

RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

Poem
Kill and Drill

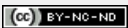
by Jennifer Hernandez



JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

Kill and Drill

Today I actively monitor
a standardized test.
MAP, NAEP, ACCESS, MCA,
a new one every month.
I must walk around the classroom,
pace like a tiger in a cage.
I must be able to see the students'
Chromebook screens at all times.
I must not read test items aloud.
I must not explain test items,
even if students don't speak English.
I must not translate test items.
I must not give my opinion
if students say that the test items
are missing information or answer options.
I must not give students any encouragement
or tell them to try their best.
I must not look directly at test items.
I must not take pictures of the test items.
I must not use my cell phone in any way.
I must not have my cell phone in the room.
I must not check my email.
I must not be on my computer
(except to perform test proctor functions).
I must not grade papers.
I must not plan lessons.
I must not read books or articles.
I must not allow students to speak,
gesture, leave their seats,
or walk to the restroom
without an escort.
I must be prepared to lock the door,
turn off the lights, wordlessly direct
my students to crouch,
backs against the wall
behind the wooden cabinet,
not speaking, hearts beating,
anxiety screaming in our ears,
even when we know it's a drill
– *it is* a drill, isn't it? –
until we get an "all clear".
Good thing we have so much practice
sitting still and quiet.



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