

MY PERSPECTIVE ON TEACHING
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When I graduated from high school, (back when I had 3 horses), my parents encouraged me to sell the horses and go on to school; which I did. Springfield was reasonable in cost and offered a program to help you earn a Teacher's Certificate....if you could pass a test.

That summer, I was able to go to school, with spare time to swim in the City Pool. Many town children also swam there. Two little girls were there often. They had long, stringy hair. I often curled their hair as it dried. During the summer, their Mom and I got acquainted. She worked and the husband was employed by ASCS. She offered me room and board during the regular school year if I would help by caring for their girls on evenings and on weekends. I was able to attend school for 2 years.

The first school I taught was the "Rainbow Valley School" in Shannon County, south of Batesland. I had all 8 grades...12 pupils. The first day of school, there was a dust storm and I had a hard time finding the schoolhouse. I wound up following a group of children who were walking to school. We had a good year.

My first year in Martin Grade School, I taught in Grade 4. The classes were ability divided and I had the low achievers. We had a classroom in the Boy Scout Building. That year, they built onto the north end of the Grade School. When it came time to move over to the "real" Grade School, each child moved his own desk and we became a part of the "real thing".

The school was in need of a Special Education teacher so I went back to school and got the necessary qualifications. We started the Special Ed room with 6 pupils. Rose Gray qualified so I went to teach in first grade after being in 7th and 8th grade for 2 years. After many years in first grade, I hung my hat up...after 26 years.

I had many good experiences. It was a poor day when you did not learn something from the children. One lesson I will never forget came after I thought I had a "WONDERFUL" Columbus Day lesson. I had nice pictures, a sound record and everything for an ideal lesson. When we got all done, I was having each child draw a picture. As I walked around the room looking at their pictures, I asked one child what he was drawing...? He looked at me and said, "Could be a banana.." He taught me about being careful in wording my questions.

I was glad when we were no longer divided by ability. Changes in education are evident and some are not good. I feel that phonics helps children and should be taught.

Teaching is a real challenge and can be a 24-hour job. I had the honor of being selected as Teacher of the Year during my career. I hope I made a difference in some lives.