
BURDEN OF ELA

Vaughn Zecha
Winfield High School

As I look upon their hopeful faces
Do I tell them how life truly works?
And is school not “real life”?

How do I teach students how to run,
when they can't walk?
How can I help them to grow,
if they were never planted or fed?
How do I show, without my burden,
That life can have perks?

I give my soul and hardback tears
To teach empathy and logic, resounding.
But we feel alone, the world consumes
And I surround those minds with love.

Yet, a constant voice of doubt -
mistakes, love, and death
Piles on years of regret.
Drowning in burning sweat,
It will never go away.
Until the lights disappear
And walls flake off, turn gray.

We English teachers seem
To hope the most,
To give the most,
To live the most,
To love the most,
To grade the most,
But most of all
To feel the most.

You are not alone.
I promise you:
You are not alone.
We connect through writing

and a common theme.
You are not alone.

We preach that authors
tell a message across time.
You are not alone.
The written word,
the human experience.
You are not alone.
Repeat after me.
You are not alone.

Author Biography

Vaughn Zecha is an English, Debate, and Forensics teacher at Winfield High School. She received her Bachelor's Degree in English Education from Wichita State University and her Master's degree in Education Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in ESOL. She is also the head debate and forensics coach for WHS. In December 2018, she adopted a newborn and she enjoys spending her time with her son, Zander, and two dogs, Lupin and Sega. Along with reading and writing, Vaughn enjoys meteorology, painting, games, and running. She wrote this poem after a long day of reflection and social-emotional discussion, which is a main focus in her building right now. She can be reached at vaughn_zecha@usd465.com.