

Teaching Chapter Seven – Rage - Transcript

Poetry is a vulnerability marathon so, the more that you are encouraging your students to get comfortable with talking about their experiences and using their experiences in their writing, the more likely it is that they're going to unearth some feelings that they're not used to feeling, um, they're going to be putting into their writing deeper feelings that maybe they have not engaged with before or they haven't engaged with in a long time. This is fine, it's not to be encouraged especially when, if you look at spoken word online, it's really easy to fall down an American YouTube, um, hole of spoken word artists, and a lot of the pieces that are more, um, popular (so therefore more findable online) are ones that are really centred around trauma. Um, we don't want to encourage that in any way but we want the students to feel that they can, if they want, use these experiences as a means in their writing but, at the same time, still have means of protecting themselves so they don't have to share anything they don't want to but they can still use that experience in their writing, they can still try and figure these things out if they want to, they just know that - in the writing - they have the tools to make sure they can distance themselves from the writing, from like, from the actual what they're writing, from the experience that they're drawing on to make sure that it's not painful or traumatic or triggering in any way, um, when they're actually going through the exercises. 'Dark' is a poem about sexual assault, it requires trigger warnings, it is definitely, um, a much more painful and raw poem, um, but it's one that, in the main programme, I very, very, very carefully underlined that when I perform it I seem really raw and angry but that's performance. It's not someone mining into their deepest darkest thoughts to give a good performance. It's not that. We do not have that relationship with our audience. This is a chapter you can engage your students with if you want to or not, I think you will know as you go along the programme or you will see as you go on along the programme just how vulnerable your kids are making themselves and maybe you want to bring in this chat earlier it's entirely up to you, you are the one that's going to read the lay of the land but what we don't want is to open them up or give them the tools to open themselves up with no support afterwards, to give themselves aftercare for writing poetry that comes from a darker place.