

“You Can’t Fire The Bad Ones!” Response Paper

“Performance is more than a score on a paper- and- pencil test and more than accumulated student test results; assessment requires close observation of both context and flow” (page 30). **What is the best way to measure the effectiveness of a teacher?** I really do not believe that standardized testing is the answer, but I am also unsure as to what the better option is. From a student standpoint, I have learned so much more in a seminar based setting where we are not tested, rather than memorizing statements in my short-term memory for a test and forgetting it immediately after the test.

“Wages and salaries are one reflection of relative social value; a collective, community assessment of worth” (page 63). This is an idea that I would assume we have all already encountered, because a lot of first reactions when people hear I am going to college to become a teacher consist of commentary regarding how little money I will make. **What makes a lawyer or doctor more valuable than a teacher?** This takes me back to the concept we talked about in seminar at one point of the value of a human being; **why do we try to measure the value of individuals? How can we place a value on a person?**

On page 88, it talks about how good public schools are hard to find and schools are hard to change. It says good public schools typically exist in privileged areas. “They mirror the societies that create them.” It is hard to hear that the education system still favors white students and rich neighborhoods because as someone going into the field, you want to hear that things are changing and getting better but this book directly shows us how things are not changing and how

hard it is to make changes. This concept of grit they talk about is huge- it says we change black kids on the inside rather than changing the system to be more inclusive from the outside.

To what extent are you allowed to incorporate your own beliefs into your classroom? Myth 11 on page 120/121 talks about how “teacher activists are troublemakers” and good teachers don’t bring their personal politics into the classroom. I think it would be extremely hard to keep all of your personal beliefs outside of the classroom, but I also think there is a right and wrong way of including them in your classroom. Encouraging only your beliefs is wrong, but sharing all sides and then mentioning which side you’re on seems like it would be okay. Just like students get to choose a side, teachers get to choose a side. However, I think these types of conversations would happen more in a middle/high school setting.

Myth 18 talks about how people think teachers should be more focused on STEM than arts and humanities. This has always confused me because society functions based off the concept that there are different people focused on different things; we need art majors and english majors and science majors and math majors. We learn different skills from different subjects in school, and all are of equal importance in my opinion. On page 205 it says “artists learn to reflect and critique, to look back on what they have created, what others have created and evaluate it.” I learned a lot in my high school art class, even though I had and still have no interest in pursuing an art degree. I have some great memories of art and music class in elementary school, and I also have great memories in computer lab and science lab. Society needs to stop influencing the education system into thinking that certain subjects are more important than other subjects. **What would society look like if the education system really did remove all funding to art and music programs?**

