



# Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire: The Methods and Madness Inside Room 56

By Rafe Esquith

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***The New York Times* bestseller that is revolutionizing the way Americans educate their kids—"Rafe Esquith is a genius and a saint" (*The New York Times*)**

Perhaps the most famous fifth-grade teacher in America, Rafe Esquith has won numerous awards and even honorary citizenship in the British Empire for his outstandingly successful methods. In his Los Angeles public school classroom, he helps impoverished immigrant children understand Shakespeare, play Vivaldi, and become happy, self-confident people. This bestseller gives any teacher or parent all the techniques, exercises, and innovations that have made its author an educational icon, from personal codes of behavior to tips on tackling literature and algebra. The result is a powerful book for anyone concerned about the future of our children.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

*Starred Review.* Esquith might be the only public school teacher to be honored by both Oprah Winfrey and the Dalai Lama; he is the only school teacher ever to receive the president's National Medal of the Arts. For the past 25 years, Esquith has taught fifth graders at Hobart Elementary in central Los Angeles. Like most progressive educators, Esquith is outraged by the tyranny of testing, the scripting of teaching under "No Child Left Behind" and the overwhelming bureaucratization of the education industry. Still, he's done wonders with the basic curriculum—developing a hands-on arts program, a money-management curriculum and a sports-based statistics unit. Esquith and his Hobart Shakespeareans are world famous for the rock opera they create every year. Throughout each school day, Esquith teaches life skills: how to think about problems, how to plan a strategy to solve them and, most important, how to work together and be nice to each other. While his goals are inspiring, he's also practical—most chapters include affordable, how-to directions for a variety of his most effective classroom activities; he's even got a few tips for revamping those inescapable "test prep" sessions. (*Jan.*)

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### Review

"Esquith is a modern-day Thoreau, preaching the value of good work, honest self-reflection, and the courage to go one's own way."

*-Newsday*

"Politicians, burbling over how to educate the underclass, would do well to stop by Rafe Esquith's fifth-grade class."

*-Time*

"The most interesting and influential classroom teacher in the country."

*-The Washington Post*

From the Back Cover

### Praise for Rafe Esquith:

"Rafe Esquith is my only hero."

*—Sir Ian McKellan*

"Politicians, burbling over how to educate the underclass, would do well to stop by Rafe Esquith's fifth grade class as it mounts its annual Shakespeare play. Sound like a grind? Listen to the peals of laughter bouncing off the classroom walls."

*—Time*

"Esquith is a modern-day Thoreau, preaching the value of good work, honest self-reflection, and the courage to go one's own way."

*—Newsday*

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#### **Bonita Murray:**

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