

Mr. Stracco's Monthly Bulletin- January 2017

First Semester Public Speakers Perfect Pecha Kucha

As the first semester of Public Speaking came to a close, students mastered their public speaking skills as they performed a Pecha Kucha (Chinese for "chit chat") formatted final presentation. According to pechakucha.org the main source of information for this type of presentation, "PechaKucha 20x20 is a simple presentation format where you show 20 images, each for 20 seconds. The images advance automatically and you talk along to the images."

The final speeches of the first semester using this type of format were an inspiring week of presentations. All public speaking anchors (Body Language, Eye Contact, Phrase fillers, Personality, Energy, "The Sandwich", Word Choice, Articulation and Diction, Audience Analysis, Background, Goal and Setting) were firmly established and applied to a 6:40 presentation. The presentation topics ranged from a tribute to other students in the class, to a favorite vacation spot, to a variety of everyday issues. All the students who presented offered insight to their selected topics while engaging their audience members.

As the course ended, and the students realized the major skills they have mastered, students reflected upon their success of the class. One student stated, "Throughout our lives, we will have to be interviewed for our future. Many people will crack under the pressure, but not Mr. Stracco's students. With this course, Mr. Stracco has taught me how to present myself to be taken seriously during this process. I know before any interview you should plan an appropriate outfit, research the person

interviewing you, and prepare acceptable and well-thought out answers. Going into an interview, I am now more relaxed, poised, and confident!"

Another student reflected by saying, "I never thought I would face my biggest fear. Jitters, Um's, and sweaty hands. Going up to the podium was one step for mankind but a huge leap for me. Doing my first mad minute was absolutely terrifying. The minute felt like a lifetime and I could not stop playing with my shirt. After the longest minute of my life, I realized I did it in one try. I did not say a single phrase filler and neither did I stutter. Impromptus are a different story. My first impromptu was about how we are all selfish. I started strong but broke apart at the end. It was so bad that I did not even talk for the amount required. My second one, I spoke about which I would rather do: skiing or swimming. After reaching the time limit and being able to sandwich my way back up, I not only earned the grade I got, but I found a new level of self confidence. I have now been in this class for two months and have never felt more trust in myself. After two impromptus, one mad minute, and many speech exercises, I come to public speaking with a huge smile on my face. This class has helped me the most out of all my classes in high school and ultimately has been my favorite. The course I promised myself I would never take turned out to be the class I enjoy the most."

English 300 Caught onto Catcher

English 300 students spent the last month analyzing the infamous character Holden Caulfield from J. D. Salinger's classic, The Catcher in the Rye.

As we were reading, we discussed how (or if) Holden Caulfield relates to teenagers today. There were many conversations, many debates, and many insights about this classic piece. Interestingly enough, one of the major discussions was Holden's use of the word "phony." Who was phony according to Holden? Society? Those around him? Or possibly himself? The discussions were enlightening and provided fodder for evaluation and analysis.

Interesting article about [Catcher in the Rye](#)



Heard it Through the Grape Vine

After the successful journey with Holden Caulfield, English 300 students examined Langston Hughes' poem, "A Dream Deferred" and analyzed what happens when a dream is deferred. This analysis led to the beginning of the ground breaking play, "A Raisin in the Sun" by Lorraine Hansberry. According to the Sparknotes.Com "Lorraine Hansberry was one of the first playwrights to create realistic portraits of African-American life. She used her new fame to help bring attention to the American civil rights movement as well as African struggles for independence from colonialism.

As our study of this classic begins, we question whether or not history is repeating itself or did we all hear it through the grapevine?

What happens to a dream deferred?

By Langston Hughes
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
Like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
Like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?