

Teacher to Student

The primary objective of a good teacher is to help students' maturation by encouraging their curiosity, resourcefulness, diligence and developing their understanding and appreciation for a field of study. To achieve this objective, an effective teacher will develop a good rapport with individuals as well as with the class as a whole. Because students are more receptive to material if the relationship is good, teachers should demonstrate genuine concern for the students. The students need to view the teacher as not only an authority in a subject but also as someone who is trying to help them reach a higher level of understanding and skill.

A good teacher establishes an environment that encourages mutual respect and a close rapport with the students, thus setting the stage for teachable moments. To this end, the teacher must attend to several basic needs of the students both inside and outside of the classroom. Like all human beings, students need acceptance, approval and support. When students see teachers showing an interest in them, mutual respect is reinforced and rapport improves.

Students also need to feel that they are being "heard." Teachers must take the time to listen to students. Without compromising professional standards, good teachers maintain openness with the students and strive to know the students as well as possible. Good teachers remain positive, enthusiastic, fair, truthful, and authentic. Occasionally, students may need extra help outside the classroom. Good teachers should provide times to help those students reach their potential. While an authority, the teacher should avoid arrogance or condescension. Instead, teachers should be willing to admit mistakes, apologize for them, and correct them whenever possible. This will confirm a sense of fairness with the students and will help prevent an "us-versus-them" mentality, promoting democratic ideals. The teacher must always remain objective and avoid any personal agenda irrelevant to accomplishing the learning goals of the class. Goodwill and trust on the part of the teacher once again ensures mutual respect and good rapport.

Ideally, teachers and students are in partnership with each other and a good teacher/student relationship offers both partners an opportunity for "Learning Through Living."