

### **Liza's Story Version One:**

When I was in college, I left the education department for six months. One of my education professors refused to take me on school visitations to observe classrooms. She told me I looked too much like the kids and didn't act my age. Once when I turned in a paper two days late, she refused to grade it. She pulled me aside and told me that I was never going to be able to become an effective teacher because I was too immature. I became angry. She had recommended to the head of the education department that I be removed from the program. Rather than fight with her, I dropped my education major and took up jewelry making and photography. After one semester outside of the education department, I decided to appeal to the head of the education department. I cut my hair off, and with a renewed conviction, rejoined the education department.

### **Liza's Story Version Two:**

Dr. Sawyer looked down her narrow pointy nose at me. "So why do you want to teach?" Because I taught Michelle how to tell time when I was in second grade. Because I taught Samantha how to speak Spanish last summer. Because I don't know how not to be a teacher.

None of these answers would be enough for her. Intimidated by her icy stare, I muttered, "I don't know." "Then there is no reason for you to waste your time in this department," she declared. "You do not have the disposition of a teacher. Your behavior is no better than that of the children."

Because Hope, Ann and I smile in your classroom? Because we giggle and chat with students in the hallways? Anger boiled in my head. I like children. They're happy! Why is it a crime for me to be, too? "You look like students, you dress like students, and you act like students. You are not fit to be in the classroom." She turned away from me with a dismissive tone. Stunned and outraged, I only managed a passive nod.

Defeated and humiliated I wandered in a daze, reluctantly arriving at my advisor's door. I handed him my second semester registration form with "Fine Arts" scrawled in my shaky handwriting across the top next to the word Major. He signed his approval.

I lived with my misery every day the following semester; making jewelry, taking photographs, and doing art critiques. My spirit was flat and unconnected. I missed the kids. I missed my dream of making a difference, student by student, through the years.

When time came to register for next semester's classes, I just couldn't take more fine arts classes. I realized that I was wasting my time and ambition. I appealed to the head of the education department and won. I cut my hair, and with renewed conviction, rejoined the education department. I knew then that I would never again let someone else dictate my future or take my life dreams away. My dreams are mine to make true, even when others don't believe in them. I believe, and that is all that matters.

*Which story version appeals to you and WHY?*

*What elements or qualities are used in the story style that most appeals to you?*