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## Two Poems: Connected, Open Minds

Kathryn Sadakierski  
*Bay Path University*

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## Connected

KATHRYN SADAKIERSKI  
*Bay Path University*

Stories are read over Zoom,  
Students are fit to boxes  
On screens,  
Listening, silently.

They don't line up together,  
Bubbling with excitement  
On the way to recess;  
We miss the discoveries,  
The exclamations,  
The science experiments,  
In our classrooms.

Creativity looks different today;  
There aren't paint stains on desks  
Left from art projects,  
Or playdough crumbs to be picked up.

The vibrant atmosphere,  
The warmth and joy,  
Aren't quite so palpable here  
In homes away from home.

It's like we're without our center,  
Fitting the mold  
Left by restrictions

During the pandemic,  
When learning styles are conformed  
To one mode of pedagogy,  
Virtually.

Still, learning can be personalized,  
Coming alive,  
Because classrooms aren't defined  
By walls.

As a family, we make the best  
Of these times when we can  
Make teacher visits to houses,  
Send birthday wishes, homemade signs,  
Parades serving to remind  
Us of the glue that binds  
Us together,  
Stronger  
Than anything.

## Open Minds

KATHRYN SADAKIERSKI  
*Bay Path University*

It was once a goal  
For technology to be integrated  
Into the classroom,  
Helping students to refine  
Their digital literacy.

There were purists and progressives,  
Traditionalists and techies,  
Different views of how to teach,  
Enriching education,  
Creating the greatest reach,  
Impacting students invariably.

Smartboards and smart TVs,  
Chromebooks and iPads,  
Redefined  
The learning environment,  
No longer chalkboards  
Or apples on desks,  
But still, doors opened  
By knowledge  
At our fingertips.

Technology was an ideal  
Further interwoven  
Into standards and tests,  
A competency

To be measured increasingly.

Now, it is the only option,

Adopted fully,

No moment for hesitancy.

It is our mission

To continue educating,

Helping students thrive

During these times,

Being guides

With open minds

As we adapt

To virtual learning,

Growing together,

Becoming better.

As technology advances,

So do we.