Infusing Disability in the Curriculum: The Case of Saramago's "Blindness"

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Abstract

What are the implications of teaching disability as a pure metaphor? Disability often has negative connotations when used metaphorically, while the lived experience of disability can be quite different. In order to demonstrate this contradiction, I discuss some pedagogical aspects of teaching the novel, *Blindness*, by Jose Saramago. First, I exhibit possible interpretations of the parable that are useful for teaching. Then, I demonstrate the ways blindness is constructed as Otherness and its possible implications for instruction. Finally, I offer several strategies by which *Blindness*, and other literary portrayals, can be used in the classroom in a critical manner, one that values human variation and diversity.

Keywords

Disability Studies; Literature; Pedagogy; Blindness

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Copyright (c) 2006 Liat Ben-Moshe
Blindness By: Jose Saramago When defining the word blindness, it can be interpreted in various ways. Either it can be explained as sightless, or it can be carefully deciphered as having a more complex in-depth analysis. In the novel Blindness, Jose Saramago depicts and demonstrates how in an instant your right to see can be taken in an instant. However, in this novel, blindness is metaphorically related to ‘seeing’ the truth beyond our own bias opinions. Saramago’s novel clearly illustrates themes that describe the importance of the awareness of others, in terms of feeling oppressed by fear, I