“My Dream as an English Teacher”

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The word “teacher” is very familiar to everyone. However, only few people really understand what it takes to be a true teacher. The term “teacher” is often only seen and understood as a job. Some people may think that teachers’ job is to just pass information and knowledge to students. Students do not like preachy teachers. While it is true that teachers teach, teachers do so much more than just than just passing information. Teachers should make an environment for student, where they can express themselves without being afraid to make mistakes. Learning happens best when there is interaction and feedback. As a teacher it is so important to be able to stop and really listen to what students have to say and help them from where they are.

By getting the TESOL certificate from the California State University at Long Beach, I hope to learn the methods, techniques and general understanding on how to better teach English. I hope the certificate will help me to meet the requirements to being a teacher at international schools.

I highly value and give lot of credits to teachers because they are people of great responsibility and influence. The two people who influence students the most are parents and teachers. And basically the people students spend the most time with are teachers. Each teacher brings his or her beliefs, cultural values, life experiences, and attitudes to class. Therefore, it is not only teachers’ knowledge that students gain from but also teachers’ beliefs, cultural values, experiences and attitudes. If students like the teacher, students will probably perform better in class and will enjoy the subject by spending more time on that particular subject. It is totally opposite if the students do not like the teacher. Students might lose interest in the subject altogether.

Ever since I was a child I always wanted to be an English teacher. I questioned myself. Why do I want to become a teacher? Why should I choose to be an English teacher over many other jobs? Let me explain why. I grew up as a third culture kid. I grew up in Russia under Korean parents. I attended a Korean language school and an English-spoken international school. The shifts in instruction from Korean to Russian, Russian to Korean, Korean to English were a big stress to me. Studying was never easy for me. And so, I would not have been able to achieve the level of English proficiency I have now if I had not met my wonderful teachers. I can totally relate to students’ stress of learning English. I am so thankful to the teachers I had and I want to return the favor by becoming an excellent English teacher. Deep in my heart I had more passion about becoming an English teacher than any other jobs.

I had a very intelligent teacher who taught me five times a week. This teacher believed that I had a learning disorder and mental problems which made my learning process so hard. I denied the fact at first. Over years, however, I heard the same thing over and over, and I slowly started to believe her theory of why learning was so difficult for me. After being persuaded by the teacher I was not motivated to do anything. I made excuses saying that I am not capable of performing better.

Luckily, I had another teacher who had a totally different perspective. This teacher believed in me and believed that I could master English. Through this teacher I was able to persevere and overcome difficulties of learning English. I started to really admire this teacher and dreamed of becoming like her one day.

Ten years from now I want to be an excellent teacher. I will be teacher with empathy, authenticity and respect. I will never consider report and evaluation letters sent home to parents out of politeness. As I matured, I got to understand that teachers need eyes to see talents and potential in their students, and help them achieve success and do their best. I was often being told that I am good at learning languages and writing. I knew that I was enjoying learning languages and that I loved writing but I never felt that I was really outstanding at it. Many years later, when I read the evaluation report cards of my teachers, I was surprised how each teacher saw that talent in me.

I do not want to be a teacher who only gives lecture and does not interact and communicate with students. I worked at a Hakwon for three months as a kindergarten homeroom teacher and at the same time as an elementary English teacher. I had a student who was not motivated and could not sit still and would distract other students. I worked really hard to not show favoritism to other students or annoyance to that student. The student gave me a hard time managing the class. It was not until I opened myself hundred percent to listen and relate to my students that I got to understand why the student was reacting and was the way he was. I got to know that the student’s parents got divorced and he was craving for love and understanding. I was ashamed of myself. I was so confident that I was not quick to make assumptions but I could not deny the fact that I was not listening to my students and was not giving my hundred percent to them. After that I worked hard to show more attention and love to all students. I learned that there is always a reason for everything, so I should not talk about anyone or anything that I do not have the full knowledge about.

My student Betty was stressed about English. She came to class with tears because she did not want to come to class. She was very competitive and was easily discouraged. I encouraged her and pointed out that she was good and she could even get better. I was so happy to see her change. She was the student who came to class last in tears, but she at one point was the first to come to class and with shiny eyes. She was ready to learn. She asked me what we are doing, and what we are learning each day. Betty’s parents thanked me every time they met me. That was the most rewarding moment I experienced being a teacher.

Ten years later from now I wish to be teaching. I will be a passionate teacher who is ready to give hundred percent to my students. I will be quick to point out the good and positive things about students. I do not want to see any of my students to give up learning and lose interest in English. I want to be a teacher who makes learning fun and enjoyable. Learning should be fun and enjoyable. I want to be a teacher who encourages students and always motivates students to do their best. I do not want to classify students according to their grades or on the basis of how fast they learn and grasp the concepts and information. I want to be a teacher who trusts students.

It will be my pleasure to see students grow and to learn. Changing and finding interest and motivation to learn English. After many years when any student remembers me and express thankfulness It will be my best reward I could imagine as a teacher.