

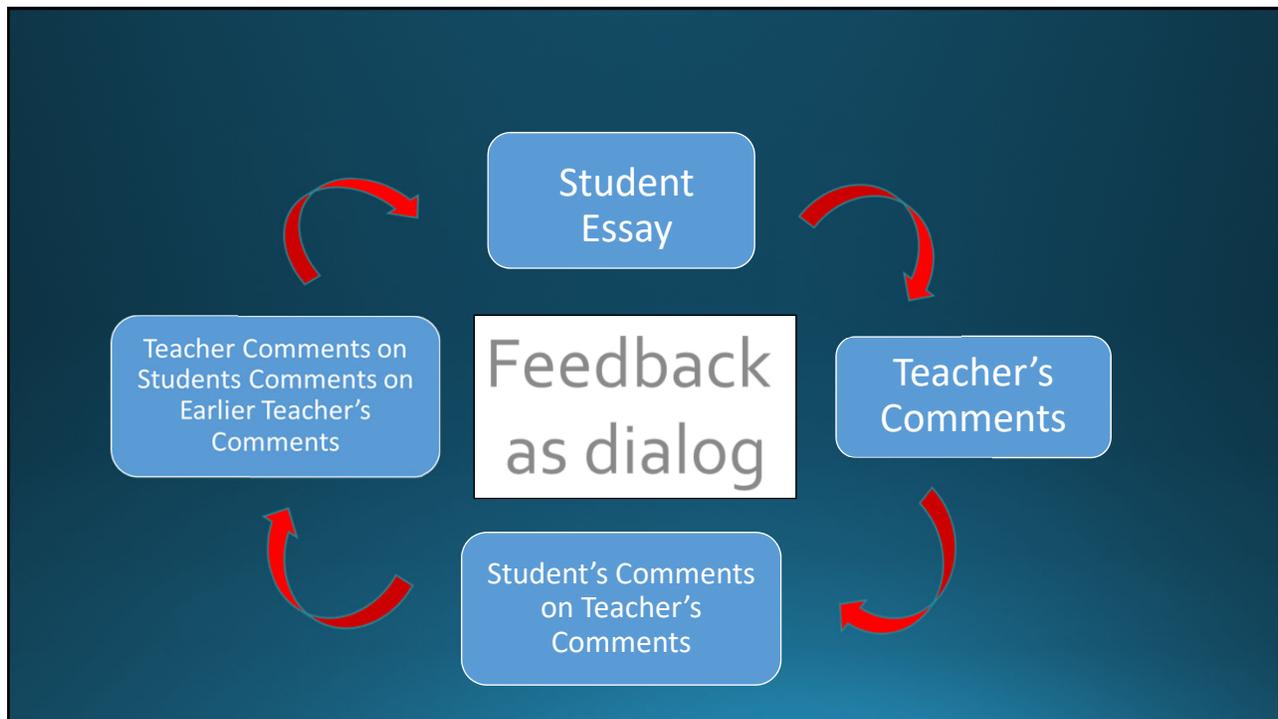
Meager Voices: Deepening Teacher-Student Engagement in Online Courses

Patrick Quinn, English Department
College of Southern Nevada



Presentation Outline

1. Student Engagement  Student Success
2. Having students comment on my comments to them
-- an experiment
3. Examples of students commenting on my comments
4. Student response to the assignment



A Nagging Sense of Futility

- Having little or no purpose or importance or having little positive outcome.
- A useless act or gesture



Since the late 1980's, researchers have been studying best practices and what helps students to be successful.

What the Research Says . . .

Thirty years of research shows that student success is intricately tied to **student engagement** in the classroom and at the institution at-large.

student engagement leads to student success

Research about Student Engagement

"Unpacking the Black Box of Student Engagement: The Need for Programmatic Investigation of High-Impact Practices"

Deryl K. Hatch

Community College Journal of Research and Practice 2012

Indeed, Hu and Kuh (2002) unambiguously state that the most important factor in student learning and personal development during college is student engagement. **Engagement is positively related to both objective and subjective measures of gains in skills, critical thinking, satisfaction, persistence, academic achievement, graduation, and social engagement, among other outcomes.**

(Astin, 1977, 1984, 1985, 1993; Berger & Milem, 1999; Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Endo & Harpel, 1982; Gellin, 2003; Goodsell, Maher, & Tinto, 1992; Kuh, 1995; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005; Kuh, Pace, & Vesper, 1997; Marti, 2009; Pace, 1995; Pascarella, Duby, Terenzini, & Iverson, 1983; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Pascarella, Wolniak, Cruce, & Blaich, 2004; Pike & Kuh, 2005; Pike, Kuh, & Gonyea, 2003; Sorcinelli, 1991; Trowler, 2010).

Definition

In education, **student engagement** refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.

<http://edglossary.org/student-engagement/>

In education, **student engagement** refers to the degree of **attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion** that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress.

**Emotional and tactile
which is hard to see online**

Research on Student Engagement

- For 15 years, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) has used data from over 250 institutions and over 44,000 students
- Their findings tell us that there are three specific ways that teachers can promote student engagement in the classroom:
 1. Offer more active and collaborative learning activities
 2. Increase the amount of student-faculty interaction
 3. Apply rigor to a climate of open intellectual exploration

Research on Student Success

“Student Engagement and Institutional Graduation Rates: Identifying High-Impact Educational Practices for Community Colleges”

Derek V. Price

Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 38: 766–782, 2014

In summarizing findings from three independent studies sponsored by CCSSE, McClenney and Marti (2006) observed that **the benchmarks most closely associated with degree/certificate attainment were active and collaborative learning, academic challenge, and student-faculty interaction”** (771)

Research on Student-Teacher Relationships

“If You Don’t Care, Then Why Should I? The Influence of Instructor Commitment on Student Satisfaction and Commitment”

Alison M. Dachner and Brian M. Saxton

Journal of Management Education 2015, Vol. 39(5) 549–571

Drawing on social exchange theory, our research found that **perceived instructor support, driven by an instructor’s commitment to teaching, influences both student satisfaction and student commitment. Students who believed that their instructor cared about their well-being and valued their contributions were more satisfied with their course and had higher commitment to the course.**

Research on Student-Teacher Relationships

"If You Don't Care
Commitment
Alison M. Dach
Journal of Management Education 2015, Vol. 39(5) 548-571

Approach their writing as
a valid text, not as a document
that needs correcting.

Drawing on social exchange theory, our research found that **perceived instructor support**, driven by an instructor's commitment to teaching, influences both student satisfaction and student commitment. Students who believed that their instructor cared about their well-being and valued their contributions were more satisfied with their course and had **higher commitment to the course**.

1. Offer more active and collaborative learning activities

Active Learning Defined

Active learning is a process that engages students in activities such as discussion, writing, problem-solving, synthesis, analysis, and evaluation of class content.

<http://edglossary.org/active-learning/>

Active Learning Defined
Doing something with the information

Active learning – not just retaining it engages students in activities such as discussion, writing, problem-solving, synthesis, analysis, and evaluation of class content.

<http://edglossary.org/active-learning/>

Research on Active Learning

“Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research”

Prince, Michael

Journal of Engineering Education; Jul 2004; 93, 3; ProQuest Central

Bonwell and Eison [1] summarize the literature on **active learning** and conclude that it **leads to better student attitudes and improvements in students' thinking and writing.**

Research on Active Learning

“Student-centered Learning: What Does It Mean for Students and Lecturers?”

Geraldine O’Neill and Tim McMahon *University College Dublin*
Emerging Issues in the Practice of University Learning and Teaching

A six-year study in Helsinki, which compared traditional and activating instruction, found that **the activating group developed better study skills and understanding, but were slower in their study initially (Lonka and Ahola 1995).**

Research on Active Learning

The link between high-impact practices and student learning:
some longitudinal evidence

Cindy A. Kilgo • Jessica K. Ezell Sheets • Ernest T. Pascarella
High Education (2015) 69:509-525

Active and collaborative learning and undergraduate research were consistently significant, positive predictors for nearly all of the liberal arts educational outcomes within both sets of analyses.

1. Offer more active and collaborative learning activities

Collaborative Learning Defined

Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of students working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. According to Gerlach, "Collaborative learning is based on the idea that learning is a naturally social act in which the participants talk among themselves (Gerlach, 1994).

Research on Collaborative Learning

"Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research"

Prince, Michael

Journal of Engineering Education; Jul 2004; 93, 3; ProQuest Central

"Looking at a number of meta-analyses [17], Norman and Schmidt [18] point out that **having students work in small teams has a positive effect on academic achievement.**"

Research on Collaborative Learning

“Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research”

Prince, Michael

Journal of Engineering Education; Jul 2004; 93, 3; ProQuest Central

In a review of 90 years of research, Johnson, Johnson and Smith found that **cooperation improved learning outcomes relative to individual work across the board [12]**.

Research in Collaborative Learning

The link between high-impact practices and student learning: some longitudinal evidence

Cindy A. Kilgo • Jessica K. Ezell Sheets • Ernest T. Pascarella

High Educ (2015) 69:509-525

Findings from the first set of analyses suggest that **participation in several of the high-impact practices led to higher levels of attainment on a variety of liberal arts educational outcome measures. Two high-impact practices in particular—active and collaborative learning and undergraduate research.**

Research on Collaborative Learning

“Beyond student-centered and teacher-centered pedagogy:
Teaching and learning as guided participation”

Michael F. Mascolo

Pedagogy and the Human Sciences, 1, No. 1, 2009, pp. 3-27.

Barkley, Cross and Major (2005) summarize the results of Springer, Stanne and Donvan’s meta-analysis as follows: (a) **students in collaborative learning classrooms exhibited higher levels of achievement and persistence than students in traditional classrooms**; (b) improved performance was stronger when students were assessed with instructor-generated examinations than with standardized tests; (c) **students described collaborative learning more positively than traditional learning experiences**; (d) meetings among students that occurred outside of class produced greater achievement than in-class collaborations; however, within-class collaborations resulted in more positive evaluations of learning activity than did out-of-class collaborations. **These results corroborate in college and university settings the positive effects reported collaborative learning found in primary and secondary education.**

Research in Collaborative Project-Based Learning (PBL)

“Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research”

Prince, Michael

Journal of Engineering Education; Jul 2004; 93, 3; ProQuest Central

There is also evidence that Project-Based Learning improves the long-term retention of knowledge compared to traditional instruction [51-53]. Evidence also suggests that PBL promotes better study habits among students. (228)

Research on Student Engagement

- There are three specific ways that teachers can promote student engagement in the classroom:

1. Offer more active and collaborative learning activities
2. **Apply rigor to a climate of open intellectual exploration**
3. Increase the amount of student-faculty interaction

2. Apply rigor to a climate of open intellectual exploration

Rigor Defined

Rigor is the result of work that challenges students' thinking in new and interesting ways. It occurs when they are encouraged toward a sophisticated understanding of fundamental ideas and are driven by curiosity to discover what they don't know.

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/a-new-definition-of-rigor-brian-sztabnik>

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Promoting Intellectual Curiosity

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/a-new-definition-of-rigor-brian-sztabnik>

Research about Rigor

"Developing a Student Conception of Academic Rigor"

John Draeger & Pixita del Prado Hill & Ronnie Mahler

Innov High Educ (2015) 40:215–228

elements of academic rigor identified by students differed from those of the faculty. . . responses also revealed that **grading standards, difficulty, and workload are filtered through perceived level of student interest.**

A course might not seem as hard if students are interested in course content, and it might seem much harder if they are not as interested

Research about Rigor

“That Truly Meant a Lot to Me”: A Qualitative Examination of Meaningful Faculty-Student Interactions

Ashley Grantham, Emily Erin Robinson & Diane Chapman

College Teaching, 63:3, 125-132

Contrary to the perception that students value teachers who are merely “easy” or “fun,” **students value high-quality interactions with faculty members.**

Research on Student Engagement

- There are three specific ways that teachers can promote student engagement in the classroom:
 1. Offer more active and collaborative learning activities
 2. Apply rigor to a climate of open intellectual exploration
 3. **Increase the amount of student-faculty interaction**

3. Increase the amount of student-faculty interaction

About Feedback

Feedback is an important part of the **student-teacher relationship**. It develops trust and encourages growth.

Research about Feedback

“Beyond student-centered and teacher-centered pedagogy: Teaching and learning as guided participation”

Michael F. Mascolo

Pedagogy and the Human Sciences, 1, No. 1, 2009, pp. 3-27.

Instructor feedback can play an important role in promoting the development of —growth rather than —fixed mindsets in students (Dweck, 2006; Schapiro & Livingston, 2000).

Feedback that (a) acknowledges a student’s ongoing progress, (b) articulates the value of hard work and continuous improvement, and (c) identifies what a student has to do in order to take the next incremental step in developing any given skill or understanding can foster the development of a student’s sense of the value of incremental learning over the mere attempt to meet particular performance goals.

Research on Student-Teacher Relationships

“That Truly Meant a Lot to Me”: A Qualitative Examination of Meaningful Faculty-Student Interactions

Ashley Grantham, Emily Erin Robinson & Diane Chapman

College Teaching, 63:3, 125-132

Perhaps most startling is the finding is that students are grateful when faculty members perform what could be considered their basic job responsibilities, such as meeting with students during office hours.

Research on Student-Teacher Relationships

“Unpacking the Black Box of Student Engagement: The Need for Programmatic Investigation of High Impact Practices”

Deryl K. Hatch

Community College Journal of Research and Practice 2012

What makes a difference, according to Kuh (2011), is that teachers and students are in a position of interacting on substantive matters. Indeed, **these kinds of activities or features—such as active learning or providing feedback—can be intentional and added to any classroom situation. What a high-impact practice does is provide a vehicle to enable meaningful interaction.**

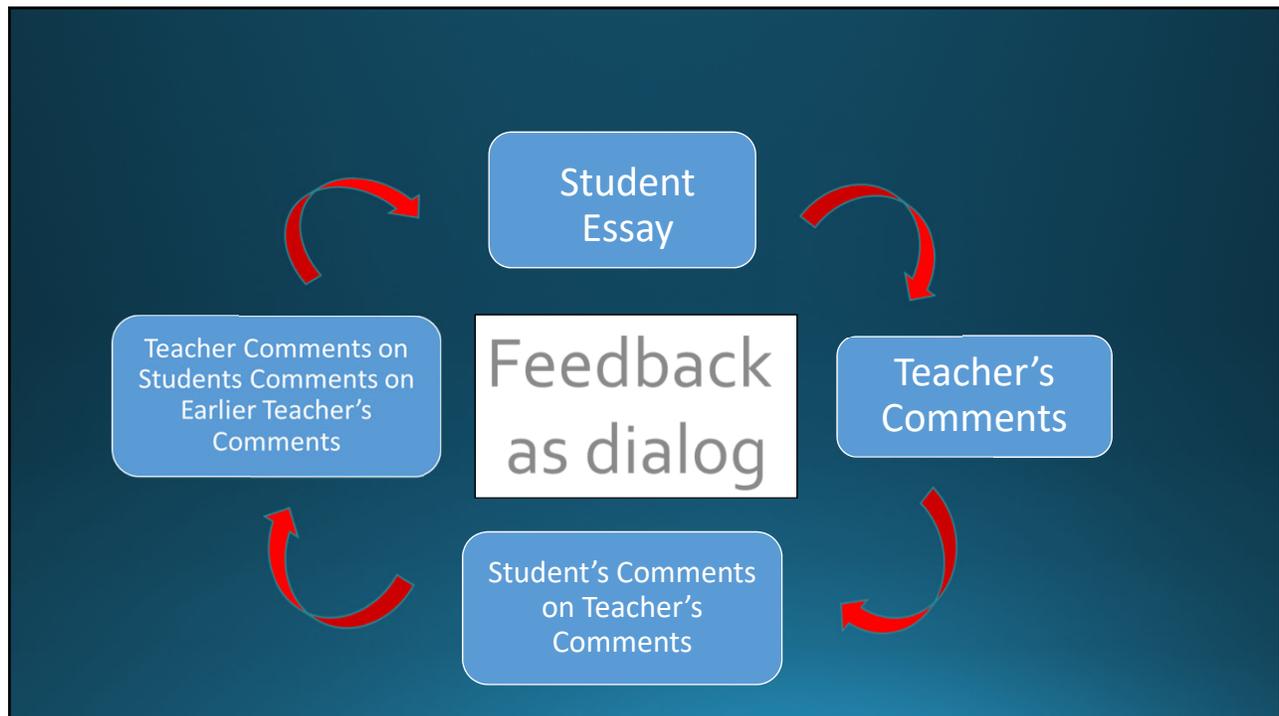
Research about Reflective Learning

The link between high-impact practices and student learning: some longitudinal evidence

Cindy A. Kilgo • Jessica K. Ezell Sheets • Ernest T. Pascarella

High Educ (2015) 69:509-525

Studies of deep learning, for example, have found that **reflective learning is positively associated with critical thinking skill growth and that higher-order, integrative, and reflective learning is positively associated with need for cognition and principled/post conventional moral reasoning growth** (Nelson Laird et al. 2011; Pascarella and Blaich 2013).

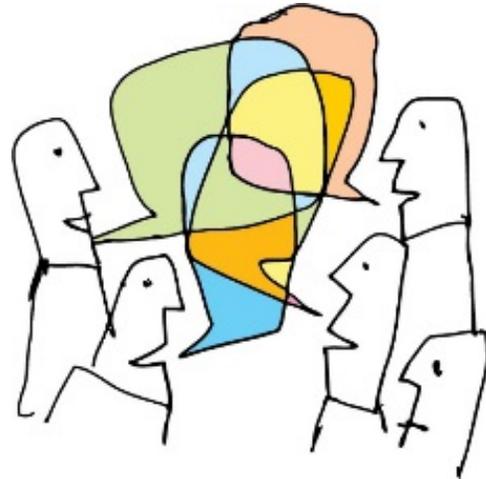


Assignment Page

Instructor Comment Review is a way to continue the dialog that began with your essay. I have contributed to the discussion by commenting on different aspects of your essay -- asking questions, sharing an idea, agreeing or disagreeing. As the person evaluating, I will also provide critical comments. Your task is to respond to my comments with comments of your own; thus, furthering the dialog.

If you submitted your essay in Microsoft Word, you will use the Comments feature that will allow you to comment on my comments. If you submitted your essay as a .PDF, then you will likely have to copy and paste the comments into a separate word-processing program before you can comment on my comments. I say "likely" because some advanced Adobe PDF writers will allow you to respond on the page like Microsoft Word does.

There are examples for each below:



Bermudez 1

Sabrina Bermudez
Patrick Quinn
English 102
25 November 2018

Synthesis: From De-grading to De-grading Against School
In today's educational system everyone seems to form different opinions, many people like Kohn believe grades affect the students learning. Reason being, it does not have the positive impact that teachers and the educational system make it seem like. Kohn stated that grades tend to reduce the students interest in the learning itself, due to the fact that students are most likely to view assignments that are graded as a chore (Kohn 238-239). Instead of seeing how they should see it which is working hard and earning a grade and meanwhile having a positive attitude while completing it. (Kohn 238-239). According to Kohn, it also reduces the student's preference for challenging tasks. For instance, students are choosing the easiest assignments to complete so they can get the so-called good grade. When in reality they should challenge themselves to do an assignment that is a bit more challenging for them. Not surprisingly students choose the easiest assignment they think they understand so they can secure the passing grade. The pressure of the assignment being graded and it affecting his or her chance of not passing the class makes a major impact on the student. Although at the end of the day they don't learn anything new. Due to the fact they did not challenge themselves into doing an assignment that is out of their comfort zone, rather than just choosing the easy assignment. Kohn also states, "that grades tend to reduce the quality of students thinking, reason being students respond better to receiving feedback instead of receiving

Comment [D02]: Before getting into specifics, how about giving the reader an introductory paragraph that introduces the authors, the topic and the direction it will go.

Comment [D03]: If Professor Quinn, I agree instead of jumping right into my specific, I should have begun with an introductory paragraph. For example, introducing Kohn, who is the author.

Comment [D02]: Positive and negative, or only negative?

Comment [D04]: I should have stated both positive and negative facts, so the essay can have a neutral point of view without sounding bias.

Comment [D05]: I don't think Kohn says the

Comment [D06]: You are correct Kohn does not state this. This is one of the opinions which I incorporated from the text. Since the students are picking the easier route that completing more challenging assignments.

a grade." The highest achievement occurred only when comments, without any numerical scores includes. (Butler 1987; Butler 1988; Butler and Nisan 1986.)

Grades in my point of view do make school a bit more stressful because you are constantly thinking of what grade you will get when you do an assignment. Especially when it comes to doing assignments we all as students try and find the easiest assignment to do because we know we need the passing and easy grade. Kohn had the right research and cites as to why grading is in fact not helpful instead it just puts unnecessary pressure on students.

In Gatto's essay "Against School" he stated how boredom was everywhere in his world and if you would ask the students why they were always bored it would always be the same response, this work is "stupid" or it makes "no sense". As Gatto refers, it was not only the students that felt bored but the teachers felt the exact same way. All the teachers ever did in the lounge was white about student's rude attitudes and how their attitudes made it hard for them as teachers to teach. As always, the teachers blame the students instead of admitting it is them as well that are bored of following the same rigid structure they must follow. (Kohn 271).

But in reality, teachers are the ones that have no interest in the idea of teaching and choose to blame the students. Gatto stated "do we really need school?" In other words do we really need mandatory five days and six classes for nine months a year of school? Whilst they are plenty of people that have become important without having the full twelve years of school and yet they became important people that will always be remembered. Truth is that even in today's world people find ways to educate themselves without being in the educational system and completing the twelve years of school that is mandatory to complete in our education system.

When in reality the educational system has hit low because most of the educators do not have the passion and drive to help these students who are expressing boredom, which is causing

Commented [DP7]: Explain what he means by this
Commented [JAB88]: What I believe Kohn means is that students are always comparing their school performance with actual feedback of what they did writing, compared to not receiving a final grade without any comments as to why they received the grade they did. Instead professors, should meet with students and explain what they did wrong and how they can do better next time.

Commented [DP9]: Do you agree with Kohn on this point?
Commented [JAB89]: Unfortunately, I do. Being a student and not receiving feedback often, as they use this as the daily basis to either have the excitement of receiving a good grade, students tend to go with the easier route, usually completing more challenging assignment where they may risk getting a lower grade.

Commented [DP11]: Interest in (Gatto 271)
Commented [JAB92]: That is correct, when Gatto references that Kohn's.

them to have rude attitudes. Often times, students are displaying this type of behavior because that is what they are feeling due to the vibe they are being given in the classroom by their teachers. From personal experience working in the school district, I can say I have seen a handful of teachers that take teaching as a "whatever job". This being because they are also bored of having to follow the same rigid rules and they feel just as tapped as the students feel. This causes them to lose interest in teaching or learning new material that can help the student's. From my opinion a teacher who has a positive attitude and is willing to learn along the way with her students will really make an impact in any student's education. If teachers don't understand the material very well and are teaching it really doesn't help because both student and teacher are going to be just as lost. Although if the teacher teaches a material he or she knows they will be able to help the students in any way they can.

Gatto educator himself says that "students can achieve in their education even without the twelve-years the education system mandates to have". "Especially in today's world you can find a way to educate yourself or find a way that works best for yourself when it comes to education."

I do not agree with Gatto when it comes to students not needing the twelve years of education as to, school is what prepares us to be ready for the real world. Especially in today's world if you don't have a valid education of twelve years finding employment is very hard. Those twelve years of school that might seem "unnecessary" to some is very well needed in order for someone to have a better chance of getting a better paying job. School is what prepares us so we can be the future leaders, we need school, we need the education that school comes with in order for us to strive in our education aspect of our lives. Gatto is right some important people in today's world did not even do the twelve years of the mandatory education and have become

Commented [DP12]: You are repeating what has already been stated
Commented [JAB93]: I would have stated that sentence since I already mentioned this in another beginning paragraph.

Commented [DP13]: This personal insight is valuable to the discussion. However, connect it directly with either Kohn or Gatto.
Commented [JAB94]: I should have connected my personal experience to the educational system to both Kohn and Gatto, to show how both of their points are to a certain extent valid.

Commented [DP17]: Doesn't he say that school is preparing children for a life of conformity and conformity is the only way to survive?
Commented [JAB95]: Yes, because without having the appropriate education that school provides elementary through high school a lot of individuals will not be prepared. Through these twelve years of schooling, we tend to have valuable information that allows us to use in our daily lives.

Commented [DP19]: Gatto talks about his son. He objects to how schools from very early on sort students in unchosen lanes.
Commented [JAB96]: That is true, teachers have the tendency to do this, when their already compare students or put them into their types of bins, instead what they should be doing is teaching their students the valuable skills they will need in order to become the future leaders they wish to be.

very important people, but that is not always bound to happen to everyone and in a future your school education is just going to count even more especially in the career world.

Sabrina,

Commented [2021]: You can't stop here, at the end of a single idea. You should have a summary that ties it all up.
Commented [2021]: You are correct. I should have included a conclusion paragraph summarizing the main points.

This is a good effort. Your personal responses are appropriate and add depth and interest to the topic. A synthesis essay is essentially a conversation between sources. What do the articles say separately and together? To answer this question you should develop a framework where you provide an overarching thesis that encompasses the main ideas from each article. Then, write a concise and accurate summary of each article, and then synthesize the shared ideas.

Gatto and Kohn have many ideas in common. For example, both articles discuss boredom and reduced motivation. Both articles claim that schools are used for sorting students into winners and losers. Both essays talk about spoiled relationships. Both essays talk about how there is a fear of reprisal for not going along. Both essays talk about how schools actually reduce the quality of thinking that goes on. Both essays suggest changes.

Taken together, both articles claim that school is no longer a healthy and valuable experience for children. Radical changes need to take place. Showing more directly the similarities and differences from each article is an important part of the synthesis process. Keep working on it.

Keep in mind as you start writing the research essay that it is like a synthesis essay but with more than two sources. However, the requirements are the same. 1) Establish a framework to understand the topic; 2) Use multiple sources; 3) Summarize main ideas; 4) Compare and contrast; 5) Revolve all information around a thesis. 12/8/15=73%

Thank you, Professor Quinn for reviewing my critique essay. This is the first time that I write a synthesis essay. I appreciate your feedback and comments regarding my essay. Next time, that I am task to do a synthesis essay, I will begin by establishing a specific framework so I can understand both of the topics being discussed, summarize both of the articles main points, compare how the two articles are different and how they are both similar. As well as using multiple sources to back up the information I am stating, besides the articles. Finally, I plan to write a more thought out concise thesis to revolve my essay around and include a conclusion that reflects my thesis.

Bermudez 1

Sabrina Bermudez
Patrick Quinn
English 102
25 November 2018

Synthesis: From Degrading to De-grading Against School

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Not surprisingly students choose the easiest assignment they think they understand so they can secure the passing grade. The pressure of the assignment being graded and it affecting his or her chance of not passing the class links a major impact on the student.

Although at the end of the day they don't learn anything new. Due to the fact they did not challenge themselves into doing an assignment that is out of their comfort zone, rather than just choosing the easy assignment. Kohn also states, "that grades tend to reduce the quality of students thinking, reason being students respond better to receiving feedback instead of receiving

Commented [QP1]: Before getting into specifics, how about giving the reader an introductory paragraph that introduces the authors, the topic, and the direction it will go.

Commented [SB2R2]: Hi Professor Quinn, I agree instead of jumping right into any specifics, I should have begun with an introductory paragraph. For example, introducing Kohn, who is the author.

Commented [QP3]: Positive and negative, or only negative?

Commented [SB4R4]: I should have stated both positive and negative facts, so the essay can have a neutral point of view without sounding bias.

Commented [QP5]: I don't think Kohn says this

Commented [SB6R6]: You are correct Kohn does not state this. This is more of my opinion of what I interpreted from the text. Since the students are picking the easier route than completing more challenging assignments.

Bermudez 2

a grade." The highest achievement occurred only when comments, without any numerical scores includes. (Butler 1987; Butler 1988; Butler and Nisan 1986.)

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When in reality the educational system has hit low because most of the educators do not have the passion and drive to help these students who are expressing boredom, which is causing

Commented [QP7]: Explain what he means by this

Commented [SB8R8]: What I believe Kohn means is that students nowadays respond better when professors give them actual feedback of what they did wrong, compared to just receiving a flat grade without any comments as to why they receive the grade they did. Instead professors, should meet with students and explain what they did wrong and how they can do better next time.

Commented [QP9]: So you agree with Kohn on this point?

Commented [SB10R10]: Unfortunately, I do. Being a student myself and working along children all day, I see this on the daily basis. In order to have the reassurance of receiving a good grade, students tend to go with the easier route, instead of completing a more challenging assignment where they may risk getting a lower grade.

Commented [QP11]: I believe it is (Gatto 271)

Commented [SB12R12]: That is correct, this is Gatto references not Kohn's.

Bermudez 3

them to have rude attitudes. Often times, students are displaying this type of behavior because that is what they are feeling due to the vibe they are being given in the classroom by their teachers. From personal experience working in the school district, I can say I have seen a handful of teachers that take teaching as a "whatever job". This being because they are also bored of having to follow the same rigid rules and they feel just as tapped as the students feel. This causes them to lose interest in teaching or learning new material that can help the student's. From my opinion, a teacher who has a positive attitude and is willing to learn along the way with her students will really make an impact in any student's education. If teachers don't understand the material very well and are teaching it really doesn't help because both student and teacher are going to be just as lost. Although if the teacher teaches a material he or she knows they will be able to help the students in any way they can.

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Commented [DP13]: You are repeating what has already been stated.

Commented [S141814]: I should have deleted this sentence since I already mentioned this in another learning paragraph.

Commented [DP13]: This personal insight is valuable to the discussion. However, connect it directly with either Kohn or Gatto.

Commented [S141814]: I should have mentioned my personal experience in the educational system in both Kohn and Gatto. We both have both of their points are to a certain extent valid.

Commented [DP13]: Doesn't he say that school is preparing children for life of uncertainty and contingency? Is this the real world you are referring to?

Commented [S141814]: Yes, because without having the appropriate education that is offered in elementary through high school all of individuals will not be prepared. Through those twelve years of schooling, we tend to have valuable information that allows us to use in our daily lives.

Commented [DP13]: Gatto talks about his too. He objects to how schools force very early on our students to winners and losers.

Commented [S141814]: That is true, teachers have the tendency to do this when they shouldn't compare students past their own three years of life, instead what they should be doing is teaching their students the valuable skills they will need in order to become the future leaders they wish to be.

Bermudez 4

very important people, but that is not always bound to happen to everyone and in a future your school education is just going to count even more especially in the career world.

Sabrina,

This is a good effort. Your personal responses are appropriate and add depth and interest to the topic. A synthesis essay is essentially a conversation between sources. What do the articles say separately and together? To answer this question you should develop a framework where you provide an overarching thesis that encompasses the main ideas from each article. Then, write a concise and accurate summary of each article, and then synthesize the shared ideas.

Gatto and Kohn have many ideas in common. For example, both articles discuss boredom and reduced motivation. Both articles claim that schools are used for sorting students into winners and losers. Both essays talk about spoiled relationships. Both essays talk about how there is a fear of reprisal for not going along. Both essays talk about how schools actually reduce the quality of thinking that goes on. Both essays suggest changes.

Taken together, both articles claim that school is no longer a healthy and valuable experience for children. Radical changes need to take place. Showing more directly the similarities and differences from each article is an important part of the synthesis process. Keep working on it.

Keep in mind as you start writing the research essay that it is like a synthesis essay but with more than two sources. However, the requirements are the same. 1) Establish a framework to understand the topic; 2) Use multiple sources; 3) Summarize main ideas; 4) Compare and contrast; 5) Revolve all information around a thesis. 128/175=73%

Commented [DP13]: You can't stop here, at the end of a synthesis. You should have a summary that ties it all up.

Commented [S141814]: You are correct, I should have included a conclusion paragraph summarizing the main points.

Thank you, Professor Quinn for reviewing my critique essay. This is the first time that I write a synthesis essay. I appreciate your feedback and comments regarding my essay. Next time, that I am task to do a synthesis essay, I will begin by establishing a specific framework so I can understand both of the topics being discussed, summarize both of the articles main points, compare how the two articles are different and how they are both similar. As well as using multiple sources to back up the information I am stating, besides the articles. Finally, I plan to write a more thought out concise thesis to revolve my essay around and include a conclusion that reflects my thesis.

Examples

Davis

Noone

Vona

Rofael

Changing a grade

Student comments about activity