

Essay on learning objectives

Olga Sánchez Portero

"Emotion is viral and, an excited teacher makes for an excited class". I chose these words from "How to teach" by Phil Beadle, to start a reflection on the topic.

In a few words the learning objectives are what students are supposed to learn after a lesson and what the teacher should convey to avoid students feeling like: "What's in it for me!" In other words, the teacher, as a ship captain, should first dial the destination, so that the students can row all together to reach that land.

Whether we like it or not, all of us must spend a long time of our lives in the school system. We are on that road, that is a fact, but it will just make sense -and learning will take place- if we are aware of where it is meant to take us and why. The student is at the core of the learning process and should take an active part on it; it is him/her who must walk along the way, not the teacher, and that is quite difficult unless he get engaged and motivated.

In an ideal world, and to be honest, I do believe, our educational system is far to be perfect, the teacher should just enlighten the path, make everything happened in the class meaningful for the student. All these ideas are surrounding the concept of learning objectives.

On the other way, as the same author wrote, what a student will get out of a lesson it is not necessarily what the teacher planned but what the student needed. What we see it's not the same as what there is. A whole range of elements are conditioning the process of perception: personal motivation, character, previous knowledge and experiences and last, but not less, emotional state. After all, learning is an alive and non-transferable process. However, it is the teacher duty to prepare the students to "walk inside", go beyond and, with a bit of luck, find at the end of the road the sheer joy of learning, because within the process of learning we develop one of our essential features as human beings: the ability to be aware of ourselves and the world around with all its greatness and beauty.

I cannot help thinking about something Picasso said long time ago: that all children are born artists, the problem is how to remain artists as we grow up. Children are born eager to learn, they cannot stop asking questions, they explore everything with their senses... But one day they lose that interest, they lose their natural curiosity and the world goes grey. I would like to connect that thought with the roll of the teacher using a quote by Einstein that Kathy Reina shared with us the very first day: "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awoken joy in creative expression and knowledge".