

**Objective 1:** Students will be able to identify and use challenging vocabulary words for *Macbeth*.

This objective presented the most problems for students. It could be that the assessments were not challenging or that more in-class instruction was needed in order for the students to achieve this objective.

**Whole Class:**

<b>Student</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment (Shakespearean Language Exercise: One Question on Vocabulary)</b>	<b>Formative Assessment (Crossword Puzzle Quiz, scored out of 100 points)</b>	<b>Post-Assessment (Final Test, 15 sentence completions with Vocabulary Words, out of 15 points)</b>
Alex	0	95	8
Ryan	0	90	1
Briana	0	93	4
Arthur	0	98	8
Amy	0	72	10
Nick	0	100	2
Justin	0	100	3
Courtney	0	80	1
Larry	0	97	4
Shannen	0	100	3
Amy	0	74	4
Merrill	0	96	5
Brittney	0	53	1
Ian	0	100	11
Ashley	0	100	8
Donny	0	100	1
Kevin	0	80	1
Alyssa	0	100	1
Mike	0	0	1
Albert	0	100	2
Tensho	0	100	5

(Note: “I” in the chart indicates “incomplete.”)

**Analysis:**

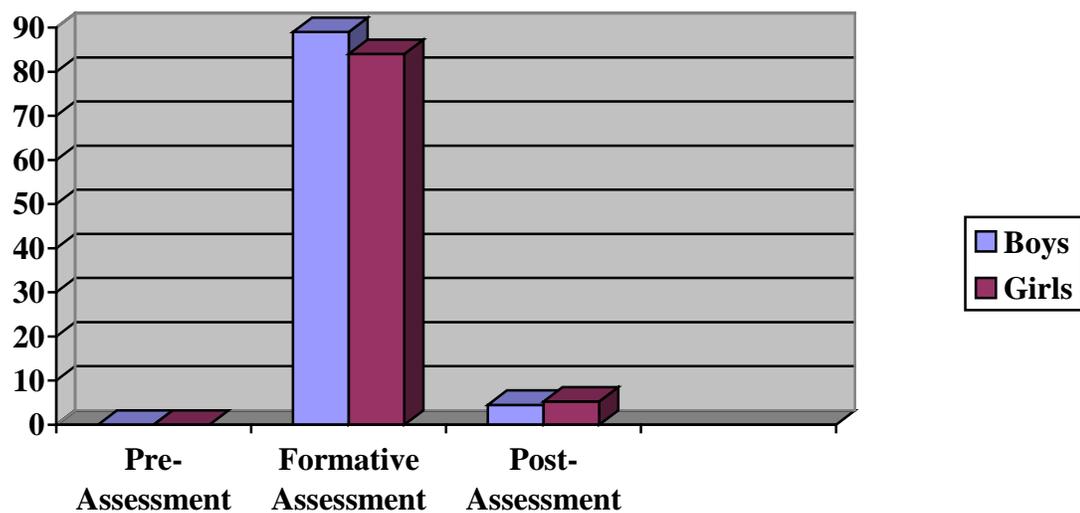
From this chart, I can see that on the pre-assessment, students were not able to figure out the definition of a vocabulary word from the context of the line it appears in, which was the goal of the exercise. However, on the formative assessment, most students were able to match the definitions with selected vocabulary words from *Macbeth*. The goal of the formative assessment was to gauge if students could accurately match vocabulary words with their definitions, which

is why I had the students take their quizzes on crossword puzzles that I made with the help of a useful website, [www.armoredpenguin.com/crossword](http://www.armoredpenguin.com/crossword). I was pleased with the results because they could recognize the words and the definitions.

The post-assessment was to measure students' ability to use the vocabulary words in sentences. This part was done on a final test on the play, where students had to fill in the blank with the correct vocabulary word for fifteen sentences. The highest score was 11 out of 15, and the lowest was 1 out of 15. I feel that these numbers should have been higher, but from the chart, I can see that I should have done more in-class work with vocabulary words. The students were unsuccessful with the ability to apply the vocabulary words in a new setting: sentence completion. I could have had reviews with the vocabulary, such as a Jeopardy style game. It would help the students to remember the words better. In addition, I could have created more challenging quizzes; instead of a crossword puzzle, I could have had the definitions of all the vocabulary words, and the students would have to write the correct vocabulary word next to its definition. This type of quiz would have required more studying and more recall. Perhaps the students would have been more successful on the post-assessment, for they would activate their prior knowledge of the words and their definitions and would be able to fit that definition in with the sentence completions. I think more class activities would have helped the students to succeed in achieving the objective.

### Subgroups:

I have chosen to examine how the boys performed on all three assessments compared to the girls' performance on the assessments. There is an educational stereotype that says that girls are much better at English class than boys are. However, I do not believe this is so; stereotypes cannot predict how individual students will perform on assessments. I am hopeful that the results will undermine this stereotype.



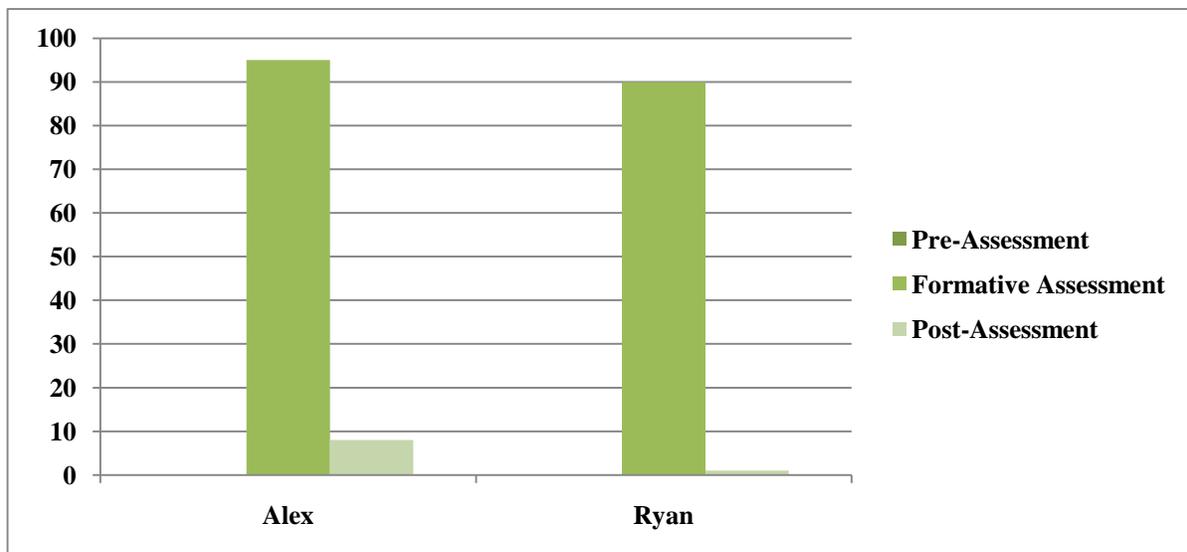
### Analysis:

While the pre-assessment scores remained the same for boys and girls, the boys outperformed the girls on the formative assessment. It could be that the data are skewed because there are more boys than girls in the class, allowing more scores for one gender and the possibility of a higher average. On the post-assessment, though, the girls' scores on the sentence completion were higher than the boys' scores. I cannot conclude that this supports the stereotype that girls perform better in English than boys do because performance ultimately depends on individual students. One cannot prolong a stereotype that does not hold much truth. This graph proves to me once again that I needed to have more classroom activities that would help the students to better grasp their vocabulary words.

### Individuals:

I have chosen to examine Alex and Ryan because they need constant stimulation in order to stay alert and busy. Alex will speak out during class about matters that have nothing to do with the topic of the class, but he does pay attention to what is being said around him. Ryan does not often take notes and he usually has his book closed. I needed to compare the two to see how each of them fared with the assessments, seeing that one pays attention while constantly talking and the other barely pays attention.

Student	Pre-Assessment	Formative Assessment	Post-Assessment
Alex	0	95	8 (out of 15)
Ryan	0	90	1 (out of 15)



**Analysis:**

As with the other data presented, I can see that I needed to make the formative assessments more difficult. Clearly, Alex and Ryan succeeded on the formative assessment, for they have 95 and 90 averages, respectively. However, their post-assessments should have been as successful, if I had implemented more class activities with the vocabulary words. If they had truly been able to recall the vocabulary words' definitions, they would have been able to successfully complete the sentences on the test and ultimately achieved the objective. Another thing this chart tells me is that I should have motivated both students to want to work with vocabulary words. Perhaps word games like Jeopardy or charades would have been a good motivator because they are usually fun and get all students involved in working on the task at hand.

**Objective 3:** Students will be able to analyze at least one character using textual evidence.

The students who completed the post-assessment were able to achieve this objective. The students and I had spent much class time discussing characters' moods, actions, and motivations. In addition, we watched Roman Polanski's 1971 film version of *Macbeth*, which supplemented our discussions of character. The students were able to recognize the characters' most telling attributes and their motivations for their actions and words.

**Whole Class:**

<b>Student</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment (Shakespearean Language Exercise: One Question on Character Motivation)</b>	<b>Formative Assessment (Character Web)</b>	<b>Post-Assessment (Character Sketch)</b>
Alex	0	Check	0
Ryan	0	Check	I
Briana	0	Check	0
Arthur	1	Check	99
Amy	1	Check	92
Nick	0	Check	I
Justin	1	Check	0
Courtney	0	Check	I
Larry	1	Check	0
Shannen	1	Check	94
Amy	0	Check	I
Merrill	0	Check	72
Brittney	0	Check	I
Ian	1	Check	93
Ashley	1	Check	I
Donny	0	Check	I
Kevin	0	Check	0
Alyssa	1	Check	85
Mike	0	-	I
Albert	0	Check	I
Tensho	0	Check	0

(Note: "I" in the chart indicates "incomplete.")

**Analysis:**

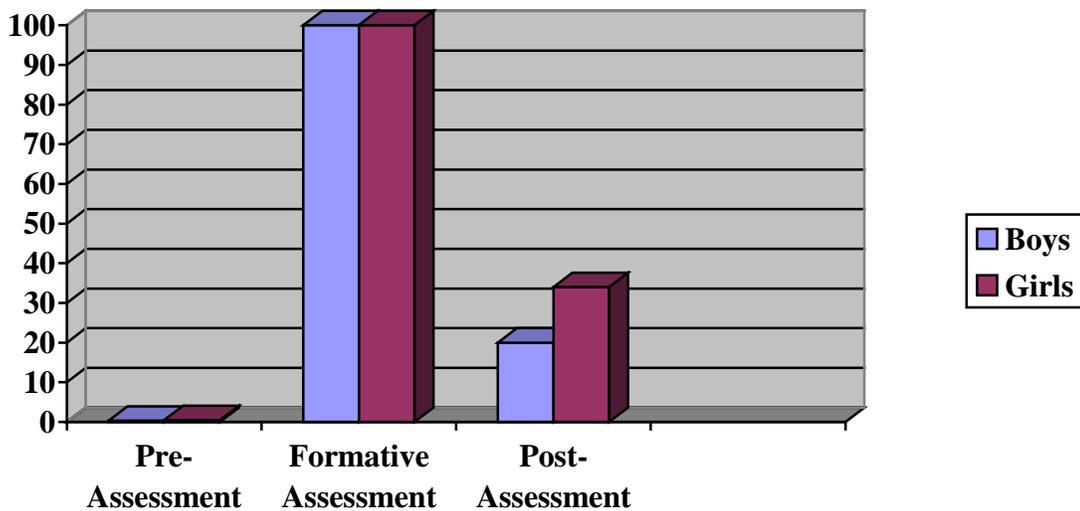
From this chart, I can see that on the pre-assessment, only eight students were able to interpret with some degree of accuracy the meaning behind Hamlet's line on the "Shakespearean Language Exercise." I wanted to know what the students knew about interpreting lines of dialogue to interpret a character's mood and motivation. The eight students who were in the

vicinity of the correct answer had some interpreting skills, but I knew that I would do much work to help them succeed in interpreting character mood and motivation. While I had written that I would not grade the character webs, I put “check” because the students attempted webs that they could use as their notes for their character sketches, which would serve as their post-assessments. I was disheartened when I did not receive all the students’ sketches; the students’ names with an “I” next to them were absent on the day it was due. The others were in class that day and should receive a 0 for not handing it in on time. The students who completed the post-assessment wrote accurate portraits of their characters (either Lady Macbeth or Macbeth). I spent much of the class time discussing the characters with the students. I constantly asked questions about why characters said or did certain things and asked the students how they thought the characters were feeling during particular times in the play. Our discussions reflect in the success of the sketches.

What this chart shows me is that I need to enforce deadlines. I have been lenient in the past, and from the start I should have given students a 0 if they did not hand in assignments on time. By now, they may have gotten the message that I do not accept late work.

### Subgroups:

As with the other objective, I have chosen to examine how the boys performed on all three assessments compared to the girls’ performance on the assessments. Perhaps these data will show that the stereotype is untrue.



### Analysis:

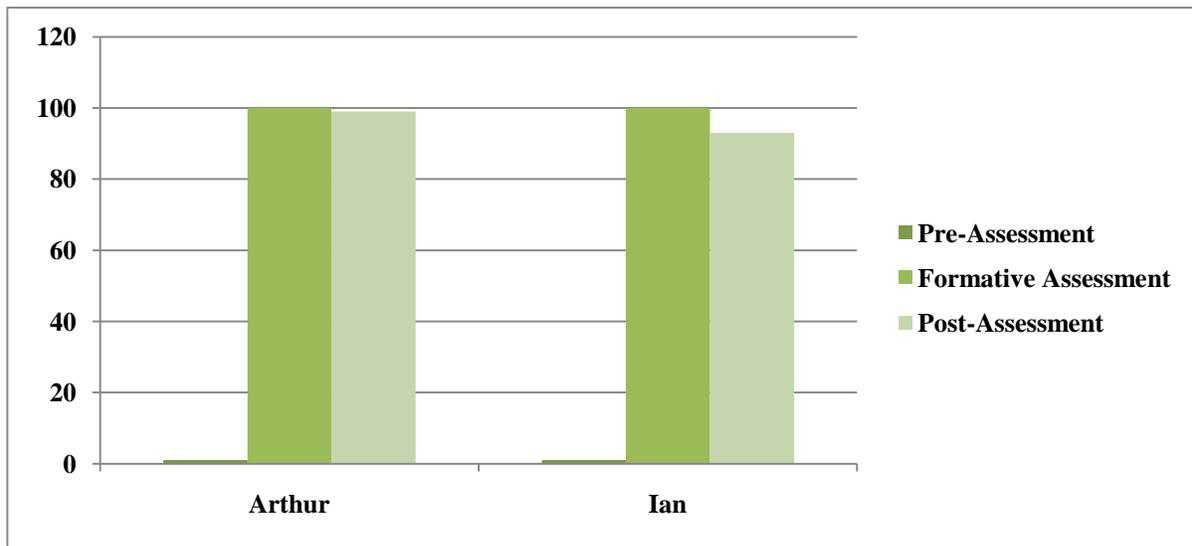
This time, the girls out-performed the boys on both the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. Even though there were only six students who handed in their post-assessments on time, the girls still scored higher than the boys did on the post-assessment. Once again, though, I cannot draw any accurate conclusions about gender-based performance in English. I firmly

believe that assessment should be based on an individual basis because everyone has different levels of ability. It was upsetting to me that only a small number of students completed their post-assessments on time, but as I said above, I should have enforced my deadlines.

**Individuals:**

I have chosen to examine Arthur and Ian because they are always willing to contribute their ideas and opinions to class discussions. If discussions fall flat or no one says anything, they offer their comments, which are usually insightful and based on evidence from the text. Their essays are exemplary of what I expected from the post-assessment.

Student	Pre-Assessment	Formative Assessment	Post-Assessment
Arthur	1	100	99
Ian	1	100	93



**Analysis:**

I was pleased with these two students’ performance throughout the semester. They had excellent ideas and were always willing to share with the class. Their ideas and participation in class reflected well in their essays. From the pre-assessment, on which they gave accurate answers to the question about Hamlet’s meaning behind his line, to the formative assessment, on which they gave good effort to create character webs that showed how Lady Macbeth and Macbeth changed throughout the play, to the post-assessment, on which Arthur wrote an eloquent essay and Ian’s ideas were well-represented with less polished writing skills, both students showed how the objective of analyzing a character’s mood and motivation can be achieved with great success.

While planning for classes, it is difficult to gauge what will be appropriate supplemental material and learning activities, especially when the teacher does not yet know the students well or when the teacher is trying to find the correct grounding. When I planned for the English 3 class, I did not know the students as well as I do now and overestimated their capabilities. The formative assessment that I designed did not measure what I wanted students to know, and I did not think out certain learning activities very well. After administering the formative assessment and coming across a challenging part of the play while reading it in class, I discovered that I needed to revise my plans in order to engage the students more and to assess exactly what I wanted the students to know.

The first example of when I had to rethink my plans was when I administered a quiz about William Shakespeare, the Globe Theatre, and the historical source for *Macbeth* as a formative assessment. Before I gave out the quiz, I had the students take notes that I projected on to the Smart Board as an introduction to the play. The students, while they did take notes, were not as motivated as I wanted them to be. They appeared to be bored and continuously talked in class, despite my attempts to quiet them. I realized after I gave the notes that I had not allowed them the opportunity to apply the notes they had taken to the material in class, since at that point we had not yet begun to read *Macbeth*. About a week and a half after the students took notes, I gave them a twenty-question formative quiz (nine questions were multiple choice, and eleven were short answers) that was supposed to assess what they had learned from the notes. However, when I graded the quizzes, the results were disappointing; most of the grades were failing. Immediately, I realized that my assessment had failed to measure what I wanted it to measure, and in turn I failed to properly assess the material.

A couple of days after I graded the quizzes, I shared my feelings about the assessment

with the students. The quiz did not properly measure the material that I absolutely wanted them to know. I was upset with myself for not making a better assessment, especially since I figured out after my first observation what material from the notes I wanted my students to know and be able to apply later on while reading *Macbeth*. I told the students that I was not going to count the grades, since the assessment was not properly designed and failed to assess the proper material. Instead, I took this as a learning experience of what I had to work on in order to help the students academically progress.

To revise my plans, I decided that while we were reading, I would reference the notes that the students took in order for them to recall information and be able to apply the material to the text at the same time (Bloom's Taxonomy levels of Knowledge, Comprehension, and Application). In doing so, the students would be able to understand not only what the different aspects of William Shakespeare's life, the Globe Theatre, and historical events are, but also how these aspects influence the play, *Macbeth*. Ever since I implemented this revision, the students have been able to respond to the play in the historical contexts that I had set up in the introduction to the class. While discussing the Three Witches, one student responded that the witches were like the Fates from Greek mythology because "Shakespeare used Greek and Roman myths in his plays." I was ecstatic that the student was able to successfully apply his notes to the play. Other students in the class have made similar references, more so to the historical source of *Macbeth* in order to make predictions of what will happen to the characters.

The second example of when I had to rethink my plans was when I realized that students were not as motivated as I thought to read *Macbeth* aloud in class. Students, like Ryan and Alex, were not following along, and they were talking to each other instead of focusing on the text. I know there are students in the class who are interested in art and are good artists, especially

Arthur, so I thought someday I may give the students a creative project to work on. One day, more than half the class was absent for unknown reasons. My plan that day was to continue reading *Macbeth* aloud in class and discuss important aspects, particularly character. However, too many students would miss the opportunity to ask questions about what they were reading, as Shakespearean language is difficult to decipher upon first reading. I did not know so many students were going to be absent, but I should have made preparations in case there were a significant number of absences.

To revise my plans, I had to think on my feet. I wanted to do an assignment that pertained to *Macbeth* and was meaningful. I did not want students to just sit and do busy work that would not benefit their understanding of the play. Moreover, I did not want to give students tasks that they would not be interested in because the day would have been wasted, which is terrible. I know that when I was in school, it was always a pleasure to have a day when I could be creative and not feel pressured to constantly churn out graded work. In order to appeal to the fun side of assignments and allow the students to be creative, I had them draw and color a book cover or movie poster for *Macbeth*. The other instructions I gave were that the cover or poster had to accurately portray the play and incorporate themes the students have encountered, any characters they feel are important, or anything else they feel would give audiences a good idea of what the play is about. The students' eyes lit up because they would be able to draw and color at their leisure. I had left out the paper and coloring supplies on my desk so that the students could take what they needed when they were ready.

I walked around the room to make the students were staying on task, even though it was a fun and creative task. At one point, I even attempted to make my own book cover, but I could not draw the characters correctly without specific people for models. As I walked around the

room, I saw some excellent drawings. Many students incorporated the theme of violence into their pictures because violence had been what they encountered the most in the play thus far. They were fascinated by the lawlessness and bloodlust that Macbeth displayed, and their extreme interest reflected in their drawings. The results were impressive, and I am glad that I chose to have the students draw a representation of the play because the assignment caused the students to think deeply about the events, themes, and characters of the play. They demonstrated to me that they had been paying attention to what was happening in the play and were able to represent their understanding in a creative form. My revisions for the day helped students to work toward one of the unit objectives: students will be able to interpret and analyze lines of dialogue in the contexts of theme, meaning, and metaphor in *Macbeth*. In order for the students to understand what was happening in the play and in turn be able to produce drawings that demonstrated their comprehension, they would have had to been able to interpret the lines of dialogue. Without comprehension of the basic meaning, the students would not have been able to create drawings that represented the themes and character motivation that emerged from reading the lines of dialogue aloud. In addition, the drawings helped the students to visualize what was happening in the play. I could see that the students in the class who are more artistically and visually inclined (like Arthur and Tensho) were pleased to be creating artwork rather than writing samples. Although I could not have drawing all the time in class, it was a nice change of pace from constantly reading and discussing.

## “Full of Sound and Fury, Signifying Nothing”

I haven't been sleeping well, I have monster headaches, my legs shake sometimes, and I have butterflies in my stomach nearly every day. I wish they were the ticklish butterflies, but all they do is make me rumble ever so slightly. Since I was little, I always loved school. My love of school manifested itself in my play: my classroom was a giant green blanket fort anchored by books, and my students were my stuffed animals with lifeless black eyes (but I knew better – I knew there were confidants inside those orbs of plastic). There was rarely a day when I felt nervous about going to school; in fact, I looked forward to it because I liked my teachers, I liked being with my friends, and I enjoyed most of the subject matter. I knew how to be a good student and work hard to get good grades and scholarships. However, this semester has not been a happy one for me as a student.

Since I was fourteen, I've wanted to be a teacher. I tutored other students in different kinds of math for three years in high school, and I absolutely loved it. I felt really good knowing that I was helping students to learn something or to figure something out, no matter how small. The same followed in college: I feel that I've made an impact on students' writing and that I've made a difference in their days even. With teaching, I don't think I've made much of a difference. This feeling stems from being too idealistic – thinking students would be willing to have discussions and that I could get them to love reading and writing – and from a couple of incidents that opened my eyes and made me realize that teaching is drastically different from my days as a stuffed animal teacher and from being a tutor.

The first incident occurred at the beginning of my student teaching experience. It was a lesson in being cautious and conscientious about assessments. At the start of taking over my first class, I gave the students in English 3 an overwhelming amount of notes. My brain is still wired

for college classes, so I thought that notes for background would be the way to go. I hadn't considered what I remembered about being a junior in English class and maybe that starting with a devastating course load would be suicide (for the teacher) and murder (for the students) at the same time. As it turned out, the students ended up with pages of meaningless notes on which I would soon give a quiz. I, of course, did not think the notes were too much or that the quiz would be too difficult to do well on. How wrong I was.

When I was correcting the quizzes, I felt horrible, dismayed, and discouraged. All but two were failing grades. Immediately, I thought, *It's me. I failed them. I'm a terrible teacher!* I talked about the quiz with Dr. Cook and my cooperating teacher, and they both said that the assessment tool failed since it didn't measure what it should have measured. However, I'm the one who made the assessment tool, so I was certainly the one who failed to do what I was supposed to do. Since most everyone received a failing grade, I decided not to count the quiz. In front of the entire class, I admitted that it was my fault that the quiz did not measure what I wanted it to. It was a big step for a person as timid as I am to tell a room full of sixteen-year-olds that I had made a huge mistake. It was also upsetting to me because I wanted everything to go perfectly in this experience, but everything in fact has been far from perfect.

This incident allowed me to do two things. First, I understood at that point that most of the notes I gave the students were irrelevant to understanding *Macbeth* and therefore would be useless to continue to test the students on. I figured out what I wanted the students to know, so I have been referring to their notes periodically throughout the play, particularly when I thought it was crucial to understanding where Shakespeare drew from for his inspiration. Often, when I ask the students questions about the historical source for *Macbeth*, they know the precise information. It always brightened my day to hear that they had learned something about the

history of *Macbeth* and how it pertains to the play.

Second, this incident also made me realize that I am way beyond my comfort zone. I am used to doing schoolwork – or any type of work – right the first time, so it was devastating to me to fail at something I thought I would do well with. And to admit to others that I had messed up badly was something I reserved for an audience of one, usually a teacher for whom I wrote a subpar paper or failed a Calculus quiz. I hate so much to disappoint people; it hurts me that I let them down, not intentionally, but it's still painful all the same. Letting down students, whose education I am responsible for, is probably the worst thing I could do. I failed them; I failed to make a fair assessment of their comprehension and recollection. Consequently, I have made sure that my assessments measure exactly what I want my students to know, and the results have helped me to stay on track.

The second incident occurred recently in my student teaching, and it was another big step for me. All my life, I've been a quiet and reserved person. Moreover, I have always felt like a late bloomer, and I'm slow to get to know people. I can't be comfortable with anyone unless I know them better and have spent a prolonged period of time with them. Quite a few years ago, someone said I was "mysterious" and "hard to figure out." I am now just realizing this after nine years of pondering it and fighting against it. Maybe I've always been hard to read – I was the independent kid with my brow furrowed as I colored pictures or later when I graduated to spending a lot of time reading. Furrowed brow to me was a look of concentration – to outsiders, it was anger or aloofness. I have been made aware of this, so now I try to abandon my "reading face" – a source of puzzlement and years of misjudgment – for a "public face."

I don't think my cooperating teacher understands that this is the way I am. We don't speak much, and she knows "talking is not my thing." But I don't want to constantly walk on

eggshells around her – I’ve already done that elsewhere, and it’s not fun. I also don’t want her to judge me as someone who is aloof and above advice. I feel so deeply when others around me are in a bad mood or are unhappy. This is especially true in such a close-knit environment as a (typical) school and when a cooperating teacher and a student teacher are working together. I picked a day when I thought she was receptive to talk with me (sometimes I feel she is closed up, too) and I explained who I am as a person. She already knew I was quiet, and when I said I’ve come out of my shell quite a bit, she questioned it (“*This is coming out your shell?*”). If she had known me in past years, she would have understood what a huge deal it is for me to be able to stand in front of people, speak with them, and teach them something important. I also told her that I am a slow learner, particularly in something as frightening and high-stakes as student teaching. She admitted that she is not one to come forward and offer words of advice; what I took from that was she was trying to compel me to speak up and talk about my anxieties and difficulties. I told her that I have to learn to do that because as I mentioned earlier, I like to be independent and find my own way. I felt that she appreciated my situation more because I admitted that I am slow to learn what works well and what doesn’t work well in the classroom.

That day, I went home smiling because I felt like a huge weight had been lifted off my shoulders and out of my stomach. We had cleared the air! We had communicated, and I expressed who I am to her. I always want to make who I am clear to people; the trouble is, who I am is quiet and shy. Just today, a student asked how I can be a teacher if I’m quiet. It’s just the way I am, and I’ve been working on breaking free of that persona when I am teaching. I never wanted to end up purposefully “mysterious”; who would understand me otherwise? It’s a real problem when a shy person has to have a public persona – maybe I’m just not cut out for it. Anyway, it was another big step for me to approach someone for help.

However, I feel that I still have a long way to go. I know there has been much tension between my cooperating teacher and me, brought on by lack of communication and my timidity. Being timid is not really an excuse, for I should be comfortable talking to my colleagues about my lesson ideas, but I still am afraid to speak up about my feelings and ideas. I have been unhappy throughout the whole student teaching experience because of this breakdown in communication and the resulting tension and frustration. I wish I were braver and stronger in this area. The most important lesson I have learned from student teaching is that I need to communicate more effectively with colleagues and peers.

I do have three moments at school that made me feel proud to be a teacher. The first happened last Thursday with my Period 6 senior class (these students are also in a literacy class). Dr. Cook had encouraged me to do activities with vocabulary, so I scoured the internet for some ideas on vocabulary activities, found some interesting ones, and made them my own. The first activity we did was a vocabulary word search, which turned out to be difficult for some of the students. The words from *Go Ask Alice* were challenging, but I wanted the students to be able to recognize the words as groundwork for other activities I had planned. After the word search, we played vocabulary Jeopardy, and all the students participated fully and they were all enthusiastic. They did well with matching the words with their definitions. The last activity we did I thought would be the most challenging, and it was. We played charades with the vocabulary words, and the students laughed so much because they were having fun and they felt that awkwardness that usually accompanies charades. The next day, the students expressed how much fun they had in class, and it was a proud moment for me because I had not experienced fun with my students at the same time. It was the best class we ever had.

The next moment that was proud for me was in my Period 1 senior class. As a

summative assessment, I had the students create newspaper articles based on *Oedipus the King*. I had not delved into exactly what I wanted the articles to look like, but I did give the students parts of the newspaper to give them ideas about how they should present their articles. They took off with their own creative ideas, and many of them turned out excellent work. I was most impressed with two of the students who used Microsoft Publisher to create professional-looking articles and even included human interest stories along with their main articles. They were beautiful pieces, and I was proud of them for their wonderful work.

The last proud moment for me was just yesterday in my Period 5 junior class. One student handed in his character sketch for *Macbeth* a day early, so I read his essay and graded it according to my rubric. His essay was eloquently written and his characterization of Macbeth was superb; he supported his ideas with examples from the play and provided his own analysis of Macbeth's behavior. It was an excellent essay and beyond what I expected for an eleventh grader. He put so much effort into his writing, and I told him so on his rubric. It made me proud to be his teacher.

The strongest emotion I feel these days is anxiety. I'm anxious about school ending because I love taking classes and talking about literature, movies, art, and even philosophy. It's going to feel weird to me not being in school anymore, after being in classrooms for 17 years! I won't know what to do with myself! I'm definitely going to find a job, maybe subbing, but I haven't decided, since I may move out of state (my boyfriend wants to visit other states and scout out a new place to live). I'm all for moving – I was born in the same town that I've lived in for 22 years – and I'm looking forward to seeing what other opportunities await me out of Rhode Island.

I'll miss school, but it will be exciting to explore the world of "being a grown-up" and

getting paid to do what I love. I guess I'm just uncertain of what will happen next, and I've never been unsure about what I want to do. I want to teach in an environment that feels comfortable and warm. I want to really help students see the beauty of words, like Macbeth's passionate speech "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." This semester has certainly been the most challenging in all of college, even more than when I was writing my thesis and taking three or four classes in addition to it. I want to be a good teacher, and I want the students to love reading and writing. Loving reading and writing may be a high ideal, but I would like students to feel what I feel inside (which is hard for me to show on the outside).

I love everyone in our seminar group. I'm going to miss my talks with Amanda because I feel such relief and peace when I can speak with her about my fears, anxieties, and triumphs. I have grown close with her, and I don't know what I would have done without her. We have had such a close group; where else could I find such awesome women to hang out with? I'm just going to miss everyone.