

Motivating Underachieving Students

Instruction in Support of
Success with Every Child

Mike Muir

We're worried about
making schools work
for the kids we're not
currently successful
with

What would it mean
to you
(or your partner)
if you could increase
engagement by 20%?

Don't judge your
students too quickly

**They Might
Surprise You**

Kelly

Dennis

**Hard to Teach &
Easy to Teach**

**Must judge the success
of our schools not on
how we do with our
Easy to Teach, but on
how we do with our
Hard to Teach Students**

Traditional Solutions

**Different Classes
or Programs**

Lots of Extra Help

Homework Hall

Lowering Expectations

**That's not what we're
talking about**

**Instruction:
Only Good Teaching
Improves Learning**

**We haven't really
considered instruction**

UPS

What's the difference...

**What Gets In The
Way?**

What Gets In The Way?

- Attitude
- Lack of home support
- Learning disability
- Learning styles
- Substance abuse
- Apathy
- defiance
- Low aspirations
- Lack of sleep
- Lazy
- Peer pressure
- How the teacher teaches
- Lack of preparation
- Normal distractions

Beware of Blame

Different Levels of Blaming Each Other for What has Happened...

The college professor who said such wrong in the student is a shame,
Lack of preparation in high school is to blame.
Said the high school teacher good heavens that boy is a fool,
The fault of course is with the middle school.
The middle school teachers said from such stupidity may I be spared,
They sent him up to me so unprepared.
The primary teacher said the kindergarten blockheads all,
They call it preparation, why it's worse than none at all.
The kindergarten teacher said, such lack of training never did I see,
What kind of mother must that woman be.
The mother said poor helpless child—he's not to blame,
His father's folks are all the same.
Said the father at the end of the line,
I doubt the rascal is even mine.

Grant me the serenity to accept
the things I cannot change.

The strength to change the
things I can, and

The wisdom to know the
difference.

**The one thing we can
change...**

Not the Teachers' Fault

**The Rules Have All
Changed**

Kids Have Changed

Definition of insanity...

**If you always do
what you've always done**

**You'll always get
what you've always
gotten**

Success Depends on **Our
Willingness to Change**

Two Paradigms

Think of a Good Learning Experience...

Characteristics of Good Learning Experiences

- the work was well connected to other ideas and to the real world
- the content of the learning experience was personally relevant, interesting, useful, or meaningful to the learner
- the learner had choices, shared authority, control, and responsibility
- the learning was hands-on and experiential
- the learner learned from and taught others

Characteristics of Good Learning Experiences

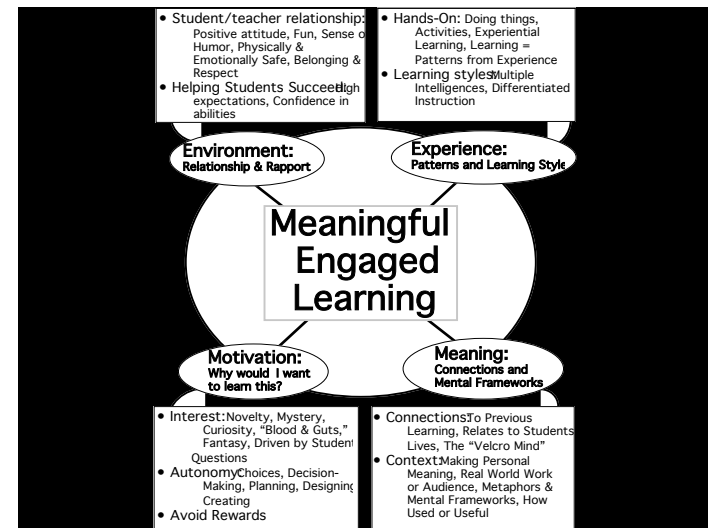
- the learner had the support of a patient, supportive, and nurturing mentor
- the learning was individualized and although there were standards for the work, the learner could meet them in his or her own way
- there was a positive aesthetic component to the experience: it was fun or left the learner feeling good
- the experience helped the learner understand him or herself
- the learner had success and accomplishment with challenging work

Our Teaching Paradigm

The Two Don't Match

So What Does Work?

Need to think of
our students as
"Clients"



mcmel.org
click on "Workshops"

1: Relationship

**Connecting to Kids &
School Climate**

**"I won't learn from a
teacher who doesn't
like me!"**

Treat Them "As If"

This is **THE** single most
important place to
start!

**2 - Help Kids Succeed
Feedback**

Most Evident Element

**“Unimportant” to
Students**

Feedback Essential

**3 - Hands-on Active
Work**

Patterns & Schema

**"Eating in a Fancy
Restaurant"**

**More Hands-on!
Less Book Work!**

**4 - Variety & Attention
to Learning Styles**

**Experience Life in
Different Ways**

Gardner & MI

**Which do most people
have?**

**Which are
most taught to?**

**About Process,
Not Content**

**Bodily-Kinesthetic
Parts of Speech**

Motivation

**“Take responsibility”
“Should do it”
“It’s their job”
“Hold students accountable”**

**“Why would they
want to?”**

**Learning is like
whales feeding**

Names at a Party

Buying a Car

5 - Interest

**Our Mistake:
"Just in case education"**

**Tie Into
Student Interests**

Make It Interesting

Adjectives in a Bag

**How can
Extrinsic Motivation
be as powerful as
Intrinsic Motivation?**

**6 - Avoid Bribery
Rewards**

A Tough Transition!

**Has Temporary
Desired Effect**

**Then Shuts Down
Learning!**

**Will Do Minimum
to Get Reward**

Goal Shifts to Reward

**Kills Any Interest
That Was There**

Bribery vs. Random

7 - Give Students Choice

**Autonomous Supportive
Strategies**

**Not
"Do What You Want!"**

Can Be Taught

True For Teachers, Too.

Meaning

**What are the two most
frequently asked
questions?**

8 - Connections

Velcro Brain

New Names at a Party

Compare & Contrast

Drama

Metaphors & Examples

Upper Blooms

**Apply, Analyze,
Evaluate, Create**

**9 - Learn in Context
Real World Connections**

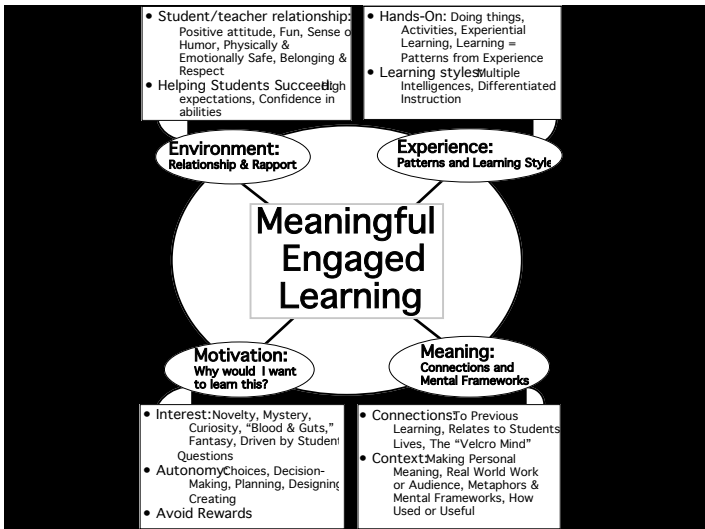
The Missing Motivator!

**Isolated Islands of
Learning**

Real World Uses

Real Audience for Work

Community Connections



Where to Work

- Relationships & School Climate
- Place-based Projects
- Make it Interesting
- Upper Blooms - Higher Order Thinking
- Activity & Variety

**Not a Theory -
This Really Works**

Watershed & Soundings

Central Park East

The Met

The Alpha Program

CART

- * Easy & Hard to Teach
- * Fix Problems, not Blame
- * 2 Paradigms
- * 9 Elements for MEL

mcmel.org
click on "Workshops"