

I was in your 8th grade social studies class at Campus Middle School in 2006-2007.

I needed to tell you a story and found your email address on your website. I graduated from Luther College in May with a degree in social work and I recently began graduate school at Loyola University in Chicago. On the first day of school a few weeks ago, my professor began by giving her incredibly rehearsed speech about how students "should not expect A's in grad school and A+'s DO NOT even exist at this school because..." but I didn't hear the rest of the lecture about grading because I was too busy looking at the syllabus and realizing I had to give a 20 minute presentation the next day. The presentation was unique because our grade would be based on how engaged the rest of the class looked during our talk...

I went home and wrote my speech about how social workers need to be more culturally competent (a fascinating subject, but I knew I was going to be preaching to the choir, and I had better spice it up). I gave my presentation the next day and that's when you come in-- I just want you to know that every time I reach down to play with my pen, get the urge to sway back and forth, or, God forbid, start reading my power point slides verbatim during a presentation, your face pops into my head. Not many people can clearly recall what their 8th grade social studies teacher looks like, but I can because every time I almost make a public speaking "no-no," there you are. This has been happening since 2007, by the way.

Anyways, I completed my assignment and I thought the class looked marginally interested while I was up at the front of the room, given I only had 24 hours to prepare. After class, my grade was emailed to me. I opened it, with slight hesitation, and there it read: "A+: You have great speaking skills." After questioning how I could get an A+ when my professor had JUST said they didn't exist at this school, I realized that I needed to thank you; even though it is a little annoying (no offense) to see your face pop up in my head almost every time I talk in front of people, I owe you that A+ that I received. You are the only teacher I have had to date that has given me clear, useful instruction on how to simply talk to people, and I still use PVLEGS- wisdom eight years later. Thank your for all you do and all you did.

Hope this email finds you well.
Sincerely,