

Lyrics & Life-Long Learning

Reflecting on the first entry I made to this portfolio, I think it summed up a lot of the magic within Social Studies. I think back on listening to music and the impact it resonated to make me question things beyond what I knew, finding out the truth, uncovering hidden gems and insights, etc. As a class, in grade 9, we didn't just listen to the lyrics, we investigated, reflected, engaged in discourse... We brought out the historical snapshots buried within the verses. This concept of decoding culture brings me to Rage Against the Machine reference that I made and was proud to see it brought up as well in the Ender & Varga article (2022). I felt validated in my passion for the lyrics and lessons that I've learned over the years.

It made me realize that I now want to apply this same sort of aspect to my classroom. In other words, if Rage Against the Machine inspired me to ask questions and learn on my own, what can I as a teacher implement to create an inquiry mindset within my future students? I came up with the idea of writing a question on the board for each lesson -however long that lesson lasts, adding other questions, getting students to ask their own questions and making that an approach to learning. This activity means I can take control and spur on an inquiry or I can instead have the students take agency and lead with their own pursuits.

I feel like this is a win/win for everyone. It will create a positive classroom environment, centred around inquiry-based learning, and help students feel safe even if they don't know the answers on the outset. Furthermore, do all questions need to be answered? Absolutely not. Some questions will simply be there to make them think. Maybe it will challenge assumptions, open up the floor to discourse, or maybe just be an enduring pursuit. We've all heard the adage that "there are no stupid questions," but I want to make that a reality. My ultimate goal is to create a safe environment where students feel free to make mistakes, take chances, and learn from them. By using the same investigative spirit that allowed me to decode complex lyrics, I want my students to take charge, work with me in their learning, relate to the world around them, and be proud of what they find.

References

Ender, T. & Varga, B.A. (2022). The use of music to connect the past, present and future. *The Social Studies*, 113(5), 217-222.