

Name:

Eng : Period

A Mr. Reese Mini-Sermon: Be Fascinated

Date:

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It Took Me 25 Years to Write This. Now it's Yours.

We have made it very clear over the course of the first four weeks that we are here in room 208 to gain knowledge, skills, and wisdom together. It's time to get a little more specific. In ELA we will constantly be working toward becoming better readers, writers, thinkers, and people. But how? By studying what it means to be human, or what we'll call the human condition.

Maybe the coolest part of this class is the fact that every single week we get to read, watch, listen to, look at, and study texts which illustrate how life, how being human, how this planet, is fascinating.

This is not a chore. This is not even a duty. This is an opportunity! Each week is an opportunity! Like, I might fall out of my chair with excitement right now!

Remember what we said was the goal for our first AotW? It was to walk away from the reading with a little more knowledge about the topic and maybe, hopefully, a little more knowledge about yourself. How freaking cool is that? Think about it! Each and every week we have an opportunity to explore, learn about, and discover things about *who we are* and *the world we live in*. Now look out. It ain't always gonna be a picnic. In fact, it seems like everything is a "good news–bad news" combo meal. For example, I agree with Plato who, in about 400 BCE, said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." But I also agree with Malcolm X who, about 2,400 years later added, "The examined life is painful." The good news–bad news combo is also in the words of feminist Gloria Steinem who in 1998 said, "The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off." Maybe that's the yin and yang of life. Yin and yang. Two cosmic forces that are at once opposing and strangely complimentary at the exact same time. See? It's amazing! Life

is complex. Life is rich. Life is an amalgamation of all sorts of things! But here is *the thing*, if you train your eyes to see the glory and wonder in life, you will start to see it everywhere. (← That's the Reticular Activating System, or RAS, which we'll discuss later.) And that is amazing! I mean, who does not want to see the glory and wonder in life?!! Who doesn't want to get smarter and wiser? Who doesn't want to understand themselves or the world they live in a little better?

So here is my advice. Learn to embrace the process of learning. Try your best to find joy in the process. It really does come down to your attitude—which is something you actually can control. You! You get to choose your attitude! No, it's not always easy. For example, no you don't get to choose next week's AotW, but you do get to choose *how you will engage with it*. So, in simplest terms it comes down to this: would you like to have a positive experience in this class—and maybe even in all of school? In all of life? If so, it comes down to one thing. Just one simple thing. Try to enjoy learning. If I could give this to you, trust me, I would. But I can't give it to you. I can only show you. You are the one who has to take it.