

“Why I Teach”

by Gregory Feducia
Region III Teacher of the Year



We just know when a teacher is different--and in a good way--from any other teachers. This teacher has a way of engaging students by making them a participant in their learning, by making them responsible for their learning, and by making them lifelong learners. My high school junior English teacher was one such educator. Because of her class, I never realized that I could appreciate literary studies of Shakespeare, Flaubert, and Ibsen--authors that I continue to teach today. Packed away in one of my classmate's memorabilia is a reel-to-reel Civil War version of *Romeo and Juliet* that we produced for her class, a project idea I have included over the years. My love of literature and my admiration for a teacher who could educate a group of high school students developed that year. This teacher was also our school's newspaper sponsor, and because I wanted to work with her again, I signed up to be in her journalism class my senior year. Through whatever circumstances, however, she was not at school the following year. All my classmates and I knew was that she had moved out of the area, and we were never able to communicate with her again. Periodically, I will run across an assignment that I have saved from her class (more than thirty years ago) and I will silently thank her for her inspiration. I cannot think of a higher accolade for a teacher to receive. This is the type of teacher I strive to be.

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