To do this you must possess a very good vocabulary. Knowing more than four hundred words (English) is normally considered having a good vocabulary. This would exclude nouns, verbs, prepositions, articles etc. A researcher told me an average Bangladeshi struggles after fifty. For Bangla, things would not be much better perhaps. So to communicate well, an outstanding teacher must have a mastery over the language he uses for teaching. Communicating well with students and young people is a real talent and a key part of the process that challenges young minds and unlocks potential. Every good teacher has this talent in abundance and those who truly connect with their young students are seldom forgotten. How many of us, who are in the profession of teaching is aware of this I am not sure. Most people who are in teaching unfortunately thinks they are teaching gospel, all those heavy revelations. Students should not question what the teacher has taught or argue his point of deliberations. Some teachers, even in the university level declare on the very first day that in the class he will explain a concept only once, and if the students did not understand then it is their problem. Many teachers do not take questions from students seriously or normally. There are teachers who label many questions from students as 'dumb questions.' Many ridicule students in the class or treat them very negatively. Such a person is in a wrong profession. A student should never be intimidated or ridiculed. A teacher not having patience and openness is not teaching, he is just telling. Teaching involves sharing. This fellow is not sharing; he is just talking, taking his salary and the students' time and energy. Does a good student make a good teacher? May be. But he needs to have an open mind, be compassionate, have lots of patience and must be willing to learn from students. Surely teachers must be highly knowledgeable and up to date in their subject area, but they should not pretend to know it all, they must be willing to learn from pupils. In my last three and half decades of teaching I am amazed to realize that I have learnt so much from my students.

In the winter of 1998 I was invited by UNESCO to attend the First Indian Educational Science Congress (28-30 December 1998) held at Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. I was to give the keynote address on the focal theme of the Congress: 'Educational sciences: exploring the millennium.' The eminent economist and the former Vice-chancellor of Visva-Bharati Professor Amlan Dutta was the Chief Guest. In his speech Professor Dutta said 'if the student has not learned, the teacher has not taught. A school is only as good as its teachers.' A learner is sent to the school for knowledge addition. The primary function of knowledge addition lies on the shoulder of the teachers. If the knowledge addition has not happened in a meaningful way the teacher has not done his or her job. In a much hyped recent game show anchored by the Indian Film Star Shah Rukh Khan on an Indian TV channel, a model, who claimed she was the first girl in her school, first thought Karachi was the capital of Pakistan and later 'corrected' it to Lahore. Her more brilliant sister, who was sitting along with the audience, thought her model sister was dumb, and declared that 'Istanbul' has always been the capital of Pakistan! Well so much for knowledge addition in the schools. I can bet we will have many such 'brilliant' students in our country and part of the 'brilliance' can be traced to their brilliant teachers.

I went to St. Placid's School of Chittagong which will be celebrating its 155 years of glorious existence. During my school days I was really fortunate enough to have teachers like Bro. Bertin, Bro. Alberic, Bro. Joseph, Mr. Moqbul Hossain, Mr. Armond Roy, and others who really played a very strong inspirational role in my life. I owe much of my life to them. I want the current generation also to say the same of their teachers.

One should not forget teachers can transform the lives of their pupils. They normally do at the early years of a student. To summarize, a mediocre teacher tells, a good teacher explains and an outstanding teacher inspires. A good teacher is one who adapts well, is dedicated, and has a positive attitude to professional development. We do not have many role models in our society. An outstanding teacher can be good role model to his or her students. To become an outstanding teacher is not very demanding. One just has to try it.

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Quotes

A library is a hospital for the mind.
-- Anonymous

People die, but books never die. -- Anonymous

If you can read this, thank a teacher.
-- Anonymous Teacher

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.
-- Joseph Addison

Reading is a basic tool in the living of a good life.
-- Mortimer J. Adler

I am not a speed reader. I am a speed understander.
-- Isaac Asimov

Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.
--Francis Bacon

The world may be full of fourth-rate writers but it's also full of fourth-rate readers.
-- Stan Barstow