

A Discussion on Teaching

led by Murray Baumgarden, 12 vii 2006

1. The group engaged in a free-form discussion of applications to teaching of our institute. Baumgarden suggested that we share both bibliography and methods.
2. Using students to connect the dots: the efficacy of letting students "discover/uncover" meanings and of using ethics as a hook were discussed.
3. The use of a recorder (a la our institute) in classroom is an approach that could be used to briefly review the previous session's work.
4. Use disagreement to focus on variant readings and connections.
5. Another approach is to move around in "spheres": private, family, community, global, etc.
6. Use a part of the reading to look at the whole. Inter-textuality approach.
7. Using bibliography to teach. For example, looking at Diego Gambetta's piece on Primo Levi's suicide (<http://bostonreview.net/BR24.3/gambetta.html>).
8. Margaret Brose did a role play/demonstration. Why does Primo Levi need to remember Dante's Canto 26 on Ulysses and the circle of false counselors/people who misuse language? Dante gradually peels off his own past/personality; Levi uses his prison camp experiences in the same way. He also teaches us about the chaos of the camps and the use of language in the camps. Dante's "Final Voyage of Ulysses", not known from any other source is about Ulysses going past the Gates of Hercules into the unknown (Star Trek theme comes up in the background). For Levi, the camp experience goes beyond everything else previously known.
9. Another suggestion/strategy: a dialogue between Dante and Levi.
10. This discussion will be continued, we hope, in the VJA work of the future.

notes by Paul E. Michelson