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A Post-Pandemic Perspective: Challenges, Choices, Alterations

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Routine upended
Adjusted, altered, amended
Pandemic-induced restructuring
Mandated, not negotiated
In-person transformed into remote, into hybrid
Asynchronous offerings, emotional distress
Additional resources, roadblocks
Presumed maturity, required resiliency, youthful energy
Replaced by separation, frustration, confusion
Skill gaps, learning loss, lack of routine
Presumption of focus, mental strength
Ennui replacing resilience
Disruption replacing resourcefulness
Falling leaves signal change:
A new school year blooms
Filled with anticipated hope
The need for consistency, a constancy, a vision
Classes with students in person
Not framed by distance, not packaged in a screen
Daily discussions with voices generating signals of life
Within one common space
Smiles, sighs, inquiries, “Aha” moments
No distance mandated for learning

No screen time necessitated for connecting
Hands raised, hopes elevated
A common plea
A pleasing return to normalcy
Students in classrooms,
The teacher moving among learners
Listening, collaborating, conferring, encouraging
Supporting creativity, discussing writing options together
In proximity, not chatting electronically
Surges of energy, fusion forming synergy
Fashioning a new pedagogy
Shedding distance and despair
Minimizing distraction, energizing instruction, eager minds
A return to concentration, collaboration
Presence, focus, engagement, participation
Challenges addressed
With patience, with kindness,
With understanding, with reasonable pacing
Challenges and choices
For lessons, for skills, for routines
For a simple return to normalcy
Focus and perspective
In a post-pandemic classroom
Challenges, choices, alterations

JOSEPH S. PIZZO is a 7th-grade integrated language arts teacher at the Black River Middle School in Chester and an adjunct professor of writing at Centenary University in Hackettstown. In his 50th year of teaching middle school and 31st year at the university level, Joe constantly reinvents his best practices to stay current in his field while being a writer who teaches writing, a PD workshop provider, and a podcaster who features authors, middle level books, and issues (https://www.youtube.com/@josephpizzo2357). He can be reached at joseph.pizzo@chester-nj.org and on Twitter at @ProfJPizzo.