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A Case Study on Perspectives

Whitney Tallarico
designsbywhitney@gmail.com

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A Case Study on Perspective

Whitney Lee Tallarico
Faculty Sponsor: Robert Leuci, English

The Rhode Island Training School becomes a home to juvenile offenders of the law. Home, in so far as it is a place that they sleep, eat, and spend a lot of time in, as well as the atmosphere in which learning and growth occur during the adolescent phase of their lives. There is a very high rate of released inmates who return to the facility for things like running away from group homes, not checking in with their parole officers, or other misdemeanors. It is my belief that this is, at least in part, due to the fact that the mindset or perspective that inmates must take on in order to function within the facility is not the same one that they need to survive in the real world. In order to function well within the facility, an inmate is expected to obey orders, not make choices. It is hard enough to become a self-aware, thoughtful adolescent in a high school setting, but it is even more difficult for inmates to develop good skills required to be successful members of society while other offenders of the law surround them.

For my Senior Honor's Project, I wanted to see if I could develop a class that would promote the ability to change a person's perspective. My thought was that a person who is able to see the world through different eyes in theory would be better equipped to change his own perspective when the situation required him to do so. For my class, I chose three subject areas-art, short stories, and poetry-and attempted to build a curriculum that would allow students to take on different mindsets during their time in my class and hopefully in their daily lives. I will be presenting the curriculum that I developed and discussing the progress that I have made while teaching thus far.