

Instructional Decision Making

Being a teacher, an authority figure responsible for the education of many students, I must make many decisions; the decisions we make as educators affect the lives of our students, our colleagues, our administrators, and ourselves. A good decision benefits everyone, though it may go unnoticed; but a bad decision has the ability to change the dynamic of a classroom with catastrophic consequences.

Lesson plans are not foolproof, and they depend greatly on student cooperation and reaction. There are times when a seemingly perfect lesson plan can go all wrong due to students' reactions and moods. These are the times when we as educators need to make important decisions. We need to, sometimes quickly, modify a lesson to accommodate students' needs and learning styles. This may involve us adapting a particular lesson, or one to follow in the current unit.

This first occurred during my unit on Marxism and *Animal Farm*. As we were discussing socioeconomic status, my students started to make comments such as, "You're white- you're middle class." This comment struck me harshly, not only because I found it to be offensive, but also because I did not want my students, who are mainly comprised of ethnic minorities, to fall into the common misconstrued ideology believing that white people are equated with middle or upper class. The statement caught me off-guard; but it was not the only shocking statement I encountered during that particular discussion. Another student told me, quite matter-of-factly, that all the poor people in Providence are African Americans. After asking this student where she learned this statistic, I was responded to by what seemed like hundreds of voices, mostly shouting that it was true, and that all African

Americans live on the south side of Providence, rather than the more affluently regarded east side.

I did my best to mediate the situation, without forcing any of my beliefs on my students; I knew right away that this was a sensitive topic for my class, and I needed more time to make a decision as to what to do. I had planned for us to move on to analyzing *Animal Farm* and beginning to apply Marxist theories to it; however, after much thought about that day's class, I decided we needed to do more work regarding socioeconomic status and race. I knew that I needed to be very careful approaching this topic with my students; I did not want them to think I was telling them they were wrong, or offending their beliefs, some of which may have come from their parents, making them even more confident and attached to those beliefs. I made a quick decision to have the class write exit tickets stating what they believe to be "middle class."

Their exit tickets mainly said that middle class is when you are not rich, but you are very comfortable, can afford nice things, and do not have to struggle to pay bills; some of them said that white people are mainly middle class. After looking at their exit tickets, I decided that I would bring in different video clips depicting race and socioeconomic status differently, but particularly showing ones that portrayed Caucasian people as lower class. I also brought in statistics for the city of Providence, showing them that it was not only the African Americans who were impoverished, and there were many who were not. I had students sit in a circle and we discussed the difference between socioeconomic status and race. My students began to see that one's socioeconomic status is not inextricably correlated to one's

race. We talked about how there are very affluent African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians living in our city; some students brought up examples of people they know. We talked about families depicted in different television shows, such as *My Name is Earl*, in which everyone is white, yet very poor. By watching the videos and partaking in our discussion, they began to realize that the two were not dependent on each other. This allowed us to start over with the discussion on socioeconomic status in relation to Marxism.

I feel that this was pivotal in accomplishing my learning goals and objectives. In order for students to understand Marxist theory and apply it to *Animal Farm*, it was essential that they understand socioeconomic status and equality. It was an added bonus that they were so easily able to relate the ideals and concepts to their own lives and society. The students who had once shouted their strong beliefs that all African Americans were oppressed and poor, began to see that many people of all races are poor, and that for Marxists, these people are one and the same, and they all deserve equality. After spending two class periods on this, students were ready to apply these theories to the chapters of *Animal Farm* as we were reading it.

Aside from noticing the need for revisions in my plan based on a group of students' needs, I have also made the decision to change the plan for an individual student based on his needs. Jimmy, one of my students, has an extremely bad home-life. Throughout the semester he and I have discussed some of the issues he experiences. I cannot help but feel badly for him, and desire to do something to alleviate his problems. When I assigned the paper relating a Marxist ideal to *Animal Farm*, I told my students that it would be due on a particular day, and that I

absolutely would not under any circumstances accept any late papers; I did this because when I had previously assigned a paper, I had many students handing it in late, or emailing it to me late, and begging for extensions and such. It was too much for me to handle, and I felt they were slightly taking advantage of my generosity. I justified it to my students in saying that they had one week to write a two-page paper, the content of which we had thoroughly discussed in class, making it easy for them to write.

Jimmy came to me during homeroom the morning the paper was due and explained to me that his father had come home inebriated the night before and was acting wildly toward his mother and him. He told me that he had the paper almost entirely written, and just needed to edit it, but that he had to leave his home the night before, and did not have the paper with him. Although I had informed my students there would be no exceptions to the deadline, I awarded Jimmy the permission to Email me his paper by the following day. He was extremely grateful, and did get me the paper by the following day like I asked. He also received an A- on it, which was one of the higher grades in the class.

By allowing Jimmy to have the extension on his paper, I allowed him to meet my second unit objective, and get the credit he did deserve for doing so. I feel that sometimes during life situations occur that are out of our control, and we should not always be faulted for those situations. In this case, I believe that Jimmy could not control the situation he was presented with, and did not need to be punished with a zero in my gradebook for it. He proved that I made that right decision by not letting me down or going back on his word to have the paper in on the following day.

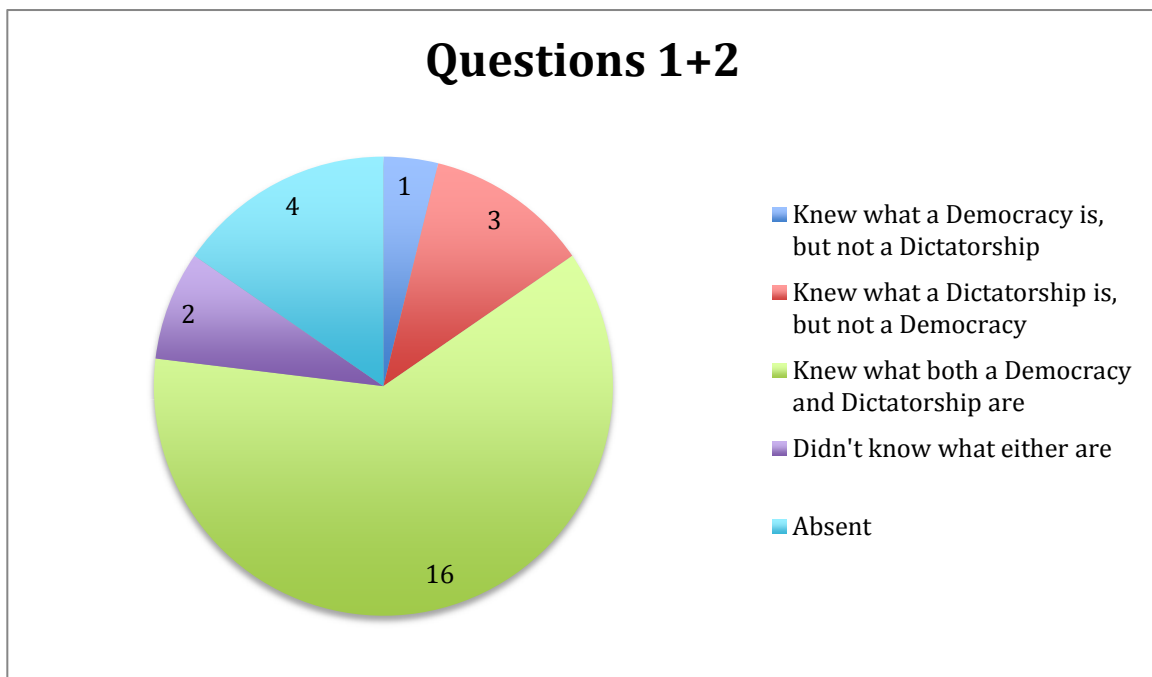
I have learned that the act of decision-making plays an extremely pivotal role in teaching. We cannot always count on sticking to our original plans, regardless of how wonderful they seem to us. It is common to change things around to accommodate students' needs and requests. We, as educators, need to think of our students first, sometimes to the detriment of our convenience, plans, and schedules.

Analysis of Student Learning

Objective 1: Students will be able to analyze *Animal Farm*, and compare the events to those in their own society.

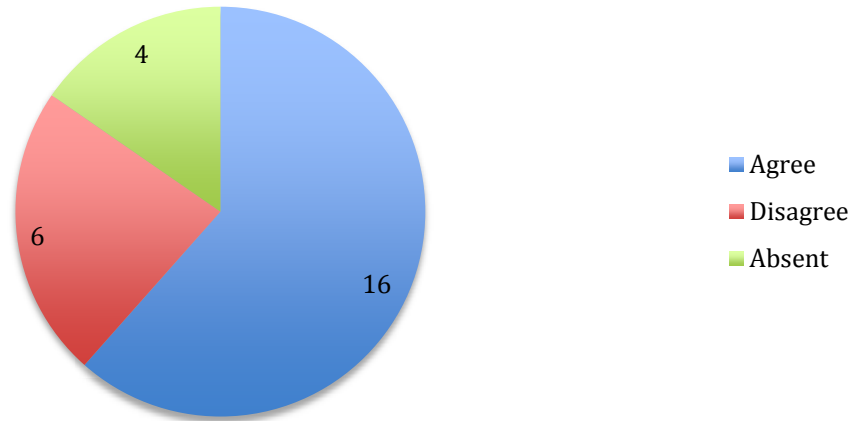
Objective 2: Students will be able to utilize Marxist theory and develop a reading of *Animal Farm* using the Marxist lens.

Pre-Assessment Data and analysis for UO 1+2 for Whole Class



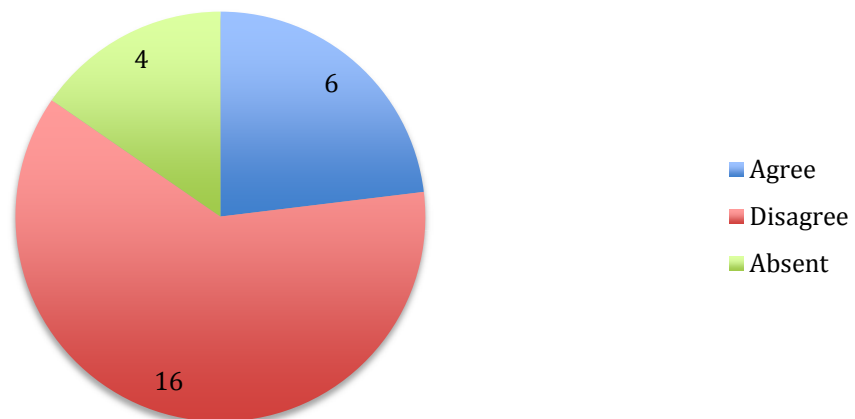
It is interesting that five out of the twenty-one students present that day did not know what a democracy is, yet live in a democratic nation. This tells me that we will have to go over this before starting our unit because in order to meet my first objective, students will need to know what our government is like before they can compare *Animal Farm* to it.

Question 3: In an ideal society, everyone is equal

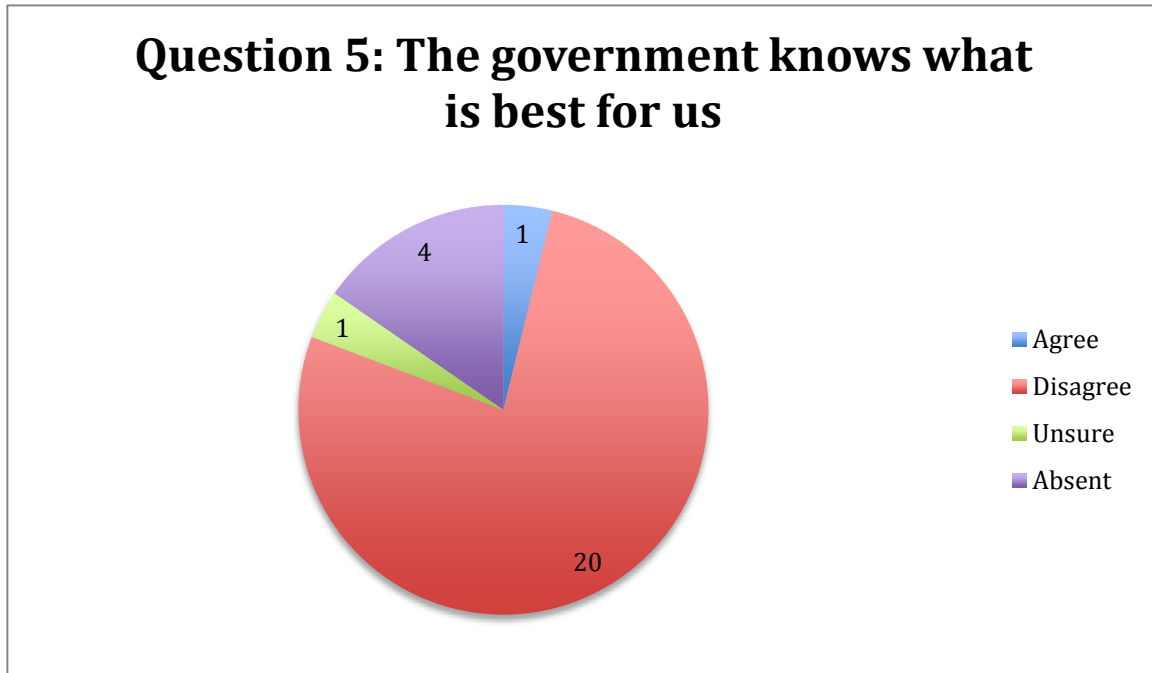


The majority of the class agreed with this statement, which makes it easy to begin discussing Marxism, as it deals mainly with the equality of people. This will be helpful in meeting my second unit objective.

Question 4: It is better to be ignorant and happy than to be aware and upset

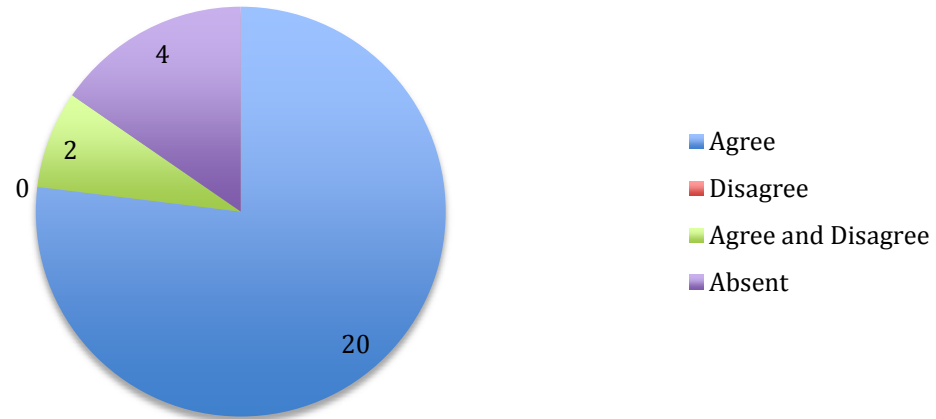


Surprisingly, most people agreed with this statement. It should prove to be interesting as we begin to talk about the idea of revolt and revolution in Marxist theory, which aligns with my second unit objective.



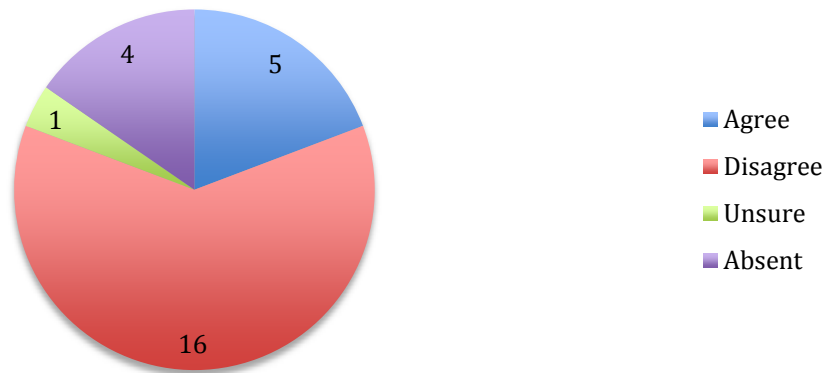
I was not incredibly surprised by the results to this question. I think this will allow for some heated debates when we begin talking about government, both in our society and in *Animal Farm*. This aligns with both of my unit objectives.

Question 6: Rules exist to help us live our lives properly



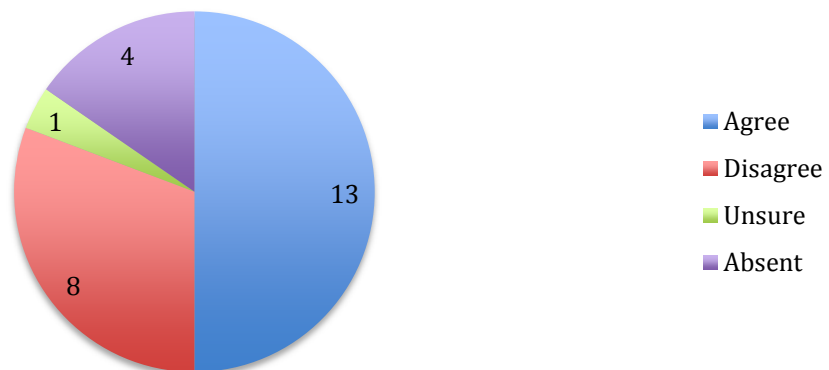
It is interesting that despite the fact that the majority of the students dislike or distrust our government, they still believe rules are necessary. This may be interpreted to mean that they just distrust *our* government; this will be interesting to discuss in relation to Marxism and *Animal Farm*. This aligns with both of my unit objectives.

Question 7: The police should be allowed to do whatever they can to protect the community



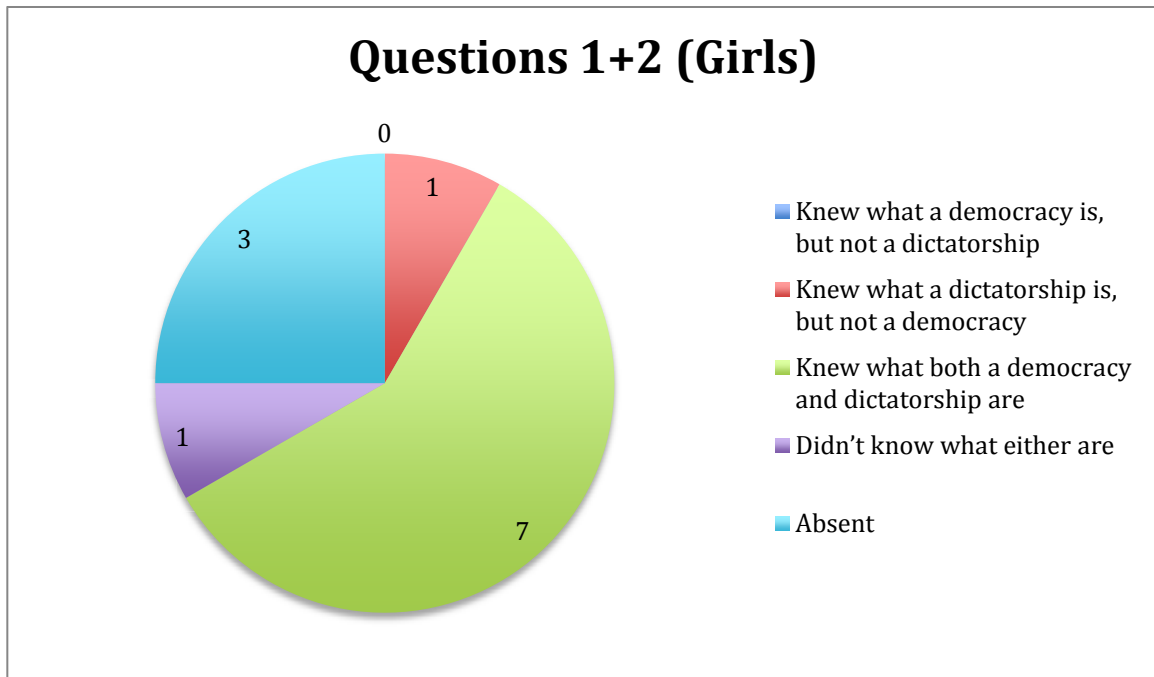
Again, while my students believe in rules, they do not seem to believe in the misuse of power. This is a perfect transition into the concepts in *Animal Farm*, which aligns with my first unit objective.

Question 8: It is okay to upset some people as long as you're doing what is best for society

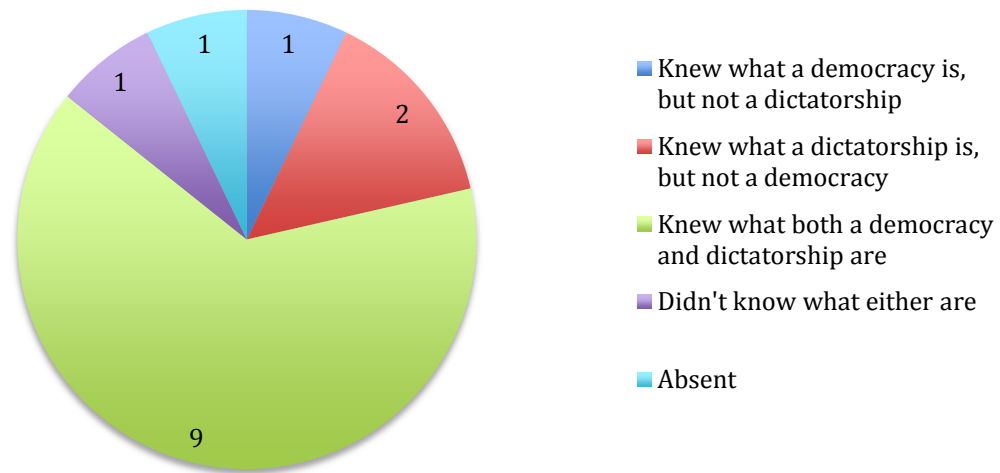


This statement also fits very well with *Animal Farm*, and see as half of the class agrees with it, it should provoke some heated debates during the book; or, others who disagreed may change their minds after reading the book. This aligns with my first unit objective.

Pre-Assessment Data for UO 1+2 for Subgroups

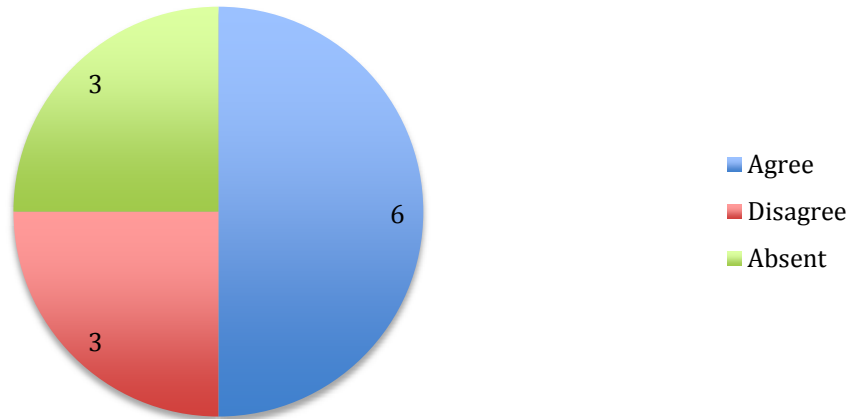


Questions 1+2 (Boys)

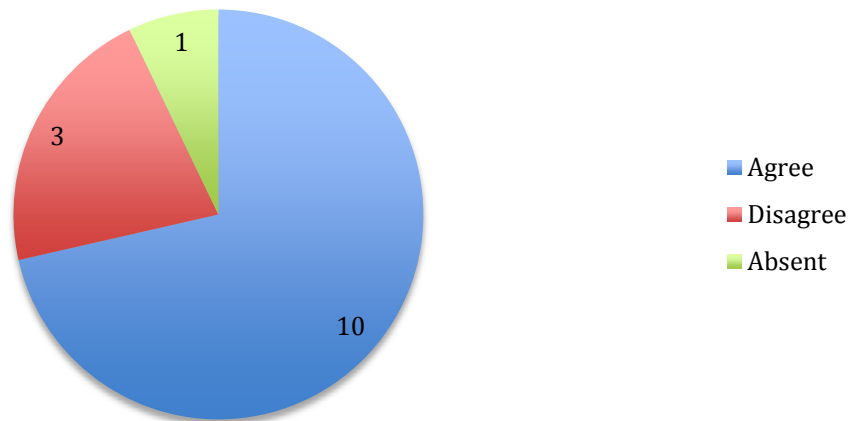


Although the majority of the class knew what both a democracy and dictatorship are, the girls seem slightly more knowledgeable than the boys. One two girls did not know what a democracy is, whereas four boys did not know. The girls may have the advantage in terms of meeting my first unit objective.

Question 3: In an ideal society, everyone is equal (Girls)



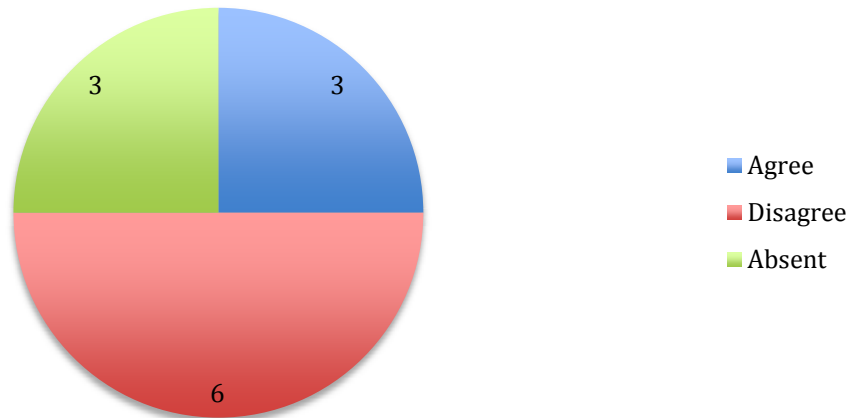
Question 3: In an ideal society, everyone is equal (Boys)



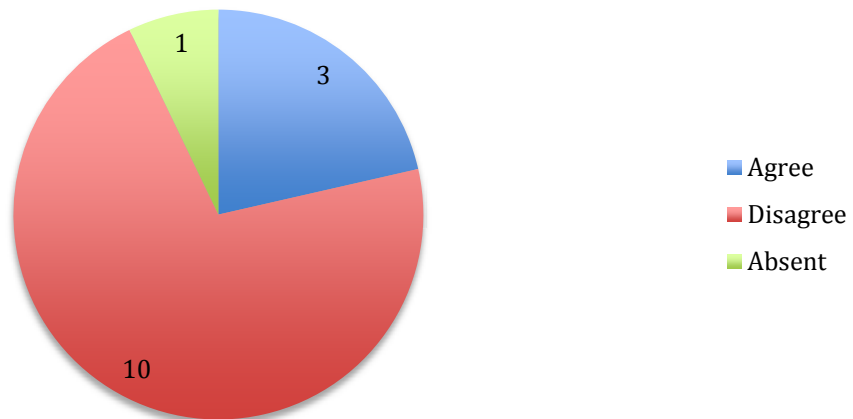
For both boys and girls, only three people disagreed with this statement. There were more girls absent than boys, making the number of boys present outweigh the girls by four, making it appear as though the number of boys who agreed with this statement is almost twice as many as the number of girls. Both boys and girls

mainly agreed with this though, which is interesting. From this we could say that neither sex feels superior to the other. They both have equal chances in meeting my unit objectives.

Question 4: It is better to be ignorant and happy than to be aware and upset (Girls)

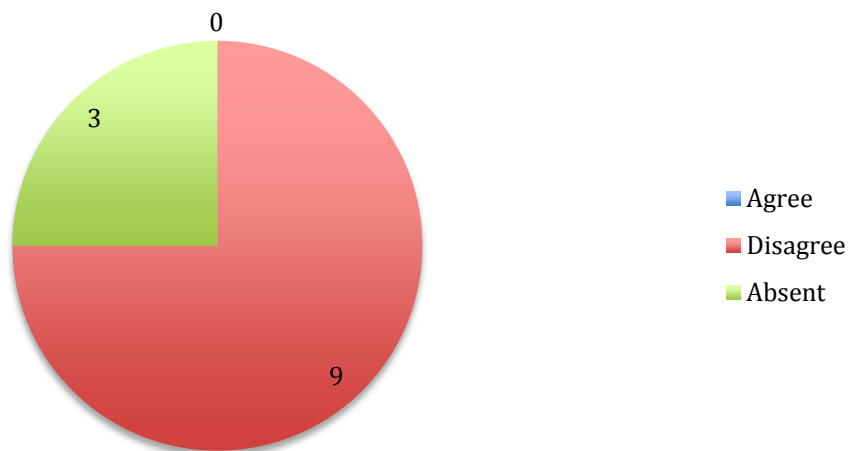


Question 4: It is better to be ignorant and happy than to be aware and upset (Boys)

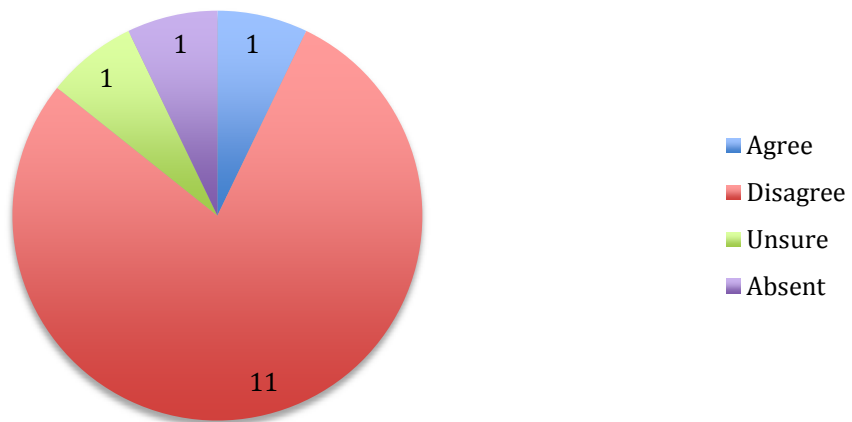


The data for this question is precisely the opposite of that of the previous statement. From this, we can ascertain that both the boys and girls want to be aware. They should both be able to meet my unit objectives.

Question 5: The government knows what is best for us (Girls)

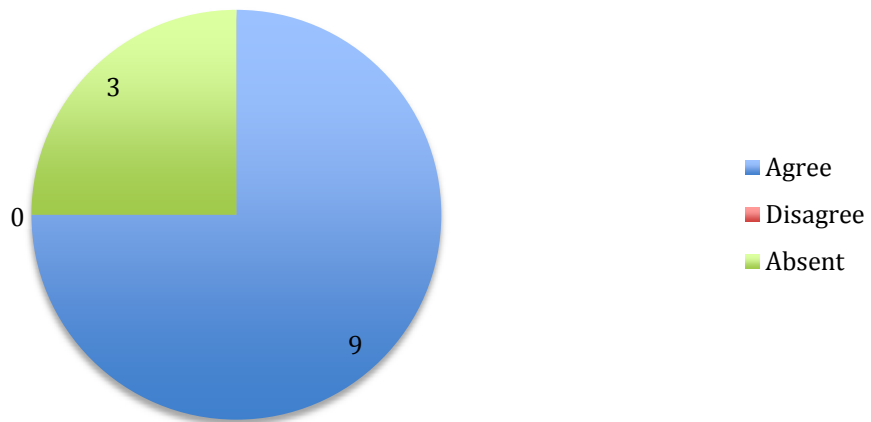


Question 5: The government knows what is best for us (Boys)

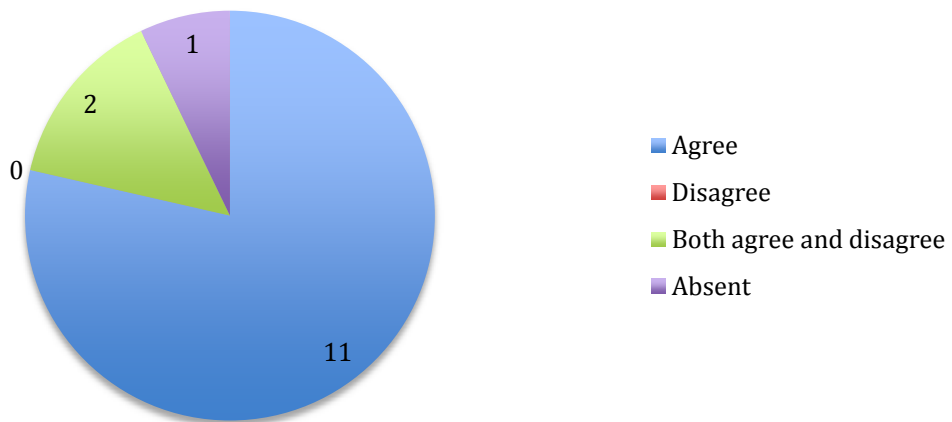


Every single present girl disagreed with this statement. This may mean that the girls feel more disadvantaged or jaded toward their government, though only two boys said they agreed or were unsure. The girls may be more interested in my second unit objective than the boys.

Question 6: Rules exist to help us live our lives properly (Girls)

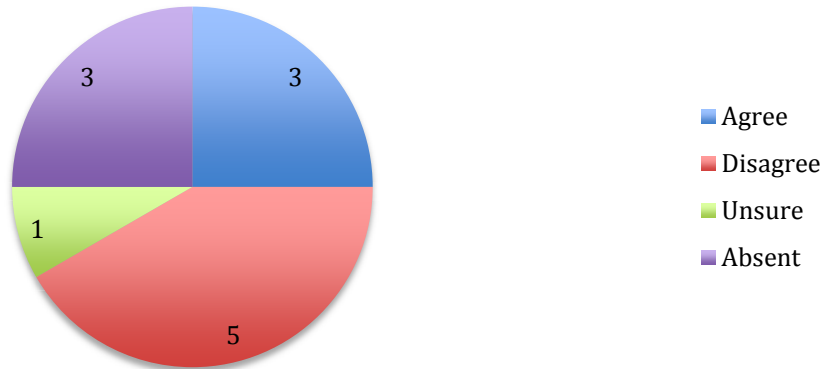


Question 6: Rules exist to help us live our lives properly (Boys)

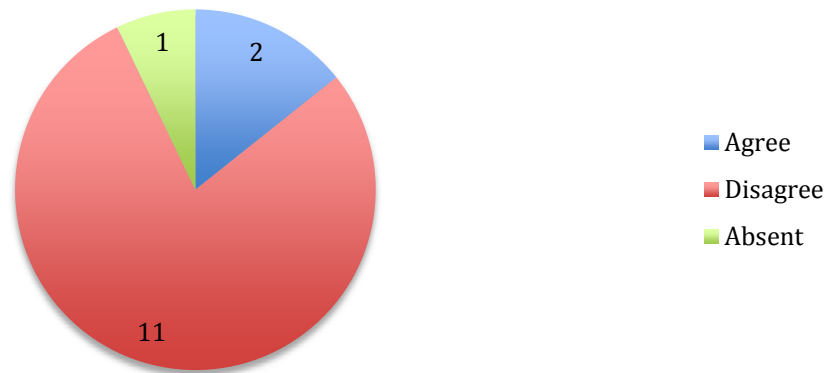


None of the girls disagreed with this statement at all, whereas two boys both agreed and disagreed. This may indicate that girls are more prone to order than the boys. This will be interesting as we talk about order in relation to *Animal Farm*. The girls may be more sympathetic to those in power. This may impede or assist them in meeting my unit objectives, depending on how our discussions go.

Question 7: The police should be allowed to do whatever they can to protect the community (Girls)



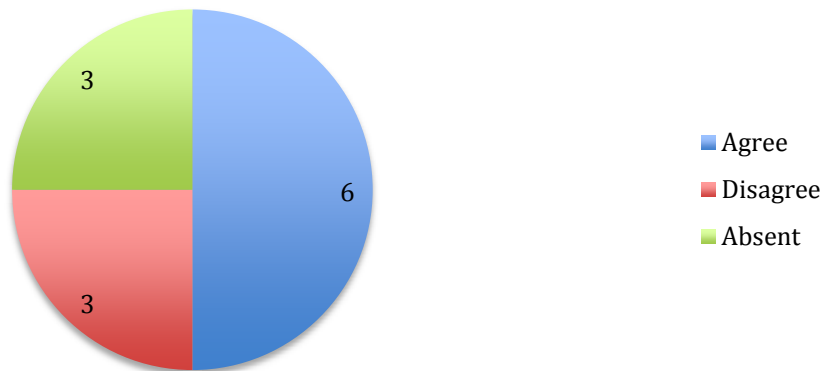
Question 7: The police should be allowed to do whatever they can to protect the community (Boys)



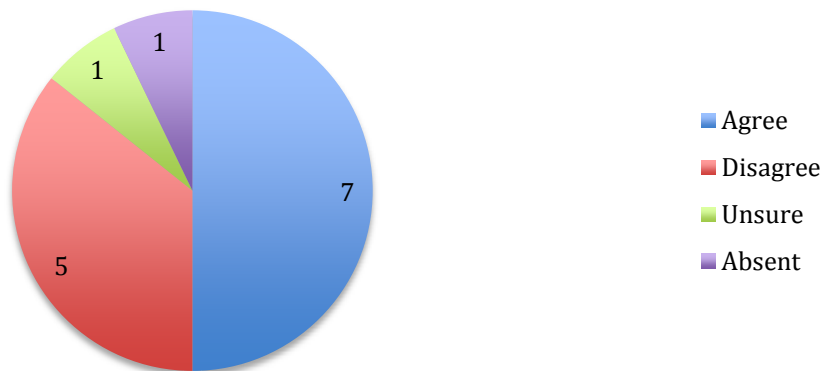
Almost half of the girls agreed with this statement, exemplifying that they may feel more comfortable with people in power than the boys. When discussing the use of power in *Animal Farm*, it will be interesting to see if the girls defend their beliefs on power, or if they will remain silent and submit to the boys' position on the topic.

This aligns with both of my unit objectives.

Question 8: It is okay to upset some people as long as you're doing what is best for society (Girls)



Question 8: It is okay to upset some people as long as you're doing what is best for society (Boys)



The boys nearly had a split decision for this statement, whereas the only one third of the girls present disagreed. By having such a close opposition, particularly for the boys, we should have some heated debates when discussing Marxist theory, and the relation of power, which aligns to my second unit objective.

Pre-Assessment Data for UO 1+2 for Two Students (Jose and Bethany)

Jose basically knew what both a democracy and a dictatorship are. He disagreed with the third, fourth, fifth, seventh, and eighth statements, providing a statistic to back up his answer for the fifth question. He agreed only with the sixth. He wrote out justifications for each response. He seems to believe strongly in the rights of the people, and awareness, putting less faith in the government and the power of a single group. From this data, one can assume that Jose is interested in politics and his nation, and that he is prepared to read *Animal Farm*, as well as to discuss Marxist theory, and that he should enjoy doing both; this also suggests that he will be able to meet my unit objectives.

Bethany also knew what both a democracy and a dictatorship are. Unlike Jose, Bethany agreed with statements three, six, and seven. She justified her answers as well; but her answers appear to be less “political” or jaded than Jose’s. By interpreting her pre-assessment data, I believe that Bethany will see a new side of thinking as we learn about Marxism and discuss *Animal Farm*; she should be able to meet my unit objectives, though she may not be as interested in them as Jose.

Formative Assessment for UO 1+2 for the Whole Class

The formative assessments I used for the first unit objective were class discussion, group work, and informal questioning. As we read *Animal Farm*, we discussed the events that took place in the book, and then compared and contrasted them with events and situations in our own society. As we did this, my students were able to

draw similarities between the dogs and our police; the pigs and our government; the sheep and those in our society who do not object, but follow everything they are told without question; and the lies the pigs tell with those our government has possibly told. My students were able to successfully draw these comparisons and provide insightful commentaries on the events in the book. During group work, my students were able work together, and learn from each other, bouncing ideas and elaborating on what their classmates offered in order to meet this objective.

Formative Assessment for UO 1+2 for the Subgroups

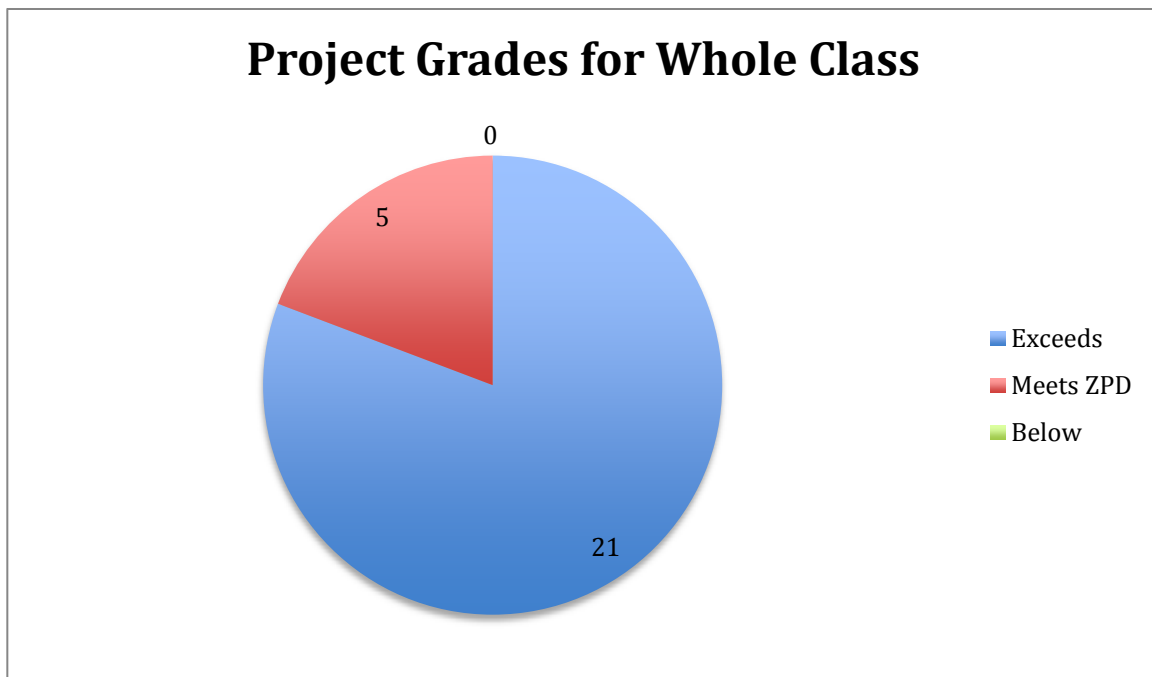
This topic interested and excited both the boys and girls in my class. During class discussion, there were fewer girls to speak out, but I feel this has more to do with the guys being the more aggressive students in the class. There were, however, a few girls (three or four) who voiced their opinions quite often, and made insightful contributions to the discussions. The girls were able to, however, showcase their abilities during groupwork. As I walked around the room when they were discussing worksheets comparing *Animal Farm* to our society, the girls spoke as much as the guys, and always offered valuable insight and contributions to the group's discussion.

Formative Assessment for UO 1+2 for Two Students

Jose, when in class, contributed moderately to class discussion; his contributions were insightful and thought-provoking. He did not work as well during group work because he often talked about off topic things, distracting other students.

Quite the opposite of Jose, Bethany barely spoke during class discussions. In fact, I don't believe she ever spoke. She is a very quite and shy girl, which is what I attribute her silence to. She did, however, participate generously during group work. She seemed to be an asset to her group.

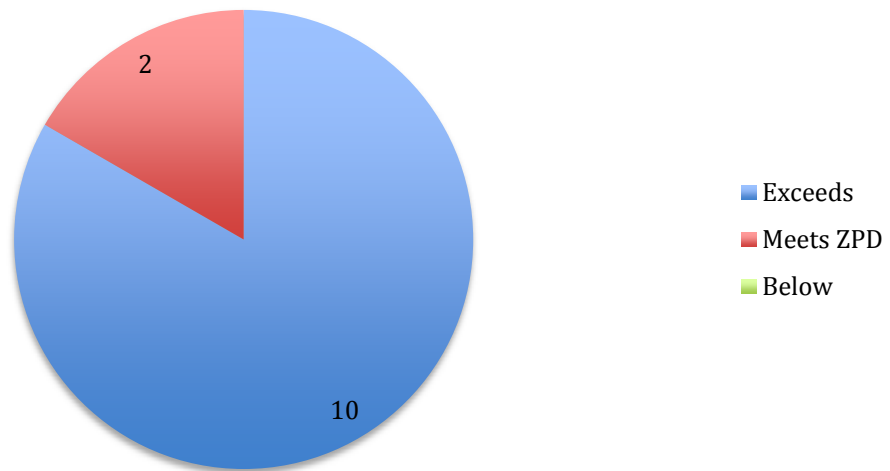
Summative Assessment Data for UO 1 the Whole Class



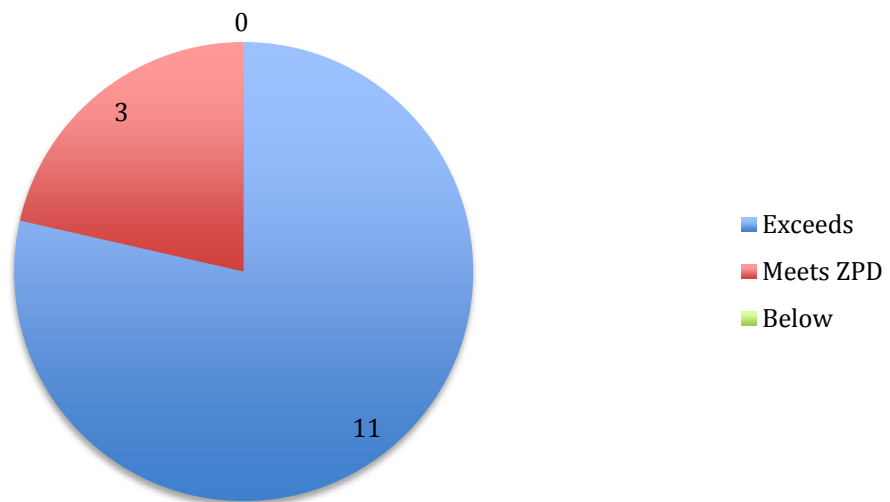
The summative assessment for the first objective was for the students to work in groups to create a new high school without adults. They had to work together, following very strict rules and parameters in creating the high school. Nearly the entire class exceeded my standards for them on this assignment. There was only one group that only met their zone of proximal development.

Summative Assessment Data for UO 1 for the Subgroups

Project Grades (Girls)



Project Grades (Boys)

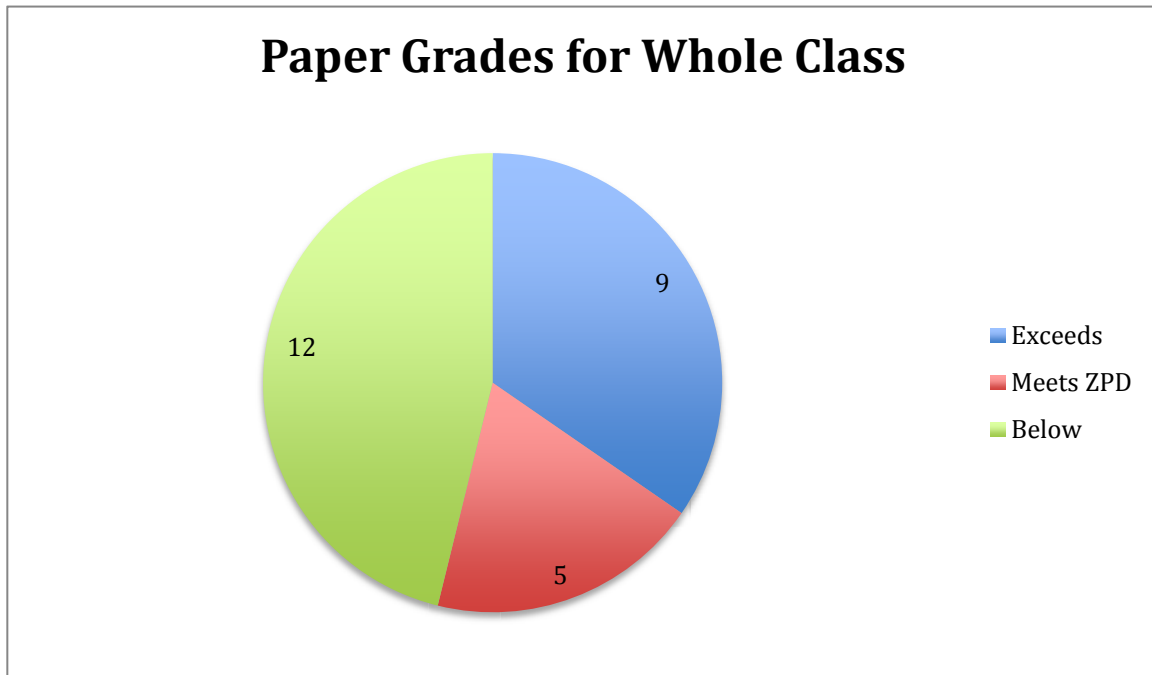


There is no distinguishing variance between the boys and girls in terms of their summative assessment data. The groups for the project were heterogeneously comprised of both boys and girls, making it so that no one group's success is based on his composition of either boys or girls.

Summative Assessment Data for UO 1 for Two Students

Jose's group exceeded my expectations on their group project, whereas Bethany's group only met their zone of proximal development. I do not think either student solely contributed to their group's grade. I also do not think I can make a definitive distinction between the individual students' abilities to meet this first objective other than the fact that they both did meet the objective.

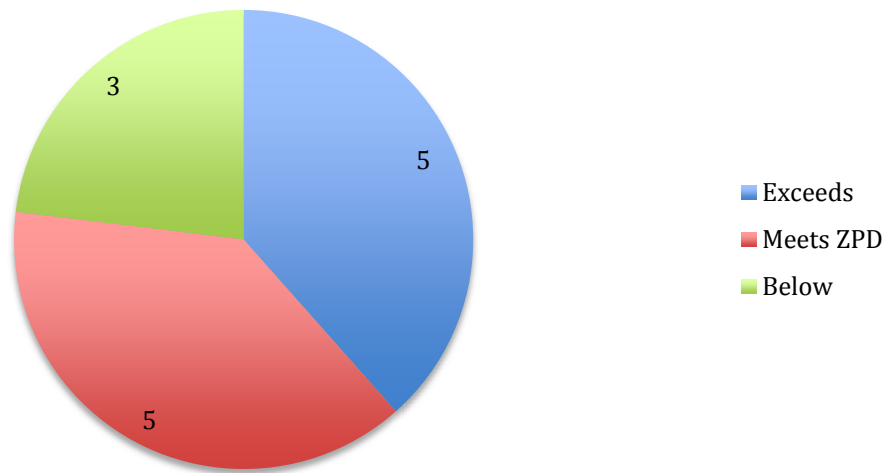
Summative Assessment Data for UO 2 the Whole Class



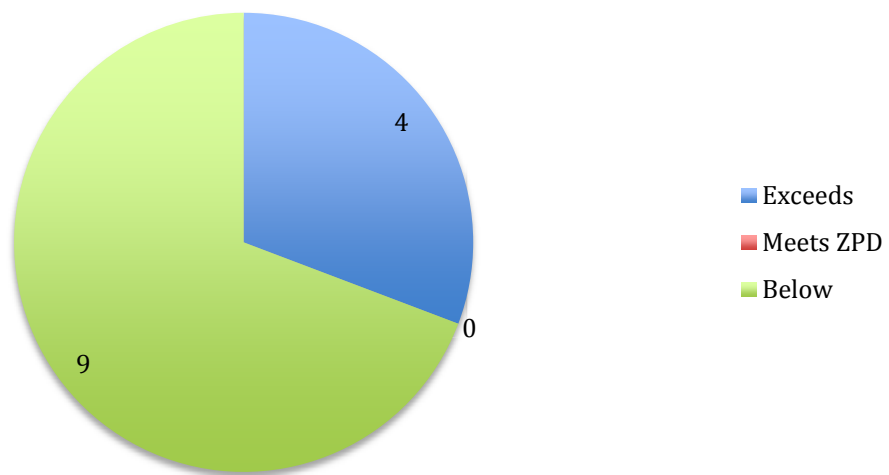
The summative assessment for the second unit objective was a paper relating one Marxist ideal to *Animal Farm*. The data illustrates that nearly half the class performed below their zone of proximal development. The least amount of people fell within their zone of proximal development, and a decent number of students exceeded it. Just over half the class was able to meet this second unit objective.

Summative Assessment Data for UO 2 for the Subgroups

Post-Assessment (Girls)



Post-Assessment (Boys)



The subgroup summative assessment data shows incredible disparity between the genders in my class. Nearly all the girls either met their zone of proximal development or exceeded it; more than two-thirds of the boys fell below their zone of proximal development. The interesting thing is that none of the boys only met

their zone of proximal development; four boys exceeded it—the results for the boys were on the opposite ends of the spectrum.

Summative Assessment Data for UO 2 for Two Students

Jose received a 68, which corresponds to a D+, on his paper. It lacked supporting evidences, quotes, and detail. Its structure and grammar did not reach the level of the anticipated zone of proximal development. Jose did not demonstrate, with this assignment, his meeting of the second objective.

Bethany received a 95, which corresponds to an A, on her paper. She provided a well-developed thesis, and fully supported it with evidence and quotes from the book. Its mechanics were perfectly executed to make it a wonderful paper. She fully exemplified the fact that she met my second objective.

Analysis of UO 1

All of my students were able to fully meet my first unit objective. I think they were able to do so, and with such ease, because their summative assessment project allowed them to incorporate the creativity they all possess. There were also very strict parameters that the groups had to follow, making it easy to succeed if they touched upon each of these parameters. Working in groups also allowed them the benefit of discussing their ideas and formulating them together in order to make them flow into a well thought-out, coherent, project. I allowed my students three days of class time to work on this project; I strongly feel that this also contributed to their success. By permitting them the class time and monitoring their work, I ensured they would have ample time to complete the project. This project differed

from the norm of writing papers in English class, which I also think contributed to their success; it allowed them to have fun with the concepts, and truly think about them in relation to their own lives, as opposed to a more theoretical approach that is often more distant to high school students' lives and concerns.

Analysis of UO 2

During the course of this unit, my students appeared to be meeting this unit objective through the display of their class discussions and group work. Their summative assessment, however, demonstrated a lack of meeting the objective fully. I believe that it is the fault of this summative assessment that my students failed to meet the objective entirely. This can be attributed to the fact that the assessment was in the form of a written paper. Not only was this paper a take-home assignment, which I did not monitor, but it also depended on the usage of more theoretical and technical concepts and application. There were many students who did not complete and turn in this assignment because it was a take-home assignment; perhaps they did not have the time to complete it. The mechanics of writing may have also been a cause for the results; if students are not proficient in the process of writing and constructing an essay, they are unable to fully meet the standards of the assignment. I found this to be one of the causes of their failure to meet the standards. I think that more work on this assignment in class would have greatly benefited my students. If I had given them the time to work on it in class, and had monitored their progress, or had worked with them more on their writing skills, they may have had more of a chance for success on their summative assessment, permitting them to more fully meet this second objective.

I think that the girls had an easier time meeting this objective, in terms of their success in their summative assessment, because they were more proficient in their writing and analytical skills than the boys. Also, the majority of the girls handed in this assignment, whereas many of the boys did not. The girls were seemingly more interested, or they cared more about their grades, which inspired them to turn in the assignment.

Both Jose and Bethany handed in the summative assessment. Jose scored significantly lower than Bethany, though as aforementioned, I believe this to be attributed to Bethany's better understanding and ability to produce a written paper in accordance with the accepted standards.

Self-Evaluation

After analyzing my two unit objectives, I think improvement in student learning could be made through re-evaluating my instruction and assessments for the second unit objective. For both objectives, the formative assessments show that the students were on the right track to meeting the objectives; however, the second objective was not met. I attribute this to both my instruction prior to and the summative assessment I chose for my students. I believe that if I had worked more with my students on their writing and analytical skills prior to the assessment, my students would have performed better. They needed more work in these areas in order to produce quality essays that meet their zone of proximal development. I also think that assigning the paper in the fashion that I did was detrimental to their

progress. They performed so well on the project for the first unit objective; I feel that if they had more room for creativity and group work in the second objective assessment, they could have flourished. By simply having them write a paper, I do not think they learned as much as they did by creating the school project. Papers, particularly for my students who are not as proficient in their writing and analytical skills, can be very daunting. I think this impeded their desire to complete the assignment. Working on the paper in class would have at least allowed me to assist them and ensure they were completing the assignment. The second objective was sound, and I think important, but perhaps a formal paper was not the best way to assess them in their understanding of it. Perhaps if I had them format the paper more creatively, though still requiring the same concepts to be analyzed and evaluated, my students would have been more inclined and found it easier to complete. I think that the work we had done prior to this summative assessment for the second objective would have come to fruition if I had done this.

Candidate Reflection on Student Teaching Experience

As the ending of my student teaching experience draws near, I need not take the time to reflect on my experience, as I have been reflecting on it each day since the twenty-fifth of January. Instead, I am putting onto paper a few of the most significant incidents and how they affected my overall experience. It is difficult to choose only a few to write about because I feel that every moment of each day was significant and affected my experience. Some moments, however, were pivotal learning experiences, and have shown me the different aspects involved in being an educator.

There are twenty-six students in my period four class; out of them, there is one who did not take to me. She decided early in the semester that she did not like me, and that she would take it upon herself to be disruptive and combative during class. I initially spoke with some other teachers about the issue; they were familiar with my student, Alisha, and counseled me on how to handle the problem. As I was told to do, I waited in the hallway the next day before period four in order to catch Alisha before she came into the room. I then asked her if there was something I was doing to upset her, and how we could fix the problem. Without making eye contact, she denied having a problem, and asked to go into the classroom. I told her that it was fine to go back inside, but wanted to make sure she was alright, and if she ever had a problem that she could talk to me about it.

As time went on, Alisha became more disruptive and combative during class. As I continued to discuss this issue with my cooperating teacher, I became informed about the fact that Alisha's mother is a very powerful woman in my district's school

department. I was told that I would not be allowed to speak with her mother, but that someone else would speak with her. In less than a few weeks, the situation escalated to a foreign level. Alisha's mother, the Vice-Principles, Principle, and Guidance Counselor became involved.

This situation was the cause for great anxiety in me. At first, it was difficult to manage such behavior in the classroom. With twenty-five other students to worry about and teach, I could not keep stopping class on account of Alisha; I became more and more upset about her disruptions, and did not know what to do about it. I felt that my other students' learning was being prohibited to an extent because of Alisha. As the situation escalated, my anxieties grew; although I knew that I had done nothing to provoke or upset Alisha, I was very worried when her powerful mother became so persistently involved. I began spending my prep periods down in the guidance office discussing Alisha; I was writing down every incident, and each step I took in correcting the problems. I felt badly that so many other people were forced into becoming involved.

Through involving those other people, however, I learned many things. I saw first-hand the political infrastructure of the school system. I previously had no idea that certain actions could be prevented by those higher up in the system. As the situation had progressed, Alisha was allowed to do whatever she pleased, and I was not to interfere. I had to remain silent at times when I felt strongly about the subject. I realized that there are restrictions on teachers, which involve the stability of their jobs that have absolutely nothing to do with educating students. There are rules and protocols we must follow in order to play by the rules and keep everybody

happy. As I learned these things, I became frustrated that sometimes politics play a bigger role in education than the educating of the students. Although frustrated, I knew I had to remain calm in regards to the situation at all times, and handle the situation with professionalism and care. I learned that I was capable of putting my own feelings aside for the greater good of my students. Despite what I was feeling during class, I knew I had to maintain composure to ensure the student learning and order in my classroom.

Order is a difficult thing to preserve at times, particularly when your students outnumber you by more than twenty-five. My period six class is a Senior AP English class with twenty-eight students in it. I was incredibly nervous taking on this class because it is an AP class and my first time teaching—the two seemed detrimental to each other. After beginning the class, my fears did not dissipate. The majority of the class seemed unwilling to participate, and only a few students spoke, saving me from standing there talking to a room of blank faces. From there, I believe it was a slippery slope. My efforts to reach the rest of the class turned to discouragements, and one may have assumed that I favored those who spoke over those who did not. The reality of the situation was that I was grasping at whatever would make the class run smoothly; in this case that was allowing those few students willing to speak to do so whenever they wished, ultimately intimidating or dissuading them from participating.

After reflecting on the class many times, and speaking with a few students, I realized that the situation has progressed badly; I knew I had to do something to try to rectify it. After contemplating it all weekend, and sending an Email to my

cooperating teacher explaining the dilemma and my intentions, I decided I would address the class, stating the problem and my hopes of resolution. On Monday, despite my being incredibly nervous, I did just that. I told my period six class that I would like to speak with them about some things before we began class for the day. I told them what I had reflected on and determined to be problematic in the classroom, and I explained to them my hopes for rectifying and changing the dynamic of our classroom. I asked my students if they had anything they wanted to contribute in order to help; after class, a few students spoke with me, offering their insight, and other students Emailed me offering their praise at my courage and maturity in recognizing the problem and attempting to fix it.

Addressing that class was perhaps the most nerve-wrecking thing I had to do during student teaching. I felt a plethora of emotions ranging from embarrassment to anxiety to feelings of disappointment in myself. Despite the difficulty, doing this was the wisest thing I could have done in this situation. It allowed my students to see me from a new light, realizing that not only am I human and make mistakes, but that I was able to recognize and admit them. They were also pleased because I wanted to change the dynamics of our classroom, and make it a more pleasant atmosphere for everyone: It quickly became just that. The majority of the class began participating and our classes changed from a few into many students who were deeply engaged and involved in discussions. The attitude and atmosphere of the classroom improved significantly, and everyone seemed much happier. I think that my decision to address the class initiated the changes needed to allow all of this

progress to ensue; it therefore affected my student teaching experience in a very positive way.

I learned so many things from this situation—things that not only pertain to education, but to life in general. Admitting one's own mistakes can be the most difficult thing to do, particularly if you must admit them not only to oneself, but also to many others of whom you are an authority figure. I learned that one must constantly reflect and think about their actions and the consequences of his actions in order to grow and maintain a healthy environment. Once we have reflected on our actions, we must make decisions and take steps in order to correct and better situations. I have learned that it is pivotal to admit one's mistakes and to correct them, allowing for the input of one's students. By allowing my students the opportunity to contribute to the changes they are obviously needing, they appreciate you and the effort you are making much more.

The act of learning does not only take place between teachers and students in the classroom; as educators, we must continually education ourselves in order to grow and cultivate our crafts. The two situations I have described that affected my student teaching so greatly are ones that I do not foresee workshops for professional development being of use for. I do think that I can develop myself professionally by talking to other educators, particularly those more experienced than myself. By discussing situations like this, and others, and by listening to other educators' stories and advice, I can continue to grow professionally.

There is one workshop that I believe would be beneficial to my situations; stress is difficult to manage, and by going to a workshop that teaches us how to cope

with our stresses, we can improve our lessons as well as our management and behavior in the classroom. I plan to look into some stress management workshops in hopes that doing so will allow me to remain calm even in the most difficult and stressful situations. Teaching, I feel, will never and should never be easy; but knowing how to do it and to cope with the stresses and responsibilities that come with it will allow me to perform my duties successfully, which is my ultimate goal.