SO YOU WANT TO BE A TEACHER

MR. DAVID M. SYRACUSE, PRESENTER

“A good teacher is like a candle - it consumes itself to light the way for others.” – Anonymous

“More important than the curriculum is the question of the methods of teaching and the spirit in which the teaching is given” – Betrand Russell

“What greater or better gift can we offer the republic than to teach and instruct our youth?” – Cicero

“We spend the first twelve months of our children's lives teaching them to walk and talk and the next twelve years telling them to sit down and shut up.” – Phyllis Diller

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is not a profession into which one can enter lightly. Choosing to teach is not the same as deciding what to have for dinner. “Oh,” says Sally, “I think it feels like a roasted portabella kind of night.” “No,” counters Jimmy, “I think it’s time for macaroni and cheese.” Perhaps after a few moments of discussion, they’ll come to a conclusion.

Teaching, however, is not a decision to be taken lightly. You literally may be the last person, EVER in the world to talk to some of your students in any intelligent way about the ideas in your class. Take a moment to consider this fact! If you are a biology teacher, you might be the last person, EVER, to talk to your students about cloning or stem cells in any sort of meaningful way. If you teach American History, you might be the last person, EVER to talk to your students about interactions between Native Americans and Europeans. This should scare you. It terrifies me. Look around at the world and see how many people get their information from the nightly news or the interwebs and can’t turn it around in their heads to make a decision about how good it is. These are the people that are voting on stem cell research, or Native American issues. That’s not a good picture.

So if you choose to teach, you choose to commit your life to your students. Teaching is rightly more of a lifestyle than a profession. You can’t teach part time. I think that if you look back over your careers as students, you’ll find that you can pick out the teachers who did an extra-special job; those who really will push for your success at the expense of their own free time or wallet. It is your job to become one of those teachers. I hope to demonstrate today just a few ways that this can happen.

Do not mistake the demonstrations that you’ll see today as merely bells and whistles; nothing that a teacher does can work if he or she doesn’t set it up right. Each technique we’ll discuss must be an integral part of each lesson you present. I hope that you do decide to join the hundreds of thousands of people who have chosen to dedicate their lives to the future in the most positive way possible – by becoming teachers.

PROGRAM

Part I

Starting off on the right foot – hook your audience – what tone to set – how to set a tone – it’s your classroom, make it feel how you want it to feel!

Part II

Knowing what or how much your students know – how to test for prior learning – Renaissance Responders – other “clickers” – how to keep interest – how to lose interest – webspiration – timing.

Part III

Demonstrations – Vernier equipment – class involvement – who’s in charge, anyway? – teacher-centered vs. student-centered classrooms – “guide on the side”

PART IV

New ways to present learning – Mimio Board – “The Wonderous Heart” – the helping verb song – French verb conjugations from eons ago – QuizKits – Lectures?!?!?!

Part IV

Always go out with a bang – summing things up – reflection – “what can we do with this?”

RESOURCES

[www.mistersyracuse.com](http://www.mistersyracuse.com)

[www.mistersyracuse.wikispaces.com](http://www.mistersyracuse.wikispaces.com)

[www.mistersyracuse.blogspot.com](http://www.mistersyracuse.blogspot.com)

I’m on delicious – dsyracuse. You can add me as a friend to see my links.

Contact me at [dsyracuse@gmail.com](mailto:dsyracuse@gmail.com) with questions