

Mrs. rose – the ninth grade task master!



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The teacher I most remember as a great teacher in my years of schooling would definitely be Mrs. Rose, my 9th grade English teacher. Mrs. Rose combined the qualities of motivation, skill and content mastery in a way that I still remember today. As a freshman in high school, I had not been exposed to any terribly difficult courses. Most of the junior high work I did was simply answering questions or writing reports which did not have to well-cite or even grammatically correct. I learned quickly that, because I was relatively smart to begin with, I could get away with a minimum of effort and studying.

Mrs. Rose changed all that. On the first day she mentioned the usual information - grading, pop quizzes, class materials and behavior expectations. I had heard all this before, so I half-listened, planting polite expression on my face while my mind wandered. Imagine my shock when we had a pop quiz of the first day's information the very next day! I did very poorly, to which I was not accustomed. Worse yet, now my teacher's first impression of me was that of a slacker. I had to wake up and work extra hard to pull up that first low quiz grade. Looking back, I am sure that was precisely her intention for all of us.

As the year progressed, we were all subjected to coursework the likes of which simply did not exist in junior high. We had to learn grammar, diagram sentences, write essay upon essay and read countless novels and plays without the luxury of Cliff's Notes. This era was pre-internet study aids! We tried to complain that we had no foundation for this to which Mrs. Rose replied, " If that is true, it is neither your fault nor mine. Unfortunately, we must correct it."

She could blend just the right amount of feeling for my battle with the semicolon with the rigor of the curriculum itself. She let my misuse go a couple of times, but on the third incident, I got an ' F' for punctuation in my essay. I was floored and asked her to let me revise it (again). She said " no." From that point on, I have never, to my knowledge, misused a semicolon; however, I find such examples frequently in magazines and newspapers now. Again, that particular strategy worked wonders for me and all the others in my class. Her encouragement wasn't overdone, but I could tell she really wanted me to learn.

At times, I would be seized by jealousy when my friends in other classes would laugh at how easy their English class was, how like 8th grade it was, and how they were getting easy ' A's. I had to work hard for my grades and resented their extra free time. Later, though, I understood the importance of my 9th grade English class and Mrs. Rose. I did not struggle nearly as much as my peers in upper level high school classes and in college courses where professors were even more demanding. I firmly believe that Mrs. Rose knew more about grammar and writing than any of them and was grateful that I had a chance to learn from her early on in my education rather than have to suffer later.

Mrs. Rose, who I believe has now passed away, was an exemplary teacher. Try as I might, I could never devise a sentence she could not diagram. She seemed to take pride in my educational victories, such as my high SAT verbal score and my college acceptance. As a result, I decided to become a teacher myself and attempt to emulate Mrs. Rose in all that I do in my classes. I, from experience now, know that Mrs. Rose did not receive any

monetary rewards for her commitment to teaching. In fact, our rewards as teachers are much more internal. However, I am confident that she knew her influence on me because I told her, as did many other students I knew. When a student tells me how much I have helped them, I know how she felt then.