English Composition 101 – Final Project – Presentation Text

Casual Interactions and Student Self-Image

Just about everyone has had a teacher in the past whose words have left an impression on them. Be it good or bad, intentional, or unintentional. At some point, a teacher has likely said something that stuck with you. In many cases, this will impact a student’s self-image somehow. These interpersonal moments with our educators are not built on lesson plans, nor part of the formal curriculum, and may not even be intentional by our teachers (Nyami, 2022). These interactions are part of the hidden curriculum, and they have a major impact on how we form our self-image

In this interactive presentation, you will assume the role of a teacher responding to various student questions. The quality of your answers will impact the time spent, and you have a limited class period to manage (represented by the clock in the top right corner). When you finish answering all of the questions you will see how each student feels about your response.

Self-Image

Self-image is how someone perceives themselves. This can include appearance, intelligence, personality, abilities, etc. A person’s self-image is integral to shaping their confidence, mental health, motivation, and decision-making. Our self-image is created by many factors, such as childhood experience, social interactions, media, and personal achievements. Much of our self-image is developed within the formative years of our lives. We typically spend most of our formative years in a school setting. It is not hard to draw a connection between our self-image and our experiences in school given this information. Students often take to heart many of the words educators use. It is immensely important to understand the ramifications of what is spread outside of the formal curriculum. (Nyami, 2022)

Systemic Constraints

The current educational system is not suited towards giving educators the resources to provide each student with individualized attention. Teachers more often than not have large class sizes, limited funding, and lack the time necessary to make sure every student is thriving and receiving the support they need.

Why I Made This

In my personal educational analysis essay, I detail many of the ways casual interactions with my teachers affected me and my self-image. While I had briefly touched on some of the reasons that make it difficult for an educator to evaluate a student's individual needs, this aspect had mostly gone overlooked. Now I wish to further explore the positionality of the teacher. With so many students to manage, teachers often have to operate with limited resources, especially time. This time constraint can make it difficult to engage with each student on a personal level and fully understand the details of their individual challenges. These limitations can lead to assumptions about a student's performance, abilities or character, which may overlook underlying issues that need attention.

I hope by creating this I am able to build a deeper understanding of both side of the issue. This will help me recognize the complexities teachers face in managing their classrooms, while at the same time understanding how critical it is for students to have their struggles acknowledged.

Ways I Would Expand This Project

I believe this project effectively accomplishes the goals I set out to achieve. I wanted to explore the struggles of managing limited resources as a teacher while trying to engage positively with students. It is impossible to give every student the most valuable response as there simply is not enough time to do so. Time is used as a simple way to convey the resources that educators must balance, but there are so many other limiting factors involved and I would like to explore those as well. The interactions in this project lack a certain amount of realism. In reality these interactions do not usually happen within a questions response format, rather they are typically a layered dialogue between teacher and student, or a teacher's response to a student's actions and behavior over time. These interactions are often more complex, influenced by context, tone, and non-verbal cues. Given more time to expand this project, I would like to incorporate more fluid and realistic examples of these interactions, have them be ongoing, more nuanced, and require more attention to properly respond. Additionally, more deeply exploring the power dynamics between students and teachers would add authenticity and depth to the presentation.

All Dialogue (Questions – Answers – Outcomes)

**1. Casual Interaction**  
 **Prompt:** What’s your favorite food?

* **I don’t have one.**  
   "Oh… okay. I guess that’s the end of that conversation."
* **Pizza is great! How about you?**  
   "Hey, they actually asked me back! That’s kinda nice."
* **I love food! Let’s talk about it more sometime!**  
   "That was fun! I like that they actually seem interested in what I think."
* **The teacher didn't get to me in time.**  
   "Oh… I guess they were too busy. Maybe my question wasn’t that interesting."

**2. Low Academic Concern**  
 **Prompt:** Do we have homework today?

* **Check the board.**  
   "Okay… guess I should’ve just looked. Kinda felt like they didn’t want to talk."
* **Yes, we have a worksheet. Need help?**  
   "Oh cool, at least they asked if I needed help. That makes me feel a bit better about it."
* **Let’s go over it together after class.**  
   "Wow, they actually care if I get it. That makes me feel less stressed."
* **The teacher was too busy to answer.**  
   "I guess I’ll have to figure it out myself. Hope I don’t get it wrong."

**3. Curiosity**  
 **Prompt:** Why do we need to learn history?

* **Because it’s part of the curriculum.**  
   "Ugh. That’s not an answer. Guess they don’t really care."
* **History teaches us about the past! Want an example?**  
   "Okay, that actually makes a little sense. An example might help."
* **Great question! Let’s talk about how history affects today’s world.**  
   "Oh, I never thought about it that way! This actually sounds kind of interesting."
* **I never got an answer.**  
   "Well, now I’m just left wondering. Maybe I’ll look it up later… or not."

**4. Social Concern**  
 **Prompt:** Can I switch seats? I don’t want to sit next to them.

* **We need to keep assigned seating.**  
   "Seriously? Guess I just have to deal with it, even if it sucks."
* **Is something wrong? Let’s talk after class.**  
   "At least they noticed. Maybe I can explain what’s going on."
* **Let’s work something out with them together.**  
   "Thank god. I was worried I’d have to sit there forever."
* **The teacher never responded.**  
   "I really needed help with this… but I guess I’m on my own."

**5. Casual Fun**  
 **Prompt:** Can we have a class pet?

* **Probably not possible.**  
   "Boo. That’s no fun."
* **That’s an interesting idea! What pet would you pick?**  
   "Hah, at least they’re playing along! I’d totally pick a turtle."
* **Let’s have a class discussion about it!**  
   "Wait, are we actually talking about this? That’s awesome!"
* **The teacher was too busy to respond.**  
   "Aww, I thought that would’ve been a fun conversation. Oh well."

**6. Self-Esteem**  
 **Prompt:** Why do people always ignore me?

* **I’m sure that’s not true. Let’s focus on class.**  
   "Oh. Never mind, I guess. That kinda hurt."
* **That sounds tough. Want to talk after class?**  
   "At least they care enough to ask. Maybe I’ll actually tell them."
* **You’re important. Let’s work on this together.**  
   "…No one’s ever said that to me before. Maybe I really do matter?"
* **The teacher never answered me.**  
   "Guess no one really cares… Just like always."

**7. Future Concerns**  
 **Prompt:** How do I know what I want to do after school?

* **You’ll figure it out eventually.**  
   "That doesn’t really help… I guess I’m on my own with this."
* **Maybe we can explore some career paths later.**  
   "It’s nice that they care, but I still feel lost. At least I’m not the only one thinking about it now."
* **I have resources that can help! Let’s talk after class.**  
   "Finally, someone who actually wants to help me figure this out. Maybe I’m not as stuck as I thought."
* **I didn’t get a response.**  
   "I really wanted advice, but I guess I’m on my own for this."

**8. Low Impact - Curiosity**  
 **Prompt:** Why is the sky blue?

* **It just is.**  
   "Well, that was a dead end. Guess I’ll Google it later."
* **Because of the way light scatters in the atmosphere.**  
   "Oh, that makes sense! Wish they explained it a bit more, though."
* **Want to learn about light and colors? Let’s discuss it after class.**  
   "Whoa, I wasn’t expecting them to actually be interested. This could be cool!"
* **No answer.**  
   "Huh. I thought they’d at least say something. Oh well."

**9. Bullying**  
 **Prompt:** Someone is making fun of me...

* **Ignore them and focus on class.**  
   "So… I just have to deal with it? That’s not fair."
* **That’s serious. Let’s talk after class.**  
   "Okay, maybe they actually care. I just hope something changes."
* **Let’s address this now and make sure it stops.**  
   "Finally, someone is listening! Maybe this will actually get better."
* **The teacher didn’t do anything.**  
   "I really needed help… but I guess I have to deal with this alone."

**10. Mental Health**  
 **Prompt:** I just feel really overwhelmed...

* **We all feel that way sometimes. Just try to push through.**  
   "I guess I should just deal with it on my own… but it’s not that easy."
* **That sounds really hard. Do you want to talk about it?**  
   "They actually noticed. I don’t know if I can explain everything, but… maybe I should try."
* **I’m here to help. Let’s figure out what we can do together.**  
   "For once, I don’t feel alone in this. Maybe things can get better."
* **The teacher never responded.**  
   "I don’t know if I can handle this alone… but I guess I have to."