

The Personal Creed Project

The project:

- guides students in upper elementary, secondary and college English courses to reflect on their life experience to discover what they value;
- weaves weekly reflections through a course, culminating in presentations students experience as life-changing rites-of-passage, community events enabling self-disclosure and vulnerability;
- helps students address six of ten Common Core anchor standards in writing, and six of six in speaking and listening. The project adapts readily to most English courses;
- generates sustained enthusiasm across the country, provoking deepened notions of learning and curriculum.

Creed Project Contents

Step I: Main Influences That Shape Me

6 Weekly Installments

Step II: My Short List of Most Significant Influences

2 Weekly Installments

Step III: Influences I Most and Least Value

3 Weekly Installments

Step IV: What I Stand For / My Draft Creed Values

3 Weekly Installments

Step V: Critiques of Draft Creed / Revised Creed Values

3 Weekly Installments

Step VI: Personal Creed Presentation

- 1) Main influences to shape me (my life experience)
- 2) The values I stand for (my personal creed)
- 3) Qualities to develop in myself to live my creed next 10 years
- 4) The difference I want to make in others' lives

Step VII: Living My Creed

Goalsetting - Researching - Volunteering

Through the project, each class member:

- compiles a short list of the main forces and people that have shaped their lives so far;
- distills from these main influences a set of values their life experience is teaching them;
- identifies qualities they wish to develop in themselves to best live their "creed values";
- shares in a presentation with their class community:
 - * their main influences,
 - * their creed values,
 - * the qualities they've chosen to develop,
 - * the difference they wish to make in others' lives;
- can gain a more balanced perspective on the academic portion of their learning—how both academic and personal matter;
- can kindle a lifelong habit of updating their values and reflecting on how best to live them;
- can play a more conscious role in a family, a workplace, and in our democracy as a citizen who knows what they stand for.

Creed Step 1A

1) List

- Taught moral values *
- Moving often*
- Gender
- Parents' divorce
- Chinese culture*
- American culture
- Living with different people at different times

2) Circle (starred)

3) Reflect

- Moral values are important in my life because I try to follow what my conscience tells me to do, no matter what. As a child I was educated about “doing the right thing” and was rewarded and punished accordingly; while growing up, I stuck to my clear ideas of right and wrong. Even in times where right can have devastating consequences for me and wrong is so much easier to accomplish, I strive to do what’s right and the satisfaction of following what I think is fair and correct, despite the turmoil that it sometimes brings into my life, is something that absolutely shapes who I am. *When it becomes hard to distinguish between what is “right” and “wrong,” I turn inwards to imagine the outcomes of either decision and seek the one which is most beneficial to others.*
- I would not be the person I am today without moving often because the constant change of environment has caused me to interact with people and things in a different way. Since I switched districts and houses every few years or so for a large part of my life, I learned to not cling too tightly to friends or material things and developed an ability to adapt quickly to new situations. However, this has also lead to some loneliness and isolation which may have caused me to slip into a depression a while ago. *A sort of insecurity of being easily-replaceable and forgettable still haunts me today because every time I change environments, I know that people go on without me in their lives and that it doesn't make much of a difference in the end.*
- Chinese culture has affected me because I was brought up in a family where academic excellence is emphasized and having a good future (college, jobs, etc.) is repeatedly mentioned during childhood. Because of this upbringing, my school accomplishments are decent and I am working towards getting into a prestigious college and pursue a