

Yoga. Yo-yo-yo-yo-yoga. Yo-yo-yo-yo-yoga...



To butcher a line from a Weird Al song about Yoda (which parodied a song called Lola), but if it fits... This was my fate Thursday when I accepted a PE job at a middle school. This was every bit as unexciting as it sounds. There was a yoga instructor two double-classes of eighth grade with myself and at least one other teacher standing bored while the kids went through a yoga routine. When I first found out about the yoga my spiritual sensors perked up as yoga can be taught from a spiritual point of view. Hey, if Christianity isn't allowed in the public schools neither is Eastern Pantheism; i.e. new age religion. Fortunately they left this part out, and I did pay close attention to make sure of it. I have read too many stories of kids being taught the experience of other religions, and not just about them to just sit back. In any event, as I said, all was well. They mostly did relaxation exercises and positions, with no explanation of those positions, at least on that day.

You might have noticed I mentioned eighth grade with the yoga. What about 6th and 7th grades? After all this is PE we're talking about. Well, those grades did yoga too, or fitness, depending on the class. However, the teacher I was subbing for had four periods of health and just two of PE. 6th grade had a video to watch. It was a video that was shown on prime time TV around 1990. It was a "test" about how much we know about handling emergencies, and was hosted by the late [John Ritter](#). It also had several other stars of the day including [Richard Dean Anderson](#), [Michael Landon](#), [Julia Child](#), and the one that played the geeky character in [The Wonder Years](#). I tried to look up this video on IMDB but it never got entered in as none of the actors I looked up had any reference

to it listed. Essentially it was a 45-minute multiple choice/true-false test (with at least one other type of question thrown in). Of course we didn't finish it, but a couple students asked if they would finish it tomorrow which means it interested them.

The 7th grade classes also involved videos. They were **making** videos with iMovie, using the built-in webcams on their iBooks. This got interesting watching them finish them, playing the parts of police officers, drunks, homeless people, announcers, and whatnot. Many were editing though so I didn't get to see everyone act.

Wednesday was really nothing special, just an easy day with 3rd grade. Easy particularly because they had a half-hour of gym in the morning, an hour of art in the afternoon, and twenty minutes of filling out a "wish list" for the book fairs. These Scholastic book fairs are really for the benefit of Scholastic and the schools, which receive commissions in books for the books sold. As for the consumer, the parent, it's just an opportunity to pay full cover price for some books and software. I guess since it does benefit the schools I really can't complain.

This brings us to today. I was in the rival school to the one I was at Thursday. The subject: one of the five foreign languages taught at this school. In fact, for 6th graders they have to take every one of them during the year. They all have one period divided into quarters for the year and one period in sixths. These "hex-mesters" are a short six weeks, so needless to say they don't learn the languages as much as explore them. 7th and 8th graders are treated to a full year in one language for the learning purpose. I would suppose they get to choose which language they want to take. Which one did I sub for (don't even *think* I taught this class...)? Just call me Herr Teacher instead of Mr. Teacher. Actually, don't because I don't like the sound of it. □ These kids just made word searches all day with a particular set of deutsch

(German) words each grade had been learning. Well, they can't all be fun days. ☐

From Tuesday to Thursday, I guess it could be said that I went from 8th to 8 and back again... ☐ Eighth grade to 8 years old, like C & L's eldest, back to 8th. Well 6th and 7th grades were involved too, but still... 8)