

## Yes, But...

I teach in a four-wall box of drab proportions,  
But I choose to make it a place that feels like home.  
I see too many students to know them as they need to be known,  
But I refuse to let that render them faceless in my mind.  
I am overcome with the transmission of a canon I can scarcely recall myself,  
But I will not represent learning as a burden to the young.  
I suffer from a poverty of time,  
And so will use what I have to best advantage those I teach.  
I am an echo of the way school has been since forever,  
But will not agree to perpetuate the echo another generation.  
I am told I am as good a teacher as the test scores I generate,  
But will not allow my students to see themselves as data.  
I work in isolation,  
And am all the more determined to connect my students with the world.  
I am small in the chain of power,  
But have the power to change young lives.  
There are many reasons to succumb,  
And thirty reasons five times a day to succeed.  
Most decisions about my job are removed from me.  
Except the ones that matter most.

by Carol Ann Tomlinson