

August 2024

Salutations Students,

The word scholarly refers to a person who, according to Longman Dictionary “spends a lot of time studying and knows a lot about a particular subject”. I have always been a scholarly person. I read Little Women in 1st grade and Lord of the Flies in 5th. (Lord of the Flies is one of my all time favorite books to this day.) I always tell my students that I am the biggest nerd in the classroom.

But the definition doesn't specify which subject a scholar knows a lot about. This is because being scholarly doesn't have to do just with school and grades - it has to do with having an open mindset (psychology), a beginner's mind (Buddhism) and being curious.

Recently, I started reading a series of mystery novels in which the Chief Inspector presents four statements that a detective must learn, understand and utilize in order to be successful.

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| 1. I don't know. | 2. I need help. |
| 3. I was wrong.  | 4. I am sorry.  |

To me these four statements embody what it truly means to be a scholar.

1. I don't know: No one person knows everything. Even as we become experts in a subject area, we are changing and, therefore, our understanding of the subject changes as well. Never be afraid to acknowledge that you don't know something.

2. I need help: Take help when it is offered. Take support when it is provided. Take advantage of every opportunity to learn something.

3. I was wrong: Acknowledge when you have said something or done something that had a negative effect - whether or not it was meant that way. Take responsibility for the impact you have made.

4. I am sorry: Never be afraid to demonstrate kindness and compassion. Show that you feel regret or remorse so that others may know that you have learned something from the incident and/or experience.

As we travel through the school year together, I hope that you take these statements to heart. They are not only practices that will help ensure your academic success in ELA but they are also life skills that will prove valuable on the journey of your life.

Welcome to English Language Arts,  
**Maria Vicario**