**Hank / JJ: Mori, “School”**

Hank began by giving the background of the reading, the author.

Nice work noting the general focus.

You then gave a general overview of the Japanese school system versus the American school system. You spoke well in your overview, giving the calligraphy example for Mori’s essay.

You spoke about *ronin* and people who don’t do well in school.

Then, you spoke about the intricacies of the American school system.

JJ spoke about the rhetorical analysis of the text; nicely done here, as you gave nice details about it (though you mumbled a bit…).

You gave the “earthquake story” dealing with the *ikebana* and described the anecdote dealing with Michiko.

Hank spoke about the allusions, particularly with Japanese words throughout the writing.

JJ then went to the *ie*… and described the questions…

Hank / JJ Questions:

* How could American students benefit from a more Japanese structured school system?
* Is the American or Japanese system more beneficial and why?
* Does the American system of learning display a better working system? (Do we benefit from multiple ways of learning? Comparison with Emerson: Is our system vomiting students from the system?)

Nick Wright / Alex Johnson

Nick spoke about the basis of *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, David Sedaris.

You discussed how Sedaris learned his French well, but he was afraid to say

Alex spoke about the rhetoric (ethos…humor…diversity… “Everyone getting shit on”). People can relate to situations like this—where they can’t please a teacher. This works on his ethos, his pathos.

Nick spoke about other texts dealing with strict versus lax teachers.

* *Dead Poets Society*
* *Glory Road*
* *The Karate Kid*
* *School*
* *Story of My Life*
* *When Pride Still Mattered*

You gave plenty of analogues here dealing with the texts from this unit. Nicely done connecting.

Questions:

* Is it better to have a teacher that is strict or supportive?
* How does this relate to “School?”
* How does the tonal change at the ending of the essay affect the overall message?
* What role does Sedaris’s inclusion of gibberish words play?

Seminar Discussion

Absent: Poch, Olinger

Geyer: Baldwin—school systems match society. That’s the case in Mori. One system works excellently in the context of a society.

Spuzzillo: Injustice = arbitrary grading…

* Geyer: Go to an American college
* Fendinger: What if you can’t ?
* Worobetz: Tough to get into college.
* Nick W: Tough to get in…
* Taylor: Zen…
* Geyer: If education prepares you well for that lifestyle—not telling you how to do stuff—isn’t that acceptable?
* Taylor: Stepmother talking to a small child = can’t be punished…
* Worobetz: Punishes, but also removes error, therefore making them better.
* Fendinger: Swimming = child abuse.
* JJ Harper: In the real culture, that has led to her friends being stuck in marriages; societies and school systems can be broken.
* Marshall: Did the education shape society, or vice versa? John is saying that they’re working hand-in-hand…
* Menke: Education system, society changing?
* Geyer: Who’s to say that a society is broken? Respecting elders, filial piety (“That’s Chinese”)
* Spuzzillo: That comes at the cost of individualism, human freedom; we do have a moral responsibility
* Taylor: Respecting elders is not fun
* Geyer: If you value your perception of society more than your happiness…
* Spuzz: Isn’t that the mind of a sick person?
* Geyer: It’s all relative…
* Taylor: There’s something wrong with a situation…

Eble: Tried to steer away from general relativism…

* Spuzzillo: There are wrong ways…
* Geyer: Works well for rote memorization…
* Spuzzillo: That’s not optimal…
* Worobetz: You have to get something right…
* Nick Wright: Difference between algebra two, physics; it’s going from a paragraph to action. The math of physics isn’t tough.
* Marshall: Cousin trying to be an engineer in Case Western. 70% of classmates are Asian. Hard math versus conceptual math.
* Jared Diesslin: Workers at McDonald’s can make a burger perfectly, but if someone wants a burger without an ingredient…
* Worobetz: People in low-end, high-end education are “the same?”
* Diesslin: Huh?
* Worobetz: Tried to clarify…
* Diesslin: Clarified—focus is on application…
* Eble tried to clarify…
* Fendinger: Practice each style in moderation… back to Baldwin: America’s education system in the 1960’s = teach the society. You can alter the machine, not ditch it.
* Worobetz: Have a multitude of ways to learn.

JJ Harper: Is having different ways to learn a subject important?

* Eble: One way to transmit information
* Schutter: Everyone learns in a different way…shared an anecdote dealing with a grade school student memorizing, reading… impossible to fit everyone in one form…
* Eble: According to your Western-educated mind?
* Schutter: Sister and I study differently…
* Worobetz: People in Japan are brought up differently…
* Menke: That’s a bit broad…
* Wright: Big difference…
* Menke: Wouldn’t they say the same in Japan?
* Worobetz: Well, a bit…
* Geyer: Take a step back—let’s not make too many broad statements…
* JJ Harper: Teacher’s College Press at Columbia—spoke about “psychological damage” from such examinations.
* Geyer: Balance that with South Korea saying our system is patriotic propaganda. We have competitive schools, too; one test and you’re out. Our system isn’t that much worse.

Wright: We can transition—Japanese schools or the one in “Me Talk Pretty One Day?”

* Geyer: Both have a little line of “it was so hard that I just gave up.” Too arbitrary? Chemistry example: The AP test / preparation.
* JJ Harper: *It’s Kind of a Funny Story*… (some clamor about that)
* Eble: So… in Eastern culture—stress comes from parents / teachers. Where in our culture?
* Fendinger: Personal stress…
* Connor Peed: *Dead Poets Society*…
* Sanders: In those cases—*Dead Poets Society*—those parents reminded us of this Japanese system.
* Geyer: Much comes from personal pressure.
* Taylor: That varies from person to person…
* Eble: So—cultural values? Intrinsic motivation…
* Eippert: Challenged… either can be successful for different reasons.
* Luke Weber: Hard to deny in our culture that people go to school for money.
* Nick Wright: People in school solely because they want to learn compared to people here to work.
* Weber: People Mori discusses go back to explore other interests…

Worobetz: Extrinsic motivation = a problem?

* Geyer: All extrinsically motivated? You’ll do well, but not great…
* JJ Harper: *Brave New World*…
* Geyer: Glutting our biological urges…
* Nick Wright: Exclusively extrinsically motivated…
* JJ Harper: Society that doesn’t try to move people…

Eble: Teacher / student mentality?

* JJ Harper: I was shocked that no one slapped the French teacher…
* Geyer: Level of respect… enough … spoke about the last line.
* Menke: Something to be said for a little bit of mockery. Reminded me of Brother Lohrey giving McDonald’s applications.
* Geyer: He didn’t say “I really, really hate you.”
* Taylor: I don’t remember any Bro. Lohrey classes in which he didn’t make fun of me.
* JJ: “How do you like your little war?”
* Menke: I took it as mockery.
* Fendinger: Amped-up version of Bro. Lohrey.
* Eble: It works…
* Alex Johnson: But he lost his confidence. You have to use a language for it to have any benefit…
* Austin: What was his central claim?
* Alex Johnson: One sentence—he pretended he was deaf…
* Sanders: I was under the impression that he learned something.
* Geyer: I’m going to learn it in spite of you being a dick.
* Sanders: This sucks, this sucks, this sucks, I’m here…
* Taylor: Learning because of the teacher…
* Eble: “Sometime me cry alone at night”
* Geyer: “It was with great joy that I responded…”
* Spuzzillo: Funny story…
* Worobetz: He was really surprised that he could communicate…
* Alex: More of a joy that he could overcome the teacher…
* Worobetz: Teacher’s goal from the beginning?
* Geyer: If that were the case, he would have ended the essay with “And she smiled.”
* Eippert: Writing to show something funny… difficult to find a claim…
* Sanders / Eble talked…
* Sanders: Language classes are taught significantly different…
* Geyer: Focus of a foreign language = translation; focus of our language = composition
* JJ: Even though this is a funny story, some pathos shows that this is wrong…

Nick Wright Notes

Geyer-School Matches society

Japan's school system prepares you for Japan's society

Its unfair to a majority of people, it doesn't matter if it fits society

Taylor-It doesn't help people learn ex learning to sweep

Geyer- That's the way she will be treated her whole life

Instruction is better than just yes or no

Does the society need to change or do the schools?

Geyer-does it need fixing?-respecting elders and strong family ties

Spuzz-their society comes a loss of individualism

Geyer-Japan's society can force people to be better people

Spuzz/liam- people having slightly better morals by forfeiting safety and individualism is not a good society

Japan's teaching is good for memorization

Spuzz-learning is more than memorizations

Worobetz- a lot of it is- memorizing formulas and facts

Wright-physics is hard because you have to figure how to use the equation is the hard part

Which is better?

Fendinger-it depends on the student/society-Baldwin-you can fix the machine instead of making a new one

Worobetz-different types of classes create different thinking

Schutter-everyone learns in a different way-you can't force people to just switch their thinking

Worobetz-it may be different for someone in another society-Japan is very different

JJ-article about high competition in Japan

Geyer-American system can be just as competitive-ACT's SAT's

How does the type of teacher affect the learning?

Geyer- "it was so hard that I just gave up"-both Authors quit because it became too arbitrary

JJ-people who get overloaded can just break down

Eble-In the American system, their isn’t as much strictness from teachers, so where does the stress come from?

Fendinger-parents push kids to succeed to much

Peed-Dead Poets society

Geyer-personal pressure causes as much stress as society and parents

Eble-intrinsic vs extrinsic

Weber-what may look intrinsic really is about extrinsic things-future jobs/money

Worobetz-Is extrinsic motivation for school bad?

Geyer-you'll do good, but not great-you won't be motivated to excel

JJ-Brave new world-no intrinsic motivation

French teacher

JJ-Surprised their was no response to students

Geyer-there was respect with anger

Menke-A little mockery is good-kind of brother lohrey

Geyer/Liam-brother Lohrey was cheeky-French teacher was mean

Eble-but he learned it

Johnson-He lost his confidence to actually speak it

Sanders-but he learned it

What's the claim?

Liam-Refugee mentality-not the teacher-they learned it out of spite

Worobetz-He was happy that he understood it

Johnson-he was happy out of spite

Worobetz-maybe that was the goal of the teacher?

Geyer-teacher wasn't shown to be happy that he learned

What if English was taught as a foreign language?

Sanders-High school English is about getting to the top, not learning mechanics

Geyer-foreign language is for translation, English is for composition

Hank Woodard Notes

* Geyer- Japanese system may look bad, but it’s a different society. Education looks like it works excellently in Japan
* Spuzz- even if works for the majority, unfair basis
* Geyer- go to college in America
* Fendinger- what if you can’t get in?
* Noah- what if you can’t get in here?
* Wright- it’s easier to get into here, more options
* Geyer- even in the workplace, cut throat education style of Japan. If you can do it, you get the job
* Liam- swimming example. Can’t be punished for never being exposed
* Noah- we see it as trial and error. Each time they fail, they will eliminate something wrong
* Fendinger – child abuse, sink or swim
* JJ- stuck in marriages because of how society is set up. Society and school system may be broken
* Marshall- which broke first? What trained the other?
* Menke- can’t change education without society
* Geyer- maybe it isn’t broken. Respecting marriage, working for family, relative for them
* Spuzz- no individuality tho. Moral ability to say it’s wrong. Wives running away from husbands, not just perspective. Morally wrong
* Geyer- value marriage/perception rather than happiness
* Spuzz- mind of the sick
* Geyer- relative
* Spuzz-well-adjusted doesn’t make it right
* Liam- leaving abusive relationship means never seeing kids again and not being able to get remarried? Unjust
* Spuzz- no best way to educate people, definitely wrong ways.
* Geyer- works best for memorization
* Spuzz- world isn’t memorization
* Noah- have to get things right
* Wright- on paper, Algebra II and Physics are the same. Going from equations to applying them.
* Marshall – Asian students do memorization really well, can’t do concepts as well
* Jared- McDonald’s workers in Japan can do it one way, can’t make adjustments
* Noah-so they’re the same? High and lowly educated? Because they follow exact same equation, are they the same just different intelligence?
* Jared-no, application is off
* Eble – Round peg, square hole
* Fendinger- can’t be too strict or too loose. 1960’s America, teach society, but broken
* Noah- multitude of ways to learn. Different ways of teaching make someone realize what they like the most.
* JJ- different ways to learn a subject working? If it doesn’t work one way, will it work another? Or does it have to be taught one way
* Eric -everyone learns in a different way, might not be effective one way.
* Noah – how you’re brought up. Everyone in Japan brought up drilled right and wrong
* Menke- not everyone raised the same way
* Wright- saying big difference between Japan and here
* Menke- do you think we’re all raised the same way here?
* Geyer- whole concept of Japanese education system from five page article
* JJ- education in Japan examples. Excessive uniformity, competition, and harm to children
* Geyer- balance that with South Korea slamming our education system. Look how competitive colleges are. Take one test, you’re in or you’re out. Not much worse, just different.
* Geyer- argument limited to this short pages
* Wright- rather have Japanese school or French teacher?
* Geyer- both have something to the effect of I just gave up because it was so hard. Stopped caring. When classes become too hard or arbitrary, you just don’t care.
* JJ- book about how character broke down because of pressure on him in school
* Eble- source of stress on teacher-student interaction. Stress abounds in school.
* Fendinger- some kids are pushed into Ivy league schools.
* Peed- Dead Poet Society, suicide to please parents, working ass off
* Sanders- parents in that movie remind of Japanese school system
* Geyer- pressure on self too, doesn’t go away
* Liam- depends tho, people will do whatever they want tho if not pushed
* Eble- most successful students are intrinsically motivated
* Marshall- depends, people are gifted tho and may be extrinsically motivated
* Luke- people go to school for money, see college as means to make money
* Wright- number of kids in school solely to learn is small compared to wanting to get job and make money
* Luke- people go back to college when financially stable, take risks
* Noah- problem to be extrinsically motivated for money?
* Geyer- not everyone is but if you are, you’ll do well but not great. Extrinsic runs out
* JJ- Brave New World = extrinsic motivation
* Eble- intrinsically motivated for pleasure
* Geyer- flooding biological urges
* Wright- almost exclusively extrinsic in 1984
* Eble-teacher end of this? Relationship?
* JJ- surprised French teacher never got slapped or screamed in the face. Blatantly verbal abuse
* Geyer- respect enough not to do that but not enough to not spite her later
* Liam- talk more
* Menke- likes relationship of mockery with teachers
* Geyer- Brother Lohrey did it differently than actually hating
* Liam- never felt like less of a person with Brother Lohrey.
* Menke- thought it was joking
* Fendinger- amped up Brother Lohrey.
* JJ- she did it to be mean, he didn’t
* Eble- but it works tho.
* Alex- but he lost his confidence and never felt like speaking so pointless.
* Sanders- central claim?
* Alex- he learned French but didn’t completely understand. Pretended to be deaf
* Geyer- your teaching style doesn’t work so I’m going to learn to spite you
* Sanders- sucks suck sucks. Oh wait, this works
* Liam- learning happened because students came together. Refugee mentality
* Geyer- too snarky to be sincere
* Spuzz- might not even make a central claim as much as he is writing a funny story
* Noah- I can actually communicate
* Alex- overcoming the teacher. Couldn’t speak but finally understood
* Noah- teacher’s goal?
* Geyer- he would have ended his essay different if she was actually trying to teach them, really ambiguous, likely hates them
* Marshall- humorous over structured, hard to pin point real things
* Sanders- interested in take on a different class, not a foreign language
* Eble- could we take English like this?
* Sanders- no, we’re about bigger things now
* Geyer- overlap between the two but emphasis on translation in foreign language classes
* JJ-only comfort was I was not alone