



GRANITE CITY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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4 December 2020

Dear Class,

Fall 2020 has presented, for me, both many challenges and many rewards. As a teacher I've continued to work on ways to help you grow as readers and writers and from a far greater distance than usual. Some things went better than expected, and others . . . well, let's say there are things I know I won't do again. My absolute biggest struggle was keeping up with your writing—simply finding the time and mental bandwidth needed to read and comment in ways you deserve.

If I were submitting a fall portfolio, it would likely contain examples of my work and reflections from the semester. I would use it as a place to show my own growth in thinking about my identity, my place in the world, and how the ways in which I move about, act, and teach influence the world it can become—a better world for *all* people regardless of race, ethnicity, languages spoken, religions practiced, gender, sexual orientation, or abilities. We all belong.

I might write about my experience in book clubs, the books I chose and why and whether or how those books impacted my own thinking and ways of being. I could tell you about the pieces I wrote throughout the semester and how I revisited a couple of them to be sure they were just what I intended for the reader, considering my audience, the genre, and the purpose. I think my own writing has evolved into something more carefree and less self-conscious by realizing that what I say matters and how I say it is a craft I can continue to work on and improve.

As a teacher, I hope this course has helped you think about what you think about. Don't just take things at face value. Don't let your initial biases or those of your friends and family necessarily dictate the person you become. Read widely, read the world, write with abandon, and write what matters. I hope a few of the readings or videos we watched inspired you or just provided perspective or affirmation.

Thanks for your time and your energy. I really have enjoyed reading your work and sharing books with you. Take what you've learned, find the passion to share it with others, and read something awesome.

Best regards,

Mrs. C-I