Twitter Thread by Calvin Wong Tze Loon ■■■ ■■



Calvin Wong Tze Loon ■■■ ■■
@ithayla



White dude wrote a thread about how he 'taught' his hungry 9 year old to use a can opener; 'figure it out' The child was in tears unable to figure out how to get the opener to align with and bite the increasingly damaged can for 6+ hours, during which time she didn't eat anything

Leaving aside all the incredibly abusive elements of this, I want to talk a bit about the things I've learned about teaching children, something I've spent a decade doing.

1) Kids, even very young kids, are incredibly perceptive, intelligent, curious, and sensitive.

2) Kids can figure out very complicated things on their own (I taught media analysis/fiction writing ages 7-16), but they need to be given the parts.

ALL my kids knew what a character arc was, but would not have been able to give you the words 'character arc' in a million years.

To repeat, I didn't teach them what a character arc was. They already knew what it was, I just pointed it out to them so they could see the patterns.

Same for plot structure, grammar, punctuation, etc. They all knew what these things were, but not necessarily how to apply them.

Kids can absolutely figure things out, but because they're kids and lack life experience, they have to have what they need in front of them.

You don't tell them 'find all the apples in this picture' and then surprise 'there's two in the shopping bag!'

Even if your goal is to teach abstract concepts (like mine was) you set it out with multiple, big, concrete examples, point out all the elements of what you want to teach in those examples, then have them repeat the concept several times over the course of the learning period.

If I could teach a room full of 7 year olds three act structure in an hour, you can teach a 9 year old how to open a can in 2 minutes. I swear to god.

3) Kids trust very easily, but also they have a bullshit detector the size of a planet. My kids responded to me because they knew I cared about them. I never lied to them. I never gave them false praise. And because they trusted me, I could help them. Don't abuse their trust!!!!

4) See 1). Kids are incredibly smart. Withholding knowledge from them so they can get to the point themselves is a valuable teaching method; but they can also see WHY you are doing it.

If it's a shared experience, with you going 'COME ON JUST ONE MORE PIECE AND YOU'VE GOT IT'

and the kid enthusiastically figuring out the final piece of their internal puzzle, it becomes a lesson they never forget

If they can sense you are withholding information because you want to see them fail or want to be smug about it, that also becomes a lesson they never forget

5) Every kid learns differently. As a result, it's your job to recognize when a kid is completely lost and just needs to be directly told the answer. You may need to figure out a new way of teaching the kid.

Crying in hunger and frustration when your dad is RIGHT FUCKING THERE

is not a learning style I've ever fucking encountered.

6) Not every moment needs to be a teachable moment. Sometimes they're just tired and worn out and it's time for a fun YouTube video or a short film. They will remember that you were compassionate to them and repay you

by trying really hard when you ask them to.

7) As a teacher your job is not to impart your lesson plan, it is to help them grow as human beings. I care less if they left my class with better spelling than if they left more compassionate about their fellow human beings and more

understanding about the power of story to teach us about ourselves.

I seriously hope this guy realizes what his story teaches him about himself.

I always told my kids the biggest difference between me and them was I've been alive longer than they have. I was not smarter or better or more creative than they were, I just had more practice.
https://t.co/nYQUUTHJC8

> I was a teacher for a number of years, as well as a nanny. This is a phenomenal thread of what that's like.
> Children are not incomplete humans or unfinished adults. They are kids.
> This is important. https://t.co/0w0mezHSez

— Monique Gamefreakgeekgirl (@Gamefreakgeek) January 3, 2021