



The Art of Teaching

Jay Parini

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Becoming an effective teacher can be quite painful and exhausting, taking years of trial and error. In *The Art of Teaching*, writer and critic Jay Parini looks back over his own decades of trials, errors, and triumphs, in an intimate memoir that brims with humor, encouragement, and hard-won wisdom about the teacher's craft. Here is a godsend for instructors of all levels, offering valuable insight into the many challenges that educators face, from establishing a persona in the classroom, to fostering relationships with students, to balancing teaching load with academic writing and research. Insight abounds. Parini shows, for instance, that there is nothing *natural* about teaching. The classroom is a form of theater, and the teacher must play various roles. A good teacher may look natural, but that's the product of endless practice. The book also considers such topics as the manner of dress that teachers adopt (and what this says about them as teachers), the delicate question of politics in the classroom, the untapped value of emeritus professors, and the vital importance of a settled, disciplined life for a teacher and a writer. Parini grounds all of this in personal stories of his own career in the academy, tracing his path from unfocused student--a self-confessed "tough nut to crack"--to passionate writer, scholar, and teacher, one who frankly admits making many mistakes over the years.

Every year, thousands of newly minted college teachers embark on their careers, most with scant training in their chosen profession. *The Art of Teaching* is a perfect book for these young educators as well as anyone who wants to learn more about this difficult but rewarding profession.

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