

Jasmine Hester

English 102

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Interview

Writing Assignment #5

After a few failed attempts, I finally had the opportunity to interview Lindy Merriman. She is the senior English teacher and student council sponsor at Mt. Pleasant High School, in Mt. Pleasant, TX. She is also a very close friend of mine, and probably one of the coolest teachers I've ever had.

**Jasmine:** What made you want to become teacher?

**Mrs. Merriman:** I was not what you would consider the "norm" when it came to why I decided to teach. Most of my colleagues say that they had a calling to teach and that they knew they wanted to be a teacher from the time that they were young. I, however, did not feel this way. When I was in high school I hated school and if you had told me ten years ago that I was going to become a teacher I never would have believed you. Ultimately, I chose to become a teacher to be closer to my daughter. I got pregnant with her while I was still in college and I wanted to choose a profession in which I could be close to her and spend a great deal of time with her.

**Jasmine:** Why did you choose English?

**Mrs. Merriman:** I chose to teach English because it has always been my very favorite subject and I have always had an extreme love for literature more so than just your average book reader.

**Jasmine:** In what ways, if any, does your teaching style differ from other English teachers?

**Mrs. Merriman:** I enjoy teaching because it is just simply a fun job. I get to interact and laugh most of my day. I do have some days (and students) that are better than others but that just goes with the territory. I get to share information with the students and help guide them in the right direction (hopefully). I also enjoy working with my co-workers. Mt. Pleasant is a great school and I really enjoy teaching there.

**Jasmine:** What is your own opinion on why many of your students think you're a pretty awesome teacher?

**Mrs. Merriman:** I believe that my students like me because I relate to them more than most teachers. I tend to be laid back and easy going so it all kind of plays off each other. I do feel that most of the kids like me mainly because I am willing to take a joke and I relate to them. I like to have fun as long as it is within reasonable limits and I think that comes across in my class :) but then they could just say they like me because I am easy.

**Jasmine:** You are still a very young teacher, how does your age help or hurt you?

**Mrs. Merriman:** My age both helps me and hurts me. On one hand it does cause me to connect to the students more because I am closer to their generation and on the other hand it causes me to have a more difficult time separating myself from the students.

**Jasmine:** What is your own personal definition of literacy?

**Mrs. Merriman:** My personal definition of literacy is not only the ability to read and write but the ability to read and write fluently and at the appropriate grade level.

**Jasmine:** Do you think literacy is an important skill to have?

**Mrs. Merriman:** I believe that literacy is one of the most important skills that a person can have because it affects everything else in their life. Even daily routines are affected by the ability to read or write.

**Jasmine:** Deborah Brandt describes literacy “sponsors” as any factor that can help or hurt you in developing your ability to read and write well. Growing up, did you have any literacy sponsors?

If so, who were they and how did they help or hurt you, and how did you benefit from it?

**Mrs. Merriman:** The person that acted as a literacy sponsor for me when have been my father. I watched him read all the time and he saved books for me to read as I got older. I started reading at a very young age and I believe it was partly because of him as a role model and his encouragement.

It was an honor having the opportunity to interview my old teacher and good friend Mrs. Merriman. This interview shows why she is one of my main literacy sponsors.

Works Cited

Brandt, Deborah. "Sponsors of Literacy." Literacies in Context. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Southlake, TX:

Fountainhead Press, 2008. 12-33.

Merriman, Lindy. Personal Interview. 20 April 2010