

FOCUS ON TEACHERS

I Want to Give My Teacher

...a GOLD STAR!

REGIOPOLIS-NOTRE DAME - *Frank Coffey*

In our society it is so easy to offer criticism, yet so difficult to offer praise. There are so many wonderful teachers that I would like to mention that deserve praise, yet it would be impossible to include each of them in this essay. Even though so many teachers have helped me to get where I am today, there is one who stands out above the rest.

Mr. Frank Coffey is a high-school English teacher at Regiopolis-Notre Dame. I remember his classes with fond memories. He was firm, yet fair.

Now that I am a teacher, I find myself using some of his tactics with my students. The one thing I remember is his care and concern for students to achieve their full potential. If students were willing, he would go over their essay or assignment and explain what it was they had done wrong. He would then give them the opportunity to correct their mistakes, hand in a new version, and give them a different (and likely improved) mark. For myself,

this was the best way to learn. Whenever I got an assignment returned, I would look over my mistakes quickly. However, when I had an opportunity to redo an assignment for an improved mark, I would concentrate on what I had done wrong and focus on doing it correctly. This helped me to remember the correct way in the long term.

I also allow my students to redo most assignments, if they are willing to put forth the effort required. In turn, I find their tests and subsequent assignments to be of a better quality. Allowing them to redo an assignment helps them to understand the concept they may not have fully comprehended the first time. The only way to truly learn is to understand.

Thank you, Mr. Coffey, for teaching me not only the rules of English, but also the way to encourage a child's full potential.

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