8/18/10

TRAGIC LOVE AFFAIR WITH NUMBERS

By: Chelsie Jones

I am a girl. 4 letters, 1 syllable. GIRL .

In fourth grade Ms. T proclaimed ALOUD to the class (after reviewing one of my submissions) that GIRLS are just not good at MATH (embarrassing, right).

4 letters, 1 syllable. MATH

4 letters, 1 syllable. That is where the similarities end.

It was a classic case of GIRL meets MATH. The story begins with an inquisitive GIRL, possessing a passion for learning, already feels confident and smart. GIRL senses a brewing confidence in the classroom and wants to explore every area and avenue for growth. Many called GIRL a bright learner.

Then GIRL meets MATH. MATH is foreign, mysterious, and allusive. The symbols are unknown and the concepts relate to things GIRL loves. 4 counts in the bar of music. 24 steps walking to the playroom. 9 long strides to make it to the swing first. MATH draws her in and GIRL moves forward with a learning bulb burning bright.

When MATH’s secrets are not easily uncovered GIRL asks WHY? “That is just the way math works.” Those are the steps you follow.” But no one ever said WHY?

3 letters. 1 syllable. WHY?

Success with MATH begins to elude GIRL. She asks WHY? “ Stay inside for recess.” “Complete your homework.” “Memorize facts.”

3 letters. 1 syllable. WHY?

MATH and GIRL experience trouble in the relationship. GIRL grows impatient and is less reluctant to seek out MATH. This relationship just might not work.

In fourth grade Ms. T proclaims ALOUD to the class (after reviewing one of girl’s submissions) that GIRLS are just not good at MATH (embarrassing, right).

4 letters, 1 syllable. MATH.

GIRL gives up. She just can’t make it work with MATH.

4 letters, 1 syllable. That is where the love affair ends.

I am a Teacher. 8 letters. 2 syllables. Teacher.

It is with MATH you see

that I’ve had some difficulty.

Although, this year I’ve seen me.

Familiar responses to work that evades

Facial expressions more telling than charades

Furrowed brows and voices that say

“This problem is too hard.”

I have such Empathy. 7 letters. 3 syllables. Empathy

But I don’t want you to be me.

Not able to see your capability,

With no one that supports your efforts to understand

MATH.

So I learn. 5 letters. 1 syllable. Learn.

To better teach

MATH.

To you, no one will proclaim

With obvious disdain

That “You are just not that good at MATH.”

For it is with math you see

That I am not afraid to be

Ever Learning.

I am a Teacher. 8 letters. 2 syllables. Teacher.