

Weaving Revelation

in Students' Learning and Lives

(10/)

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a

universeWired

conversation on learning

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The wise separation of church and state, mistranslated and misapplied, has led us to the unnatural separation of learning and spirit. No surprise that education for so many of us amounts to going through minimally meaningful motions for even less meaningful certificates of completion. Students' motivation to learn, in isolation from the growth of the part of ourselves that hungers for the deepest connections to life and to others, can never fire on all cylinders.

The Guest House

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

~ Rumi

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Deepened Purpose

1) The significant problems we face can never be solved at the level of thinking that created them.

Albert Einstein

2) The time has come to situate education in a perspective that comprises far more than management of schooling and that thus redirects thinking to intrinsic issues of human development.

James Moffett xiii

3) The philosophers of ancient times exhaustively explored the relationship between man and the cosmos. Popular education, however, neglects the conclusions of the teachers of antiquity and concentrates only upon those thoughts which enhance the productive capacities of human beings through science and materialism.

T. Will

4) For Darwin, the core drive of human evolution is not natural selection, but education and learning. [For Darwin's actual words, see Recommended Reading, p36.]

D. Loye

5) The purpose of all education should be to foster and further the supreme purpose of life, the development of a majestic and well-balanced personality.

Urantia Book 2086

6) I argue that personal development must be central, because all solutions to public problems, no matter how collective the action, depend on mature, enlightened individuals to call for and indeed insist on these solutions.

Moffett xvi

7) Education is a difficult enough process under any circumstances, because educational effort is primarily an expression of hope on the part of the students.

T. Ham

* 8) Education, in its true sense, is the key to unlock one's individuality.

David Xu, student 2001

9) The purpose of education is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions... to ask questions of the universe and then learn to live with those questions. [This] is the way he achieves his own identity.

James Baldwin

10) There are years that ask questions, and years that answer.

Zora Neale Hurston

THESE YEARS ARE WITH GOD

Figure 1

Plan A

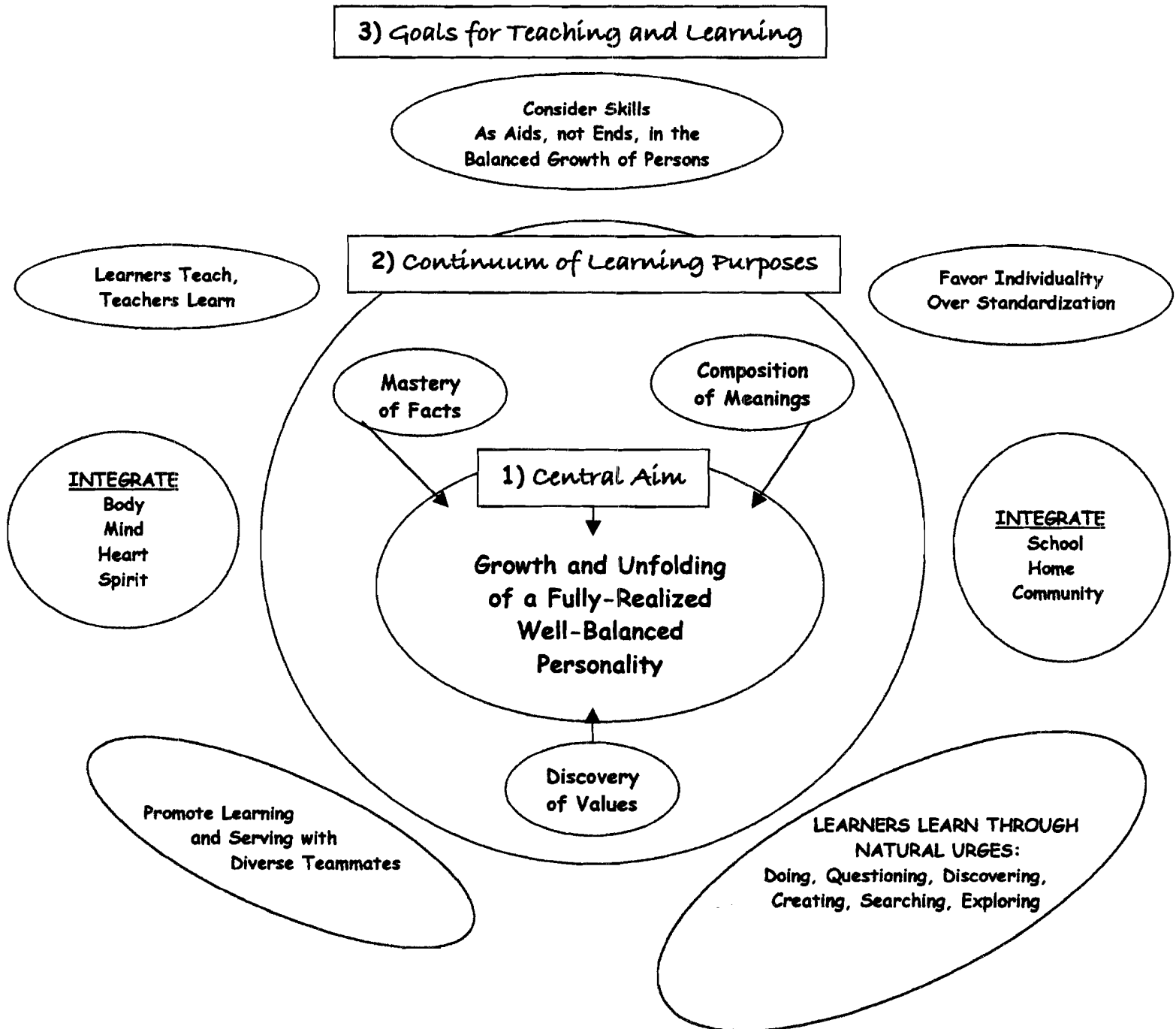
Basic Nebadon Model for 21st Century Learning:

From center outward:

Level 1) Central Aim

Level 2) Continuum of Learning Purposes

Level 3) Goals for Teaching and Learning



Manuscript excerpt (culmination of a series of chapters on new perspectives on learning):

To settle on a central aim of learning, something I don't know has been attempted on a broad scale before, is to rethink everything we do as teachers and learners. This is some of the most invigorating thinking I've ever had the opportunity to do, some of the most personally rewarding and, I hope, most useful. Here is the "New Look Toward Learning" for now. I look forward to many invigorating conversations to test its soundness and learn its applicability.

A New Look Toward Learning

- ◆ Learning is the primary fuel of human progress.
- ◆ The central aim of learning is the growth and unfolding of a fully-realized, well-balanced personality.
- ◆ The personality unfolds best, and is most satisfied, when learning is balanced among the mastery of facts, the composing of meaning, and the discovery of values.
- ◆ 21st Century teaching and learning practices should be growth-centered rather than skills-centered, integrative rather than isolative, should harness natural curiosities and urges rather than artificial motivation to learn, should employ service as a means of harmonizing learning among learners from diverse backgrounds, acknowledge that the wise separation of church and state was never intended to result in the unnatural separation of learning from spirit, and should allow frequent opportunities for learners to teach and teachers to learn.
- ◆ Each branch of study should have personal learning at its center.

Plan B

Two-Legged Curriculum

Introduction

"Unless the raising of consciousness and culture is the primary goal of education, people eventually betray their practical goals such as material improvement and social amelioration. But aside from any worldly payoff, personal development may also be the main purpose of life." *Moffett 331 (my emphasis)*

Two-Legged Curriculum is a way of designing learning experiences for students that sets out to devote as much care and thought at every stage of classroom and curricular planning to help students grow *as persons* (to Moffett, in consciousness), as to help them develop academic (culturally-orienting) skills. For more, see my article in *California English*, February 2002.

Designing a course using a Two-Legged approach
Sophomore English at American High School
~ Statement of Twin Purpose ~

The purpose of sophomore English at American High School is to help students develop themselves in two major areas:

1) to promote their progress in reading, writing, thinking, and conversing skills. (Beyond the personal benefits these skills bring, they are also culture-orienting skills.) To this end, we teachers find reasonable and effective ways to use standards and assessments in our classrooms;

2) to begin building a personal vision for their lives. (This is one means of bringing about Moffett's "raising of consciousness.") To this end, we teachers select themes and literature, design a writing program, and create other activities to encourage and inspire our sophomores to begin envisioning life concepts for themselves.

Our goal is to balance students' time and energies between these two essential areas of development.

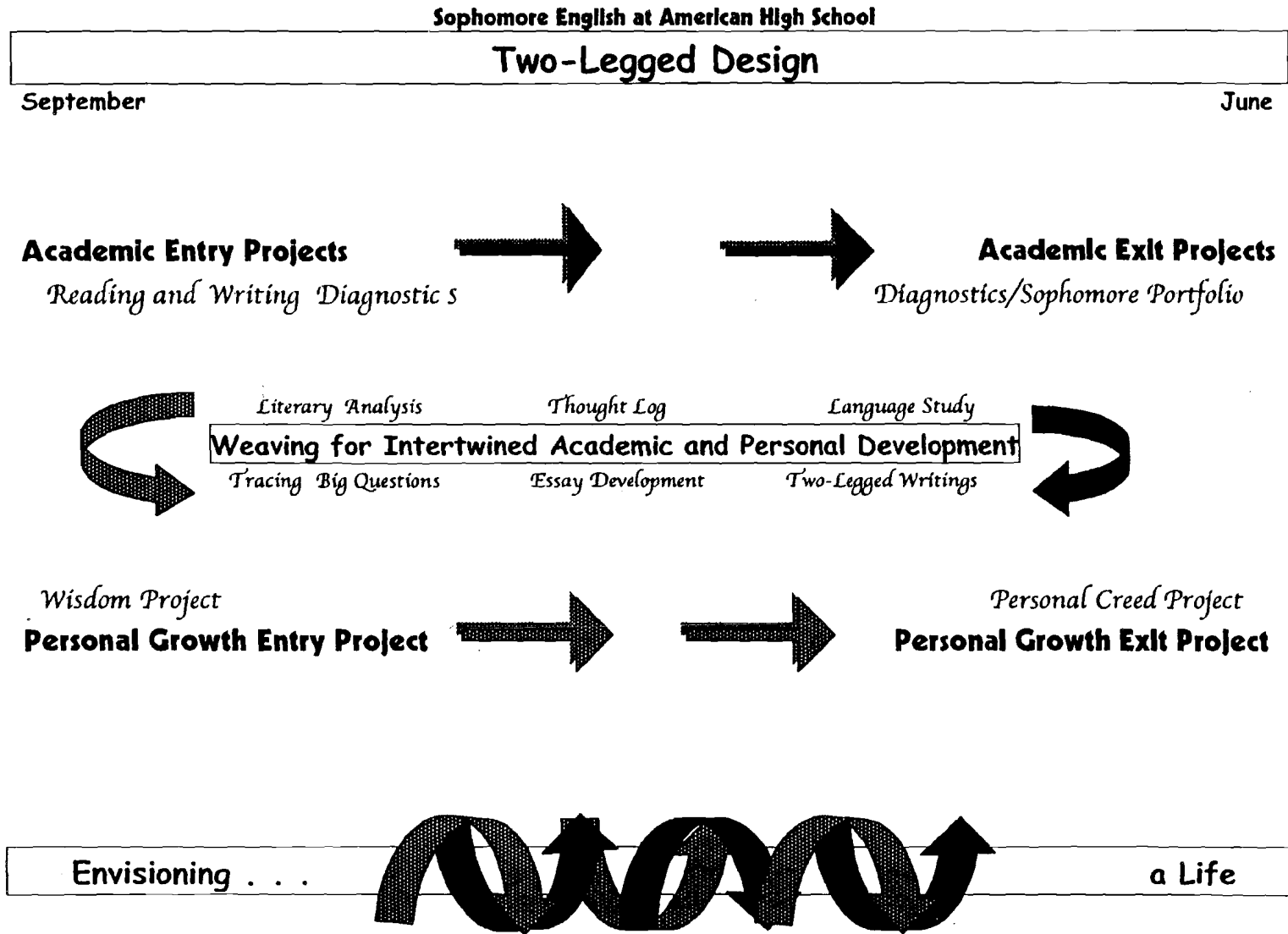


Figure 2

Envisioning a Life
a Two-Legged Sophomore English Course

• Entry, Personal Leg

The Wisdom Project Overview

For the first project in the fall of this world literature course, students read a series of excerpts from world spiritual and wisdom traditions. Our current text offers selections from most of the great world religious traditions and wisdom from a variety of regional traditions. With the addition of a selection of African wisdom, we have a fair cross-section of world wisdom.

Students begin **The Wisdom Project** by brainstorming to explore their own ideas about what wisdom is, what makes a person wise. They continue their inquiries in a series of interviews--with peers, adults, and senior citizens--probing into the nature of wisdom. With an emerging sense of the issues involved, students return to the selections of literature, each choosing the two or three pieces she finds most interesting, locating each reading in one of the three levels of wisdom (below), and explaining the choice in writing.

Three Levels of Wisdom

(adapted from the *Urantia Book*)

Wisdom at the ground level we can think of as closer to material knowledge, or cleverness--one has a knowledge of things, is wise to the ways of the world, knows how to get what one wants. We can call this Level 1 Wisdom.

In its intermediate levels, wisdom helps us to decide how to interact with others, what we should regard as our duty, what is right and wrong, a moral and intellectual perspective. Let's term this Level 2 Wisdom.

Wisdom in its higher forms gives us the desire to serve others, the urge to understand the universe on a spiritual level, to love and be loved, to balance the needs of body, mind, heart and spirit. This we will call Level 3 Wisdom.

Reflecting back over their brainstorms, interviews, and responses to the literature, each student writes his personal definition of wisdom. These definitions become students' opening statements in the year's first argumentative essay. Students go on to argue that one particular selection from the literature reflects, or does not reflect, wisdom. This project can be called **Two-Legged**, in that it combines personal and academic development.

• Weaving the Personal Through the Year

As we move through the year's labor of developing students' academic skills, we weave "personal strands" around and through the various activities that develop students' reading, writing, conversing and thinking skills. To carry their personal growth through the more skill-oriented work, students develop and revisit their **Big Questions**, react to and converse about expanded perspectives on course themes and topics using their **Thought Logs**, and engage in self-discovery through **Two-Legged Writings**. Descriptions follow, along with student insights into each of these approaches.

~ Big Questions

Overview

Students begin the course by identifying and writing about "**Big Questions**"--about life, the world, the universe--that they sometimes think about. As new studies commence through the year, they revisit and possibly revise or update these questions. The goal is for students as much as possible to navigate the curriculum of this World Literature and writing course using their own genuine deep interests --well-developed in some students, of course, and just emerging in others--as compasses. Students are regularly encouraged to bring their **Big Questions** to the year's work of developing reading, writing, thinking, speaking, listening, and study skills. Students relate them to our studies when possible, incorporating them as feasible into essays and final exams.

It is also possible for teachers to use students **Big Questions** in designing courses. As time permits, I tally and group students' **Big Questions** for a given year into categories and report results to classes. (See next two pages.) I then use these results in choosing themes and literature for whole class study, as well as titles for **Literature Circles** (a team reading activity).

The "big questions" 112 students in my classes asked in response to the course description and instructions for the "Inquiry #1" writing assignment break into the following groups, in order of frequency:

	<u>period 1</u>	<u>period 2</u>	<u>period 4</u>	<u>period 5</u>	<u>total / %</u>
1) Questions about life in the universe beyond earth.	10	2	6	2	20 / 18%
2) Questions about afterlife (including soul and reincarnation)	9	3	3	2	17 / 15%
3) Questions about destiny (incl. end of world, eternity, personal)	3	5	-	4	12 / 11%
4) Questions about existence of God (creation v. evolution)	1	2	3	3	9 / 8%
4) Questions about personal future/career	3	-	2	4	9 / 8%
5) Questions about (the nature of /relations with) the universe	1	2	2	1	6 / 5%
5) Questions about individual life purpose/uniqueness	-	1	2	3	6 / 5%
5) Questions about the challenges of life	2	2	1	1	6 / 5%
6) Questions about racism, prejudice, respect	3	1	1	-	5 / 4%
7) Questions about beginnings, origins	1			3	4 / 3.6%
7) Questions about humanity's future, millennium	-	1	1	2	4 / 3.6%
7) Questions about the impact of science/technology	2	-	1	1	4 / 3.6%
7) Questions about the problems of greed, money, war	-	2	-	2	4 / 3.6%
8) Questions about love	-	2	-	-	2 / 2%
9) Questions about "true religion" (Truth?)	1	-	-	-	1 / 0.9%
9) Questions about beauty	-	1	-	-	1 / 0.9%
9) Questions about gender issues	1	-	-	-	1 / 0.9%
9) Questions about the limits of human knowledge	-	1	-	-	1 / 0.9%

Tallying and Using Students' Big Questions to Design Sophomore Course

Figure 3

Student Insights on Course Emphasis on "Big Questions"

Melissa T.

(00-01)

One of my "big" questions was "Why do people believe in a god and put their whole life in a god that no one has seen or know exists?" This question still applies to me, but readings from this course have helped me realize why people believe do believe in a god. God gives them hope, security, and just to have someone always there to turn to. This quote [She probably means "question."] is still important to me because I have started to want to turn to God for my problems or my "big" questions.

Tony C.

(00-01)

The Big Questions assignment made me think about how I see the world and what is important to me. My list had questions like "Why are we here?" and those questions made me think about who I am as a person and how I see things. Those questions had a significant impact on my year this year, and without those questions, I don't think that I would have been able to write my Personal Creed or my wisdom essay. They are still meaningful to me because I still want to know if there is an answer to them. If I didn't do those questions, then there is no telling what kind of shape I would have been in now and after the year is over.

The purpose of education is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions... to ask questions of the universe and then learn to live with those questions. [This] is the way he achieves his own identity. **James Baldwin**

Danielle A.

(00-01)

Lately, I have thought about many new "Big" Questions: Who made God? What is my destiny? etc. This course has helped me realize that these questions were in my mind. It has helped to further develop my thinking process. It has brought up questions about destiny, mainly because of *Les Miserables*.

~ The Thought Log: Revelatory Classroom Conversation

Overview

Twice a week or so, students respond in their Thought Logs to quotations, some from revelatory sources, intended to offer expanded perspectives on the themes and literature we are engaged in. Thought Log discussions are consistently among the most popular activities of the year.

Figure 5

Sample Thought Log Responses

"It is not the knowing of the truth that is important, but the searching for it."
-Tardes, a teacher

I don't know whether or not I agree with this quote because knowing what is true is important but equally important is the searching for it. I think one should not spend all of one's time thinking ahead about the truth, but enjoy the present.

"To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong."
-J.L. Pearce

I completely agree with this statement. People are too worried about being wrong and what other people will say. This quote is something I would like to put more of into my life.

"Doors possess magical qualities in stories and fairy tales and folklore. They are entrances through which imagination moves."
-L. Carroll

Although I don't have a very strong opinion about this quote I believe it to be true. I think this quote could also be interpreted that ~~doors~~ are the doors through which the imagination moves.

"If we have no fear it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."
-Martin Luther King Jr.

The reason for conflict and war seems to be that we don't remember that we are all the same inside and we belong to each other. And because we are the same we should be able to coexist together.

Sample Thought Log Quotes (on Love)

from *Weaving in Light*,
forthcoming book of quotes for *universewiring* 21st century classrooms

The present is an egg laid by the past that has the future in its shell.

~ Zora Neale Hurston

Love is dynamic. It can never be captured; it is alive, free, thrilling, and always moving.

~ M. M. Essenger

In love there is no deception. And where there is no deception, there is freedom. And where there is freedom, there is no limitation. ~ T. Tomas

Seek and you shall find; love and you shall be loved.

~ T. Daniel

Remember to always give back love, even when it is the hardest to be tolerant and understanding of others.

~ T. Daniel

Love is infectious, and when human devotion is intelligent and wise, love is more catching than hate. But only genuine and unselfish love is truly contagious.

~ M.C. Hizedek

Love is only born of thoroughgoing understanding of your neighbor's motives and sentiments. It is not so important to love all men today as that each day you learn to love one more human being.

~ M.C. Hizedek

Greater love has no man than this: that he will lay down his life for his friends.

~ Jesus of Nazareth

Change is inevitable; growth and transformation are optional. ~ an educator

Do not make the mistake of confusing knowledge, culture, and wisdom. They are related in life, but they represent vastly different spirit values; wisdom ever dominates and always glorifies culture.

~ Rodan of Alexandria

Failure is simply an educational episode—a cultural experiment in the acquisition of wisdom.

~ Rodan of Alexandria

Student Insights on The Thought Log

Beth S.

(98-99)

The thought logs were something I looked forward to each week. I didn't always share my views, for fear of being attacked by fellow classmates. But I did when I had something I couldn't hold back. But I always got a kick out of hearing my fellow classmates try to persuade others [of their] view. Towards the end of the year people were less shy in my opinion, so the conversations were much more interesting.

The thought logs let us all stand up and fight for what we believe in. It was like little practices for standing up for your rights.... It's like we worked on a whole different part of our brain, feelings. Everyone's point of view, no matter how out there, was added to the conversation. Thought Log discussions were like building blocks to the Personal Creed Project. It forced us to look at things in a different way, and to find a part of us we might have not known existed.

For education to be transformative it must permeate the society, not remain a professional enclave within it.

Moffett 294

Ken M.

(98-99)

The thing I will value the most from this class are the quote logs. I learned many new ways to think of things. I learned how to really understand the reading (?) from practicing my skills on the quote logs. It also got me interested in reading poems.

Monica G.

(98-99)

The other part of this course that I really loved was our class discussions. I love arguing with people and the thought logs gave us good ground.

Suppose we don't so much learn to live as live to learn.

Moffett 332

~ Two-Legged Writings

Overview

Two-Legged Writing Assignments call for academic skills—supporting an assertion with carefully chosen and specific evidence, writing with focus, development, and flow, according to language conventions—to be demonstrated in the writing of a topic created to promote personal discovery.

Sample Two-Legged Writing Assignment

English 10cp Fall Final Exam Essay Prompt

Write about an important change you passed through in 2001. As you follow the instructions below, you will select a change to write about, form an opinion about this change--your essay's **assertion**--and write your essay supporting that opinion. You will learn how to **introduce** your essay by discussing one of the **themes** we have explored in our reading this semester, as the theme is developed in at least one selection of our literature. **The theme you choose should connect to the change you are writing about.** **Conclude** your essay by making an **allusion** to one of these pieces of literature, showing, in a sentence or two, how the theme of this piece of literature relates to your change. **Clinch** your essay with a **related question** to which you'd like to know the answer.

Student Insight on Two-Legged Final Exam Essay

For the first time I was interested in doing a test. *Jamie P. (00-01)*

The Personal Creed Project

A mid-high school rite of personal passage

Overview

The **Personal Creed Project**, most popular among these projects, gives students the opportunity to think about who they are and what they stand for. Students begin by listing key influences in their lives--family, friends, sports or entertainment figures, teachers, mentors, works of art, music, film, turning points in their lives, and (let's hope) literature. Reflecting on this list, they choose the most and least admirable influences, and write a reflective piece explaining why they have made these choices. Then, attempting to stand outside themselves, they imagine what kind of person would select these particular influences as most and least admirable.

The time is ripe for tentative statements of personal creed: these are the kinds of questions I have asked to this point in my life, and this is what I believe, for now, about who I am and what kind of person I am here in the universe to become. After examining this statement critically--from a perspective as nearly *opposite* her own as possible--a student writes a full-blown essay in the reflective mode, concluding with a revised statement of personal creed.

The project culminates in a creative presentation: each student stands before his peers with a poster, collage, painting, song, poem, or other creation, and presents to them his personal creed. Hopefully, students realize some connection between this concluding project and the initial Wisdom Project. Over the years, most students have taken these presentations as seriously as any traditional rite of passage, and a Personal Creed Presentation may be considered an expression of a student's **growth** of what James Moffett might call **personal consciousness**.

Flash: This spring, in the wake of the national award I received in recognition of the Creed project, three colleagues jumped in, two of them taking their students through the experience, the third helping me kick off the student presentations with our own. A member of the Esselen tribe from the Big Sur area, Brett Nelson shared his medicine wheel with us. Made when Brett was 20 of twisted willow branches and hide, the wheel contained symbols representing what he most valued, a Creed project, Indian style. As many as half the sophomore class experienced the project this year, sowing exciting curricular seeds for next year.

Student Insights on The Personal Creed Project

Jennifer's story, told as part of her Creed Presentation to the class:

When my mother was my age she was basically a whore. [Tone and facial expression not judgmental or angry, just descriptive] She got pregnant and had an abortion, got pregnant and had an abortion, got pregnant and had an abortion, and then when she got pregnant again her mother told her it was unhealthy to have another abortion, so I was born.

Still in high school, my mother took care of me for a while until one night when my father, still a teenager himself, came into a room where my mother was the only girl in a roomful of guys drinking and doing drugs. I was on the bed in diapers that hadn't been changed in long enough that they were full of poop and whatever else. My dad took me out of there and has been trying his best to raise me ever since. Now he's 30 and I'm 15.

A while ago I ran away from home and was acting wild until my father sat me down. He told me I was acting very much like someone he once knew, someone we had seen only once since he took me out of that room: When I was eight my dad and I were eating in a Lyon's restaurant one night when a waitress came up and gave me a big hug and left before I could say anything. I asked my dad who she was. "That's your mom," he answered. That's when I started to realize that I was heading down the same road as my mother, and knew that wasn't where I wanted to go.

Jennifer M.

(00-01)

This project totally opened up my eyes to myself and everyone in my class. I have a new level of respect for everyone who presented. It was good for me because I was able to express a hurt and bruised side to a group of people that I normally would not. The audience was awed by everything everyone said. Everyone was respectful because all the walls were open, from the moment the first person started talking to the end everyone respected and loved everyone at that moment.

Puneet S.

(00-01)

My moment that mattered would have to be the Creed presentations because everyone just listened and did not judge you or say something that might have discouraged you they were all there to support you and listen to what you had to say about your life and what you stand for. I really enjoyed the presentations because of this I especially like to listen to everyone else's because I learned things about him or her that I would never have known. Through all the tears and laughter I learned more about my classmates and myself as well. I have never known my classmates as I know them today. I always thought that we were all so different but now I know we are only different in appearance but mostly we all stand for the same things.

[Overtaken by an unscripted moment of truth in her presentation, Puneet confessed to us that she had recently attempted suicide by "cutting." I referred her to the counselor, who later said that she appears to be out of danger. Puneet chose to write about this experience for her "Moment That Mattered," a selection in her end-of-year portfolio.]

Education is a difficult enough process under any circumstances, because educational effort is primarily an expression of hope on the part of the students. *T. Ham*

Jordan McM.

(01-02)

This project made my views change dramatically towards people. [During the presentations,] I got inside their heads for five minutes and it truly helped me feel them and where they are coming from. As humans, we need more humanity in our lives This project is the essentials of how to get at that point towards others.

Jenae S.

(99-00)

I have to say this is the most meaningful project I have ever done in my school years.

Consciously or not, the man in the street [and girl in her seat!] cries for meaning and purpose and will seek it in trivial or destructive ways if no framework exists through which to give significance to daily life. *Moffett 31*

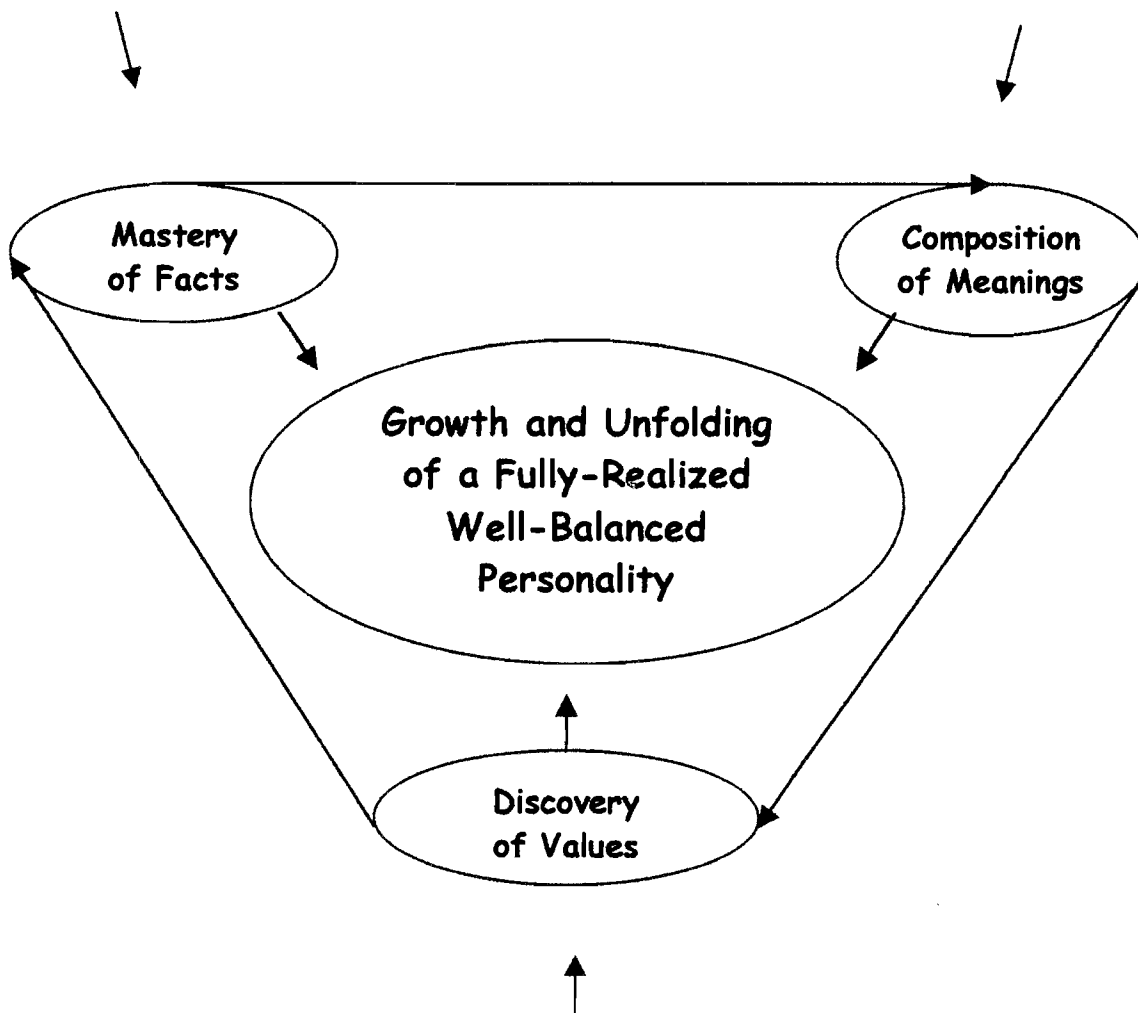
Figure 6

The Learning Experience Behind the Enthusiasm

Central Aim of Learning, Continuum of Learning Purposes,
with Connections to Personal Creed Project

Creed Step I:
Your Life Influences

Creed Step II:
Most and Least Admirable Influences



Creed Step III:
What You Stand For

My Personal Creed and Mission

The universe is a mountain.

Life's goal is to ascend it.

There are as many paths up the mountain as people to walk them.

My life is about finding my path up, and walking it.

People and events teach me to choose my steps and keep walking.

Religion may feed my roots, but I must bring my soul to flower.

My path is made of my choices.

My footsteps are leading me in two great adventures:

- discovering and coming into the gifts that lie inside me,
- and helping others find and cultivate their own gifts.

To learn to do these things well, with a calm, grateful heart. . .

And a lot of love . . .

This is my mission.

J. Creger, June 2002
begun at the request of a class
6 June 1998

Two-Legged Reflections

The Sophomore Course and Beyond

Student Insights on the Sophomore Course

Frank W.

(99-00)

For me, this course was about finding who I am and my purpose on Earth, but to the Board of Education this course was about improving my ability to read and write. I believe that they have succeeded in their goal, and as you read these works [in his yearend portfolio], I hope you will see that I have met mine as well.

Yes, public education should help people get jobs, get along, and get ahead, but that had better happen as part of benefitting human culture and consciousness. *Moffett xv*

Vince M.

(00-01)

In the beginning of the year I felt that all of these kids who had [Mr. Creger's] class last year as freshmen were weirdos because they always were nice and open to discussions. I ended up realizing that they just wanted all of us to feel the same way about them as they felt about us.

An accurate gauge of effective learning is the magnitude of love that complements conscious action. *Veronica Islander*

Jennifer M.

(00-01)

You come into this thinking it's just a normal boring English class and leave more open and happy.

Plan C
Personal Learning-Centered
21st Century Curriculum Templates

Figure 7

Template for 21st Century English Curriculum
created with students, for students

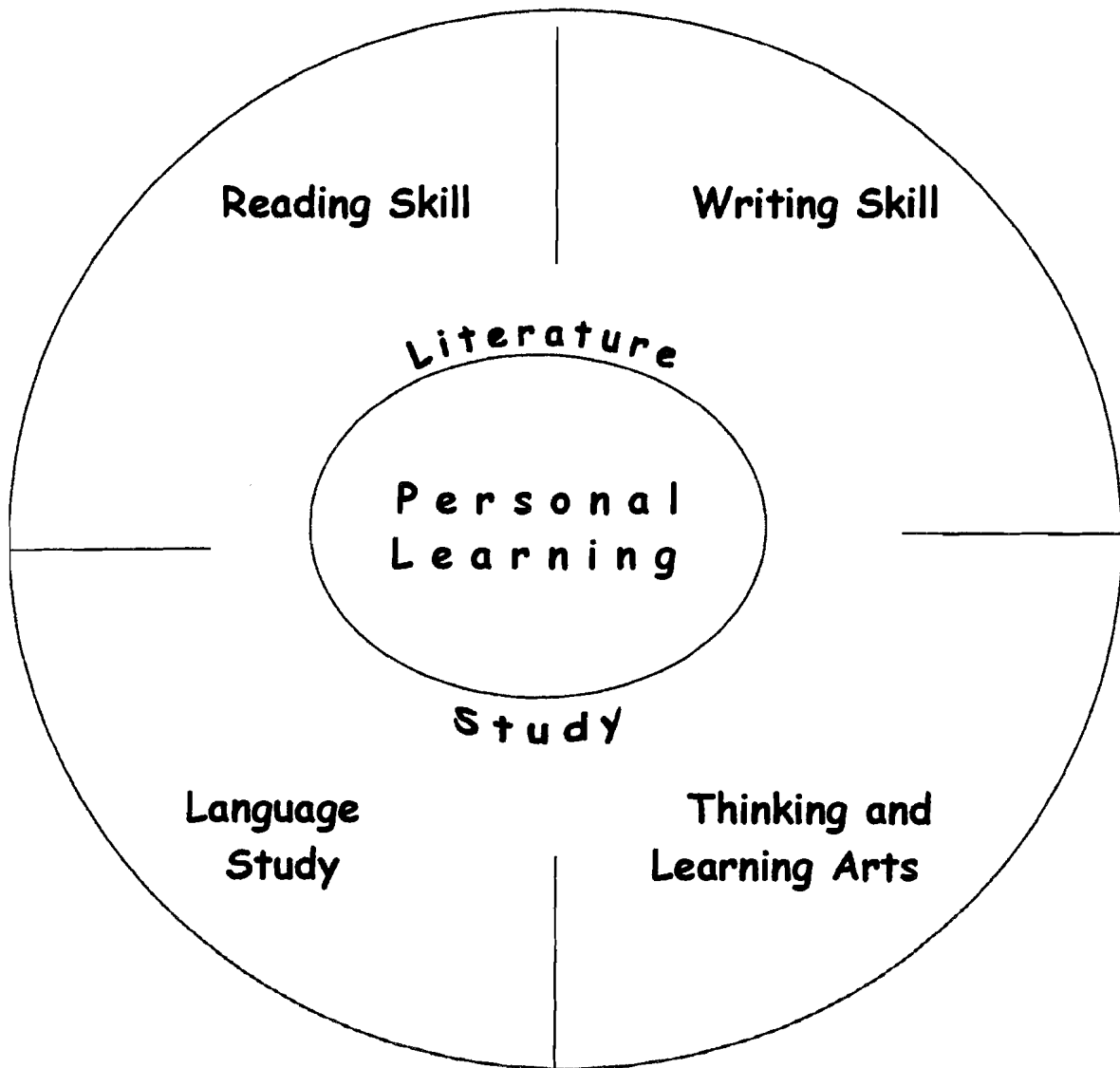
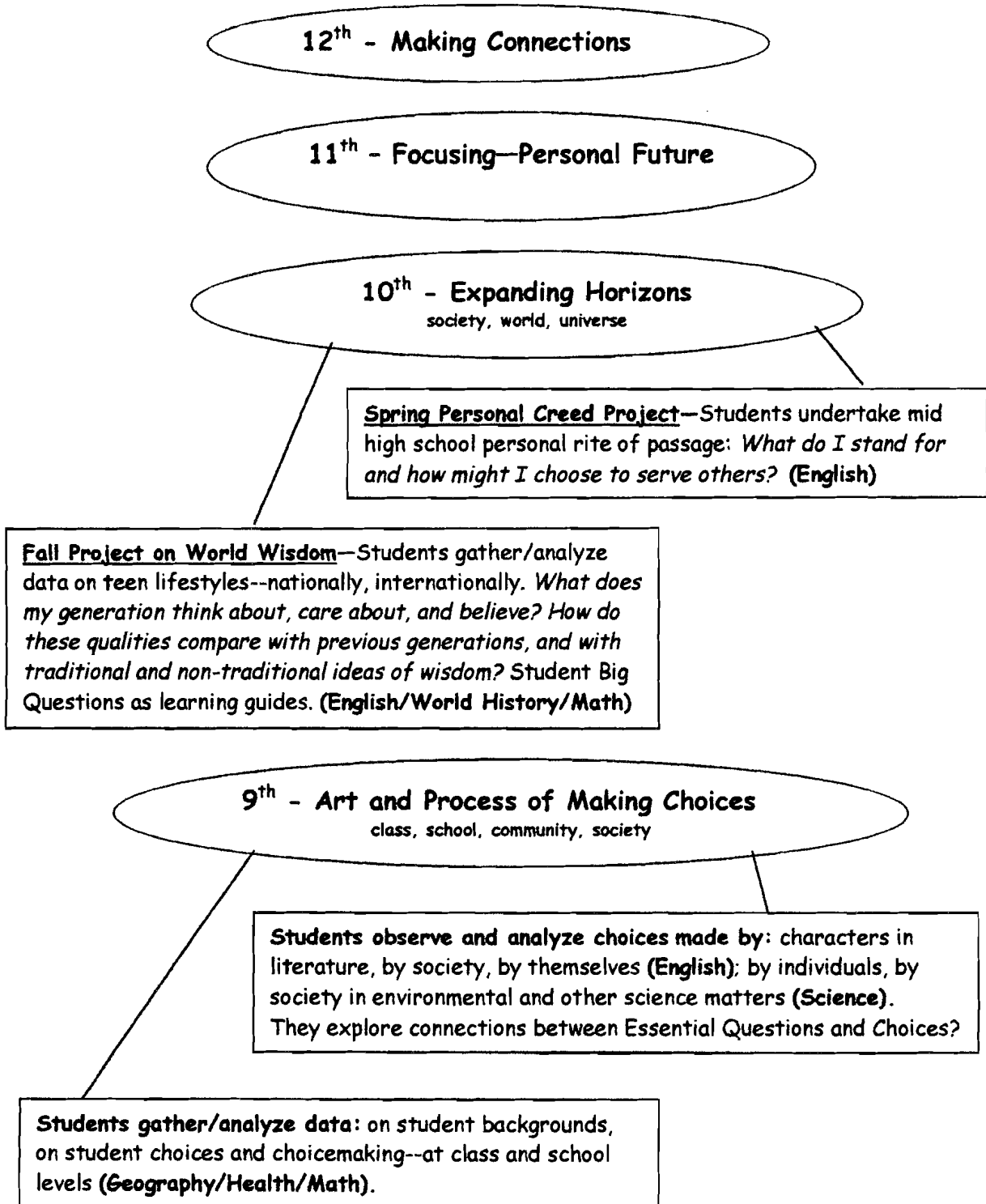


Figure 9

In-Process Draft of A Schoolwide Model

Personal Leg of American High School Curriculum
Possible Grade-Level Themes, 9-12

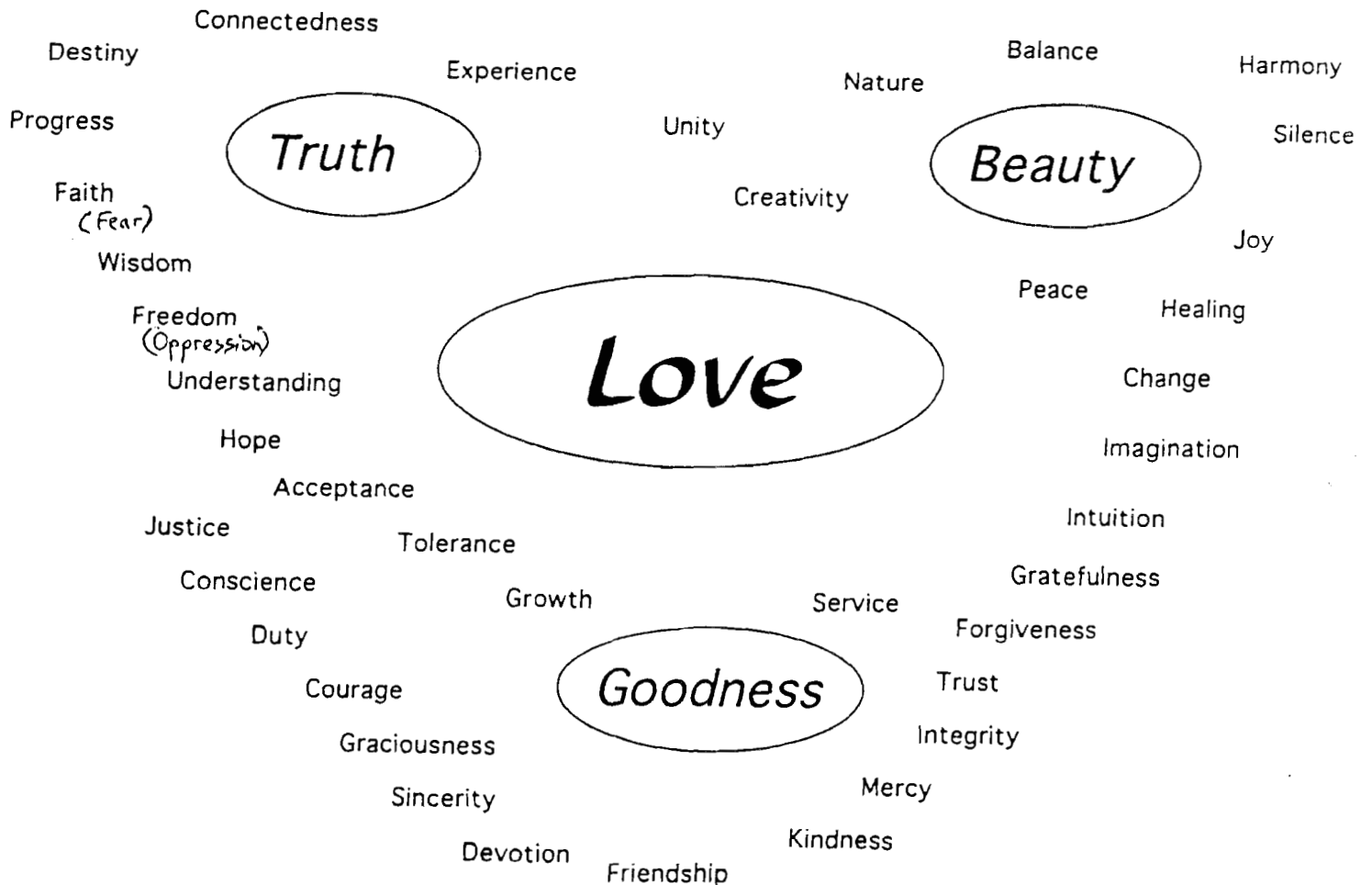


Behind the Scenes: Further Options in Two-Legged Design

- **Cosmos-Friendly Themes**

A starting point in designing a Two-Legged Course. I use an overarching theme—"Envisioning a Life" for my sophomore course, "The Art and Practice of Choicemaking" for my freshman course—and create a subsidiary theme—*Courage, Love, Destiny* (and/or their opposites)—for each study. Ideally, course themes relate to grade level themes (for example, "Expanding Horizons" for sophomores, "Thoughtful Choices" for freshmen).

Figure 10



• Lighting Up the Dark Canon

Use more literature presenting students an inviting, well-lighted universe. A few Cosmos-Friendly titles I find especially effective among my students:

- * ***Les Miserables*** (secondary)
a vision of a compassionate universe of powerful growth and progress, beginning amid suffering on earth
- * ***Jane Eyre*** (secondary, college)
a vision of spiritual growth assisted by nature, heaven, and prayer in a responsive universe
- * ***Their Eyes Were Watching God*** (secondary, college)
a vision of a universe in which love and goodness of heart can transcend even the legacy of earthly slavery
- * **Poetry of Rumi**
arguably the greatest spiritual poet in world history, Rumi remains widely read today in the U.S.. Effortlessly blends Muslim, Jewish, and Christian themes and images.
- * ***The Alchemist*** (secondary, college)
a millennial fable about finding one's relationship to the world and to others.
universal appeal, international connections
- * **Any and all in the Harry Potter series** (all ages)
filled with rich, surprisingly subtle spiritual messages for a world on the brink of discovering the rich multilayered variety of life in the universe
- * **Other titles from audience?**

~ Revelatory Passages in *Les Miserables*

Progress, the Soul, and Destiny

1) The book which the reader now has before his eyes is, from one end to the other, in its whole and in its details, whatever may be the intermissions, the exceptions, or the defaults, the march from evil to good, from injustice to justice, from the false to the true, from night to day, from appetite to conscience, from rottenness to life, from brutality to duty, from Hell to Heaven, from nothingness to God. Starting point: matter; goal: the soul.
Hydra at the beginning, angel at the end. (436)

2) Courage and forward! Citizens, whither are we tending? We are tending toward the union of the peoples; we are tending toward the unity of man. (Enjolras at the barricade, 416)

9) God can add nothing to the happiness of those who love one another but to give them unending duration. After a life of love, an eternity of love is an augmentation indeed; but to increase its intensity the ineffable felicity which love gives to the soul in this world is impossible, even with God. God is the plenitude of heaven; love is the plenitude of man.

10) You look at a star from two motives; because it is luminous and because it is impenetrable. You have at your side a softer radiance and a greater mystery: woman.

11) If you are stone, be loadstone; if you are plant, be sensitive; if you are man, be love.

12) "Does she still come to the Luxembourg?' 'No, monsieur.' 'She hears mass in this church, does she not?' 'She comes here no more.' 'Does she still live in this house?' 'She has moved away!' 'Whither has she gone to live?' 'She did not say!' What a gloomy thing, not to know the address of one's soul!"

~ Student Comments on *Les Miserables*

On the novel's ending:

1) If I were to re-write this story, I would not change one thing or event in the ending. It was the most attention-grabbing and soul-moving ending that a hero can have. It made Jean Valjean's pilgrimage to enlightenment fulfilled and perfection was accomplished. From a selfish thief, he had become a selfless saint. I think that Hugo is indeed saying that a human being's quest in life is to strive toward perfection. . . . (Monica Yun, 99-00)

On the novel's vision of love

2) The part of Marius' letter I choose to write about reminded me that I am a romantic; always have been, always will be. . . True love does come from the soul. When you fall in love with someone you don't fall in love with their looks. You fall in love with their soul, the one thing that is unique, the way they look at life, their personality, that's their soul. . . So I think that this is not only the most beautiful part of Marius' letter. It is also the most deep and insightful thing I've ever read about love. - (Megan Irwin, 99-00)

3) All next day in the store she thought resisting thoughts about Tea Cake. She even ridiculed him in her mind and was a little ashamed of the association. But every hour or two the battle had to be fought all over again. She couldn't make him look just like any other man to her. He looked like the love thoughts of women. He could be a bee to a blossom--a pear tree blossom in the spring. He seemed to be crushing scent out of the world with his footsteps. Crushing aromatic herbs with every step he took. Spices hung about him. He was a glance from God.

4) Of course he wasn't dead. He could never be dead until she herself had finished feeling and thinking. The kiss of his memory made pictures of love and light against the wall. Here was peace. She pulled in her horizon like a great fish-net. Pulled it from around the waist of the world and draped it over her shoulder. So much of life in its meshes! She called in her soul to come and see.

5) "It's uh known fact, Pheoby, you got tuh go there tuh know there. Yo' papa and yo' mama and nobody else can't tell yuh and show yuh. Two things everybody's got tuh do fuh theyselves. They got tuh go tuh God, and they got tuh find out about livin' fuh theyselves."

- **Other Two-Legged Options for Discussion**

- **Sharing Your Personal Growth With Students**
- **Meditating (solo and with students)**
- **Praying for Your Students**
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Two of My Favorite Testimonials From Students

Arriving chronically late, sleeping in class, Nicole Verser did failing work most of spring semester. In the end she earned a passing grade. I think she slowly began to see for herself the value in the elements of the course described earlier. I share her course evaluation below not only to boast shamelessly, but to offer an especially credible student voice in support of the Two-Legged approach I am attempting to develop and describe, and other approaches dedicated to intertwine personal growth with academic development like it. Thank you, Nicole, for your kind words and your spelling.

I found this course interesting and certainly an exciting experience. Many people thought your work was too abundant but I find you a fantastic teacher and your intentions for your students full of your soul. I can't remember a teacher I have enjoyed as much as I did you. Your organization and comfort made me want to learn. I enjoyed your course and your next year's student are truly lucky. Thank you and have a good summer! (97-98)

~

I would say to keep the Creed Project & Portfolio. I really liked them because I got to explore myself and my belief. I never really thought of my beliefs or needed to for school, so these projects you should keep. The only thing I think you should change is the presentation of our creed projects. I get way too nervous around a lot of people, making presentations, so I wouldn't want others to almost embarrass themselves like me. Harvin Toledo, chief class disrupter (97-98)

Comments from Workshop Participants

"I experienced. . .

- . . . hope. Comfort that we're all in this together."
- . . . a very interesting journey through your process of growth and how you've carried that into your classroom."
- . . . many wonderful ways to enhance what I'm already doing in the classroom."
- . . . a great way to help have a deeper class allowing more growth leading to a better understanding. And a diving board to create a unit that my kids REALLY need."
- . . . exactly what I wanted."
- . . . more emphasis on spirituality, the inside of a person."
- . . . We really talked about spiritual development in students. What a treat to discuss this with other educators."
- . . . more ideas for the classroom and a reminder to get back to spiritual growth in my own life."
- . . . a reconnection with my own spirituality! Thanks!"

I most value. . .

- . . . your passion for the topic, flexibility in responding to our needs, and your friendliness."
- . . . the work you've done here, how very valuable it is!"
- . . . your handout."
- . . . This is powerful stuff and you're on the cutting edge. You're making a difference. What joy!! I'm so happy to be on the same path."
- . . . hitting the need for spirituality without connecting it to religion."
- . . . the boldness with which you're presenting some radical ideas."
- . . . what you do/have done in the classroom."
- . . . the discussion, the info shared, and all the materials to take home and ponder."
- . . . I enjoyed the quotes and pondering! Thanks so much for the great packet."
- . . . the packet and the sincerity with which the workshop was presented."
- . . . psychic space to think about my own philosophy."

About Your Presenter

John Creger has taught English and ESL at American High School in Fremont CA since 1987. The 2001 recipient of NCTE's James Moffett Memorial Award, he was also one of 13 nominees for Fremont Unified School District's Teacher of the Year (1999-2000). He has served as a California State Mentor Teacher (93-95) and been nominated by former students to four editions of *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* ('92, '94, '98, 02). John did graduate work in Literature at San Francisco State University where he wrote the thesis, *The Responsive Universe: Spiritual Awareness in Western Literature from Blake to the Millennium* (1997). He offered the first in his "Universe-Wired" workshop series for teachers at the national conference of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)'s Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning (AEPL) in June 1998. His emphasis is on creating conditions for deepened motivation in students and workshop participants by designing activities, courses, and curriculum to bring in perspectives on the "big picture," particularly in response to "big questions" about life, reality, and the universe. His approach evolves from the "surprising ways the universe keeps finding to deal with my old big questions and bring me new ones."

He can be reached at the addresses on the cover of this booklet.
For more information, visit www.universeWired.com (site up spring 2003)

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For moral qualities are advanced...much more through the effects of habit, by our reasoning powers, by instruction, by religion, etc., than through natural selection.... *Charles Darwin 359*

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Closing Journal

Answer in writing and/or discuss with your neighbor(s) any or all of the questions below, as you choose.

a) How successfully has this workshop dealt with the initial question?

If learning can accurately be called the primary fuel of human progress, and James Moffett was right that education's greatest single problem is the *de-personalizing* of learning, how then--in classrooms, in schools, in communities--can we create what Moffett called a "special culture" that engages and nourishes us *personally* as we learn?

b) What have you learned in this workshop that you feel is of value?

c) How could you make what you've learned real in your life and/or work?

Weaving Revelation in Students' Learning and Lives

A Universe-Wired Conversation

Workshop Evaluation

I came here expecting:

FELLOWSHIP, SHARING OF TRUTH

I actually experienced:

WISDOM

I most value:

YOUR PERSONALTY

I least value:

I make the following suggestion / comment:

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

Please add me to your mailing list for information and upcoming Universe-Wired or Two-Legged workshops and materials. Project Pending: *Weaving in Light*: quotes to spark personal insight and deepened motivation in the classroom. (booklet)

Name: NORMAN INGRAM I describe myself as (check all that apply):

Address: 8316 COMSTOCK AVE. a teacher

WHITTIE, CA 90602 a student

email: ~~norman~~ noylastave an administrator

Please email / snailmail the following materials: APL.com parent/community member

spiritual seeker

Please tear off and leave this evaluation with me.

Thank you for participating!