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Title: Which Organ? The Heart or Brain?



I: Most Significant Experiences

Today is the end of my students' Culminating Performance Task (CPT) week, and I was tasked with evaluating the work of four STEM sections. This involved a review of each student's essay and answers to the guide questions, assessing their grasp of the concepts, and providing constructive feedback.

The process was time-consuming, but also very satisfying. I was genuinely impressed by the creativity and dedication shown by many students. For example, one student started his essay like this, "Do you think that the Earth is flat?". Others used psychological words like cognitive dissonance, confirmation bias, herd mentality, and more. Their essays also demonstrated a deep understanding of the subject matter and a remarkable ability to apply their knowledge in meaningful ways. However, the evaluation process also presented challenges. There were a few students who struggled to meet the specific criteria presented by our cooperating teacher (CT). While I witnessed firsthand their efforts and the challenges they faced during the CPT week, I struggled with the decision of whether to consider these factors in my evaluation. I knew that the CPT accounted for a significant portion of their final grade; it's 50 percent. I was torn between empathy and objectivity. Is it better to think with my mind or feel with my heart?

II: Obstacles Encountered

Should I prioritize logic and objectivity, or should I allow my emotions to guide my assessment? This question still persisted on my mind which I struggled to answer as I was looking at the student's work.

On one hand, I understand the importance of maintaining a fair evaluation. I want to ensure that each student is graded based on the quality of their work, not on personal biases or emotional attachments. However, I also believe that empathy and understanding are essential qualities for a teacher.

As I read through the essays, I found myself drawn to their stories and experiences that the students shared. Their words kindled emotions within me, and I couldn't help but feel a connection to their perspectives. I mean, I'm just a human after all. Yet, in this case, I admit that my emotional connection was influencing my assessment, leading me to give higher marks to most of the essays that resonated with me on a personal level. It was a decision driven by a desire to recognize and appreciate the unique perspectives and experiences that each student brought to the table.



III: Obstacles Hurdled

It took a while for me to reflect what would be the best thing to do next as I haven't finished evaluating the student's paper. I believe that the key to effective evaluation lies in finding a balance between logic and empathy. While it is important to maintain objectivity and adhere to established criteria by the CT, I believe it is also important to recognize efforts, uniqueness, and determination in education.

In assessing the student's work, I combined logic with empathy that ensured that my evaluations were both accurate and meaningful. I considered the factors affecting each student such as their background, experiences, and any challenges they may have faced. This helped me more understood their performance fully. Yet, knowing each student is a struggle on its own especially in my case as a student-teacher as I haven't had the opportunity to get to know the students personally over a long period of time. Therefore, my observations are only based on their behavior and interactions within the classroom. I've been paying attention to how they interact with their peers, teachers, and other school staff. This includes their participation in class discussions, their willingness to collaborate, and their overall attitude towards learning.

The approach I did allowed me to provide an assessment that is not only informative but also supportive.

IV: Impact on Your Chosen Field

I learned that in the field of teaching, a teacher cannot only take one side with regards to being subjectivity and objectivity. If the teacher is too focused on objectivity alone, the students may feel disconnected and unmotivated. The teacher may appear cold or indifferent. This can lead to decreased participation and lower academic performance. Also, without emotional connection, it can be difficult for a teacher to establish rapport with students. This can hinder their ability to provide effective support and guidance which is very crucial for the student's growth.

On the other hand, being overly emotional or subjective faces a lot of challenges. Subjectivity can lead to favoritism or preferential treatment of certain students, which can create inequality among the class. As a result, this can influence a teacher's grading and assessment practices, potentially leading to inconsistent or unfair evaluations.

There should be a balance between objectivity and empathy. However, we're all just human beings; sometimes one side of the scale tips a bit more than the other. Nevertheless, if our actions are driven by the best interests of our students and they truly deserve it, then I believe that it's justifiable. After all, "it takes a big heart to shape little minds" (unknown).

