As this school year begins, students feel two things: hope that they’ll be able to learn—math, science, history—and fear that they won’t understand and remember the facts they’re taught. Amidst new “standards” and relentless testing, a boy repeating 4th grade in the Bronx asks himself, “What’s the matter with me? Am I dumb? Will I ever be able to learn?” The speakers in this vitally important seminar will show how the Aesthetic Realism Teaching Method meets children’s tremendous hope to learn successfully!

New York teachers will give examples of lessons from their own classrooms and will describe how students—including many who had been given up on—become excited by their subjects, remember facts, pass standard exams, and also become much kinder to each other. This is the educational method that can end the high dropout rate, the poor learning, and the violence in our nation’s schools!

The Basis
This method is based on principles stated by the American educator Eli Siegel, founder of Aesthetic Realism:

1) “The purpose of education,” he explained—and this is crucial for every teacher and student to see—“the purpose of education is to like the world through knowing it.”

2) The chief cause of failure to learn is contempt—the feeling one “will be for oneself by making less of the outside world.”

Contempt for what’s different from oneself is also the cause of the bullying and violence that are making America’s schools so dangerous.

Young people are justly angry at the horrible economic inequity in our rich land as they see their parents desperately worried about having a job and money. Meanwhile, without knowing it, students can use the ugliness and injustice they see, including the racism many of them endure, to be angry at the wrong things—to feel, “The world is a mess. Why should I give a damn about cube roots or photosynthesis? What’s school going to get me anyway?” At the seminar you’ll hear what opposes that inaccurate fury and resignation and brings out students’ ability to learn! This ground-breaking principle is the means: “The world, art, and self explain each other: each is the aesthetic oneness of opposites.”

For Instance: The Atom Is Like Us
There’s Keisha, a 7th grader who goes from feeling painfully stuck to frantically restless in one afternoon. Then she learns in her science class that atoms put together the opposites she’s so confused by: rest and motion. They’re made of electrons that whirl at terrific speeds around the protons and neutrons, which stay securely inside the atom’s nucleus. Learning this, she feels excited and composed at once. She sees that the very atoms which are in her, and in her classmates, and in every bit of matter in the world, are doing what she wants to do: make a beautiful one of activity and calm, freedom and security! Keisha feels, “This is about the world and it’s about me!” She welcomes learning, and feels closer to other people.

On November 7th, see for yourself the teaching method which truly meets the hopes of young people, their parents, and teachers now.