

“Not on your life!” he said to his dad, a superintendent of schools. “Why on earth would I want to teach?” At that time, he was an uppity college English major and thought that teaching was beneath his dignity and intellectual capacity. However, the military, marriage, and parenthood soon changed his perspective on the teaching profession. He needed a job, and teaching seemed the natural thing to do. He enrolled in an alternative, fast-track credential program, and 8 weeks later, he was a teacher.

What was the teaching profession like in 1956? Vastly different from today, and the momentum of change will accelerate. Why teach? He thought it was because he had a family to support.

However, one day something happened, and he learned why he wanted to be a teacher. During that first teaching assignment, he was leaving his classroom to walk to the playground. Suddenly, he felt a little hand tugging on his hand. He looked down into the eyes of a little girl, smiling up at him. He recalls that it was as normal, as it was unusual.

The human connection between teacher and student captured him at that moment, and he understood why he was a teacher.

“It lets me meet a side of myself, which I didn’t even know was there.” Since that day, he (Graves, 2004) discovered his answer to, *Why teach?*

*Teaching lets us develop a side of ourselves we might never know otherwise*

(Graves, 2004, p. 3).