9/4/2021 – Introduction to CDL Team

Hello!

I'm Jamie Henshaw, an adolescent education student majoring in creative writing. It's exciting to approach ELA with a focus on writing (most high school teachers have majored in English literature). I firmly believe that experimenting with writing is essential to critical reading skills, and that diverse reading is essential to effective writing skills. We see more and more these days (mostly through social media) the presence of varied grammatical structures. This begs the question, "Do we really need to be teaching 'proper English' in the classroom?" For me and my pedagogical philosophy, the answer is, "One of the purposes of the ELA classroom is to learn how to vary our responses based on our audiences, our content, and ourselves."

That's where my focus on creative writing comes into play. I feel that if we practice writing into varied scenarios we can engage in varied discussions and groups. This caries over into the digital world as well: How are we presenting and representing ourselves?  What ethics and IDEA components are we recognizing in our digital presence? Are we being allies, advocates, or activists for the things and people that matter to us?

I want to learn more about online resources and technology-based programs/strategies to be an effective member of both the digital community and as a Safe Zone-oriented teacher. This digital world allows us to hide our faces so easily - sometimes we forget that we can use it to express ourselves and reveal important things which our faces do not.

Most of us have taken a Gen Ed course about humanities (mine was western civilizations and anthropology) because we need to understand how culture has developed over the ages. The internet has closed the gaps of distance and thrown us into a single collective. I fell that it's completely necessary to know how this impacts us as a global culture, and what we need to do to continue developing in appropriate and additive ways.