Initial Post:

Hello Professor and classmates,

The article I selected in Unit 3 addresses the psychological development of adolescents. I am interested in teaching middle school English, so learning more about how adolescents develop is important to me. I have included my pre-writing below:

Going through the pre-teen and teenage years can be very difficult. Teens begin seeking their independence but are not really psychologically ready to be adults. Teachers really need to know not only about the content they will be teaching but also their students. Each student is different and they will go through developmental stages at different times. What does this mean for me? How will I reach all students? How will I address their psychological needs and academic needs? I think I need to examine my own strengths and weaknesses. There are many skills, behaviors, and qualities that may be valuable to the success of a middle school English teacher. Middle school English teachers work every day with preteens and teenagers, so they must be patient. I tend to be very patient. I have raised two teenagers and while I know they can be frustrating at times, they are ultimately good kids. Teachers need to be understanding of students’ needs and hormonal mood swings. Middle school English teachers will need to be supportive. They also must be resourceful and technically savvy because most teenagers are accustomed to using cell phones and social media. I love technology and can usually figure things out quickly. I will need to be able to remain calm and cool, no matter what. Some skills middle school English teachers should possess are the ability to break down complex topics into chunks of information students can better understand and to teach to a wide variety of learning styles and skill levels. This is something I am not fully skilled in but I think my education courses will prepare me for teaching and in time I will feel comfortable developing lesson plans and presenting information to teenagers. My sister is a middle school science teacher, and she will really be a great resource as I work towards my degree and when I begin teaching.

This activity was pretty fun and really helped me think about my article and my future career! I appreciate any feedback!

Claire

Participation Post:

Hi Claire,
I also enjoyed freewriting, and I will definitely use it again in the future. It helped me to not only generate a lot of good ideas, but also to begin to see some relationships between the various aspects of my topic. I now have a good idea about what direction I want to head in with my upcoming assignment.

You mention that your sister is a middle school science teacher. You may want to consider writing your Unit 4 assignment to her. She would certainly be a great audience to target since she is familiar with the topic and could also help you answer some of the questions you have posed. When I look at your pre-writing, it seems like the purpose is to explain how knowledge of adolescent psychology can help you become a better teacher. Is that the direction you intend to take in your assignment? I think it would work well. You could develop paragraphs based on the characteristics you have identified and then give examples of how you possess those characteristics or will learn about them in the future.

Hope your assignment goes well!

Thomas