about being on stage, having the freedom to be bigger than myself, even if it was just for a few minutes. I had spent my whole life being the little one, with my petite size and mild manners defining who I am. I was always seen as fragile and small, the baby doll to be picked up and thrown around by my older cousins and the tiny tot to be coddled by the adults. But on stage, I could be as big as I felt, not as small as I looked.

I was soon enrolled at the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre School of Theater Arts, spending countless afternoons on the stage. I was taught the ins and outs of performing, from prop management and set construction to dance routines and vocal projection. I played Alice in “Alice in Wonderland” and a witch in “Macbeth”, being taught how to pronounce difficult Shakespearean verse and how to fall through a rabbit hole without bruising. Yet, I still couldn’t manage to land the part I wanted in the third grade play.
According to my music teacher, I was too quiet. In a parent-teacher conference, she told my parents that I should be encouraged to take interest in other things. I was too shy and socially inhibited for performance, and would never be able to do theater with such a small stature and reserved nature, she said. Hours later, I sat at the foot of my parents’ bed, stubbornly insisting through my tears that I didn’t want to stop singing and acting. My 3’5” stature and missing front teeth weren’t enough to stop me. I wasn’t going to be small anymore.

As I grew, I continued my lessons, playing more parts and singing more songs. I joined a professional children’s choir at age twelve and landed my first leading role in a musical at age thirteen. But, my biggest year for performance was still to come.

In January of 2004, during my junior year of high school, I began rehearsals for two shows. One, a musical review, was a community-wide production to commemorate the fine arts facility. The other was my high school’s spring musical, “Annie”. I had been cast in the title role, which was my biggest theatrical undertaking yet. The show would be the first high school performance in the new fine arts center, debuting less than a week after the commemorative review. It had to be my best performance. I was more nervous and more excited than I had ever been in my life up to that point. And even though I was portraying someone small, I knew I had it in me to make her someone big.

The schedule was grueling. I spent lunch hours napping on the couch in the drama room, and afternoons juggling rehearsals, AP English test preparation, and voice lessons. I baby-sat on the weekends, sang in the school’s chorale and jazz choirs, and sang the national anthem at the winter basketball games. I co-hosted the junior variety show with my best friend, and remained an active member of the Spanish Club. My life was busy,
but I was doing the things that I loved. I was a student, balancing Spanish class and AP prep with acting lessons and dance moves. I was learning about my life, and the things that defined me. I felt proud and unstoppable, holding the audiences in the palm of my hand. I remember I had never felt more scared in my life. But, scared or not, I had set my mind to something, and I was going to do it no matter what.

During the performance-filled weeks of that spring, I wore too much make-up and a wig, and a famously bright red dress. I cried on cue and sang the most well-known children’s anthem in musical theatre history. I danced in an ensemble of a musical review, then performed alone in a title role. Still a student of theater, I had learned the lines, the technique, and the dance moves. But, as a learner of life lessons, I had gained so much more.

Every elementary school student in the district had seen the show that day. Among the audience members at the afternoon performance was my elementary school music teacher, who approached me backstage after the performance. I recognized her immediately. I still had to look up to look her eye-to-eye, and I felt three feet tall again while I stood before her. She took my hands in hers and told me how beautiful I had become. “I was wrong about you,” she said, shaking her head. “You...well, you amaze me, Whit. You gave a voice to every shy kid tonight.” All I could do was smile back.

In that moment, I realized that I was the only one who could define my life. Had I listened to my teachers as a child, I never would have had the courage to follow my dream, and I never would have known what I might have done. I learned that the cliché was true—I can do absolutely anything if I believe that I can. Even a teacher cannot define a child’s life and tell them what they can and cannot do. Your life is your own, and
every chance is yours to take or leave. It wasn’t until the spring of 2004 that I realized that. I had to find my own way, and do things the way I wanted, guided but not defined by the people and things that surrounded me.

Every child deserves a voice. As a teacher, it is my job to encourage each student to follow his or her dream, find the voice inside them, and help it to be heard. A teacher should incite a child’s best qualities, helping them to grow into confident individuals who believe that the world is theirs to take by storm. I had the opportunity to learn something that day. I was more than a student who was taught how to sing the notes and recite the lines. I was an accomplished learner who understood the magnitude of my actions and the worth of my existence. Just as every educator should be more than just a teacher, every pupil should be more than just a student. They need to learn that nothing is impossible, and that fact cannot simply be taught—it has to be shown.

So what do I have to do? Undoubtedly, I will meet every type of student as I educate class after class. With that in mind, I have to ask myself what I will do to achieve my goals. The keys are self-motivation and self-determination. But what are they? What comprises determination? What lives within a motivated student? What does research tell us about these pivotal subjects, and what they can do for our students? And more importantly, what do we as teachers need to do to unlock these traits in our students?

I have always been highly conscious of metacognition, constantly striving to understand the inner working of my brain in order to grow academically, socially, physically, and emotionally. Early in my life, it was as evident to me as it was to others that I was a highly self-motivated person. The highly driven mindset that propelled through the pursuit of my theatrical dreams in high school had been a presence in my life
for as long as my blonde curls had, seeming to grow inside my head at the same speed as
the hair on top of it. A strong conscience had me apologizing profusely at age four
because I had accidentally forgotten a toy for show and tell. The motivation to understand
the adults around me had me reading everything I possibly could, gaining a vocabulary
that rivaled my high-school-aged cousins’ by the time I was just seven. I spent hours
practicing the piano, singing scales, playing scrimmages on the soccer field, and
rewriting class notes before every test. Every task was integral, and anything less that an
A brought tears and a self-inflicted grounding from TV. But what did this all mean, and
more importantly, what does in mean to me now as I enter the final stages of my higher
education? In just a little under two years, I will be entering the world as a full-fledged
educator and, with any luck, I will be living my dream of educating a new generation.
But how will my own identity as a self-regulated learner impact my identity as an
educator? How will I use that to turn my students into learners, encouraging them to find
that motivation within themselves? Motivation continues to drive me, and I still have that
conscience. But what will that mean for my career? How does that fit into self-
determination, and how do I bring that into the lives of my students?

As I write this final piece of the CER puzzle, I can’t help but think of a highly
recent illustration of my identity as a self-regulated learner. For the first time this
semester, I took the easy way out, choosing to turn this piece in by five rather than at the
regularly scheduled class time. I found myself ashamed at this decision, discouraged by
my inability to complete the assignment on time. Typically, I am not a procrastinator, and
I still take heart with every less-than-perfect grade and performance. Whether it is a
missed note in a Gold Company performance, a missed line during a play, or a C on an
essay, I never take my mistakes lightly. How, then, will I be able to temper this perfectionist persona with motivation, keeping my conscience at a healthy level and not allowing myself to be discouraged or consumed by guilt? How motivated is too motivated, and how do I teach my students to know boundaries?

According to author Susan Marks, "self-determination is simply the idea of being a "causal agent" in one's life, being able to make things happen" (Marks, 2008). She goes on to elaborate that the most integral key skills that researchers have tied to self-determination include self-reflection, problem solving, goal setting, decision making, self-monitoring and self-regulation. A self-regulated learner may be, but will not always be, a self-determined student. These skills are often learned "without being formally taught" (Marks, 2008), much like I learned them as a young child. But, how do I turn self-motivation and self-regulation into self determination? The attribute listed by Marks are echoed by other researchers as well, and self-determination is called “a means for access” to a successful education. (Lee, Wehmeyer, Palmer, Soukup, & Little, 2005). But how is it achieved? According to Lee et. al., teaching students skills such as self-regulation, problem solving, and goal setting are easy augmentations to a curriculum that can foster student involvement and progress. (Lee, et. al.).

Having studied the research and methods that can be taken in order to elicit self-determination and self-regulated learning from my students, I feel confident that I will be able to do just that. I will design a curriculum that centers on a balance between fun and function, marrying structure with freedom of expression. Despite my tendency to strive for excellence, I have to remember that no one, including myself, is perfect. I cannot expect the same from every student, and the expectations I have for myself may be
appropriate for any one of my students. Self-regulated learning and self-motivation are highly-effective tools in education, and the proper use of them can mean the difference between a student and a learner. More importantly, they are arguably the fundamental characteristics of self-determination. The challenges that teachers give their students should be ever-changing and adaptive, and the curriculum should be constantly augmented as well. Determination is fueled by challenge, which is why it is a teacher’s constant ability to challenge his or her students through a curriculum that will foster self-confidence, self-monitoring, and self-expression. Of course, there is always room for imperfections and improvement. Human nature means making mistakes, whether they come from the organized teacher that forgets her lesson plan at home just once, or the conscious student whose dog really did eat her homework. Life happens, and life means mistakes. The commitment of mistakes must always be tempered with kindness and understanding. A student will not learn from a teacher if they do not feel valued and respected, and a mistake is never a reason to treat a person without respect. With that in mind, how do you temper a valuable lesson with encouragement? Teachers who are too nice are just as ineffective as the ones who are too strict. Where do I fit in that mix? How do I share my brand self-regulated learning and motivation with a student who is nothing like me?

Approximately thirty students walk through the classroom doors on that first day in September. They will all be of similar ages, but that is just about the only similarity they will share. However, if their teacher truly does his or her job, they will leave in June changed. They will have learned, and a good teacher will show them that they are valuable individuals by helping them to embrace their unique and special differences and
reach their full potential. No two students are exactly the same. Each of them holds the key to a self-motivated style, but each also has a different lock in their hearts. As an educator, my job will be to help them mold the key to fit the lock, never forgetting that self-motivation comes in many different shapes and sizes, just like my students. What motivates me may not motivate another, and that does not make it wrong. Other opinions are never wrong, but merely different. Nothing is impossible. Every child has it all inside them—and it is my job to help them get it out.

Author Alyssa Morishima Moore discusses the importance of leadership. “In this world so filled with negative press, lack of true heroes, and few role models and leaders, it is so important for children to have someone to emulate.”(Moore, 2005). She goes on to explain that it is imperative “to actively seek out examples of people who demonstrate the characteristics of true leaders”(Moore, 2005). But what does that mean to a future educator? Where does a teacher fit in the mix of “influence” in a child’s life? Moore lists a teacher alongside a family member and a friend, among other things. In truth, a teacher could be both of those in addition to the convention Mr., Ms. or Mrs. label. And I believe they should be. As Moore illustrates, a teacher is just as influential as the family and friends, and a student may see their teacher in the same light as these other influential people. Moore also states that a leader should be mindful of the principles of “lifelong-learning, self-motivation, and independence”(Moore, 2005) and possess “an avid and continual desire to seek the ‘truth’ and a need to understand the unexplained.”(Moore, 2005). This statement gives me the confidence to know that I have the ability to turn my students into self-motivated learners. In psychological studies of the past, present and future, students have consistently shown an overwhelming desire to understand the world
around them and the truths that are found in their own minds, as well as the world around them. I still possess that innate curiosity and insatiable thirst for honesty, understanding, and validity. I am fully confident that I will be able to harvest that thirst and pass it to my students, relating to their own curiosities and encouraging them to unlock their own personal motivators.

“Self-motivated teachers display an unmistakable commitment to their profession...and their enthusiasm is contagious.” (Yeager, 2003). Alice Yeager’s definition of a self-motivated teacher could be easily attributed to a self-motivated student as well. She goes on to elaborate on the benefits of being a self-motivated educator, the “power to choose their reaction to each and every situation...see the best in everyone, believe that each child has value and that every child can (and will) succeed.” (Yeager, 2003). Self-motivated educators “have learned to reach deep inside and motivate from within during difficult or trying times rather than relying on extrinsic factors.” (Yeager, 2003). Therefore, if I rely on the motivation that lies within each individual student, I will succeed in keeping them enthusiastic and hopeful regardless of the personal obstacles they may be facing. I will teach them to overcome, embracing challenges and learning their own best way to succeed, always knowing that whatever is the best for one may not be the best for another.

A self-regulated learner cannot be created. However, anyone and everyone have it inside themselves to become one. Author Barry J. Zimmerman discusses the increase of cell phones, TVs, MP3 players, and computers in the lives of young people with one specific example of a teen who has become infatuated with MTV. “She uses no specific learning strategies for condensing and memorizing important material....has only vague
self-evaluative standards and cannot gauge her academic preparation accurately." (Zimmerman, 2002). Zimmerman goes on to discuss studies that have "clearly revealed how self-regulatory processes lead to success in school" (Zimmerman, 2002), and, more importantly, how students can be taught to learn on their own.

According to Zimmerman, self-regulation is "a way to compensate for their individual differences in learning" (Zimmerman, 2002). Differences, though previously feared by educators, should be embraced and accepted as potential benefits to an individual's educational potential. Instead of looking at Matt's remedial reading abilities and Michelle's difficulties in the science lab, why not focus on Matt's ability to play the piano at a concert level or Michelle's phenomenal poetry-writing skills? The teacher should alter Matt's and Michelle's specific curriculum to encourage their strengths while improving their weaknesses through a confident program of self-monitoring and progress.

As a future educator, I want so badly to share the benefits of self-regulated learning and self-determination with my students. The potential is all there, and I am confident that I will be able to unlock it. Every child is different and valuable, and I have promised myself that I will never forget that. And I know that my perfectionist conscience won't let me.
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<th>Month</th>
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<td>September</td>
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<td>Magic Tree House: The Musical</td>
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<td>November</td>
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<td><em>Nunsense 25th Anniversary Tour starring Sally Struthers</em></td>
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<td>Savion Glover's <em>BARE SOUNDZ</em></td>
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<td>December</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'</em></td>
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<td><em>Oliver!</em></td>
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<td>NBC's <em>Last Comic Standing Live Tour</em></td>
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<td>Gold Company Celebrates Motown &amp; Beyond</td>
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<td>Alvin Ailey's American Dance Theater</td>
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<td><em>The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling</em></td>
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"You're my favorite princess 'cuz you're the prettiest... but I know that real princesses are pretty on the inside too because that's... um... well that's what the poster above my bed says."

In 2007, I got my first professional acting job performing as Cinderella for children's birthday parties. At my first party, a six-year-old girl told me the above.

Teachers must always remain beautiful on the inside and out, just like princesses. As I start this next chapter of the fairytale that is my life, I vow to never forget that.
A further understanding of the romantic musical tradition can be found in the study of the romantic operas. The \textit{opera comique} emerged out of Paris, spreading throughout Europe and displacing the Italian opera, which had previously prevailed as the dominant form. As stated in Weiss and Taruskin, "the last season has been, throughout the whole of Italy, a season of failures: not a single opera has obtained anything like distinguished success". Following the trends of the revolutionary culture, the plots of the operas became more serious, featuring storylines involving dramatic rescues. The operas also featured the common people, as well as more of an emphasis on spoken dialogue. The German operas of the romantic period were popularized as well, featuring imaginative and whimsical plots that were based on German legend, myths, fairy tales, and medieval history. The operas featured depictions of nature and rural life in a wild, unnatural state, and supernatural characters as the antagonists. The nobles and common people were featured as the protagonists of the story, with the magic and supernatural forces acting as powerful obstacles that affected human life. Ultimately, good would triumph over evil, and the conclusion would feature redemption and salvation. Therefore, the "love conquers all" belief is prevalent, and the concept of rescue appears yet again, similarly to the French \textit{opera comique}. The change in plot trends exhibited by these operas is another source of support for the themes of love and death. The twist to a more serious tone, as well as the dramatic rescue plots and the mythical supernatural, offer more evidence of a quest for immortality, with love and death at the forefront of the journey.

Quite possibly the most notable person in the history of romantic opera is Carl Maria von Weber. His early training and particularly musical childhood led to an equally

eariy career. He worked to unify the arts using recurring motives and associative
tonalities. For example, in his notable work “Der Freischütz”, the pleasant-sounding key
of C major is associated with benevolent powers, but the diminished 7th chord is
employed and in turn associated with Saniel, the demon antagonist. That chord serves to
control the entire “wolves glen scene”, featuring the malevolent characters. In his article
“The Origins of Romantic Opera”, author Edward J. Dent discusses Weber’s influences
on the art form. He states that audiences have been accustomed to accepting Weber as the
creator of romantic opera. However, it is instead imperative to investigate romantic opera
in general in order to understand its true influences on the general history of music. It is
clear, also according to Dent, that a great majority of later romantic-era concert music
was derived from the dramatic tendencies of the theatre, and it is always within the
musical theatre that the emotional language of music is developed and treated. The
parallels drawn to the theatrical tradition underscore the dramatic trends of the romantic
era, ascertaining the period’s tendency to focus on the more passionate emotions of
everyday life 5.

In R.G. Collingwood’s article “Form and Content in Art”, the concept of
romanticism is broadened to romanticism as an art form in general, encompassing all
aspects of the fine arts. The author compares and contrasts classical and romantic art,
asserting that the romantic artist wishes for his work to be judged on content rather than
form. He would prefer that the audience wonder what he wishes to say with his work,
rather than how he says it. Further, the author states that “romantics are obviously warm-
blooded and excitable people”, and also that their lives are constantly full of passion and
vitality 6. Thus, that passion and vitality is manifested in the emotional themes that were

Life gets so crazy, you can forget that part of it means taking the time to dream—about how you want tomorrow to go, or about how you want your future to turn out. Before you go to sleep tonight, use this space to get all those thoughts and feelings down on paper. This is your personal private space to let your dreams flow.

**i wish...**

(Write down anything you want to happen.)

**a dream for tomorrow:**

- finish everything on my to-do list!

**a dream for next year:**

- Enjoy my last semester at WMU, and love student teaching!

**a dream for the next five years:**

- **CHANGE THE WORLD!!**
I wrote this in my favorite purple pen because life cannot be erased. Music, Spanish, and English have been three equal languages in my life throughout my educational journey—staff paper, notebook paper, whichever type I use, I will always love to tell stories.

And now, I can’t wait to help others tell their stories... because every story deserves to be told.
ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

--TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

--TEACHING MODULE

--COMPLETE REFERENCE LIST FOR ALL WRITINGS INCLUDED
Principles of Theatre and Drama within the Realms of Communication and Language

Whitney S. Dykhouse

Western Michigan University
Section One: Unit Learning Objectives

Overarching Objective: Understanding the principles of theatre and drama within the realm of communication

Specific Objectives:
Students will
-- study the different components of theatre and drama in great detail
-- learn to identify different aspects of communication within the theatrical setting
-- discuss the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication in the theatre
-- be encouraged to compare, contrast, and apply theatrical communication to their daily lives

Section Two: Research

According to the interpersonal communication textbook Looking Out, Looking In, all behavior, including non-verbal, possesses its own communicative value. Posture, body orientation, gestures, as well as expressions of the face and eyes are all important facets of the communicative world, exemplifying the many forms of communication without words. It is argued that even a face that is described as “expressionless” conveys its own messages, which means that a face that is entirely free of expression does not exist. Further, non-verbal communication performs the imperative social function of conveying emotions that we would otherwise be unwilling or unable to express. In actuality, non-verbal communication is better suited for the expression of feelings and attitudes. Also, unlike verbal communication, it is multi-dimensional and continuous, making it more effective (Adler, Proctor, & Towne. 2005).

In the New Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word drama is defined as “a series of events depicting conflicting forces” (New Merriam-Webster Dictionary [NMWD], 1989). However, in silent works of drama, how can the many aspects of conflict and the many emotions that inevitably accompany them be accurately portrayed? Without the use of words, how can one feeling or even an entire plot be displayed in a convincing fashion to the expectant audience? Often, drama involves wordless communication, and non-verbal communicative techniques are employed and made effective just as often, if not more, as their conventional verbal counterparts. In a survey conducted to investigate the impact of a theatrical performance on different audiences, researchers found that the spectators’ “overall appreciation referred mainly to the actor’s performance, which was also the strongest source for the spectators’ emotions in the theater” (Konjin, 1999, para. 1). In order to achieve the empathy and sympathy that theatrical productions need in order to stay popular with their audiences, the principles and aspects of communication are imperative.

Theatrical productions rely heavily on non-verbal communication in conjunction with verbal in order to produce a convincing performance. For instance, stage directions often call for non-verbal displays of emotion from the actor. A parenthetical note that appears before or within a line of dialogue is often a clue to how the line should be delivered, or what gestures or facial expressions should accompany the line. For example, a lull or silence in dialogue may be broken by a direction that instructs an exit, a sigh, or an embrace, depending on the emotional tone or mood that is necessitated by that particular scene. Even without words, a hug can imply love or friendship, a sigh could
illustrate boredom, and a heated exit is a perfect depiction of anger and frustration. Oftentimes, it is the non-verbal aspects of the theatre that prove to be the most poignant or effective in conveying the scene. True to form, actions do speak louder than words.

In musical theater, music and dance accompanies the dialogue of a straight play, thus incorporating other aspects in addition to the raw drama of a non-musical work. In these performances, dance is employed as a primary form of expression, often conveying crucial points in the plot of the show while accompanied by nothing more than an instrumental score. During my research, I watched several classic musicals and compared and contrasted the forms of non-verbal communication used in each one.

*West Side Story*, the 1961 adaptation of the classic musical by theatrical legends Sondheim and Bernstein, was a prime example of a movie musical that uses gestures, facial expressions, and body movements as primary communicative methods. The Romeo and Juliet story takes place in the boroughs of New York City, revolving around the lives of two teenaged lovers caught in a tangled web of violent riots and gang uproars. The plot line of the movie calls for a great deal of street fighting, featuring a legendary scene known simply as “the rumble”. In true musical fashion, the fighting is approached from a theatrical standpoint, presented to the audience as a dance sequence instead. The actors leap, bound, and jump across cobblestone streets, somehow achieving an accurate portrayal of fury and violence through the graceful art of dance. Here, it is incredibly evident that non-verbal communication has indeed played a crucial role. The harsher movements of the dancers, as well as their fiercely intimidating facial expressions, are strongly indicative of the true, violent nature of the scenes. Choreographer and co-director Jerome Robbins recognized the fact that juxtaposing dance and fighting was not at all typical or readily realistic, and therefore choreographed the routines carefully, using specific moves that were echoes of actual fighting moves. The dancers move harshly, using sharp gestures like punches and jabs to accurately convey the situation. Each gang has its own specifically uniform body language, uniting its members and making it easy for audience members to recognize the opposing sides of the fights. Further, facial expressions reflect ferocity, and the dancers grimace with intimidation and hatred throughout the entirety of each routine. Even the simple snap of a finger communicates severity with the sharpness of the sound coupled with the sharpness of the gesture (*West Side Story*, 1961).

A second example is the 1955 adaptation of the classic *Guys and Dolls*, the romantic comedy of errors about a couple of New York City gamblers and the girls who cross their paths. Many of the film’s musical numbers center on the plot’s main point of gambling, and one particular show stopper is a musical version of a gambling favorite, “The Crap Game”. Non-verbal communication abounds in this particular number, from a cat-and-mouse style tap dance to the ever-famous poker face to fool the opponents. The actors and dancers employ body orientation, distance, movement, gestures, and complex facial expressions as methods of communication, each of which aid in the realistic illustration of a typical gambling incident (*Guys and Dolls*, 1955).

The third and final musical that I researched has long since been called the greatest Hollywood musical of all time. *Singin’ In The Rain* tells the story of Hollywood’s leap from the world of silent cinema to talking pictures. One specific number, “Make ‘Em Laugh”, is one of the film’s most famous, featuring a hilarious dance break by actor Donald O’Connor. O’Connor portrays the comic sidekick to macho-
man Gene Kelly, and his performance in this particular number relies heavily on non-verbal communication in order to achieve its humor effectively. O’Connor’s facial expressions mark the hilarity of the scene, helping him present himself believably as his bumbling, goofy character. Further, his body language illustrates the clumsiness and awkward tendencies that are very typical to his character, and his orientation to Gene Kelly’s character throughout the song implies his slightly inferior status as the sidekick (*Singin’ In The Rain*, 1951).

In general, performers have been known to call themselves storytellers. One journalist wrote of his experience as a performer in a children’s production of *Beauty and the Beast*. “Following the play, we found ourselves in the lobby surrounded by curious children eager to feel the fabric of Beauty’s gown and to touch the mask of the Beast” (Collins, 2003). The majesty of performance can bring even the most mystical of characters to life, often making the starring performers regal and untouchable. However, without the use of realistic non-verbal communication, no performer can be truly convincing. In dance especially, non-verbal communication is the only way to express emotions. In a study done by the Tokyo institute of technology, it was proven that there is a direct correlation between a dancer’s arm movements and the emotions that he or she is aiming to express while dancing. Different movements occurred for the specifically intended emotions of joy, sadness, and anger, all of which were easily recognized and interpreted by even the most naive of spectators (Ishii, Sawada, & Suda, 2003).

As further research, I interviewed Scott Hamilton, a graduate of Western Michigan University who received a minor in the field of dance. Scott answered the following six questions.

1. How long have you been studying dance?
   *Since I was about twelve or so.*
2. What is the most typical facial expression for dancers, in your opinion?
   *Well, it depends. Our faces usually try and match the mood of the song, and if we’re not trying to convey a specific emotion or story, we’re told to look peaceful and pleasant, which is kind of a half smile with the eyebrows raised.*
3. Are dancers specifically taught methods to use to express emotions while dancing? If so, what are they?
   *Hmmm...not really. It kind of comes with experience and performing. Like, the longer you’ve been dancing, the easier it is to know what kind of movement and facial expressions the dance calls for.*
4. Do the arm motions in dance have specific emotional meanings and representations? If so, what are they?
   *Not really. In general, harsher movements would imply a more negative feel, and more fluid, graceful movements are more peaceful.*
5. When expressing emotions in dance, do you draw from personal experiences? How would you say expression in dance compared to other types of performance, like acting and singing?
   *Tough one. Yeah, I guess I draw on personal stuff. I kind of try and give the dance a story, and relate it to something I might be going through at the time. In terms of comparison, I’d say they kind of all go hand in hand. Dance just relies more heavily on movement and facial expression.*
6. Do you find it difficult to communicate non-verbally?
Sometimes. Especially since my first love was acting, and I’m also very involved with singing (S. Hamilton, personal interview, April 10, 2008).

The answers Scott gave are very much in accordance with the study in the aforementioned paragraph. Non-verbal communication is clearly demonstrated once again as an imperative component to the art of dance.

The many facets of communication play integral roles in theatrical and dramatic presentations. Communication is not only prevalent in the world around us, but also prominent as a factor in several facets of the media.

Section Three: Preparation Notes for the Instructor

Stage fright is a concept that is typically associated with a theatrical setting. However, on a more general level, it is also referred to as communication apprehension. Simply put, it is the fear of public speaking, and can occur in any public situation. Eighty to ninety percent of Americans surveyed admitted to experiencing some kind of apprehension and discomfort when placed in any forum of public speaking. Even further, many studies have shown that many people fear the concept of public speaking more than death itself (Glencoe, 2005).

William Shakespeare said that the entire world is a stage. We as humans are constantly scrutinized both interpersonally and intrapersonally, judged by ourselves and those around us. Public speaking puts even the most accomplished speaker in a place of vulnerability, a place where fear becomes instantly commonplace. Theatre is merely an extension of reality, a depiction of life as we live it. Sometimes it is more dramatic than reality itself, and other times it is more understated. But, whatever the case, it is communication. Students must understand the importance of confidence, of eloquence, and of understanding the human spirit. When a student can watch a piece of art such as a musical or dance recital and see it as a form of communication, he or she will then be able to apply those aspects of communication to his or her everyday life. Through that understanding, the student will be able to conquer his or her stage fright, seeing an everyday communicative task as a challenge, and not something to be feared.

Educators must remain empathetic to the concept of stage fright and the convention of fear. If the student is reminded and encouraged that fear is normal, he or she will learn to fight it and combat the phobia or public exposure. Encourage students to express themselves freely and regularly without threat and stress. If they see public speaking as a fun way to express their feelings, they will embrace it, rather than fear it.

Section Four: Sample Lecture Outline*

Communication in Theatre and Drama

I. Non-Verbal Communication
   A. Definition: facial expressions or body movements used to express attitudes or moods about a person, situation, or idea
      1. theatrical examples: stage combat, blocking, cues and other performance notes in script
      2. Additional related term--Non-verbal Message: facial expressions or body movements used to convey messages not spoken

II. Verbal Communication
   A. Intrapersonal Communication
1. Definition: an inner dialogue conducted with oneself to assess one’s thoughts, feelings, and reactions
   a. theatrical examples: monologues, Shakespearean soliloquies

B. Interpersonal Communication
1. Definition: communication that takes place any time messages are transmitted between two or more people
   a. theatrical examples: standard dialogue or scenes
   b. other notable theatrical effects: voice inflection and voice pitch, pacing, general emotional content

*note: all definitions are found in the glossary of Glencoe Speech

Section 5
Sample Unit Activities

The Free-Write
Best if used as a warm-up activity, this sparks students’ cognitive and creative skills simultaneously. Give your students a topic, then ask them to write for ten to fifteen minutes. Tell them not to concern themselves with grammar or format, and to simply write whatever is on their mind for the given period of time. At the conclusion of the time allotted, encourage them to wrap up their closing thoughts and review what they have written. Once they have had a few minutes to peruse their writing, ask for a volunteer to read his or her response. Instruct the student to “perform” his or her writing; that is, he or she must read what they have written to the class with conviction, using proper theatrical techniques to illustrate the mood and feel of the piece. Afterwards, ask the rest of the class to comment on their peers’ work. Discuss the theatrical elements from the lecture notes, and how they were or could have been applied to the presentation. If desired, use a chart such as a Venn diagram to illustrate the similarities and differences between real-life and theatrical portrayal of verbal and non-verbal communications.

The Character Sketch
Also applicable for actual fictional characters, instruct students to answer the questions truthfully and without too much thought. Encourage “gut”, instinctive responses. Then have them pair up and discuss their answers with a partner or small group. A follow-up activity, if desired, could be to create a scene for two people based on the two sets of answers. As actors, students can again compare and contrast their real-life interactions with the theatrical conversation they create. (see sample hand-out below)
Character Sketch: Who Am I?

Who am I?

What do I think of me?

What do others think of me?

What do I look like?

How do I feel right now?

What is happening to me in my life right now?

What do I want?

What do I have to do to get what I want?

Will I do it?
Section Six
Sample Unit Questions

Sample Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which of the following is NOT an example of non-verbal communication?
   a. a wave of the hand
   b. a clearing of the throat
   c. a smile
   d. posture

2. What is interpersonal communication?
   a. e-mail correspondence
   b. written letters or notes
   c. communication between two or more people
   d. private communication within oneself

3. What is intrapersonal communication?
   a. e-mail correspondence
   b. written letters or notes
   c. communication between two or more people
   d. private communication within oneself

4. Which of the following is NOT a theatrical example of interpersonal communication?
   a. a monologue
   b. a dialogue between two people
   c. a musical number
   d. a scene consisting of three characters

5. Which of the following is NOT a theatrical example of an effect on verbal communication?
   a. inflection
   b. pitch
   c. pacing
   d. tempo
Sample Short Answer Topics
1. List and define the effects an actor puts on his or her performance to enhance the communication of it.
2. Compare and contrast verbal and non-verbal communication.

Sample Essay Question
If you were a director, what techniques would you use to encourage your actors to perform in a drama? A comedy? Discuss the theatrical aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication in your answer.

Section Seven: Recommended Movies for In-Class Use
Singin’ In The Rain
Les Miserables: In Concert
*although this is a movie musical, it is in a concert setting—discuss how this alters the actors’ interpretation
West Side Story
Evita
Gypsy
The Phantom of the Opera
Spanglish
*discuss the bilingual variable—how does this affect the message of the film? How is it portrayed communicatively by the actors?
Juno
*discuss the generation gap between the characters
Speaking Whenever Spoken To: A Proposal for Speech Appropriation

As an undergraduate at Western Michigan University seeking degrees in English, Spanish, and Communication for the secondary education curriculum, most of my coursework centers around linguistic principles. Having been very interested in the capabilities of language for most of my life, I hope to use my position as an educator to teach students to use English to its full linguistic potential, using it appropriately in a variety of situations. Children need to learn to use their native language to its full potential, modifying their speech to suit their environment.

Varying Skill Levels
Think back to your elementary school days. Where did you sit in the cafeteria? Who was your best friend? Were you in the ‘fast’ reading group or the ‘slow’ one? For many children, their reading ability and language skills define who they are. The speech-impeded readers fear having to recite aloud to the class, stumbling over words amid the snide comments and cruel giggles of their classmates. Some kids read twice or three times as slowly as their peers, and struggle to follow along in their texts. Others try to improve, sounding out words phonetically but still feeling embarrassed when their teacher must correct them yet again in the end. But, what about the gifted child? What about the rambunctious little boy who is reading Charles Dickens at seven, or the quiet girl who comes into kindergarten reading Nancy Drew mysteries? Where do they fit in?

As a child, I often found myself being consistently embarrassed by my language skills. Growing up as an only child, I was left without the youthful company that most other children had, and consequently had a much larger vocabulary. I was constantly using more adult words, and had a much more developed sense of speech than my classmates and friends. As I grew older, I continued to develop that vocabulary, and entered my middle and high school years having mastered a command of words that was significantly larger and more advanced than the other students at my grade level. It didn’t take long for this ability to make itself apparent, and I was quickly dubbed “the walking dictionary” by a few classmates. Rather than combat this, my teachers treated my ability as a gift, continuing to challenge me. While this was great on an academic level, it was extremely detrimental socially. I did not know how to talk to children my own age, and struggled with basic communicative skills. Despite my command of the language, I struggled, simply because I did not know how to use my skills to their full potential. If my teachers would have balanced the enrichment of my vocabulary with the teaching of proper usage, I would have learned when it was or was not appropriate to use larger, more adult words. My vocabulary continues to be a struggle today, and I constantly am reminded by friends to “stop using English major words”. Although they are only joking, it is frustrating, and I constantly wish that I had been taught at a younger age to monitor my tones of speaking to better suit my varying audiences. As a future educator, I plan to teach grammar in a way that will facilitate a student’s ability to act as a conversational chameleon, able to change his or her word choice, diction, and syntax techniques to better suit the particular needs of their linguistic environment.

What Can Be Done?
“The varieties of English offer you a powerful entranceway through which you can encourage students to discover the structure of language. In particular, the language of ordinary conversation itself provides an essential grammar resource for the classroom” (Haussamen 10). According to this statement from Grammar Alive: A Guide for Teachers, it is imperative that educators view the English language as their most valuable tool in the teaching process. The language in itself offers countless illustrations of linguistic potential, lending itself to the study of versatility.

Just as each student will offer his or her own individual personality within the classroom, he or she will offer his or her own linguistic palette. The classroom will become a melting pot of diverse linguistic backgrounds, and each child will offer something different. As a teacher, it is extremely important to respect each student for who he or she is, encouraging them to use their different linguistic views and backgrounds and always reminding them to keep their own stylistic voice. However, it is equally important to encourage proper use of the language. Students must learn to properly cater their speech to their audiences, remaining aware of their tones of speaking, word choice, diction, and syntax. A complete education in grammar mastery must include an education in tailoring speech to your audience.

Tone Management and Alteration

Julie Ann Hageman discusses the importance of tone in her English Journal article, “Balancing Content and Form in the Writing Workshop”. She asserts that “adolescents and adults in the process of learning academic English need both content and form. They need access to a well-rounded version of English” (Hageman 73). Further, adolescents need to develop their linguistic repertoires in a way that allows them to comfortably navigate spoken informal discourse that would be commonplace at home and more formal, written school discourse that is necessitated by the academic environment. “If they want a chance at success in today’s society, all students must learn to shift easily from “home talk” to “school talk” to “workplace talk” whenever the situation arises” (Hageman 73). Students need to learn how to manipulate their linguistic skills in their favor, ascertaining that their abilities can help them reach their maximum potential in language usage. For instance, a student will never fail to speak differently with his or her friends than he or she does with his or her parents. Even further, he or she will speak differently with a prospective employer or in a professional setting. If the student has not mastered grammar in full, he or she will not be able to use the language appropriately. It will be difficult to discern between the different types of grammatical technique, and the student will be more likely to fall prey to the confusion of casual speech versus more formal speech.

Varying Aptitudes at a Secondary Level: Interview with Jennifer Kigar

Mrs. Jennifer Kigar teaches several varying levels of English at the high school level in the Forest Hills Public School district in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In an interview, she once told me that it is the teacher’s relationship with the student that ultimately ensures the quality of learning for teacher and student alike. As a veteran teacher who teaches several levels simultaneously, she has seen every extreme of student from the incredibly motivated AP kid to the delinquent who is only at the desk so that he can graduate on time. I watched her in action at both the highest and lowest levels of
learning, and noticed that there was one thing about her techniques that never changed: her caring attitude. "While we may work hard to fashion coherent curriculum, it is the relationships among all who participate that determines the quality of learning" (Raider-Roth 14). Author Miriam B. Raider-Roth agrees, ascertaining the importance of cohesive teacher-student relationships. Her book discusses the short-and long-term effects of both negative and positive student-teacher relationships in the contexts of student confirmation and disconfirmation.

**Keeping It Fun**

A fluency in grammar usage is a necessity if students are to fully grasp the concept of language alteration and appropriation. "To develop fluency in grammar and mechanics, students need quick daily instruction and progress. Ongoing shared experience with playing with and understanding grammar is crucial" (Anderson 19). Jeff Anderson's book *Mechanically Inclined* offers several suggestions for entertaining methods of grammatical growth. Exemplary activities include the explode-a-moment, where students are asked to choose a one-moment happening and describe it in great detail, or sensory activities like the mystery box, where students explore the contents of a shoebox without sight and write about their findings.

Harry Noden’s *Image Grammar* offers several suggestions as well, including a fun in-class activity that involves a direct comparison between “home” dialects and “proper” grammar usage.

**Embracing Differences**

According *Teaching to Change the World* by authors Jeannie Oakes and Martin Lipton, schools often attempt to stifle students’ differences with the traditional methods of teaching. Often, tradition dictates that every student needs to learn the same thing. “Differences among students are often not neutral, but schools place a positive or negative value on those differences” (Lipton, Oakes 174). The book goes on to discuss the true importance of embracing differences within the public school classroom setting, ascertaining that each student will be different. Thereby, we as educators should be obligated to treat these differences as precious blessings rather than oddities to be fixed.
Sources


Raider-Roth, Miriam B. *Trusting What You Know: The High Stakes of Classroom Relationships.* San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2005

