

## 2008 UF COE Writing Contest Entry

*(This is one of 27 entries submitted in the College's recent writing contest on the topic of "What's Good in Education?". Visit the [Writing Contest home page](#) for links to other entries, including the winner.)*

# WHAT'S GOOD IN EDUCATION?

*I make a difference.*

By **JOHN FULLER**

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Doom. Gloom. Testing that never ends. The world of education is in a never ending downward spiral. The educational community is under lots of stress for state testing and certain benchmarks needing to be met. School grades are on the line and the teachers take the blunt of the blame for failures. With all of this stress and social pressure to get everyone to succeed, teachers must be getting paid high salaries, right? No? Hmm...Then why do teachers teach?

I teach to see the change in a student from the first day of the new school year to the last day. I literally get to help grow a young mind and expand it with new knowledge to better ensure success in a student's life. I get to help mold our future and change the course of thousands of lives. When a student finally understands a new and difficult concept, the joy and excitement I experience is incomparable to anything else in this world.

Recently in my classroom, the science lesson at hand was simple machines. The normal routine for science is to read the chapter and copy the bolded words. This works for not one of my students. So I shook it up. We built catapults. The students used every day materials to make a fulcrum and lever. We tested the catapults for three days. Every student was engaged. Every student's "light bulb" flicked on! This is a teachers dream. So why would I want to do anything else in this world?

One of the proudest moments of my short career was when "Johnny" thanked me for not giving up on him. Hearing this broke my heart and made my day all at the same time. This is the validation of the teaching profession; one changed life. All teachers do this. With all of these distractions on testing and such, most teachers lose sight of what is really important. When you get bogged down and frustrated with the job, just remember this about yourself: "I was born to teach. I make a difference. I will take the low pay. I will take the social pressure. Changing the world is worth it all!"

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