

“Schooled and Unschooled”

A curriculum with lectures lessons and exercises for eight actors.

Characters:

Mrs. Hollar

Mr. Beaks/Father

A Good Student/Pupil 1

A Bad Student

A Good Teacher/Pupil 2

Mother/Pupil 3

Another Mother/Pupil

Prudence:

Objects Needed for Lesson Plan: an overhead projector and/or a chalkboard and chalk, four chairs, three apples, 20 small rubber balls (6 yellow, 6 blue, 6 green, 2 red) 20 small yellow pencils, several little black books, a textbook or two, a clear box or large bowl.

(a short bit of music: pre-recorded. A sweet folk song

Q 1 SONG

Q 2 Bell

(darkness. Bell. Students jerk awake)

(students rise and turn around)

(they turn on sink)

(wash faces)

Q 3 start-up

Q 4 sink on

(they brush teeth)

(spit, gargle, spit)

(turn off sink)

(A condescending female voice)

Q 5 tooth brushing

Q 5.5 tooth brushing X

Q 4.5 sink off (X)

Q 6 Bell

MRS. HOLLAR

My name is Mrs. Hollar. Mrs. Hollar.

(chairs turned around)

(The sound of chalk writing on a board)

Q 7 Chalk

Q 7.5 Chalk X

welcome to a secret training facility.

Q 8 start up into

(lights begin to rise on Mrs. Hollar along with a burst of techno instructional video music like a computer starting up. Very slowly if possible. Her voice rises too.

She is a modestly and tastefully dressed [except for one large gaudy clay pin]

High School Math teacher. She does not wear glasses and her hairstyle is only slightly out of date)

Q 9 subtle kids

you don't know where you are. Some of you don't know *who* you are. But you are here to be re-trained. you are the people who slipped through the cracks of the educational system... Here is a preliminary test for you. Don't panic I know we haven't started yet. It's just a placement test to see where y'all are at so that we can all begin on the same page. Ok? Great. Let me just hand them out here...

Q 10 papers rustle

(she distributes tests to everyone in the audience and her three pupils)

(the tests have four questions on them)

THE QUESTIONS:

WHAT MAKES A GOOD STUDENT?

WHO SHOT MARTIN LUTHER KING JR?

WHAT IS INTERNALIZED AUTOMATIC SELF-DISCIPLINE?

WHO IS THE ENEMY?

Q 10.5 paper rustle X

Q 11 instr. mus fade in

...you are the home schooled. The unschooled.

(whilst she passes out the exams the pupils stand. They and begin a rather dance like exercises from the '80's in unison that corresponds with the descriptions of schoolings))

Army brats who never stayed at a school longer than a month. The sickly and the cancerous who tried to do math sheets in a hospital bed but were too weak to lift a pencil. The auto-didactic children of free-spirited hippies who let you run wild in the woods.

Q 9.5 subtle kids X

The devoutly religious who spent their days handing out bibles in the Sam's Club parking lot. Some of you here even went to school; alternative school; Some of you are foreign. Some of you were Jews in Catholic school or black children in an all-white private school. Some of you have learning disorders or are simply resistant to the official teaching methods of our country. Some of you were so-called "geniuses" who took the G.E.D at 10 and graduated, freeing yourselves from the system only to become a danger to yourself and to it. Some of you dropped out. Some of you tuned out. Many of you hated school for various reasons, most of them irrational and based entirely on personal experience. Some of you loved school but missed the whole point. I am glad to have you all here now. I am honored to be your teacher. I am honored to fill the gaps in your heads with the knowledge you need to be a functioning member of a community, a family, even a member of a healthy couple. Now

(pause)

raise your hand if you've had trouble in a relationship.

(hands up tentatively, scattered. She smiles and the lights fade on her. The students continue their dance for one second, slow and confused)

Q 11.5 intr. Mus X

Q 12 VOICE part one

VOICE

(A male voice)

Part One: methodologies.

Q 13 Bell

(A classroom. Bell rings. Pupils in white tshirts sit at desks or in folding chairs. Some of the pupils are played by women but they are making a concerted effort to be male. They each have a little black book and a pencil. Their instructor is Mrs. Hollar. There is a chalkboard behind her that she writes on. The BAD STUDENT glares. BAD STUDENT snarls. He is a wild dog in an alley.)

Q 14 Bad student theme

PUPIL
But what is a good student?

(Pupil 2 raises hand)

MRS. HOLLAR
yes?

BAD STUDENT
(With a warm smile)
I am a Bad Student who can't be convinced to even fucking try.

BAD STUDENT
The cause of my behavior is impossible to analyze

(The BAD STUDENT is spastic, hops in funny jerking movements as if jumping in puddles)

PUPIL 2
Someone who is capable of receiving and regurgitating information.

BAD STUDENT
I am your worst nightmare. I am the kid who won't sit still

(he wriggles CS)

MRS. HOLLAR
(drawing the semiotic model on the blackboard)
Exactly. you see here: The receiver or the pupil. He or she is called "the pupil" if he or she is required by law to participate in compulsory education. (a student is one who has chosen to study)

BAD STUDENT
(He is dancing, almost well)
I am the kid that won't stand up. I go limp.

MRS HOLLAR
OK: the pupil is connected to the message.

BAD STUDENT
(shaking, spitting, amok)
I am the kid who answers wrong intentionally and then laughs. I am the kid who curses violently. I am the kid who points *(laughs)*

MRS HOLLAR
The message is connected on the other side to the emitter or the instructor.

BAD STUDENT
(evil)
I am the kid who *cries...(laughs)*

MRS HOLLAR
This line is the *medium* through which the message is conveyed. Here on the bottom this little square represents the referent and this little square up here is the code. No?

(She gives up on the blackboard and turns on the overhead projector. She puts a transparency of the semiotic model on it and it's projected on the blackboard over her scribbles)

BAD STUDENT

I don't understand. I'm not cute. I hurt. I don't understand. I don't care. I hate you. *(calling out loud)* Hey! I know what death is!

MRS HOLLAR

(starting to get shaken by the Bad student)

Can anyone tell me what the referent is? Or the code?

BAD STUDENT

(stopping)

My quiet moments are just exhaustion. I never ever never ever ever listen.

MRS HOLLAR

The referent or the code?

BAD STUDENT

I am too much of a person from you. My life is more complicated than yours.

MRS HOLLAR

(desperately scanning for a raised hand)

The referent? The code? No?

BAD STUDENT

I hate you. I'm your fault. It's your fault that I can't learn. It's your fault that I hate you.

MRS. HOLLAR

Anyone?

(Lights change to single out MRS HOLLAR and BAD STUDENT. They don't see each other but they are in the same physical position, like stiff action figures thrown against a wall, slow movement in unison)

BAD STUDENT

you and I are alone. Alone. Alone. *(laughs)*

Q 14.5 Bad student theme X

(Bell rings)

Q 15 Bell

Q 16 choral ah

(pause. The BAD STUDENT crumples to the sound of elbows in a marching rhythm on desks and becomes an ordinary pupil. PUPIL 1 raises her hand. Lights change. PUPIL 1 raises her hand higher. The other pupils shift left together then right PUPIL ONE wants badly to answer the question)

MRS HOLLAR

yes! you!

PUPIL 1

The code in this case might be the English language but it also includes our system of behavior; which includes the raising hands as part of a question-and-answer method...

PRUDENCE

(played by a woman with short hair)

I'm sorry but I don't understand how this semiotic model is applicable to individuals...

MRS. HOLLAR

Of course you don't! What do you even mean "semiotic model" and why didn't you raise your hand?

(turns off overhead projector)

you're a home schooler aren't you?

PRUDENCE

Unschooler

MRS. HOLLAR

(repeating BAD STUDENT's most recognizable series of repeated jerks)

I'll say! I have to pound this stuff into you stuff that should be almost instinctual like eating eggs for breakfast and a ham sandwich for lunch *(LAUGHS)*

PRUDENCE

(also repeating BAD STUDENT's series of repeated jerks)

Well I was raised a vegan. Now I occasionally have store-bought bread that isn't strictly vegan. But I am a strict vegetarian. I refuse to participate in the American animal industry.

*(How to de-hierarchize the room? PUPIL 3 tries to stand in front of the class but MRS HOLLAR is there, emanating heat like businesswoman Cindy Sherman)
(As she speaks the next few lines she urges the other Pupils to turn their chairs, sideways or backwards or to stand up. They are reluctant or bemused, also have other emotions that show on their faces)*

I don't care as much about the individual animals; I mostly care about the farmland being wasted to grow grain for animals that will only feed a small portion of the population when it could grow food to feed the entire world. I also care about the chemicals and hormones put into meat and how these cause cancer and no one says anything. I also care about the pollution that slaughterhouses cause; especially eutrophication of our lakes and rivers...

ALL

Most of all I just care about the children

MRS. HOLLAR

And that is why I became a school teacher

PRUDENCE

that's why I don't eat meat

MRS. HOLLAR

I'm not THE enemy.

(Pupils re-arrange the chairs)

PRUDENCE

you are AN enemy. I've always hated school teachers! With your condescending voices and sensible shoes. I can pick you out in a crowd. As soon as an adult would talk to me in public I'd know he or she was a school teacher. Mostly shes would do this: *(mimics)* "what grade are you in?" or "out of school sick? Or even to the point: "why aren't you in school today? Something special?" School teachers have no qualms about interrupting children. They don't acknowledge that a child might be doing something; have an agenda or be busy reading a in-depth anthropological study about Indonesian Island peoples who have refused contact with the so-called civilized world.

MRS. HOLLAR

Why aren't you in school today? Something special?

PRUDENCE

(trying to read)
Don't go to school

MRS HOLLAR

Where? Where do you go to school?

PRUDENCE

I don't. I am homeschooled. *(to audience)* homeschooled is easier than "unschooled" unschooled is difficult to explain.

MRS HOLLAR

So who teaches you your mommy or your daddy?

PRUDENCE

Both. Neither. Mostly I teach myself.

MRS. HOLLAR

(with pity)
Uh huh I see. you poor thing. Do you mind if I sit here by you?

PRUDENCE

(shouts to audience)
Don't try to flatter me by treating me like I have a choice woman!

MRS HOLLAR

So what's your best subject?

PRUDENCE

We don't do subjects.

MRS. HOLLAR

But if you went to school what would it be?

PRUDENCE

(to audience) Never mind the fact that this is unfathomable for a nine year old who has never stepped foot inside a school. "If I went to school" is as without context and concrete reference as "If we all lived on the inside of the earth instead of on the outside of it" and there was a cult who believed that too. They also separated men and women and died out naturally due to a lack of procreation. Ah! I'm getting so worked up here. *(back to Mrs. Hollar)* Probably art. Or history. Or science maybe...I like biology a lot...or anthropology. Do you have anthropology in...uh...*(to the audience)* I'm trying to figure out what grade I'd be in *(back to Mrs. Hollar)* uh...school?

MRS HOLLAR

Sure we do. yes. Absolutely. What about math do you like math?

PRUDENCE

Not really no.

MRS HOLLAR

But you learn it with your mommy?

PRUDENCE

Yep

MRS. HOLLAR

What are you studying right now in math?

PRUDENCE

(to audience) When will this interview end! Where in the name of Vishnu and his attendants is my mother!?! *(to Mrs. Hollar)* I don't know for sure...uh...multiplication tables?

MRS HOLLAR

Ok then, How about 12 times 8?

PRUDENCE

Um...uh... 12 times 8? Is 12 still part of the tables?

MRS HOLLAR

It certainly is!

PRUDENCE

At this point the teacher has a certain air of righteous outrage. She is flushed and agitated. She looks as if she has eaten something both delicious and way too spicy. I'm not sure how we ended up at this math business. Why didn't I ask her why she isn't in school? Why isn't she shopping instead of bothering me? Where did she get that ridiculous clay pin? Oh god. She still expects me to answer a math problem. Think: 8 times 2 is sixteen and sixteen times 1 is sixteen...no that can't be the answer... 1 times 8 and 2 times 8 is sixteen plus eight is *(counting on fingers discreetly)* eight nine ten eleven twelve thirteen fourteen...one hundred and fourteen? Is that reasonable?

MRS HOLLAR

(sincere condescension)

you didn't learn that yet? It's 96. what's your name?

PRUDENCE

I...uh...Prudence

MRS. HOLLAR

Where do you live?

PRUDENCE

I...that's...I can't uh...talk to strangers...

MRS HOLLAR

I'm not a stranger Prudence I'm a school teacher

PRUDENCE

I hate teachers. They're all the same. you can tell they're teachers right away and they think they're better than everyone else. They're like martyrs who prick themselves with wooden toothpicks in public and expect everyone to think they're doing the will of god. I'll bet most school teachers are Christians too. I hate Christians.

Q 17 instr. music

(music swells suddenly and then retreats. MR BEAKS enters. It would be nice to like him but something about him is grating. He wears a casual suit or maybe a cardigan and slacks, but definitely nice shoes. He turns on the overheard projector.)

MR. BEAKS

One of the primary goals of public schools in the United States and one of my own personal goals is to use education to erase prejudices formed on the basis of religion

(slide of Jew refusing a whole roast pig, a Muslim refusing wine, and a Hindu refusing a hamburger)

class

(a well-dressed family and a shabbily dressed family. All of these are black and white line drawings in the style of 1980's educational childrens books)

race

(Black, White, Red, and Yellow heads)

and gender.

Q 18 toilet flush

(the restroom pictograms)

A homogenized education ensures that individuals agree on the equality of all of a country's citizens and are informed about the many choices that can be made by a free person living in a free society such as ours. When a child is home schooled or otherwise divorced from the flow of normal society he or she is forced to emulate only his or her parents and take on whatever prejudices religious political views etc that the parents hold. This is not freedom. This is brainwashing. This is why every kid should get a chance to go to school and see himself as a part of something bigger than just himself and his family. Or her family.

Q 17.5 instr. Music X

*(one last transparency: a whole page of people pictograms. Mr. Beaks circles one with a red pen)
(blackout. Projector still on with transparency)*

Q 19 bad student mus. (and maintain)

*(BAD STUDENT enters and does a little dance, then turns off overhead projector (darkness.)
(The techno start-up sound again.)*

Q 20 start up Q 21 chalk (and X)

MRS. HOLLAR

My name is Mrs. Hollar. Mrs. Hollar. *(The sound of chalk writing on a board)* welcome to a secret training facility. you don't know where you are. Some of you don't know *who* you are. But you are here to be re-trained. you are the people who slipped through the cracks of the educational system.

(with a rhythm)

Q 22 add evil kids

The brain is quite empty at birth. yes it has weight and certain girth but its empty. Quite empty. My job as a teacher is to fill it with stuff living in the world as a person just isn't enough. This is specific stuff. you know it I know it and it helps us function. It helps us make decisions when we reach life's junctions. I'm a trained teacher and I hold the knowledge. I pour it into you like so much porridge

Q 19.5 and 22.5 bad student theme and evil kids FADE X

Without me you would fill your own head with whatever interests you. Now what interests little children? Cars or dinosaurs or Indians and Cowboys right? If a little child is left to his own devices he will fill his little head with nothing but information about dinosaurs! And then he won't know anything *useful*. He has to learn to read and to write and to do basic math. He needs to develop

skills. This is my job. A person can't learn things that they're not interested in by themselves. I have to teach what kids *aren't* interested in. And I have to make it interesting. I have to wrap it in something good fun colors and easy words...like you wrap a pill in bacon for your dog. It's a skill to teach and to teach well.

MOTHER

We wanted to home school because we believe that children should interact with the world and learn by doing and being rather than by having rhetoric pounded into their heads by underpaid and maladjusted adults who don't even have children themselves.

Q 23 VOICE 2

FATHER

We are atheists and there was a big debate about intelligent design

VOICE

(crackling and overlapping)

10 commandments in the schools/um quality of school district based in um class differences/the school board...a teacher arrested...and...creationists/religion/um curriculum/arts program was cut/no more subsidized school lunches/ketchup is not a vegetable/soda um/the pledge of allegience

MOTHER

We want our children to be adaptable and conscious compassionate and mature.

VOICE

School shootings um/outdated textbooks

MOTHER

They will not be subjected to coercive isolation in an environment of competitive peers. They should not have to sit at a desk all day or learn at a pre-concieved level and at a pre-conceived pace.

MOTHER

They deserve individual attention and unconditional love.

VOICE

Standardized testing/special needs. expensive/um/outdated/mmm/ineffectve... Degrading/a bad environment

Q 23.5 voice 2 X

THE GOOD STUDENT

I was a good student. I earned a lot of points and the points relieved me from work. I had to write fewer paragraphs or pages...Learning was for those who had learning to do.

PRUDENCE

I don't know any math. And and and I have poor social skills

(PARENTS make a circle. They are activist homeschooling parents)

GOOD STUDENT

It's the way they teach you. It's the empty vessel theory. Like knowledge is a substance that is objective...yeah like it's a substance. Like oatmeal or little...uh...plastic cubes. And someone

else has to give you this stuff. It's like precious or guarded or fragile. It has to be phrased in a certain way. Even phrasing is protected. It's like I had three different text books in middle school for social studies and I remember the exact phrasing of the paragraph about Martin Luther King Jr. because I'm a history of civil rights grad student now. It said:

GOOD STUDENT and MRS HOLLAR together

Martin Luther King Jr. was one of America's greatest leaders. He felt very strongly about the rights of Black Americans. He felt that everyone, Black or White, should have equal rights. The right to work and make an honest living, the right to vote, the right to a good education, and the right to use all public places. Martin believed in using love instead of hate to settle disagreements. He was a very influential leader, one who will always be remembered and honored in this country. This is possible because in 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill declaring that beginning in 1986, the third Monday of every January would be celebrated as a national holiday known as Martin Luther King Day.

THE GOOD STUDENT

(backing Mrs. Hollar into a corner)

I think I learned in college that he was murdered. And then I was like what? But people loved him! They made a holiday for him! Ronald Reagan!

PRUDENCE

(preventing death of Mrs. Hollar)

Ok but we're not talking about the information or the lack thereof we're talking about the way the information is viewed and...well see even I call it "the information" like it's a set of something or a product...

THE GOOD STUDENT

Kids consume the information which is given to them by their teachers. And those of us who are good at it...well it feels good. It feels really really good. Like mastering the universe. It's addictive. I'm certainly addicted to it. I'll probably go on to get a PhD after this. The knowledge-is-power paradigm is parallel to one that states that consuming is power. The more you have the better you are. That's capitalism. That's class. School is a model for society.

ANOTHER FATHER

Foucault wrote that our social institutions (prisons schools the military hospitals) serve a disciplinary function and are meant to instill (above all else) an internalized and automatic self-discipline. This is the goal of all of these institutions. They discipline through shame, isolation, surveillance, and competition. A citizen can't see the person judging them but that person can see them. Sometimes the person who's judging isn't even there. Like Bentham's Panopticon prison with its open yard and tower with the one-way glass. School is like that.

MOTHER

you all sit facing front isolated and surrounded at the same time. you are being watched at all times and you know who is doing better than you and who is doing worse.

THE GOOD STUDENT

(spinning with cards movement sequence accompanies)

At the beginning of the day you get a green card by your name on the wall. This green card means you're good. If you do something bad you get a warning and then if you do it again or something else bad you get a yellow card. The yellow card is ok. But then if you do another bad thing you get another warning. Then if you do another bad thing you get a red card! The red card means you go in Time Out. There's a Time Out chair by the door. Then after you get out of Time Out and if you do something else that's even a little bad like pick your nose or speak out of turn you immediately get a Blue Card which means that they call your parents and it's really bad and the teacher doesn't like you anymore. The next day you get a green card again but the teacher remembers that you had a Blue card the day before or a red card or whatever and she Watches

you. That means you have to be twice as good as everyone else. Everyone else knows how good or bad you are.

ANOTHER MOTHER

I don't want my kids to have internalized and automatic self-discipline that regulates their behavior and enculturates them. Resistance to enculturation is very important to social health. It's important to actualization and civil mobilization.

PRUDENCE et ALL

(turning their heads to expose their throats)

(stupidly as if on drugs) I have always wanted to be a part of a riot. Protests just make me cry but a riot...preferably one spilling out of a theatre...yes. That would be awesome.

Q 24 riot

**Q 24.5 riot fade X v
v**

MR. BEAKS

(breaking up circle and striding into lecture mode)

Of course school is a model of society. In a damn good way. It's a part of society a product of it and it prepares you to function in it. For example you raise your hand to learn that everyone has to wait his or her turn

PRUDENCE

And that your right to speak will be determined by someone in a position of power

Q 25 yeah & X

(Prudence and Mr. Beaks have divided the performers into two groups. They stand en garde, preparing to do battle)

MR. BEAKS

you learn teamwork by working on group projects

Q 26 clap clap & X

PRUDENCE

And quickly learn how to manipulate others, compete for recognition, and form hierarchies based on superficial popularity and pre-selected skills.

Q 27 yeah & X

MR. BEAKS

you learn to see out of your own backyard into other times and other countries other cultures and different worlds

Q 28 clap clap & X

PRUDENCE

And you learn to see these "other cultures" and "other times" in a pre-concieved and pre-determined way that relegates them indefinitely to the realm of "other" while you remain safe and secure in your "us-ness"

Q 29 yeah & X

MR. BEAKS

A strong educational system makes a strong society. It's the funding that's the problem.

Q 30 clap clap & X

PRUDENCE

But an education system that makes people weak makes this thing... "society" weaker.

Q 31 yeah! & X

MR. BEAKS

Excuse me ma'am are you a Marxist?

PRUDENCE

No. Are you a Marxist?

Q 32 OOOOh! & X

(Bursting out)

THE GOOD STUDENT

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

MRS HOLLAR

I was alive in the 1970's. I know what "the bourgeoisie" means. It isn't as if we're communists. We do not want people to be all the same.

Q 33 instr. Mus. in

MR BEAKS

No, we exploit and irritate differences. We create hierarchies that judge and isolate individuals in order to control them.

I want to make this perfectly clear

Q 34 MR BEAKS V.O.

Q 35 typing

Q 36 filing papers

Q 37 phone ringing

(he draws on the blackboard or on a blank transparency sheet. The rest are workers at their desks, typing on invisible computers, writing invisible sums)

Millions of People who work separately at their own desks or in their own cubicles with their own copy of the same book and their own computer with their own password, Millions of People who work alone but parallel, each individual working in his or her own self interest but in a manner that is homogenized and ingrained, are much easier to control in terms of sustaining a healthy capitalist society than Millions of People who work together and can turn together in any direction and unite for any reason for an imagined collective interest.

Q 36.5 filing papers x

(As Mr. Beaks continues his speech the movements of the workers becomes more and more unified)

Q 33.5 instr. Mus loud!

The masses are dangerous and violent.

Cellular beings who presume themselves individuals and who compete for the same resources are easy to lead, to frighten: to make suspicious; to passify, and to make happy.

Q 35 typing, vol. up

Q 33.75 instr. Mus X

Q 34.5 MR BEAKS X

Q 35.5 typing fade X

Q 37.5 phone ringing fade X

MRS HOLLAR

Yes I see my students as individuals and I have to cater to each of their needs so that they can all learn normally. We examine them and place them in categories to serve them. We give rewards to the pupils who most deserve them. We are fair and rational. We instill the national. Individual attention is a service that the public schools provide in order for the parents then the bosses then the government to see what is inside.

MR. BEAKS

Psychology, personality testing, behavioral analysis, observation. The more we know about them as people the better we can give them what they want; safety and stability. Normalcy.

THE BAD STUDENT

My parents don't come to school events or meetings. I am not normal.

Q 38 VOICE 3

VOICE

yes and what happened to the educational theories of the 1970's? There was a time when it was proposed that children should sit on cushions on the floor in a big circle and have discussions with a facilitator about things that interested them.

THE BAD STUDENT

Tear off their breasts and arms and put them on a fire

VOICE

School was supposed to be a big library of resources where kids could move freely from room to room learning at will about this and that. There would be an aquarium room with fish in it...and a room with a glass roof and a garden...an art room with lots of paints and big swaths of paper so kids could express themselves whenever possible.

THE BAD STUDENT

Aye aye captain! The soldier shoots them all: rattatatattattat!

VOICE

It was in the 1970's that the term 'children' was replaced with "kids" perhaps as a nod to goats and their nonconformity: as you may know baby goats are also called kids. Maybe one room would have some goats in it. Kids could meet kids.

Q 38.5 VOICE begins to fade out

Kids could eat when they were hungry.

THE BAD STUDENT

Paint sandwiches.

VOICE

And they would eat good nutritious foods and then when they reached like eighth grade they would be given a joint

Q 39 live guitar

and they could enjoy it in a special "mind expansion" room which would be like a movie theatre and show all kinds of information like quantum physics and geometry and astronomy through expressive means and the kids would just *get it* they would *click in* and be one with the world and be aware and conscious and active.

(The rest of the kids have become so lulled that they are lying on the floor)

And then everyone would get a snack and go out onto the playground and kids would each get a musical instrument...

Q 38.75 VOICE 3 X

Q 40 LIVE SONG

MRS. HOLLAR

(walking over the bodies of the kids, kicking a little at them)

Sometimes I dread coming to work. Sometimes it seems like the kids have no interest in learning whatsoever and no free will of their own. They just stare up at me with their tongues lolling out of their mouths. Don't these kids' parents love them? Don't they teach them anything at home?

THE BAD STUDENT

(weakly)

I'm a mess-up kid.

GOOD TEACHER

(Getting up, brushing herself off and becoming new)

I am a good teacher. I am training my students to be equals not to be subordinates. I've read Howard Gardener and know all the different learning styles and types of intelligence.

Hablo espanol un poquito

(honestly and humbly)

The kids really like me. Sometimes I get too involved or am too lenient because I want so bad to be a good teacher...a kid came up to me the other day and said "I'm a mess-up kid" can you imagine thinking that about yourself? That is harmful.

(GOOD TEACHER loses the floor to MRS HOLLAR and her class, who rearrange the chairs.)

MRS. HOLLAR

Now look everyone! This is your textbook. Today we are studying Our Selves. Our selves are divided into two categories: our bodies and our selves. I know that's kind of confusing because "selves" also refers to the whole thing. *(drawing on blackboard)* this is a person.

PUPIL 1

I had went to school in France until I was 11 and when I came back to the United States

PUPIL 3

Ha ha! Everyone said that Mr. Kimbar sexually abused kids but I don't know if he really did but then he left! Maybe all the rumors just got back to him and it was too embarrassing!

PUPIL 2

My teacher gave me bad grades because I was popular and she was jealous

PUPIL 1

We weren't allowed to leave the school during lunch. I got suspended for sneaking out but a friend of mine didn't because she was the captain of the soccer team.

MRS HOLLAR

Raise your hands to speak in my classroom.

(pause)

Ok Now. A person has experiences. This person learns from his experiences.

THE BAD STUDENT's voice

Experiences ssssss

MRS HOLLAR

(to the Good Teacher who is observing the class or possibly a TA)

I don't understand why every other kid has ADD or ADHD it's a plague. It's because of video games and television. Why don't parents limit their kids to an hour of tv and then have them read or play outside? So few kids really have the *desire* to learn.

(Lights change)

Q 41 quiet: bad stud. theme

THE BAD STUDENT'S voice

In my mind sometimes I see a tree. The trunk is the crux of the issue or the thing I need information about. But sprouting out of the trunk are a large number of limbs some of which are as wide as the trunk itself. Sprouting out of these limbs are branches and then more branches and then twigs...and I can't follow them all. They are infinite and gorgeous. Leaves of every color and fruits...strange things hang off some of the branches glowing orbs and juicy lung-shaped things. Some things are alive and make grunts and little squeals. It's raining money and food and genitalia.

(blackout)

Q 41.5 bad stud. theme X

VOICE

Q 42 VOICE 4

Part Two: materials and memory

Q 43 chalk and chalk x

MRS. HOLLAR

My name is Mrs. Hollar. Mrs. Hollar. *(The sound of chalk writing on a board)* welcome to a secret training facility. you don't know where you are. *(lights up)* Some of you don't know who you are. But you are here to be re-trained. you are the people who slipped through the cracks of the educational system.

PUPIL 2

I'm really frightened ma'am. I don't know where I am. I don't know *who* I am.

MRS HOLLAR

Oh sweetheart don't worry. I'll help you. I'm a teacher I'll help you.

PUPIL 2

Thank you.

MRS HOLLAR

My pleasure.

Q 44 Bell

(Bell rings.)

(she sweeps her arms and the pupils remove the chairs from the playing space. They spread out the balls stopped by the pencils in a grid.)

THE VOICE

Q 45 VOICE 5

Q 46 fade in sampler?

A rational person living in a medium sized city in the United States is constantly bombarded by information from all sides. He can not possibly keep all of the information that is presented to him stored in his head: the price of gas at seventeen different gas stations who is the guest pastor at a church he doesn't attend what kind of fertilizer is being used in a cornfield along the highway how many families have dogs running in their yards the percentage of subdivisions that has

switched to some kind of fiber siding as opposed to vinyl or what kind of new sandwich the Burger King has. He can only retain information that pertains directly to his own life.

MRS HOLLAR

your own life. What is your life? It is a series of experiences and a collection of information. you have sensory memory (*the yellow balls*) short term (*the green balls*) and long term memory. (*the blue balls*)

THE GOOD STUDENT

There are three stages of memory usage in the human brain: Encoding storage and retrieval

He demonstrates this with a clear box.

MR. BEAKS

School has been *scientifically* developed to reinforce these patterns and make them healthy and serve the individual that has them. School gives an individual the tools of Organization, Distinction, and Effort for the retrieval and use of memorized information and experiential memory.

(The pupils demonstrate these actions and seem to understand)

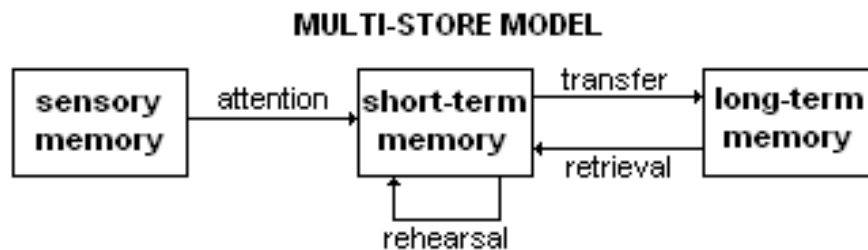
THE VOICE

Q 47 VOICE 6

But only based on storage models.

MR BEAKS

(putting up transparency) Lights! (*lights dim*) This is an accepted models for memory. There are some others now but I prefer this one. It's first is very simple and looks like this:



The trick is to use bright flashy things to attract the senses to the information, here, and then transfer that information to the short term memory by relating it to personal experiences. From there, the mind should be forced to rehearse the information through exercises and quizzes until the mind is convinced that the information should be stored in the long term memory for later use. That later use can be on a test, in life, or it may never be used at all.

Let me demonstrate with these balls.

(He does so)

PRUDENCE

But there is no way for your balls (*laughtrack*) to interact. Memory, or stored knowledge, is much much more like a chemical solution whose properties change depending on ingredients added, temperature of the room, etc.

THE GOOD TEACHER

Imagine that every mind is a different room

(she begins a rhythm of bouncing a ball off the wall or ceiling)

MRS HOLLAR

(gathering up the balls into the clear box)

In every room there is more of the same, an endless labyrinth of desks and chairs

PRUDENCE

If you were to walk from head to head and from mind to mind, room to room, how different would they be?

THE GOOD TEACHER

Would the basic size be the same? The basic shape even? The smells in the room? Of course the objects there would be different and things would be different colors...

MRS HOLLAR

Every day is the same. Every night is the same.

THE GOOD STUDENT

We have reached the door...if every mind is the same, they are all equal.

PRUDENCE

Minds are not all the same!

THE GOOD STUDENT

If they are not all the same, are some better?

PRUDENCE, THE GOOD TEACHER and MRS HOLLAR

Some minds are better than others. More interesting. Or with better furniture. Organized.

THE GOOD TEACHER

Self-actualized.

THE GOOD STUDENT

And yet

THE GOOD TEACHER

And yet...

PRUDENCE

Ideas about hierarchizing the human mind are among the most dangerous ideas ever thought by human kind. They have catalyzed eugenics, mass sterilizations, holy wars, regular wars, electro shock therapy, lobotomies, aggressive assimilation strategies, missionizing, colonizing, genocides, and holocausts.

Q 48 ALL X

THE BAD STUDENT

I hate you. you sent me to the school psychiatrist because I wrote a play about a man butchering a little girl.

Every day is the same.
Every night is the same.

THE GOOD STUDENT

Examine Me

Examine me!

Examine me
Examine me

Door after door is locked.
Room after room is blank
and white and ugly.
Someone is watching me
but I don't know who or when.
I'm afraid of making a mistake.

Examine me
examine me, I like it
Your judgment means a lot to me!

(blackout.)

THE VOICE

Q 49 VOICE 7

Part Three: what do you say? What do you say what do you say?

THE THREE OTHERS

Q 50 Bell

Please sorry thank you you're welcome yes please no thank you

(they raise their hands)

VOICE

Q 51 VOICE 8

(A male voice not angry just focused: speechmaking)

This lecture will address three major failings of the US school system. The first is the concept of teaching and the philosophy behind teaching; the ways in which this ground-down processed information is imparted. Even our words for the sharing of information between an older and supposedly wiser individual and a younger and less experienced individual are deeply flawed. The methodologies, the philosophies, and the curricular structures are all flawed. The visualized models for these structures are flawed and contribute to the continuation of detrimental social systems that require participants to be apathetic, self-centered, frightened, and anesthetic. I believe this to be the most serious flaw. The second is of course the actual material that is taught; the so-called information; the apocryphal tales of heroes and enemies; partially lobotomized narratives primarily in terms of history and social movements; material that is not taught; etcetera. The third failing is of course the role of school in American society itself along with...

Q 52 Bell

MRS. HOLLAR

Q 53 chalk

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**Q 54 papers
rustle/Bell**

Time! Alright pass the tests forward please. I will evaluate them after class. Remember I'm grading on behavior as much as I'm grading on academic performance. I'm just going to say that because we're all big boys and girls here aren't we. Now.

Q 54.5 papers rustle X

(lights)

Q 55 bell

(End)

Q 56 LIVE SONG 3