April 27, 2016

English 310

Should I use movies/Youtube?

Observations today felt weird, I personally felt out of place when I walked in and the students seem to all look serious. Apparently today was a day dedicated to writing an essay for the A.P. exam. I remember those days, all I remember is being told if you don’t know the answer to a multiple choice question it is okay to guess because penalizations wouldn’t be happening. Yet, this was not like that, ten minutes into the class after attendance and the teacher answering various questions about the exam, suddenly the room was dark, the projector was on and a Youtube Prezi was on display- it was like a “movie day”. The videos were about essay structure and common arguments and logical fallacies.

This lasted until the class was over. I sat all the way in the back and there were a few things I noticed almost everyone had paper out and were taking notes occasionally, only three students were continuously taking notes four were on their phones, and there was one student who was just staring at his desk. I thought this was a bit ridiculous, even as I was observing I felt the videos were too long one and there was no pause in between for a recap or just a mental break. The first thought I had in my mind was “Nope this does not look effective” and following that was that I wouldn’t use videos in my lessons because in that moment I felt that the cons outweighed the pros. Students weren’t really engaged only a select few were really taking notes, phones were out, and there must have been students who were possibly dozing off. I didn’t see the use of videos in the class as useful, but after giving it some thought it does deserve merit if it were brought up properly.

I think it would be nice to occasionally show videos that are short and engaging towards the students and have breaks to go over what was seen to make sure the students were paying attention. Also it would give a chance to the students to ask for any clarifications they might have. Otherwise I might have just sent them links and not have bothered to show it if there wont be a discussion of it.

Which also leads me to the use of phones students have while a video is playing, honestly I like the way my school treated that kind of disruption which was to take it away and have parent pick it up. I was extremely bothered by the fact the students are using their phones and not paying attention it took a lot to not go up and just take it away from them.

All this leads me to think the way to go about this is to make the students understand the video is not there for entertainment purposes, it is for educational use and needs to be respected as such. I had a teacher that would give us short clips of news segments and have us analyze why we were watching it and connect it to the unit we were currently on. That would be an interesting way to include videos in the classroom but not lose control of the class in exchange. I like to think if I were a teacher the videos would be small and extremely short and take up no more than ten minutes and it can’t finish as class ends, there needs to be a discussion on why the video was played.