

Emotions Matter-Legends

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ABSTRACT

It is no secret that the American school system is failing students. Whether it be from lack of motivation or other personal reasons, students just over all seem to have a lack of interest in their education.

Chiloquin Elementary is a kindergarten-6th school located in Chiloquin, Oregon, thirty miles to Klamath Falls. By making the trip every week to work with a first and sixth grade class, we were able to introduce some new ideas and ways of learning to these students who may never get the chance to be exposed to this diverse way of learning.

By creating a safe learning environment for these students, we were able to stimulate creative thinking and diverse ideas. We chose to let the students focus on themselves and learn about their culture. Many families in this area are first nation's people of the Klamath Tribe. Each student's exploration of their culture was used to create a legend featuring them as the protagonist.



RATIONALE

- I believe we are products of our surroundings
- When students are constantly reminded that they will succeed, they usually do
- On the contrary, students who are not encouraged often drop out
- We asked students to look into their culture and then to write a legend
- The students were ecstatic to have an assignment focus on their lives and beliefs
- When students are excited, they work harder

Learning Goals

- I wanted for students to coexist together in a safe learning environment
- Students were to learn about themselves and their peers
- While this was happening, students were meeting Common Core State Standards in English and Language Arts
- I learned that all of this was possible, necessary and fun!



Process

- Every Tuesday, my mentor and I would go to Chiloquin Elementary
- We taught first grade in the morning and sixth in the afternoon
- As a team, we enforced a safe learning environment
- If the idea was too foreign to a student, we would sit with them at lunch and give them the extra attention they required to understand what safe meant
- When students receive respect, they give respect

For further information and more legends go to:
<http://www.ontasc.com/student-legends.html>

STUDENT ESSAY

THE DARKER IT GETS, THE BRIGHTER I BECOME

A long time ago a legend was told about a young girl named Crystal. She lived alone in the woods, pushed down by the wind. Crystal was intelligent, smart, and beautiful. She would hear voices when the moon was full. It sounded like someone was giving her advice. Crystal found out the next day that she could talk to animals. She knew every animal except the wolf. The other animals called him 'The Predator.' All the animals feared him.

One night, Crystal heard the wolf talking to the moon about how he felt misunderstood. The next day she stood up to the wind for the first time. She was stronger after that, and thought she might be ready to face the wolf. Crystal cautiously approached him. The wolf growled at Crystal. Crystal ran away as fast as she could.

"Hey, come back!" yelled the wolf. The wolf didn't want her to leave. Crystal knew that every night, on the full moon, the wolf came out to talk to the moon. Crystal waited until the next full moon. As expected the wolf was there. This time, Crystal didn't run. Crystal and the wolf became friends. "I will call you, Howler" Crystal said. But they did not have a very good friendship. Howler pushed her around all the time, until Crystal stood up to him and said, "I will not be pushed around anymore! I'm tired of all your grouchiness! If you need a friend, next time go ask the moon!"

The wolf cried and ran away. Crystal felt bad, but she knew it was the right thing to do. Now, when the moon is full, you can hear Howler howling to the moon that he lost his only friend. The moon just listens.



My Growth

- The impact that we had was physically visible with everyone involved
- Students can and should be trusted
- Lessons do not always go the way they are planned
- Always know and trust yourself
- I loved to watch all of the students grow as individuals
- Everyone wants to be recognized for their best qualities, when those qualities get overlooked, often times they get buried

CONCLUSION

This process has been one that I will never forget. Over those eight weeks I grew more than I ever have. Taking part in this experience has been so beneficial. I have a new outlook on the way that teaching and learning unfolds! Revisiting this experience has renewed my passion for teaching. I loved doing this and I cannot wait to continue to change students' lives in the way that they have changed mine! If I could go back and make any changes, I would not; unless it was to relive every moment in there.



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