At this tumultuous time in American education, teachers, administrators, and parents are asking in desperation: What’s going to have our children learn? And What will stop the hatred and prejudice in our schools? The answers will be given in this seminar as New York area teachers describe the unprecedented success of the Aesthetic Realism Teaching Method in their classrooms. This great, time-tested method makes every subject—from reading to mathematics, from science to history—truly anti-prejudice! Through it, young people are eagerly learning—and are kinder, including to persons of different cultures and backgrounds.

Eli Siegel, the great American educator who founded Aesthetic Realism, explained:

1) “The purpose of education is to like the world through knowing it”—and this is the deepest purpose of every person, every child, whatever his or her ethnicity.

2) Prejudice—in a student, teacher, anyone—begins not with race, but with the human desire for contempt, “the lessening of what is different from oneself as a means of self-increase as one sees it.” And contempt is the biggest interference to learning.

Today, 65 years after Brown v. Board of Education, and despite decades of “teaching tolerance,” prejudice is still rampant. High school hallways and cafeterias often are battlegrounds. Students of different races—even different neighborhoods—go at each other with insults, fists, and weapons.

Young people are suffering from a brutal economy and inequitable school funding. They undergo mandated lockdowns to prepare against mass shooters entering their schools. Many are frightened that their immigrant parents will be taken away from them. And they feel they’re seen with suspicion by storekeepers, and persons in authority. All too often young people use the injustices they experience to be against—even hate—the world that knowledge comes from, and people who look and sound different from them.

On November 7th, teachers who use the Aesthetic Realism method will show this tremendous fact: education thrives and prejudice ends when students see how the subjects they study stand for a world they can honestly respect, because its structure is beautiful. The means is this principle stated by Eli Siegel:

“The world, art, and self explain each other: each is the aesthetic oneness of opposites.”

Take, for instance, a 9th grade vocabulary lesson on synonyms. As students learn that words which look and sound quite different have a similar meaning, they see an exciting relation of sameness and difference—the very opposites that are at war in prejudice. They see that such different sounding words as “think,” “consider,” “ponder,” and “contemplate” convey aspects of the same idea, and each is needed to make English the rich, expressive language it is. As they respect words more, they also see that people who may look and sound different from themselves have a deep kinship to them and can add to them!

Come and hear about the method that will make our schools alive with learning and kindness!

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**SPEAKERS**

ZVIA RATZ (mathematics, NYC middle schools, currently MS 223)

PATRICIA MARTONE (ENL, NYC elementary schools, currently PS 110)

CHRISTOPHER BALCHIN (social studies, NYC high schools)

LORI COLAVITO (elementary education, NYC & Southampton public schools)

ROSEMARY PLUMSTEAD (science, NYC high schools, teacher educator)

ARNOLD PEREY, Ph.D. (instructor, The Aesthetic Realism Teaching Method)

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