COVID-19 Isolation: Daily Lessons

Joseph S. Pizzo
New Jersey Council of Teachers of English

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Available at: https://digitalcommons.montclair.edu/nj-english-journal/vol11/iss2022/9

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COVID-19 Isolation: Daily Lessons

JOSEPH S. PIZZO
New Jersey Council of Teachers of English

A challenge
To enrich, engage, explain, excite
My students in isolation
Reflecting
On forcible removal
A March
From the classroom
The class
The building
The network
The ultimate reality show
Based on an unreal premise.
Shunted to the rear
Pushed away
A summer of speculation
Of supposition
Anticipated hopes for normalcy
Routine
Seasoned with excitement
With vision
A new school year filled
With holidays
With energy
With effervescence
Masked scholars
Masked emotions
Missed smiles
Eyes embracing wonder
Voices seeking comfort
Inspiration requesting oxygen
Reduction of isolation
A re-emergence of requirements
Routine
Rigor
Respect
Meetings at lockers
Expectations
Of stories
Of shared laughter
Of commonalities and connections
A temporal relief?
Will the holidays bring
Insidious tricks
Disguised with their
Baskets of treats?
Is gratitude and giving thanks
A pilgrimage
A gathering
A cruel hoax
A winter of discontent?
Can the merriment of December
The candles
The presents
The gatherings
The embraces
Become an uncharted adventure
A variant journey
Navigated
By an insidious Omicron?
Is the holiday spirit
Once filled with inspiration and hope
Now defined by an invasive
And devilish deception?
Are the fears of the Ides of March
To be revisited with rebellion?
Are the lessons being learned
Not confined simply to classrooms?
Are the pursuits of success being weakened
By the pervasiveness and fear
Of a returning unknown?
Are the lessons being learned
Teaching resilience?
Defining defiance?
Indicating a variant vulnerability?
Is the seemingly unlimited supply
Of ebullience and energy
Becoming a psychological pariah instead?
Has the coverage of curricula
Been masked
By frustration
And learned distance?
Does material matter more
Than matters of the heart?
Is the energy of learning
In teams
Diffused by distance
And directives?
Can the precautions
That inspire lessons
Be reasonably lessened?
Can the fears
Of infection and contamination
Be replaced by those
Of infectious joy and spontaneous laughter?
Can the threats and trepidations
Be replaced by sincerity
Simplicity
And congregation?
Will the challenges remain?
Does hope lie within the months ahead?
Can this COVID-19 Sea of separation Be drained? Can a bridge to return Daily lessons To routine Rigor And respect Be reconstructed? Can the once-familiar routine Become expected Rather than yearned for? Can education Finally be allowed To educate Rather than Separate? Must we settle For a new normal? We must create rather than cringe We must inspire rather than interpret We must connect before we construct We must lessen our isolation We must continue To humanize Our study Of humanities