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*A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on cold iron. ~Horace Mann*

The most effective learning occurs when the right balance is struck between environment, motivation and instruction. With the right combination of these components, learning can be enjoyable and can prepare a student for the challenges, opportunities and possibilities

of the future.

The learning environment should be a place where there is freedom for students to explore and investigate, and where mistakes can be made without fear of ridicule. The classroom must be a supportive gathering place that facilitates the exchange of information and ideas, hopes and dreams. Within this environment, opportunities must be created for student ability to be developed, practiced and honed.

Developing intrinsic motivation in students supports the most effective learning. When a student understands *why* something should be learned, the knowledge and skills acquired are more deeply understood, more easily recalled, and therefore readily accessible when needed.

Instruction must go well beyond following a prescribed curriculum or course of study. It must be based upon the individual needs of the learner. Through the use of assessment and clear goals, and with an understanding of optimal learning styles and differentiation techniques, the teacher can identify the most effective means to facilitate learning.

Effective instruction must also be based upon solid, recent research, with the teacher taking part in active research whenever possible. Research plays a critical role in the process of continuous improvement and in meeting the needs of all learners. Instruction that is research based helps a teacher address issues, find answers that positively enhance the education process, and aids in implementing creative methods that fully engage students.

The ultimate goal of teaching is to facilitate the creation of self-sufficiency and independence in the student. During the learning process, the students should not only be instructed and given access to information, but they should be instructed on how to obtain information and how to put knowledge to work.

*The mediocre teacher tells.  
The good teacher explains.  
The superior teacher demonstrates.  
The great teacher inspires.  
~William Arthur Ward*