

WHAT WORKS

Themes

The themes in the article are powerful as they are likely to resonate with a cross section of readership, from educators to parents to children to a general reader who may not have thought of himself as creative. One of the stronger themes I identified was how listening is misconceived as obeying. In a blog [here](#), I talk about what makes for credible writing. Of the three points, I emphasize on whether a story can make the reader feel compassionate towards himself, the world or towards the author. The article made me feel compassionate towards my younger self and also towards the teacher. Kudos for that!

There are other beautiful and strong themes such as the role a teacher plays, what is art and how you have grown as an art teacher. The good part is that they are all connected and I believe that you can use your discretion to play one as the primary theme and others as secondary.

While this assessment is restricted to 'Unknown', I thought it was important to mention that even in *Unknwon*, the way you portray the theme (mistakes v perfection) was strong.

Length

The length of the articles seemed fair considering they were meant as blogs (?). I see these as personal essays, and hence the scope to add more.

Language

I felt the strength in your language was the simplicity. For instance, 'I was asked a hundred times if my students listen to me, and I always thought, do they have to?' I like how the question posed at the reader is reflected back to those who likely pose it: parents and educators. Besides, you answer it in less than 20 words (why do they have to listen at all?). Well done! Of course, this is not to say there is no room for improvement in language.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK

Although I usually describe things that did not work in this section, the points mentioned below rather stress on what can be done to strengthen the impact of the writing.

Structure

I encourage you to think about the themes to develop a working structure. The first step for the same is to ask yourself what is the most important thing you wish to talk about? It may be that you want to talk about self discovery (e.g your 'craziness') during art classes or share a message with educators and parents (e.g. it is OK to make mistakes). Whatever be the answer, you can use it as your guiding light to organize the essay. Although you had interesting ideas, I wondered what it would be like if the article was built around a primary theme.

General v specific

Sometimes I found myself wanting more information or felt confused. Here I will share only one example. When you say I looked like them, could you not tell the reader which year was this, what did you look like then, how was it different from before, in your view what made you look like them, were you told the same frequently? Remember that details make for a richer story.

Character

I noticed that even though you mentioned your students, the reader does not meet a student as a character. You could not only show how these students dressed, how they spoke, what was it like interacting with them but also show the reader a student who stood out in your perspective. This way you can also avoid generalizing all students. It would be heartening to see the teacher enter the student's psyche and show his or her view on listening v obeying or other themes.

Show v tell

I noticed that the article mentions art class but I found myself wanting to *see* the room, the way it was lit, the students in the room etc. Will the reader not gain a better sense of the world you are talking about if for instance he could *see* that when you entered the class, the first thing that struck you was the paint splashed on the tables and hands of the students who were singing a particular song out of rhythm? This is a lay example.

Unknown programme

As I mentioned before, it is an interesting programme and a much needed one. I noticed that useful information that could benefit the target audience was missing. Read below to see what can be added.

Overview (200- 500 words): describing what it is, how is it different, target audience, special features.

What are the objectives?

What will the student learn?

What will the student gain?

Number of classes: Range

Fee: Range

ENDS