

Katelin E. Oliver

P.O. Box 74, Gold Run, CA 95717, (530) 305-1714, katelinoliver@gmail.com

1. What was the memorable classroom moment in your first year of teaching?

As a teacher it is always rewarding to see students succeed. I shared in their excitement over a perfect spelling test, a well-constructed essay, or simply the right answer to a difficult question. My first year of teaching is full of memories like these. To select the most memorable one is difficult for obvious reasons, but if forced I would choose the assignment that involved the entire class.

The presidential elections in November created a wonderful opportunity for learning about our political process. My seventh and eighth graders decided to put on an assembly for the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade classes where they would demonstrate their knowledge of the candidates and the propositions. Each student chose a side to argue then buckled down to the hard work of winning the support of their electorate. The students had to have a general knowledge of every issue and an in depth knowledge of their chosen topic. This required a lot of research, writing, editing, and production. As a class we learned about the value of individual web sites, which were factual and which were emotional, we discovered how to write copy that was persuasive and succinct and we found which colors on posters had the greatest impact. Each student then created a Power Point slide to add another visual element to the presentation. Then they were ready to go.

The children performed brilliantly. The shyest young lady spoke convincingly about her candidate; the star athlete persuaded the fourth graders that his position was the best way to vote. The audience was enthusiastic and responsive. The seventh and eighth graders were thrilled to see their hard work pay off so well. We capped the experience with a mock election. Every student cast a ballot. I forwarded the results to "My Vote", a national student election site. It was a great teaching tool to then discuss with the class how the rest of California and the nation had voted on the presidential race and the propositions.

The success of this project was gratifying in itself but I was also pleased to be able to share my love of politics and government with my students. I strongly believe that projects and moments like this encourage students to be informed and to vote. During all the debates and discussions in class the students learned to listen and respect views that were different from their own. This was indeed a memorable moment for me and for the thirty four seventh and eighth graders.

2. What's a specific example of how you believe your teaching helped a student, or students?

I certainly hope that all of my students have had a successful year with me. I am currently the Reading and Language Arts teacher for the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. I have worked hard to make my classroom a positive environment where all students can learn, express ideas openly, and gain confidence.

There is one child in my class who definitely stands out for his remarkable growth both as a student and as an athlete. His name is _____ and he is currently in the seventh grade. This young man attended Alta School from kindergarten through the third grade, then transferred to a home school program under the direction of his mother, then returned to Alta at the beginning of his seventh grade year. When _____ and his two brothers returned to Alta they were tested and shown to have made little if any progress during their absence. _____ was an extremely poor

speller, knew no phonics, and consequently could not read or write at an acceptable level. _____ referred to himself as “stupid” and “dumb” because he lagged so far behind his classmates.

I was distressed with _____ assessment of himself. This child is extremely personable, outgoing, kind, friendly, and compassionate. Although _____ was demonstrably way below grade level he also showed real potential and promise. I discussed _____ situation and outlook with his parents and they agreed to my tutoring him. I spent many hours before and after school reading aloud with _____, sounding out words, explaining grammar, and editing essays. I also gave him special attention during class, modified his assignments, and gave him constant feedback on his progress. When I knew there was a difficult upcoming lesson I front loaded vocabulary for _____ so he could actively participate during group discussions. I was continually supportive of his academic growth. It was my special mission to get him caught up with the rest of the class and to raise his self esteem.

_____ is a talented athlete and repeatedly expressed how much he loved to play basketball. He wished that Alta could put together a boys’ team; something that had not been done for years due to a lack of coaches. I gladly volunteered to coach both the varsity and junior varsity basketball teams. _____ emerged as the star point guard on both teams. This experience cemented _____ new feelings of self-worth and pride. _____ experienced true success probably for the first time in his young life.

_____ has carried that dedication and commitment into the classroom. He is now able to write a five paragraph essay on his own. He brainstorms, writes rough drafts, edits, then edits again until he produces a satisfactory grade level paper. _____ is flourishing now. He believes that he can succeed and he is willing to do the hard work. _____ needed someone to encourage him and to show him how to catch up. It was my privilege to be that person for him this year.

3. What are you most looking forward to in your second year of teaching?

Next year I am looking forward to the challenges that accompany teaching in a new school with a new position. Due to the economic uncertainties at Alta I was advised to consider other teaching assignments if any became available in the next two years. I will be leaving Alta at the end of this year and starting a new job as the 7th/8th grade English teacher at Bowman Elementary School in Auburn. This will be a tremendous change for me as I have such a strong connection and attachment to Alta Dutch Flat School.

Although I hate leaving Alta, I know that I will have many exciting and challenging opportunities at Bowman. The staff at Bowman is much larger than the one at Alta and there is a lot more team teaching, collaboration, and mentorship. I look forward to learning from the experienced teachers there. To formalize my interest in professional development I have decided to work toward my master’s degree in this subject at California State University, Sacramento beginning this June. I know this is an ambitious undertaking at this point in my career, but I am a life long learner and want to be the best possible teacher.

Another exciting challenge for me next year will be selecting and teaching three electives. I am considering journalism, debate, and current events. I would also enjoy putting a school newspaper together. This is something the school has not done for many years.

I will continue coaching probably with a junior varsity girls’ basketball team. Additionally I will serve as the student council and leadership teacher. In the spring I am going to be one of the chaperones for the eighth grade class trip to Washington D.C. It will be a challenge adapting to a new school, staff, community, and students but one that I look forward to with enthusiasm and confidence.

Miss Oliver's 7/8th Homeroom:

Mock Election Project

Encourage students to be active voters once they are old enough to cast a ballot.



John McCain

By, Summer Wright

- help support Iraq's government we will eventually be able to bring our troops home.
- every American should be worthy of an education
- is a Republican and is now running for president of the United States.
- His VP pick is Sarah Palin.
- He is running against Senator
- Barak Obama.

Proposition 9: Pro:

By, Alex Mutto

- Victims will be notified for their safety.
- Prevents politicians from releasing dangerous inmates.
- Reduces the number of parole hearings that prisoners are entitled.
- increases the number of people allowed to attend and testify on behalf of the victims at the parole hearings.
- Victims will receive notification of their constitutional rights.

Proposition 10: Pro:

By, Ethan Robinson

- Prop 10 will diminish the need for foreign oil
- Diesel is a harmful and polluting ethanol
- Other countries are doing it why cant we

As President of the United States of America Barack Obama will...

By, Emily Zentner

- ensure every child a quality education
- call for affordable healthcare for every American
- slow down immigration
- implement a 21st century economic agenda
- and get us out of the Iraq War

Proposition 9: Con:


By, Avery Vrooman

- Prisoners would get less rights than normal American citizens!
- The sixth amendment clearly states that all people are treated equal.
- it is also threatening to worsen our overcrowding crisis
- Proposition 9 is an expensive unnecessary action
- According to appeal democrat newspaper " This action is about little more than political grandstanding

Proposition 10: Con:

By, Trevor Roosen

- This will cost 10 billion dollars
- When were older we will have to pay big taxes
- The fuel will not help our air



What an Attempt

What do you think it would feel like to flip a 285 pound vehicle over your head?

Well, believe it or not it has been done. But that is not what the story is about. This story is about the first back flip ever attempted. To me, this dirt bike rider is nerve racking and daring. To you, he's probably crazy. If I could open a door and walk into any historical event it would be Carry Hart's first attempt at a back flip because he was the only one to attempt this trick, it was dangerous, and it came after a progression of easier tricks.

This attempt was at the 2004 X-games. The X-games is a huge action sport event. The X-games include skateboarding, dirt biking, BMX riding, snowboarding, skiing, and many other events. Some great X-game competitors include Travis Pastrana, Dave Mera, Danny Way, and Shawn White. Carry Hart was the only dirt bike rider to ever attempt this trick. Many people did not believe that he would success and few people thought that it was possible.

Dirt biking is extremely dangerous in many ways. Many competitors have had countless injuries. These include broken bones, dislocations, fractures, and surgeries. The competitors wear gear from head to toes. This includes a helmet, chest pad, thigh pads, knee pads, and boots.

During the 2004 dirt bike competition, Carry Hart did three runs. Carry started off his first run with a "double knack, knack" moving his legs from one side of the bike to the other. On Carry's second run he completed a trick called "the kiss of death", this trick requires the rider to lean all the way forward and "kiss" the front of the bike while in

the air. Carry Hart's third run finally came around, everyone was anxious and watching. As Carry entered the ramp the crowd watched in anticipation. Carry Hart pulled back on the handlebars. He pulled back so hard that his hands ripped from the handle bars and he had to bail mid-air. Carry fell 20 feet from the ground, dislocated his left shoulder and broke his left arm.

Though Carry Hart did not complete the back flip, I would have liked to be there because of the anticipation and build up for the first back flip attempt. Carry completed the back flip in 2006. However he was not the first to land it. Travis Pastrana completed and landed the back flip in 2005. This historical event means a lot to me because Carry Hart is my favorite rider of all time and, in my opinion, the craziest.