

YOUNGSTERS PRODUCE AN OPERA

The late Zig Ziglar, author and renowned motivational speaker, loved to tell the story of Ms. Romayne Welch from the Reynolds Elementary School in Baldwinsville, New York.

He described her as “a truly outstanding teacher ... an example of what dedication, inspiration, a love for children and a commitment to excellence will produce.”

This teacher and her students were very creative. They saw opportunity in every problem.



During the 1993 school year, they produced a magnificent opera, *Creating Original Opera*. Imagine 9- and 10-year-olds writing, producing and performing in their own opera, and having a fifth grader as the orchestra conductor!

Ms. Welch said the most difficult part for her was “letting go and allowing the kids to make and carry through on their decisions.”

The class was allotted only \$125 for the entire production, and the footlight supplies alone cost that much. They turned their creativity into a fundraiser and produced an additional \$1,200 that they needed.

The kids in the second through fifth grades made five sets of note cards in packages of six each. They designed them with musical symbols, and they were outstanding. Furthermore, since an opera needs box seats, the children made seats out of boxes. It was hilarious.

The bottom line: the opera was quite successful, and it planted the seed for other projects – including a musical about immigration and Ellis Island. Theirs is an example of what talented, directed young people can do.

Most of us should get involved in working with our youth instead of being so quick to criticize. Parents and teachers all over America can take a page from the notebook of the Reynolds Elementary teacher and class in order to direct their students into more activities of a similar nature. Initiatives like these will enable them to turn their creative energy into character – and confidence – building endeavors.

Inside every person are seeds of greatness. The responsibility of parents and teachers is to nurture and cultivate those seeds.

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The same principle is true for those of us who lead in Life Care and Century Park. We must challenge and give opportunities to those we are responsible for to “turn their creative energy” into innovative and successful projects.

And he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver, and bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of artistic workmanship (Exodus 35:31-33 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter