

Courtney thompson

Profession, Teacher



Courtney Thompson Professor Swart English 101 12 Jan 2012 Back in Time

With the smell of paint in the air, I enter every five year olds fantasy. Toys of all shapes and sizes scattered around the play area, the soft spoken words of story time given by a friendly face, stains from spilt glasses of grape juice that overrun the carpet, and endless numbers of shelves that envelope any remaining space on the walls. This could only be described as my daycare, Sunshine Oaks. While we all crowd around the teacher, mesmerized by the tale about pirates, the story comes to an end. We get settled down and lead into the nap area where we all know what is our fate. Many moans and retaliation come from everyone, but we unwillingly follow the request of our loving friend, Mrs. Kat. With the help of persuasion, she gets everyone to dose off into the unknown where our imagination is let loose and no longer bound by the power of reality or looked down upon because you didn't " have a dream that was good enough. " Mrs. Kat, our loving babysitter would do anything under the sun for her students. She would give encouragement to do better, kiss our scraped knee after an accident on the play ground, or even sing us to sleep if we were missing our parents. This was someone who I looked up to. If you think about it, teachers have as much of an impact on their students lives as the child's parents. On average every kid spends about 6 hours a day with different teachers who have most likely been raised with different morals. These adults are responsible for a third of the type of person your child is going to become. While growing up, my mentors focused on gliding through the school day with coffee in one hand and a misbehaved child on the other. They mostly pointed at something for us to do, tell us how to do it, check if we did it correctly, then move on. With writing assessments,

I would get my paper back with scattered red slashes and comments all over my paper, saturating my ideas. It would say “ This doesn’t make any sense, change it. ” or “ spelling mistake, look it up. ” Have you ever tried looking up a word you have no clue how to spell in a dictionary? Well it’s not easy. My peers assignments would be a completely different story. Most of their papers would have a mere 4 or 5 markings on it to go back and fix. From that day on, I convinced myself that I was the outcast. That none of my ideas could ever get through teacher radar and come out untouched without becoming a robotic patented version. I kept telling myself, if only I was a better speller, I would be deemed smart or if I could just try and sound more sophisticated... Well that’s what my teachers allowed me to think. My thoughts didn’t change as I went through English class after English class with the same outcome. My writing slowly decreased in spontaneity. There was less and less of myself in my writing because I was trying to write something that my teachers wanted to hear, not my opinion. Not one teacher pulled me aside to help me one on one with my spelling or grammar issues or the blandness of my pieces. Nothing was ever good enough it seemed. I cant help but think that the reason I have this problem was because the lack of personal communication from my teachers when I was learning the basics. My 7th grade year was suppose to be a fresh start: Different teachers, shorter classes, and more people to socialize with. It wasn’t till mid semester where everything fell into its original rut no thanks to Mr. Salaborn, my science teacher. It started out as a normal day in science class. Many kids began to file into the room as the final bell rang. He had a test for us to look-over Individually. I wasn’t feeling very confident

because some of the information was a bit hazy, but I wrote down the answers as best I could. Not feeling confident in my work, I handed over the dreaded work that felt like a hundred pound weight, as I realized this may not come back in my possession as an A paper. The next day, I entered the room and saw that my paper was being projected on the over head projector. With a confused look, I sat down in my seat (which is dead set in the center of the crowd) with no escape. The final bell rings and Mr. Salaborn enters the room. " Good morning class! I graded your tests as you can see and I just HAD to show you this. " To my dismay, I understood what was about to take place. With hardly any warning, he started to mock and point out information that sounded silly to him, or that I happened to misspell phrases. Words escaped his mouth that felt like a punch to the ribs every time he said, " Can you believe Courtney wrote this! "... " Oh it gets better check out this part" "...Seriously, who doesn't know how to spell that! " As the words echoed in my mind, I took into consideration that I, Courtney Thompson, was " dumb"? With the echoed laughs and whispers consuming the room, I sank down into my chair to try and keep myself from crying. " Not yet" I repeated to myself, Just wait till you get out of class, then you can cry. " This man was suppose to be me teacher, my mentor, a person that I could look up to and trust. Right? Instead, he was yet another one of my teachers that had me convinced that I was a nobody, someone that could never amount to anything. Afterward, my writing wasn't the only thing that was the problem anymore. My trust and confidence in myself got shattered. I lost hope for my future and it started to eat away at me. I felt like clay in my teachers hands, being molded into something they wanted me to be. I had it

seared into my head that my questions would never be thought of as important: “ why do I need to change this wording?... How come I cant write about this?... Why doesn’t this sentence make sense to you? ” I look back and understand now that the real turning point in my life was when I came to the conclusion that you have to speak out and do something about it or nothing will ever get done or answered. I had to accept myself for who I was and that I had more of a struggle with things than others. That was one thing my teachers failed to drill into my mind. That I was worth something and not just a grade or name on an attendance sheet. One teacher who lead me to this conclusion was my 7th and 8th grade choir instructor, Mrs. Kirstien. She was young, fresh out of college, and eager to teach us how to live and love music, just as she did. She taught everyone to be confident in what we had to offer one another. But things began to change as she became more comfortable in her surroundings. She started to make it known that she favored some students more than others. If you’ve ever wondered how it would feel to have a parent favor another child, this would be the closest comparison i could think of. Children would try and fight for the parents attention and that’s exactly what unhinged. She got consumed with idea of perfection. The “ teacher” aspect took over. She was no longer our friend who was helping us discover a found passion or a possible future. Instead, she transformed into a controlling adult who sucked the fun out of a talent we had discovered. My mind began to relapse once more on the fact, that a teacher that I’ve come to trust has once again, turned their back on me It wasn’t until my tenth grade year in pre-AP English where my teacher, Mrs. Coyer, was able to change my thinking, literally. She always told us that “

Just because you can't spell, doesn't determine how smart you are. " In that split second, my problems were solved. I will always remember this needed advice. She would explain that in the beginning of the year she would " hold our hand" through each assignment and slowly release us to take matters into our own hands, to learn how to work things out ourselves. She was able to change my outlook on people, how we are all unique and that everyone has their own path to success, but it's up to us to seize it. I no longer took pity on myself and blamed others, but I took it into my power to do my very best. I would let her rip my work apart no matter what because I knew her motto " everything is going to be ok. " I would welcome her comments on how to improve just as she was welcome to my questions on what she thought. I would take that information and apply it like gas to a flame, to feed my undying will to better myself. Mrs. Coyer believed in me which led me to be able to believe in myself as well. I no longer beat myself up for my lack of knowledge like before. I learned that it is up to me to learn and to grow from my past mistakes. Since she was a proper educator, mentor, parent, friend, and ally, I was finally able to take action and do something about it. I didn't have to hold back anymore. I was able to let my ideas fly onto the page. Many don't understand that teachers are like a second parent. They teach you how to learn, grow, and mature through whatever life throws at you. The situation won't always improve as the years go by like I once thought. You have to believe in yourself to take your future by the reins and control it. Don't have teachers fence it in or put the reins on it, but instead, let them help you tame it and open up your

imagination of all the possibilities it can hold. Just like my daycare teacher Mrs. Kat or Mrs. Coyer. Thompson