

## 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?

*That's simple—it's the children!*

By **RACHEL GROSS**

*4ED ProTeach (elementary education)*

People often ask me, "Why are you majoring in education?" and then they proceed to tell me, "Do you know the pay is terrible?" I never know how exactly to respond to this question and have even found myself questioning why am I going through all of this. Yet, I have stayed in the field of education and I even plan to earn my Master's degree starting this summer. The people who ask me this question do not know "what is good in education." I discovered the secret to this question while volunteering in a kindergarten classroom during my first semester at college.

I was the stereotypical freshman in my first semester at the University of Florida, having no idea what to major in. I decided to take an education course that required time in the classroom. I chose to be in a kindergarten classroom near campus. My mentor teacher was an older teacher who had been teaching at the same school for over 30 years.

One day during this experience there was a young student who started to get upset towards the end of the school day. I sat as an observer and watched how the teacher handled the situation. The young girl was upset because she did not have any friends in after-school care so she did not want to go. I carefully watched the teacher take the young girl, find another kindergarten girl who was also in after-school care, and introduce them to each other. With this simple task the young child stopped crying and a friendship was formed between these two girls. As a result of watching this interaction, my eyes and then my heart suddenly became fascinated into the minds and the world of children.

Before I volunteered in this classroom, I never really thought about the problems and situations children go through on a daily basis. Children are sometimes viewed in our society as people whose feelings are insignificant, as not having "real" problems. After that day, I made an extra effort to listen to children. I want to learn about them, understand them, help them, and teach them. From that

experience, I learned about "what's good in education" and the answer to that question is simple, the children.

I am currently in my last semester of undergrad pre-interning in a fifth grade classroom. Every day my peers and I talk about the "bad" part of education; we complain about the budget cuts, standardized tests, and not having enough time in the day. But what keeps me coming back to school every day is the chance to have an impact in the lives of these fascinating kids.

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