

Powerful Competencies Unlocked by Stories

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One definition of an educated person is the ability to get outside of our own ways of thinking.




"The limits of my language
are the limits of my world."

Wittgenstein



Soren Kirkegaard is not famous for easily understood ideas but he made an important observation on this language issue.





"Life can only be understood backward, but it must be lived forward."

Soren Kirkegaard

I would like to add that—"life can understood backward (through history) and sideways (through contemporary literature, languages, arts, and culture) so that life can be lived forward more richly.




Is language a structure
(Chomsky) or an organism
(Hymes)?



"We perceive reality along the lines laid down by our native language."

Sapir & Whorf





"Where is the wisdom we have
lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we
have lost in information?"

T.S. Eliot, "The Rock"

"Literature reveals truths
that reality obscures."

Jessamyn West



Literature & Competencies

--Literature that is

- Vexing,
- Vivid,
- Vicarious



Literature & Competencies

--Literature and the
Importance of Precision


--Literature and the
Imagination



Appointment With Love

By S. I. Kishor





“Imagining the lives of others is not a rare feat achieved by authors. It is a daily obligation for all of us.”

Alan Gurganus

What can teachers and students do with stories?

- memorize stories
- summarize stories
- analyze stories
- become involved in stories
- create stories



-understand they create
their own life story.



Good teachers pause and take time in stories to have students explain:

-What a character will do next

-What a character could do next


-What a character should do next



-each student would do next

-each student should do next





"We seldom, if ever, act according to principles and rules stated in words and logically arranged. We act, rather, according to models, metaphors, stories, and myths. Our action is imitative rather than rule-abiding. Prior to our intention to obey sets of rules, we are trying to become a certain type of person."

adapted from Michael Novak,
Experience and Nothingness (1970)



Creativity

Problem Solving


Moral Education

Literature
Little Stories,
Great Wisdom

Emotional Intelligence

Relationships

Precise Thinking



“The spirit of liberty is the spirit that is not so sure it is right.”

Judge Learned Hand