

What is the ultimate goal of teaching? To make meaningful connections and experiences between information and the students? To be able to properly answer a question? To have a wealth of knowledge in your noodle, but little application of what it means or how it used? Or is the ultimate goal to teach students to feel confident in themselves and what they are capable of. Isn't really the purpose of education to develop a set of automated tools/skills that are practical and comfortable for use for students'. But man its hard to do that in a year. So is there a better time to get at it than other times? Is there an ideal time to have students so that the impact is most effective? How can I spread myself out so that I can work with each student and make them feel confident in their abilities? I think the quickest way is to make it everything PRACTICAL. Now that answers the problem of making real life connections.... So that's the why. But how do you give to them the how? Semantics, rules, and all those boring worksheets are the how unfortunately. How does it work? Not why is it used here...but how does that use work? Man that's gotta be hard to reach. Its got to be hard to find that balance between the mechanics off a process and the application of it.

How is that done? How can students learn what they need to learn based on worksheets? How can I, as a teacher, provide experiences for everything I need to teach my students. Maybe the worksheets/quizzes/tests/essays/projects are necessary. But why not integrate it? Projects are good b/c they allow students to explore a topic and present information that they feel is relevant. It is dynamic in the fact that it can take multiple approaches. Pictures, research, data, summaries, hypothesizing, extending, and relating. Always focus on "WHAT IT MEANS." Its important to know what something is. But what does it mean in the big picture? How are things connected? How does it work? Sometimes the alternative approach can be the best way to demonstrate something. Don't just show how something works...but show WHY it both works and doesn't work. For complete understanding, its important to know all the different aspects of something and how it does/doesn't work.

But how do I do this? There are so many standards and things that must be met, done, and monitored, that it is difficult to micromanage all the things while still trying to develop the students understanding. And what about all the different kinds of students that there are in the classroom? All the backgrounds and experiences... How do I overcome these when there are standards that must be adhered to. What's worse, the standards aren't even universal. Sure there are minimums that must be met in teaching students (TEKS) but what does that mean for other students from around the country? From around the world? A disparity in education is still a disparity, pure and simple. It is reflective of the disparities that are inherent in society. The rich get richer, the poor get poorer. Why? Would a system of social motherhood help alleviate this stress? What must be done to make it universal? What must be done in order to have equity for students. Even if I can make every lesson meaningful, important, and practical, how can I know it will do anything? Will the students have the same experience naturally in their lives regardless of what role I play in it? Maybe it is important to "teach towards the test" so that all the bases are covered, and then allow experience to fill in the cracks. Can it work that way?

If so, do I really have a hand in doing something important in peoples lives?

What do I have different that would make me a great teacher? Perspective? Patience? Objectives? Im sure most teachers have these qualities to them, but what would make me excel? Because I have the mentality of a 12 year old? Because I still ask questions? That doesn't mean that I will compel my students to ask questions, to seek understanding, or to search deeper.

Existence precedes essence, and the goal should be to first question existence, then essence.

A big thing to remember is the importance of rituals and practices. From the first day, if there is something I want the students doing every day...have them do it every day. Decide what are things that I need to take care of, and what are things that the students need to learn to take care of on their own. Make sure they do stuff that is necessary. Don't pick up after them, make it their responsibility to clean up.

Are these concerns ever gonna pass? Does every future teacher fear this? Is this a doubt in myself, or a doubt in the system? Does it matter that I am not sure about my abilities? If my abilities fall is it a result of the system? Is the system failing me? Am I failing the system? Maybe the system and I aren't really compatible. Is it necessary for me to go to a private sector where everything isn't scaled on minimums? What is the answer to this? Would a nationalized standard even work in this situation? Say there was a nation-wide education movement. Everyone gets behind the bandwagon and a universal education policy is adopted in this country. Even then, when \$\$\$ isn't as much of an issue for me or other teachers, will the goals be effective? The Taks outlines goals. Minimum goals that everything is based on. Reinforce minimums and you will get minimums. What does that teach people. Do enough to get by, and you have gotten by...good job?