



I've chosen an image of someone rock climbing as my metaphor for teaching. Teaching is a lot like rock climbing - it can seem very daunting when you first start out. Looking up at that wall for the first time is like looking at your curriculum and a full class of students for the first time. The thought of "how am I going to do this?" comes to mind with both initial looks. With both rock climbing and teaching, you make a plan and analyze the options, but eventually you have to jump in and get started climbing/teaching.

In rock climbing, you can take many different routes to get to the top, some are faster, some are easier, some are more fun, and some challenge different muscle groups. Yet the result is the same - you get to the top of the wall. This is the same as teaching, there are so many different ways to teach the same information to our students, some ways are more effective, some are quicker, some are more interesting and fun, and some ways lead to a dead end and you need to start over. Either way, the goal is the same - to get our students to understand the material we are teaching them. One way isn't always better than another way.

You can also learn so much with each passage up the wall in rock climbing, and likewise with each attempt to teach our students. This allows us to either climb the wall - or teach - more effectively. Each failure is an opportunity to learn more. If you fall off the wall, you can analyze why you fell, and what you could try differently so you don't fall the next time. Likewise with teaching - if one method is a flop with your students, or they haven't learned what you were intending for them to learn, you can learn from this experience and analyze why your teaching strategy didn't work, and what you could try differently to be more effective the next time.

Rock climbing has endless possibilities to learn and grow, and this is also my approach with teaching. As a teacher, I always want to be learning and growing.