Dancing with Quotes from “Spring in the Classroom”

These sentence were pulled from student papers for the essay about “Spring in the Classroom” by Mary Oliver (723-24). Review the prompt (731), the poem and then revise these quotes and the analysis. Dance with the quotes.

For this practice, revise the second rendering. Leave the first version (the numbered one) in its original form. Have this completed, loaded in Google Classroom by class on Monday. Have *Perrine’s* available for use in discussion.

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2. Oliver depicts spring as a “greening woodlot” (3).  Not only does the color green draw comparisons to life and nature, but the action of the land “greening” presents physical movement.  By illustrating spring and the surrounding wildlife as something with inherent motion, Oliver associates a sense of energy and vitality with the concept.  The students find kinship in this liveliness, as they also themselves resemble the nature, thriving on the other side of the classroom windows.

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3. Finally, students conclude that they must take action; creating a climax by using hyperboles. They begin to say that “we had her hanged” and “we had her in chains.” The use of hyperboles demonstrates their heightened desire of escaping. The sudden changes of attitude represent the feeling of having a rush of anger.

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4. They even go as far to say, “By Miss Willow Bangs, her eyes two stones behind glass, Her legs thick, her heart In love with pencils and arithmetic” (Oliver 13-15). Typically, the eyes are the window to the soul and most emotional part of the human body. In this case, the description of the teacher’s eyes are behind a barrier. This means that the students feel the teacher does not have feelings or the vision to care for nature.The implication for the teacher can be described as soulless and evil for keeping the students captive in the class rather than out in the beautiful weather.

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5. While she seems to love nothing more than robotically teaching kids while preventing them from doing what they want, this changes when the students see her "all furry and blooming against the old brick wall in the Art Teacher's arms" (724; 25-26). This does not change how the students view her, but Oliver brings in this new detail to show that Miss Willow Bangs can still feel love and enjoy the spring weather as the children were. This shows that while the students only thought of her as a heartless torturer, Miss Willow Bangs wanted to be out of the classroom as well.

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