V. Liu

Ms. Reichmuth

Core 7

2 June 2022

Keep On Keepin’ On

Before seventh grade, my writing skills were very basic and needed a lot of improvement. Hearing that my core teacher was new to the school made me unsure of what to think, but as the year progressed, I realized that it would be a unique year. Ms. Reichmuth taught us to persevere, and that when we work our very hardest, the result will be rewarding. She pushed all of us out of our comfort zones to go above and beyond in everything we did. To start, the Project Based Learning (PBL) units were a major part of Ms. Reichmuth’s class, consisting of book club, essays, and presentations. In addition, the high expectations in this class contributed to knowledge growth and spectacular writing. Lastly, I gained several strategies and writing tips to grow and improve my writing and mindset going out of seventh grade. Ms. Reichmuth’s PBL units and rigorous expectations have aided me in becoming a better student going out of seventh grade.

To begin, our first PBL unit was called “We are the World: An Inconvenient Truth,” which focused on endangered species and climate change. This project was based around minimizing our global footprint and becoming aware of the negative effects that human actions have on the Earth. Subsequently, our second essay was a compare and contrast essay for our PBL unit “The Ability Project.” The essay was about the similarities and differences between the main character’s disability in Lois Lowry’s, *Gathering Blue* and the disability of our choice. This unit was truly inspirational because we met and interviewed people with disabilities, which helped us gain an understanding of their perspectives. Last but not least, we ended the year with our PBL unit “Social Justice: Be the Change,” which aligned with Suzanne Collins’ *Hunger Game Trilogy*. In the totalitarian Hunger Games society, Katniss Everdeen faces the Capitol’s corrupt reign of terror, similar to many countries in real life. This extremely engaging unit included a persuasive essay and the deep study of social injustices and human rights violations in the country of our choice. While the PBL units were a major focus of Ms. Reichmuth’s seventh-grade core, so were her class expectations.

First, one class expectation is to not begin spoken sentences with filler words, including “um, so, or well.” When writing, do not use contractions, as it is considered informal, especially in essays. Second, all work should be completed diligently and concisely, as Ms. Reichmuth does not tolerate sloppy, rushed work. One of her common sayings is “Use your time wisely,” which means work efficiently and utilize class work time. Third, Ms. Reichmuth has several writing rules including writing with complete sentences and labeling all of your papers with your MLA heading. SAT (Story, Arguments, Thesis) format is used for essays and paragraphs summarizing the events of CNN 10. When writing, value quality over quantity and, in this core class, going above and beyond earns you extra credit points. Ms. Reichmuth’s expectations guided us to becoming superb learners and new, knowledgeable students going out of seventh grade.

Foremost, going out of seventh grade, I am more organized and independent, two important factors of successful learning that Ms. Reichmuth promotes. This includes knowing when assignments are due, how they need to be completed, and how they should be submitted. Moreover, I have become more intrigued with reading and responding to texts. Book Club was one of my favorite activities that helped me engage with the text and group discussions. It was enjoyable to learn while sitting on the edge of my seat, waiting to know what happened next in the book. Lastly, I have gained more perseverance and grit, especially after watching the meaningful TED Talk video about grit. “Grit is…working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it’s a marathon, not a sprint.” Grit was the main reason for my completion of the big projects because I adopted a growth mindset that encouraged me to keep going. Organization, engaging with texts, and having a growth mindset are the skills I am taking with me from seventh grade.

Coming out of seventh grade has positively changed me, particularly thanks to Ms. Reichmuth’s PBL units and high expectations. Firstly, the PBL units had a powerful effect on me that I will remember for years to come. Furthermore, Ms. Reichmuth’s expectations educated us on the formal, proper way to write and speak. Finally, coming out of seventh grade, my mentality has positively changed, and my writing has dramatically improved. From now on, in everything I do, I will bring out my “inner Reichmuth,” by being confident and always procuring learning opportunities. Ms. Reichmuth’s motto is “Keep on keepin’ on,” which taught us to never give up. “If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward,” (King Jr.). Seventh-grade core was a very memorable experience that I will cherish and appreciate for a very long time.

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