
Reality Bites

I've done my marking, been for a walk in the sunshine, read a bit about Lacan, and watched You Tube videos of Noam Chomsky and Richard Dawkins questioning feminist theory.

Typical Sunday.

But that isn't all I have done ...

I've also put in three loads of washing, had a discussion with my dad about what constitutes a dirty look and bought a bra.

Of course, that *still* isn't all I've done...

I've watched the last episode of *Game of Thrones*, Series Three, wished I was a mother of dragons, and wondered about the life of the pregnant lady who worked in the shop where I bought the bra.

And that really isn't all I've done today; it doesn't even scratch the surface. Most things never make it to paper; the majority of thoughts never crystallise on a computer screen. In the entire history of human existence only a tiny proportion of certain people's thoughts are ever immortalised.

Those of us who write about our lives, edit constantly. We reform reality; argue a train of thought until we have convinced ourselves. Sometimes we don't even do that. Our words can be cathartic, or simply chaotic. They can amuse, irritate, seek approval or openly challenge. Words can be meek or full of pomposity; they can be transparent or tricky; they can seek agreement or court disdain.

But representations of the real miss the mark by quite a margin.

In teaching we are faced with the real every day. All aspects of it. The mundane, the trivial, these things are important. I can't say to a nine year old with a cough that is racking his small body: I expect you to learn what perimeter means, even though your head is on the table and your eyes are watering.

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A huge part of our job is mediating reality to try and get towards the sublime. Knowledge and beauty may be our aim, but to get there we have to travel through a river of snot.

As teachers we are helping children begin to write the stories of their lives. To write themselves into history. We are the givers of the tools children need to question the words presented to them. Teachers have to tell the right stories. We have to select the correct words to help reality make sense.

We are the readers of many books that will never be published.

heymisssmith