

Questions

* When did you decide you wanted to go into teaching?

Learning and teaching has always been something I enjoyed doing. I had worked with young kids since my university days. I can be described as a bit of an idealist and thought what a way to change the world then with the youth of today and what better place to start than in schools. If you can make a difference in these kids then really you have made a difference. But teaching became a viable option for me when my wife decided to undertake the graduate teaching programme route into teaching. She would come home utterly satisfied with her days work, whereas I was constantly lacking job satisfaction.

* What do you like about teaching in general?

I know it may sound a little clichéd but it really is a rewarding job. In my first year of teaching my salary dropped almost 70% and I am still no way near what I was earning. I could not carry on with teaching if it was not rewarding. The most rewarding element is when you see the pupils understand and grasp what you have been trying to teach. I have a passion for teaching, and that mostly comes from my desire to have a positive influence upon people, youth in particular.

* Is there a set pattern to your working day?

ohh we work like clock work. Tick tock tick tock... I have to be in school by 08:30 and after registration with my year 7 form class for 15 minutes, I read out all announcements etc. Period 1 starts at 08:45 for an hour and straight after, it's another hour lesson. Then you get 15 minutes of coffee or tea break, depending on what you fancy ☺ It's always a mad rush to get your hot coffee and try and make time to sit and chat. Then it's another couple of lessons for an hour each till lunch time, which in my case most lunch is spent in my room giving extra time to students, with catch up and the computer club I run. Then it's back to the routine, registration and lessons. After which you began to tidy and contemplate what you have done etc.. phewwwww that's one day over ☺

* What was the high point of your week this week?

My high point of this week was a year 11 pupil who has completed his exams and can doss about at home, had decided to come home and say thanks for all the help and just have a general chit chat about his future.

* What do you like about working with children?

I like the fact that you can actually make a difference in their life if you really try. You know, equip children with skills that they will be able to utilise in the future. And not just giving them the subject knowledge, it's about empowering children with the confidence they need to be able and responsible citizens. And it's tremendously rewarding and challenging at the same time. There will always be those children that require motivation to learn. I like teaching children in ways that would appeal to them.

* How do you encourage good behaviour in your school?

I believe good behaviour will be maintained by the teacher having a good relationship with the pupils and having a positive attitude even in the darkest hour.:-) I make a point of knowing what's happening in the pupil's lives. How their holiday was, knowing about their pets etc and that makes us (teachers) seem human. If we are seen as human then the students feel they can communicate with the us.

* How enthusiastic do you find your pupils?

This really depends on simple things like the weather, what has happened in their life before they entered the classroom, whether I smile or not. But overall great enthusiasm especially when they are learning about things they enjoy. Of course there will always be the few that need a little extra motivation, but that's the challenge I mentioned earlier.

* What about when they are not so enthusiastic?

Enthusiasm comes from wanting to learn and pupils will not want to learn if they cannot relate to their learning, hence their learning has to be purposeful and has to have meaning in their life hence it's just learning for the sake of learning.

*** Do your lessons always go as planned?**

Actually good lesson plans always should and most of the time they do, as even in a good lesson plan, one should always have a plan b and even a plan c. As a teacher though you quickly learn that if the lesson plan does not go accordingly then it's not the end of the world as long you have a back up. The pupils can always smell a fake a mile away so you always have to be ready.

*** What do you find is the best way to engage your pupils?**

Make the lessons purposeful and meaningful to their lives. I have introduced film making into my lessons. The unit is about teaching pupils control and I have chosen short film making as a tool to teach these skills to the pupils.

*** Do you find that teaching offers good opportunities for career progression?**

I had worked in the IT industry for over 6 years as an IT consultant and considering what I had learnt with an IT degree, it really placed me in a strong position when I started teaching. I do feel there are great career prospects if anybody is willing to take them.