

Apt Words

a liturgy for grading students' work

Learning about my students.

Commending knowledge to them.

Offering an apt response or timely word.

Do I view grading in this light?

"Grading papers again!" I confess that this is often my thought. When I see this pile of papers and work in front of me, I groan. I'm tempted to sit down and with a resigned determination work through it one by one.

Instead, help me to think about

what I might learn about my students,

where I might commend knowledge,

how I might offer an apt reply to each student.

I confess I care more about my own time than taking time to help others. Forgive me for rushing through the work.

(Add your own words of confession here.)

Thank you for helping me view grading differently as a way to help writers learn to write better sentences and essays, readers learn to comprehend words and deeper meaning, and listeners and speakers learn to use skills and strategies in order to communicate.

Thank you for allowing me to

learn about my students,

commend knowledge,

and offer apt and timely words.

I am not perfect and sometimes need reminders. Once, I had 79 papers to grade. I was busy and slipped back into "getting the work done" mode. I usually wrote an encouraging word at the end of my students' papers even if it was only something like "I really appreciate how you are trying." But this time, I forgot to write something. I was in too big of a hurry to get through the pile of papers.

I handed the papers back to the students, and I noticed one of my students who was usually enthusiastic. I could tell she wanted to say something to me. After class, I went over to her. She showed me her paper with a score, but no encouraging words. I apologized. She asked, "Would you write something?" I did.

In that moment, I asked forgiveness for overlooking one of my student's needs for encouragement.

Help me to view others as you do.

(Add your own words of confession here.)

Thank you for your reminders and gentle corrections.

Learning about my students.

Commending knowledge to them.

Offering an apt response or timely word.

Thank you for helping me to view grading in this light.

Amen

This liturgy was published by [Master Teaching](#). It can be found at: [Apt Words](#).