On Fishing and Learning

"Give people fish, feed them for a day.
Teach people to fish, feed them for a lifetime."

 We are constantly learning, whether we're aware of it or not. The television preaches at us. The radio invades us with "stuff' as we cruise down the road in our cars. We learn from our mothers, fathers, extended family and friends. We go to schools where the "professional" teachers open our heads up like cans of pinto beans and pour in their "stuff." As information and ideas bombard us, we struggle simultaneously and quite often *autonomously* to make "sense" of all this *stimulus,* all this information, these ideas. We are always teaching or being taught.

But what makes a "good" teacher? What does effective teaching look like? When we attempt to show a child how to bake cookies, what teaching methods work best? When someone works to teach us something, which approaches and strategies best get the job done? The core question for Assignment Four is this:
What is your definition, **your** description, **of a good teacher?**

Here is this week's list of pump-priming questions. Again, these questions are only offered as a place to start and are certainly not *comprehensive.* Try to *augment* this list with your own questions as you develop your cluster or brainstorming list, and try to focus on only *one* of these suggestions rather than try to write a little on all of them. (Please include at least the first four steps of **The Eight Steps** when you hand in your essay to your LIA.)

1) What kind of approach works best for you when someone
is trying to teach you something?

2) Can you describe a time when someone did a good job of teaching you something? What made it a "good" job? What did the person do to make the skill or information clear and understandable?

3) What kind of teacher are you? What traits do you have which make you an effective teacher? What qualities do you have which make teaching difficult for you?

4) Can you tell us a story about a time when you tried to teach someone something? How did you do? What did you do that was effective, that worked? In retrospect, what could you have done better? What other strategies could you have used?

5) Can you build the profile of the "perfect" teacher? If you built a teacher from the ground up, what qualities would you want this teacher to have?