

## Effective and Influential Teaching

A good teacher motivates, facilitates, is thoughtful of his or her students, acts as a role-model, and never ceases to learn. Students of this kind of teacher, whom I aspire to be, will be successful within the classroom and out in the ever-changing, globalizing world.

### **Motivation Through Practicality**

Motivating one's students is probably one of the most challenging aspects of teaching, but it is also one of the most important things I can do for my students. Without motivation, learning cannot occur. The key to motivation is to convince the students of the practical use of the material. In second language learning, if students realize that they can use the language purposefully in the future, they will be more inclined to take the time to learn the material well. Therefore, in my future classroom, I plan to use actual data samples, such as in the form of video clips from real situations, and have my students complete assignments where they need to use the target language outside of class. I hope to help my students understand how learning the material now will benefit them in the future by teaching them language they will need to further their studies, be fully equipped for their career, and interact with people all over the world.

### **Facilitate Inductive Learning**

I strongly believe in letting the students discover new knowledge and learn on their own because that way, they actively engage in the lesson and remember the material better. A teacher should facilitate students' learning by pointing them in the right direction. Throughout my studies, I have learned that the best way to teach language inductively is to expose students to appropriate materials, give lots of examples, and allow for lots of student talk time. That way, the students learn without having to be told explicitly what they need to take away from the lesson, whether it is particular grammar rules or the pragmatics involved in writing a letter.

## **Considerate of Students' Personalities, Needs, and Learning Styles**

Being thoughtful of one's students is important for creating good rapport and ensuring they are getting the most out of each lesson. This means to know their names within the first week, to remember their favorite pastimes, and to have a good feel of their unique personalities. I have learned that an effective way to start is to write down their unique characteristics and hobbies when they introduce themselves, and as much as possible, say their names aloud to commit them to memory. To be thoughtful of one's students also means to be aware their various learning styles, whether they learn best through aural instruction or kinesthetic activities. I will make it a point to adapt or create lesson plans that accommodate my students' different learning styles, but also to expose them to new ways they are not used to. Furthermore, I will prioritize being aware of my students' needs and adjust lesson plans as I see fit. One other very important way in which I plan to be thoughtful of my students in a language classroom is being sensitive to my students' cultural backgrounds, which affect the way they think and learn. Knowing this might help me in my interaction with my students—such as calling on those who come from a culture where speaking up freely in class is not the norm—and better present the second language and its culture.

## **Lessons Beyond the Classroom**

Teachers also act as role models. This is especially true when teaching a classroom full of children or young adults. Being a role model involves disciplining unacceptable behavior like cheating, promoting good habits like being organized, and practicing important life values like being kind to others. One of my favorite teachers is my hula teacher. She always has wise words to say about life, speaking from experience. An exceptional teacher like my *kumu* does not just present information and works to have the students retain the knowledge, but also shares

what he or she has learned about life, such as the importance of being givers and not takers, and encourages students in hopes they will learn something that is applicable beyond the classroom.

I hope to be an excellent role model for my students.

### **Learning Never Stops**

Teachers should always be learning. New methods of presenting material, ways to manage a classroom, and technologies that can be used to help students will continuously be developed. I vow to not be stuck using set methods that I am comfortable with, but will actively seek out to learn new ideas from researchers and other teachers, especially in the field of second language studies. That way, I will continuously improve upon myself.

-----

To teach is to inspire, to be considerate, to share, and to learn.