



English 8: Reading: Module 3: Lesson 4: Section 3

Analyze Texts With Similar/Different Purposes

Comparing Texts

Instructions: Read the first text without annotating. Then, read the second text, annotating it with the first one in mind. Finally, return to the first text and annotate it thoroughly. When you are finished, return to the lesson.

Kids Need to be Away from Home

By Michael Thompson

When I talk to residential camp directors around the country today, they tell me that many parents are struggling with the idea of sending children away for four-week or six-week sessions. "It's just too long," they say. Parents are keeping their children near them, and trying shorter skills-based experiences, perhaps a one-week computer "camp," followed by a one-week tennis "camp."

In my opinion, these aren't really camps, not in a psychological sense. For me, camp is about character, community and a prolonged period of independence.



Source: Summer Camp 2012 Junior Camp, Diocese of Fon Du Lac, Flickr

Parents assume that their presence always adds value to a child's growth. I disagree. I think parents can sometimes seriously impede their children's development.

As a parent there are many things you cannot do for your children. You cannot give your child confidence, you cannot pick or manage his or her friendships, you cannot always be his or her advocate/agent/manager/coach. Most parents cannot get their children to turn off electronics, especially in the summer, and most important, parents have a hard time urging their children to take psychological risks.

Camps do all of these things brilliantly. Young adult counselors present developmental challenges to which younger children rise. Living in a cabin 24/7 with kids you like and kids you hate builds self-control and empathy. Helping carry someone else's backpack on a hike, making a fire and cooking together, cleaning pots in the lake, trying new foods and overcoming homesickness...well, that's independence. And true independence is something your parents cannot give you. You have to live it on your own.



A Place to Develop Self Esteem

By Marie Hartwell-Walker

Children develop self-esteem by having opportunities to feel good about themselves and becoming confident that they can be contributing members of a community. A well-run camp focuses on fun but also provides opportunities for kids to be successful in connecting, contributing and developing confidence.

Everyone needs to find a way to connect, to belong, to be accepted and to accept other people. Unplugged from cell phones, tablets and computers, kids learn how to be with real people in real time. Conversations while hanging out at the pool, during a hike or after lights out reminds them that real intimacy only happens up close and personal. Kids who have had a hard time fitting in at home find a new chance for acceptance in the camp community. With a little staff encouragement, they can learn new social skills. For kids who are already socially competent, camp provides an opportunity to get along with a new and diverse group of people.



Source: Summer Camp 2012 Junior Camp, Diocese of Fon Du Lac, Flickr

Every week or two, a new group of excited kids arrive at camp. Camp staff have to quickly forge them into cooperating groups. By contributing to group activities like camp skits, non-competitive games and talent shows, kids get to explore how their talents, interests and skills can support the success of the whole group. When camp staff are committed to inclusion, all their campers find they have something of value to offer.

A positive, “can do” approach to life - and the willingness to try new things that goes with it - are central to becoming a confident, resilient adult. The more relaxed structure of a camp day and the variety of activities offered gives the kids who may struggle with school a place to shine. Camp also encourages kids to set their own goals and work on improving their skills in a non-judgmental environment. Such challenges as swimming all the way out to the raft or refining their skills in a craft or leading a song before lunch give them opportunities to stretch out and succeed in new ways. They learn to take on a challenge and to keep at it until they succeed.

Connecting, contributing and developing confidence usually aren't focuses of academic curricula. They can't be taught through a textbook or measured by standardized tests. Yet they are at the very heart of what it takes to be successful in life.