

**Pompano Beach High School
Pompano Beach, Florida**



TRANSCRIPT: “LEARNING THROUGH AUTHENTIC TASKS”

SENIOR STUDENT: The teachers here, what they do, they try to engage the students as much as they can. They make sure that we do projects where we’re actually doing hands on things to learn the information. We’re not just sitting there taking notes. Like, they actually make sure that we understand and we know what we’re talking about so that we can speak eloquently. And so that we know what we’re talking about. We’re not just talking to talk. And they go out of their way to help us. My AP government teacher on Fridays now, she does review sessions for the AP exam. And I know that the AP psychology teacher does that too. Our teachers go out of their way to help us. They make sure that we learn. They ensure our success.

SENIOR STUDENT: They go out of their way to make you learn in a creative way. Not just that you sit there and take notes. They’ll go out to the field, do a physics project, the teacher will research. Anything to basically make you have fun in the classroom and make you learn the material.

FRESHMAN STUDENT: One of our classes – math for example – we come in. We go over the homework. She asks who has questions and then after that, she asks who can answer those questions. So instead of just writing them all out on the board, other people get to go up and see how it’s done and you can go up and ask that person or ask them how to show you to do it and not be rushed.

FRESHMAN STUDENT: I know in my web design class, we had to have—we had a huge project. We worked on it for like a month and a half—maybe 2 months—and you had to make your own website pertaining to your own business. You pretty much had to create a business. I sold color guard essentials, like uniforms, and you had to research it and research how much these things would cost, how much you’re gonna make from it, all of these different things you had to know about. And also I was in like a career class. You’re researching careers. She gave us a low budget and you had to base yourself off of that. You had to work your way up from that and just find out how you’re gonna pay all of your bills. You had kids and you had to do a family vacation and pretty much, I guess what she was trying to do is show us that in the real world, even if you don’t make a lot of money, you have to figure out how you’re gonna get by. She probably wanted us to see that you should aim higher.

FRESHMAN STUDENT: If I were to talk to a seventh grader, I’d warn them that they have to, if they’re not already, become very organized because in high school, it’s everything. I didn’t think it was. In my seventh and eighth grade teachers told me organization is so important and it’s not

that I wasn't, but I wasn't as I am now. I wasn't on top of my game as far as being organized back then but now it's very important to me. I have binders and dividers and everything is very detailed because sometimes you have notebook quizzes where it matters. It makes everything a lot easier and smoother.

FRESHMAN STUDENT: We were the host school for the county for Harvest Drive. Harvest Drive is we get all of the schools, they had to collect a certain item, like some schools collected spaghetti and meatballs—I mean spaghetti and pasta, some schools collected like soap and detergent and other necessities and we actually go together all of these grocery bags in our mini-gym. We had to sort out all of the canned goods and everything. It took three days. The community brought in a whole bunch of different items. Girl Scouts were here. We had so many cans we actually had to take some of them to another location. We helped feed over 100 families. Each family got 10 bags of groceries,. And we packed the bags and the families came here and they picked them up and it provided them with a Thanksgiving meal and a weeks' worth of groceries. We got them turkeys, milk, orange juice, apples, toys. It was really, really great.

DONNA MELILLO, TEACHER: Reference and research and words tended to be our lowest scale on the FCAT tests so we really want to incorporate vocabulary into reading. It enhances reading and vocabulary—just teaching vocabulary is boring. Really, it's deadly. You can teach it in context as you go along but the kids tend to forget. So, we're in the technological age and we want to use their technology to enhance their learning. So the kids kind of create their own lesson. They become the teachers. It's more entertaining and they tend to remember. And we have a really good time. First, I assign groups certain vocabulary words. They get 3 or 4 each. Then they work up a presentation. They create their own kind of context. They make sure that they use them in sentences at that moment so that short term memory will kick in. And then we go over the words again and again as we go along. They tend to go with Power Points. Sometimes they use a flip camera and they go make a movie. One group made this soap opera with the words, and they kept going on and on. And the kids tend to do better on their vocabulary tests because the context that they presented is their context like *Avatar* is really big now. We had this one kid that just went wild over *Avatar*—but using the vocabulary for *Avatar* so that the kids will remember those words tomorrow. Using this technology in their venue to present their materials, and it comes from them and not just me, they like it.