I TAUGHT THEM ALL

I have taught in high school for ten years. During that time I have given assignments, among others, to a murderer, a pugilist, a thief and an imbecile. The murderer was a quiet little boy who sat on the front seat and regarded me with pale blue eyes; the pugilist lounged by the window and let loose at intervals in raucous laugh that startled even the geraniums; the thief was a gay-hearted Lothario with a song on his lips; and the imbecile, a shifty-eyed little animal seeking the shadows.

The murderer awaits death in the state penitentiary; the pugilist lost an eye in a brawl in Hong Kong; the thief, by standing on tip-toe, can see the window of my room from the country jail; and the once gentle-eyed little moron beats his head against a padded wall in the state asylum.

All these people once sat in my room, sat and looked at me gravely across worn brown desks. I must have been a great help to those pupils... I taught them the rhyming scheme of the Elisabethan sonnet and how to diagram a complex sentence.

raucous = harsh padded = soft covering stuff
Lothario = Don Juan shifty = changing (swift moving)

Comment upon the main ideas in the fragment above. Is education beneficial for this kind of people?