

## **The Artistry of Teaching**

Stanley D. Ivie

### **Abstract**

We live in an age rife with evaluations. Everyone is busy evaluating everyone. Teachers evaluate students; administrators evaluate teachers; the public evaluates administrators. Testing agencies are having a field day creating instruments for evaluating everyone and everything. The circle feeds on itself. In my 45 years of teaching experience, my most treasured evaluation came from a six-year-old boy who came to class one evening with his mother. During the class period, he sat quietly next to his mother working with pencil and paper on something placed upon his desk. At the end of the class, he came to the front of the room and presented me with a picture of myself standing in front of the classroom waving my hands in the air. Below the picture he had written, "You are a good teacher and funny." They say a picture is worth a thousand words. I like to think the little boy captured the spirit of my teaching. The following article is a venture into the spirit of teaching. Hopefully, it can assist thoughtful teachers in developing their own classroom artistry.

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Is teaching more like the sciences or is it more like the arts? Are empirical and quantitative studies the only legitimate ways of gaining knowledge about teaching and learning or are intuitive and experiential approaches of equal value? The past 100 years of educational research have given priority to scientific studies. Wittrock's (1986) massive compilation, *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, running 1,000 pages with 35 contributing authors, reflects educators' commitment to scientific inquiry. The volume, however, fails to mention the concepts of intuition, aesthetic fusion, bonding, and love anywhere in its pages. Why are researchers so reluctant to talk about the artistry of teaching?

Studying an activity and performing an activity are two very different things. Doctors may memorize *Gray's Anatomy* from cover to cover, but there is no substitute for actually dissecting a human body. The visceral does not come with a neat roadmap taped inside. The same is true of teaching. Study all the theories and methods you like, it is quite a different matter to step in front of a classroom filled with children. The weight of the group suddenly settles on your shoulders. Though schooling, teaching, and learning can all be studied from the outside using empirical and quantitative methods? Nothing can substitute for the rush of adrenaline the teacher feels when the bell for class to begin rings. A military battle plan may be the best ever designed until the first shot is fired. Then everything breaks down and Sergeants begin to improvise. The same is true of teaching. Madeline Hunter, herself, may have written your daily lesson plan, but all of that goes out the window the first time the teacher looks down at bewildered faces. Logic will only take educators so far. Sooner or later they will be called upon to use their intuition.

Teaching and learning revolve around what can be called the aesthetic trinity of fusion, bonding, and love. It is just that simple and just that complex. Everything else is subterfuge. Calling the role, making assignments, checking papers, testing, and assigning grades are all part of the bureaucratic requirements of today's schooling. The mania surrounding standardized

testing profits no one except a handful of testing agencies. When was the last time you heard of someone being awarded the Pulitzer Prize for having made a high SAT score? Years ago John Dewey expressed serious reservations about the value of testing. He was fond of telling a homespun story about how pigs were weighed back on the family farm. First, he said, we balanced a long pole on a big rock. Second, we caught the pig and tied him to one end of the pole. Third, we stacked big stones on the other end of the pole until the pig and the stones were perfectly balanced. Finally, we untied the pig and took a guess at how much the stones weighed. All measurement is at best conjecture. How often have children been shortchanged because someone guessed wrong about the weight of the stones?

### **Aesthetic Fusion, Bonding, and Love**

#### **Aesthetic Fusion**

Professional athletes like to talk about being in the zone and experiencing flow. Artists and educators, on the other hand, prefer to speak of aesthetic fusion. All three groups have similar experiences in mind. What do athletes mean when they tell us of being in the zone and achieving flow? When someone is in the zone, he or she is at peak performance. The whole activity generates the feeling of effortless action. Some athletes talk about being outside of themselves and watching their bodies perform. The gymnast, Nadia Comaneci, was awarded a perfect 10 on the uneven bars at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal. Her movements were like watching poetry in motion. Bob Beaman, who had been jumping 27 feet (plus inches), jumped a remarkable 29 (plus inches) at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, setting a new world record for the long-jump. Serena Williams accomplished her professional goal when she won at Wimbledon in 2015. Her serves and returns were both powerful and graceful. All three of these athletes were in the zone when they made their spectacular accomplishments. When an athlete is in the zone and experiences flow, he or she becomes one with the activity. All of his or her actions come together to form an aesthetic whole.

Bill Russell, who played for the Celtics, speaks of moments in a game of basketball when it was almost like having a mystical experience. Cooper (2009) quotes Russell as writing in his autobiography, “It was almost as if we were playing in slow motion. During those spells I could almost sense how the next play would develop and where the next shot would be taken.’ Russell goes on to add, “My premonitions would be consistently correct, and I always felt then that I not only knew all the Celtics by heart but also all the opposing players, and that they all knew me.’

The motion picture, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, offers a thoughtful interpretation of the idea of flow. The story unfolds around a golf tournament. The hero of the story, Jonah (Matt Damon) is trying to recover his swing. A mysterious stranger, Bagger Vance (Will Smith) shows up to help Jonah with his game. A key scene in the film is when the great golfer, Bobby Jones, steps up to the tee. Bagger Vance tells Jonah to watch carefully Bobby Jones. Bagger Vance delivers a prosaic talk on becoming one with the field. He tells Jonah to get out of his head and to trust in the wisdom of his hands. To play golf like Bobby Jones, who is a master of the game, Jonah has to become one with the field by tapping into the flow of the game.

Though Csikszentmihalyi (2002) conducted pioneer research on the phenomenon of flow in singular activities such as athletics, music, and the arts, he has only expressed his thoughts on teaching and learning in a left-handed way. One educational innovation, however, has managed to catch his attention—the Key Learning Community in Indianapolis. Csikszentmihalyi believes it reflects his thoughts on education. “Perhaps the most intriguing application of flow theory,” says Schmidt (2010), “has been the school’s Flow Center.” The Center is equipped with a variety of games, puzzles, and challenging activities. “The mission of the flow room is to help students realize that they can become engaged in activities that are educational.” Csikszentmihalyi (2002) has complemented the teachers at the Key School, saying, “They have tried very self-consciously also to include flow into their teaching methods and, I think, very successfully.”

Being in the zone is one of the characteristics of great teaching, though it cannot be called up at will. To achieve flow in a classroom, the teacher has to establish an atmosphere of trust with his or her students. A touch of humor is always a good way of making students feel relaxed and open to new experiences. It is said that everyone enjoyed being a guest on the Jack Benny (comedy) Show. Jack himself was always the brunt of all the jokes. The same is true of good teaching. When learning situations are in the zone, there is an open flow of ideas and experiences between the teacher and his or her students. Fear of failure has been left at the classroom door. Everyone is caught up in the spirit of allowing the dialogue about worthwhile ideas move freely in whatever direction it may chooses. The whole classroom is characterized by a pervasive feeling of unity and oneness.

What determines the personality of a classroom filled with students? Teachers have less power to shape the character of their classrooms than is generally recognized. Teaching in some respects is like playing the game of poker. You play with the hand that is dealt you. Face cards represent the dominant individuals in the group. It is good to be holding the Queen of Hearts. She is a positive force in the classroom, explaining the teacher's motives to the other members of the class. No classroom is complete without its Joker. Jousting with the Joker is always entertaining for the other members of the class. Being in the zone and experiencing flow are not ends in themselves. They are merely steppingstones along the path leading to aesthetic fusion, which is one of those intangible rewards that keep teachers teaching and learners learning.

Do you remember the movie, *Little Big Man*? Dustin Hoffman was given a powerful role playing the part of an old Indian. Hoffman, speaking of his part, recalled there were times in the making of the film when he was not just playing the part of an old Indian but that he was indeed the old Indian. An aesthetic fusion had taken place between the actor and the character in the script. Equestrians tell us when a horse has been properly trained it can read the mind of its rider and move correctly without physical commands. Steve Reeves had such a relationship with his

horse. The reason he was dumped over the bar, according to Steve, was he lost concentration for a moment and the horse stopped. Rubinstein, the pianist, was once asked how Chopin might have played one of his own pieces. Rubinstein went to the piano and played the piece. Later he said it was not the way he usually played it, but he felt very sure it was the way Chopin would have played the piece. When the artist is successful in achieving aesthetic fusion, says Broudy (1962), “the whole picture, poem, or play feels like something—the feeling seems to be in the work of art itself” (pp. 218-219).

Sarason (1999) believes the classroom is like a theatre where the teacher creates an ambience for his or her audience, the learners. Teachers are the “vehicles by which the script (the curriculum) becomes a source of interest” (p. 11). Sarason (1999) stresses the importance of recognizing, “the fact that teaching is an art, a performing one, requiring of the teacher imagination . . . the sources of which are both cognitive and intuitive” (p. 155). Not only is teaching a performing art, but it contains a mystical side as well. Eisner (2013) informs us that, “Artistry is the ability to craft a performance, to influence its pace, to shop its rhythms and to modulate its tone so that its parts merge into a coherent whole. You come to feel a process that often exceeds the capacity of language to describe.”

Mathews (1988) called Jaime Escalante *The Best Teacher in America*. Escalante came to national prominence when his high school students in East Los Angeles were successful in passing the AP test in calculus. Escalante’s classes accounted for one out of every four Mexican American students taking the AP calculus test in the United States. Escalante’s notoriety resulted in his becoming the subject of the motion picture, *Stand and Deliver*. The story of Escalante’s success at James R. Garfield High School provides an excellent example of how learning can reflect aesthetic fusion. Escalante used his Latin American background and knowledge of Spanish to build relationships with his students. Mathews (1988) says, Escalante “turned the family spirit of East Los Angeles into an academic tool” (p. 290). Though his teaching

techniques were frequently quirky and harsh, his students came to know he had their best interests at heart. Escalante “ate with them. He agonized with them over divorce and neglect and violence or rejoiced with them at marriages and births in their families” (p. 287). What does Escalante’s experience tell us about the artistry of teaching? Mathews (1988) offers the following advice to school administrators: “leave good teachers alone” (p. 292). Don’t try to persuade them to give up their personal style in favor of one of the latest fads.

### **Bonding**

Bonding, says Berger (1988), occurs “between mother and newborn in virtually every species of mammals” (p. 97). In humans, however, bonding is less immediate and instinctual than it is among other species. The bond between parent and child “begins to grow or atrophy from the first days of pregnancy, throughout infancy, and many years of childhood, and beyond” (p. 98). Bonding is a pivotal experience in the life of every human being. Unfortunately, says Knittle (2017), “Not all parents bond with their infant children during this critical time after birth.” Perhaps as many as 40% of all infants do not form strong bonds with their parents. This can have devastating effects later on in life (Knittle, 2017). If bonding does not occur shortly after birth, the person’s need for intimacy and affection can never truly be filled.

Bonding is one of the most powerful experiences that can take place inside a classroom. Without it everything else is a waste of time. Do you remember Robin Williams’ portrayal of a teacher in *The Dead Poets Society*? Williams had just instructed his students to tear out the introductory chapter to their poetry book. At first the students couldn’t believe what they were hearing. No teacher had ever given them such instructions before. Williams tells his students it is all crap. Tear the pages out! Soon the students are ripping out the pages with glee. Once the task of tearing out the pages is finished, Williams seats himself on a desk in the middle of the room and instructs his students to huddle around. He then delivers an emotionally stirring talk on the value of poetry and how it contributes to enrichment of experiences flowing into our lives.

Everyone, Williams informs his students, has a chance to add a line to the great conversation shaping who we are and how we think. The bonding session ends with Williams posing the question, “What will be your line?”

Bonding is closely related to the psychological processes humans use in acquiring values, identification and imitation. We identify with persons who we admire and respect. Who were your childhood heroes or heroines? Sports figures and rock stars rank high on today’s list. We wish to be like persons who demonstrate skills and qualities we desire to find in ourselves. Who children seek to be like can tell us a great deal about their development. Emotionally healthy children tend to model up. Emotionally troubled children, on the other hand, tend to model down. Teachers, says Getzels (1963), can become significant figures in the lives of children. “Where values are concerned, it is not so much what people say the child should do that matters as the kinds of models the significant figures provide that is important. One cannot so much teach values as offer appropriate models for identification” (p. 160). Years ago, when the author was teaching high school, he was standing in the hall having a conversation with the math teacher, who was known for being a very exacting teacher. During the conversation, one of the math teacher’s students came up and stood next to him. The math teacher turned to the student and asked, “Can I help you with something?” “Oh, no,” the student replied, “I just like to hear you talk.”

Marva Collins was a very exacting teacher. She first came to national prominence in connection with the private school she founded in the slums of Chicago. CBS News, 60 Minutes, visited her several times, and her school became the subject of the movie, *The Marva Collins Story*, starring Cicely Tyson. Collins’ (1990) style of teaching was graphically depicted in her book, *Marva Collins’ Way*. She was offered the position of Secretary of Education by two different presidents, which she declined in order to pursue her passion for teaching. Collins is an example *par excellence* of teacher and student bonding.

Tamarkin (1990), who was Collins' co-author, describes Collins' teaching in the following way, "She had an exuberance, an energy about her that was both captivating and contagious" (p. 12). The spirit of teaching flowed naturally out of her. Collins was in constant motion in the classroom, patting students' heads, touching their shoulders, praising their efforts. Collins gave each child individual attention. "She didn't just teach them. She nurtured them" (p. 12). An incredible bond developed between Collins and her students. "One had to watch Marva's students in the classroom to see the full effect of her energy and her conviction that children can learn" (p. 180).

Collins (1990) was fond of telling her students on the first day of school, "Say goodbye to failure, children. Welcome to Success. You will read hard books in here and understand what you read" (p. 21). Then she would read part of Emerson's essay of "Self Reliance," explaining it meant one should be proud of himself or herself. Collins saw her role as one of inspiring her students to become educated citizens of the world. "I tried to introduce my children to a world that extends beyond the ghetto of Garland Park. Until you reveal a larger world to children, they don't realize there is anything to reach for" (p. 58). By teaching a curriculum featuring classical literature, Collins hoped to elevate her students' horizons. "I encouraged them to become universal people, citizens of the world" (p. 141).

Current literature has extolled the virtues of student-centered learning. Collins (1990), however, favored teacher-directed instruction. "Everything works when the teacher works. It's as easy as that, and as hard" (p. 187). The teacher is the most important factor in the classroom. If a child senses that his or her teacher does not care, "then all the textbooks and prepackaged lesson plans and audio-visual equipment and fancy, new, carpeted, air-conditioned building facilities weren't going to get that child to learn" (p. 26). Collins' instructional style is a good example of the principle that the teacher is the curriculum. All knowledge flows from the teacher. The teacher can only share with the students his or her level of understanding of any given subject.

Education is a humanizing enterprise. That is why it is foolhardy to believe that teachers can be replaced or displaced by computers.

Eisner (2013), who was one of the most scholarly contributors to contemporary educational literature, recognized the common humanity present in teaching. He argued that, “the satisfaction of teaching extends beyond the academic. Indeed, the most lasting contributions come from rescuing a child from despair, restoring a sense of hope, soothing a discomfort.” Memories from such occasions are more enduring than those coming from academic achievements. “They address the human needs that we all of share.” Cohen (2012) seconds Eisner when he writes, “educators are loved by their students for both their personal and scholarly abilities.” Personal qualities form the basis for success as an educator. Further, “these qualities are an outcome of personal inner work” (p. 4).

## **Love**

Erich Fromm’s (1970) *The Art of Loving* provides a classical statement of the importance of love for individual and social wellbeing. From birth until death, humans have a natural craving for love. A baby will very quickly learn to read its mother’s feelings. If a baby is well-loved by its mother, it will lean into the mother’s breasts. If, on the other hand, the baby senses that it is not really wanted, it will lean away from the mother. The greatest gift life has to offer is a loving mother. The need for love and affection follows us throughout our lives. Love is the wellspring from which all human activities take nourishment. Fromm (1970) tells us, “Without love, humanity could not exist for a day” (p. 15).

Love is a central factor in the instruction of the young. It is the bond welding teachers and students together. Teaching and learning are more than filling minds with facts and figures about the world. It is the art of connecting each new generation to the larger human community. “While we are teaching knowledge,” Fromm (1970) reminds us, “we are losing that teaching which is the most important one for human development: the teaching which can only be given

by the simple presence of a mature, loving person” (p. 98). In earlier times, the teacher who was most valued was the one who best embodied outstanding spiritual qualities. Though the preservation of knowledge is important, the teacher’s primary function should be “to convey certain human attitudes” (p. 98). Teaching and learning need to keep alive the vision of mature life. If schools fail to perform this function, “our whole cultural tradition will breakdown” (p. 99).

Loving, caring, and trust are like the holy trinity of character development. Noddings (2005) made caring the center piece in her philosophy of education. Teachers need to establish caring relationships with their students. “When I care, my motive energy begins to flow toward the needs and wants of the cared-for” (p. 4). It is difficult for many Americans to conceptualize a humanistic view of education. They have been sold a bill of goods for so long that testing and accountability are necessary to save the nation. “The present insistence on more and more testing—even for young children—is largely a product of separation and lack of trust” (p. 11). What our society should really aim at is competence. When teachers and students share in a caring relationship, they are creating the conditions necessary for competence.

What are the qualities of a great teacher? The best teachers, Rubin (1985) argues, “exercise a considerable amount of personal judgment” (p. 159). They count heavily on intuition and inspiration as signposts for guiding their classroom activities. Eisner (1998) writes, “Artistry and intuition are enormously important aspects of all forms of teaching” (p. 209). In the hands of a skilled teacher, instruction seems to flow from some mysterious inner source. Epstein (1981) believes great teachers manifest a “love of their subject, an obvious satisfaction in arousing this love in their students, and an ability to convince them that what they are being taught is deadly serious” (p. 12). Rubin (1987) says of great teachers, “What they taught their pupils wasn’t nearly so important as that they taught it—for if they considered it worth-while to know things...then clearly those must be reputable and meritorious objectives for a young person to

know” (pp. 12-13). Whitehead (1960) reminds us that, “A certain ruthless definiteness is essential in education. I am sure that one secret of a successful teacher is that he has formulated quite clearly in his mind what the pupil has got to know in precise fashion” (p. 47).

The motion picture *Conrack*, starring Jon Voight, provides an interesting illustration of how love can transcend ethnicity, poverty, and cultural isolation. Love is the universal elixir facilitating mental and physical growth. Voight was on a personal crusade to raise the intellectual horizons of African American children living on an island off the coast of South Carolina. Since his students found it impossible to pronounce his last name, Conrad, they all settled on Conrack. Voight used a wide variety of non-traditional techniques in order to awaken a spark of curiosity in his students. He marched them up and down the beach reciting facts about sports heroes and significant persons in history. On Halloween he took his students to Beaufort to participate in trick-or-treat, which brought down the wrath of the superintendent of schools. Voight’s creative instructional techniques, of course, cost him his job. Before Voight left the school, the principal paid him the biggest compliment a teacher can receive, “You loved the babies.”

Nothing is more important in the life of a classroom than love. This statement is supported by the school founded by Pestalozzi, who was a Swiss educational reformer living in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Pestalozzi created a theory of instruction known as Object Teaching, which featured the use of sense impressions to help children develop categories of thought. Pestalozzi’s success in the classroom attracted educators from Europe and the United States. Herbart, the German philosopher and educator, visited Pestalozzi and wrote a critique of his methods. Calvin Stowe delivered a report to the Ohio legislature in 1837 describing Pestalozzi’s achievements (Rippa, 1988). The spirit animating Pestalozzi’s school is clearly reflected in the comments made years later by Vuillemin, who had been one of Pestalozzi’s pupils from 1805 to 1807. Vuillemin describes how Pestalozzi’s students felt about their teacher. “We loved him; yes, we all loved him, for he loved us all; we loved him so much that when we

lost sight of him for a time we felt sad and lonely. We could not turn our eyes away from him” (Rippa, 1969, p. 101). Pestalozzi grasped the importance of developing the whole child. He was fond of saying: “Make it your aim to develop the child. Do not merely train him as you would train a dog” (Rippa, 1969, p. 101).

Rafe Esquith is a contemporary example of an educator who has a feel for the artistry of teaching. In the prologue to his book, *Teach Like Your Hair’s on Fire*, Esquith (2007) reveals he believes teaching can happen in an aesthetic “zone” similar to the way it occurs in sports. Central to his thinking is the belief that the emotion of fear that governs most classrooms needs to be replaced by trust. Teachers must build a bond of trust with their students. Esquith highlights his passion and love for working with students in a classroom setting. His book contains a developed outline of a wide variety of the materials and experiences he has worked out with his students over the years. Of particular interest his creation of a Shakespearean theatre. In all of his instructional units, Esquith encourages his students to play an active part in their own learning.

### **Conclusion**

Years ago, I was interviewed by a local superintendent for a teaching position. During the interview, he asked me if I had experienced any differences in the personalities of my classes. I told him they were like night and day. One class was shy and timid, almost to the point of being boring. Another group was strong-willed and belligerent. The superintendent smiled and replied, “You would be surprised how many teachers have never had that experience.” Why are many teachers unable to tune into the energy flowing from their students? The answer in a word is a lack of sensitivity. Teacher preparation programs need to do a better job of identifying and counseling insensitive candidates into other careers. Corporation executives and computer “nerds” are notoriously insensitive. Look at Steve Jobs! The medical profession is stacked high with prima donnas. A few more would hardly be noticed. Teaching, on the other hand, is a very different profession. Sensitivity is a categorical imperative for anyone seeking to become a

teacher. Insensitivity is not hard to detect; it stands out like a wart on someone's nose. One day a student came by my office to have a friendly chat. He told me he had a fiancée who lived back in his hometown. He said he was planning on marrying her so he could study her behavior.

Laughingly, I told him if I were his fiancée I would toss him out on his ear. A fiancée wishes to be loved, not studied. Whatever happened to my insensitive student? He is probably out in the public schools studying other people's children.

What background experiences are the most helpful in preparing sensitive teachers for the nation's schools? The student teaching experience makes the answer abundantly clear. Women who have raised children win the contest hands down. They have learned how to read children's thoughts and actions as well as how to flow with the shifting moods within the classroom. What are the least helpful backgrounds for someone wishing to become a teacher? Careers cultivating rigid temperaments or fixed standards of performance such as those found in large corporations or the armed services do not lend themselves readily to the give and take of classroom life. Different professions forge different habits of mind, which are all too often hard to break. The classroom is the ultimate proving ground for those mental habits that will survive.

What are the conditions and experiences that lend themselves most readily to becoming an artful teacher? Certainly, allowing the richness of classroom experiences to flow freely into our lives must be assigned a top spot on any list. Educators need to free themselves from the confines of established traditions. Teachers, like Shelly's Prometheus, should be encouraged to break free of their bonds—to flow with the rhythms of life and learning. One way of clearing the cobwebs out of our mental closets is to adopt a new metaphor for thinking about teaching and learning. The mind is not a computer, and the body is not a mechanical robot. If physicist cannot predict the path of a lowly electron, why should we suppose any personality test can forecast the destiny of a complex human being? It is time educators gave up on the illusion that teaching is or can become a science. Rather, educators should follow Gage's (1978) advice and admit teaching

is more like the arts than the sciences. “As a practical art, teaching must be recognized as a process that calls for intuition, creativity, improvisation, and expressiveness—a process that leaves room for departures from what is implied by rules, formulas, and algorithms” (p. 15).

Although Gage acknowledges that the practice of teaching is clearly an art, he retains the hope that the artistry of teaching might lend itself to being studied scientifically.

What does practical experience tell us about selecting different methods of instruction? Don't become enamored with flashy, new doctrines. Trust in your own judgments. Throw away your copies of Skinner, Hunter, and Coleman. They only lace teaching and learning into a straightjacket. When the author was an undergraduate student, he was enrolled in a class in educational psychology. The professor of the class was a true-blue behaviorist whose fondest dream was that one day he would be allowed to require all of his students to purchase a pigeon. He believed the key to unlocking the secrets of effective teaching and learning lay in reinforcing a pigeon's pecking behavior. Similarly, Hunter's *Seven Steps of Effective Teaching* will not lead us to the promised-land, artistry in teaching. Slavin, (1986) in his evaluation of Hunter's model, says, “program effects on student achievement were minimal.” Additionally, “already competent teachers do not benefit much from the training in Hunter's model.” Coleman's *Common Core of State Standards* is based on the assumption that everything worth learning can be measured and assigned a number. The most important experiences in life—love, goodness, friendship—cannot be measured by the yard or sold by the pound. Ravitch believes that not only are Coleman's doctrines pedagogically unsound, but that they represent an inherent danger to our democratic society. Strauss (2014) cites Ravitch as saying, “I fear the Common Core and testing will establish a test-based meritocracy that will harm our democracy by parceling out opportunity, by ranking and rating every student in relation to their scores” (p. 11).

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote a famous essay on *Self Reliance*. He advised us to trust our own thoughts and feelings. His message contains profound meaning for today's educators. The

key to becoming an artistic teacher resides quietly inside of each and every one of us. Whose advice to follow once we have shut the classroom door? We have only to get in touch with our own thoughts and feelings. Teaching and learning are far more than achieving a set of behavioral objectives. Teaching is a projection of the teacher's total personality. Emerson (2015) quotes Palmer as writing, "teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher." Just as personalities differ, so too do teaching styles. The methods utilized by Escalante, Collins, and Esquith are not likely to work as well for others. There is truth in the old saying: One man's wisdom cannot be inherited by his son. There is no universal book of rules governing the artistry of teaching. Here the words of Frost (1916) seem as sacrosanct as any, "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference."

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