**What Teaching Means to Me**

What is teaching? What is the role of a teacher? These are some of the thoughts that have been recently going through my mind. I know that there is a significant difference between what makes a teacher and what makes an effective teacher, but I have yet to realize exactly what those differences are. By looking back on my personal beliefs on teaching, I can interpret my own meaning on what an effective teacher is and maybe how I can also be one myself.

When I was ten I wanted to be an artist, when I was seventeen I wanted to be an engineer and when I was nineteen I wanted to be an investment banker. Now that I am twenty-two I have decided that I want to become a teacher. Teaching was always a role that I admired but didn’t think that it was something that I had the capability of doing, as I was very much used to being in the position of the student. But then I thought, “why not?” because I am good at speaking English and it is definitely a skill that I could teach to others. As I thought about teaching English as a possible career option more seriously, I began to develop a deeper interest about it and what it really means to be a good teacher. By remembering my past experiences with teachers, it helped me to realize those aspects.

I’ve had my fair share of good and bad teachers. For some reason, it has always been the bad ones that left a stronger impression. When I was in primary school, there was a Mrs. Galbraith who would frequently tell me off and I would always find myself at the receiving end of her cold and disciplinary gazes. I was not a troublemaker in school and other teachers did not have a problem with me, so I found Mrs. Galbraith’s actions to be quite disheartening. My experience with Mrs. Galbraith did not nurture my faith in teachers, but it also does not undermine the profound effect I believe that a teacher can have (especially on a child). A teacher’s ability to inspire positively and motivate students to learn is something that I also find greatly inspiring.

I find a teacher’s potential to be inspiring because I have come to understand that throughout our lives we are constantly learning, therefore there are always teachers around to facilitate our learning process. Whether it is in a classroom, picking up a new sport or learning an instrument, learning can be a lot more fun and engaging when there is an effective teacher to guide you along the way. I also strongly believe that it is important for good teachers to be around, as it can sometimes be solely up to a teacher’s belief in a student that determines the student’s ability to succeed. That is why I am taking this TESOL course, because I also want to be a person that is able to teach and connect with others. To be able to inspire people to believe in their own learning capabilities and see them develop their own potentials as well.

Throughout my life, I have always been unsure about what I wanted to be. Then I discovered that I could become a teacher, which made me reflect on my own personal experiences I’ve had with teachers and the effect that they had on me as a student. Despite my negative experiences, I always believed in the importance of teaching and the importance of believing in another person’s ability to learn. I hope that by taking this TESOL course, I will also be able to learn and prepare on how to become a great teacher.