

Dialoguing With Students “In The Moment”

Presenter and Volunteer Roleplay (A: Teacher and B: Student)

A: Why did the author write this?

B: To tell us about the Boston Massacre. But what I don't get was why it was called a massacre if only 7 people were killed.

A: Can you elaborate?

B: Well, the people weren't so famous, and a massacre usually means lots of people die. Maybe the people reporting it wanted to make it sound really bad.

Maybe they wanted to get people all mad in order to rebel, like, to start the Revolution.

A: At that time, not everyone wanted to rebel.

B: Oh, well, a lot of times in the newspapers—I don't think they had radio or T.V. back then—would make up stuff...

A: You mean exaggerate?

B: Yeah, they would exaggerate things or focus on things or not print things to influence people. So calling it a massacre made the English look really evil, right?

A: Maybe. How about today? How can we apply these ideas to today?

B: Like, in commercials they only talk about good parts. And reporting on the war in Iraq might be biased, depending on the source.

A: But why?

B: Maybe to influence voters to vote to get troops out.

A: So we need to remember that words can be biased?