

[Recording starts 0:00:00]

Hello, this is Vicki Davis and I want to thank the following people who have recently won some of our giveaways. [Frank Ferrara, Casey, Janet Nitchals, Crystal, Linda Salt (*note – since the recording of this opener, Linda did not respond so Sherry Jordan won the prize instead of Linda*) and Sherry Hale]. You know, teaching is my nobility, it's my ability and it's also my responsibility. But it's also my vulnerability because it can leave me with heartbreaks, body aches and headaches that few people can understand. So today, I give you a song from teacher, Jim Forde, that has just been ringing in my ears. And he let me share the whole thing today. If you want to get a copy of this I encourage you to head over to his website in the show notes.

“♪ Music playing ♪: Try your best to remain friendly, help us know all the things you know. You're the teacher”

The Ten-minute Teacher podcast with Vicki Davis. Every week day you'll learn powerful practical ways to be a more remarkable teacher today.

VICKI: Welcome to the Ten-minute teacher, it's Motivational Monday and you've been listening to Jim Forde and his song from Jimmy and the Keys, *You're The Teacher*. Now, Jim, as we think about Motivational Monday and teaching, what is your encouraging word to teachers about who they are?

JIM: Well, I got to tell you, when I wrote this song I was out of the classroom temporarily and I was longing to get in. And basically, the message is that teaching is about who you are as a person, at a time when there's standards of movement and high stakes testing and all kinds of pressures that are placed on it, it really is about who you are as a person, it's a vocation that you're called to, it's something that's not easy to sort of have a rubric score that can identify who you are, define you.

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So I really wanted to have a message out there that kind of said, “It's not about all the things that people are constantly making you worry about. It's about you being a person who cares about the kids, who listens to the kids and who connect with them.”

VICKI: That's so important because it's so much about relationship. I mean, the research shows it, doesn't it?

JIM: Yeah. When I wrote in the song, the statement from the students says, “Will you listen to me, will you stay friendly, will you teach me all the stuff you know.” I mean, that's basically what middle school kids keep communicating to me. Just hear me, look at who I am, understand me, have fun, relax and teach me all this great stuff. And I think that's sort of like the secret sauce, the pixie dust that great teachers have when they connect with kids.

VICKI: Well, I just love the song, *You're the Teacher*. Do you think that some teachers make a mistake and just don't understand who they are?

JIM: Yeah. I think sometimes they may not have the power that they possess to influence the future although they've been told many times. When I wrote the song I was really thinking about that young teacher who's entering the classroom for the first time with those 50 eyes staring back at him. And I wanted to sort of communicate that it's okay to be a little freaked-out. No matter how many graduate courses you've taken, no matter how many things you've done to prepare, it's going to be a situation where you're going to have to feel that way for a little while, you're going to have to make your way through that little bit of wilderness. But you can do it and not only can you do it, you can make a tremendous difference in the lives of others by doing it.

VICKI: Oh, I love that. You've given us permission to air the whole song here on the Ten-minute teacher and I'm so excited. Would you give us a quick intro to *You're The Teacher*?

JIM: When I wrote this song I was thinking about basically having teachers remember why they're doing it, remember that at the end of the day, you're going to run into those students in the future, they are going to look you in the eye and say thank you.

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They are grateful, it's getting in there, you're planting those seeds and you just need to wake up every morning knowing that there's a kid in that school waiting for you. You need to get in there and you need to make a difference for that kid. And no matter how tough the day is, there's always some kid who's at that school on that day who's longing for you to be there.

[♪ Music playing ♪]

Verse 1:

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Here I'm standing in a classroom

50 eyes they are upon me

Who am I to be the teacher?

What is it they expect from me?

I decide to ask that question

And the young man stands before me.

He says will you listen to me?

Try your best to remain friendly, help us know all the things you know.

Chorus:

You're the teacher

Not a businessman and not a preacher

You try to change the world with all the things you do

Don't you know you're the teacher?

Verse 2:

*Here I'm standing in a staffroom,
Twenty eyes they are upon me,
Who am I to be a teacher?
Who am I to be the teacher?
What is it they expect from me?
Then a wise man sits beside me
He says how're you doing, Jimmy?
I say I'm doing all my best.
He says that's all that you can do, don't you know?*

Chorus (x1)

Bridge:

*So much to learn at that school
But there's one thing I've learned so far
Teaching ain't what you do
It's who you are.*

Verse 3:

*Well, I'm standing in a Shoprite
And the tall man stands before me
He says, hey, I think I know you
Weren't you my 6th grade teacher?
Then he tells me about law school
And some words I said that changed him
It made him want to tough it out
And then he says, hey, you know who you are.*

VICKI DAVIS @COOLCATTEACHER

Chorus (x1)

Because you're a teacher (x3)

[♪ Music ends ♪]

VICKI: So Jim, I just really enjoyed your song and what it reminds me.. And I think, let's finish up with this. What is your message to teachers about how we need to lift up and encourage each other? Because it's obvious that you really felt strongly that teachers needed to hear this message.

JIM: Well, I think that we need to remind each other every day why we do it. Especially veteran teachers, I'm a veteran teacher now and I need to be speaking with the younger teachers that I interact with and remind them that it's a great career choice. It is an awesome responsibility with awesome rewards and that as they go on in their career and they see the impacts that they're going to be having, that all the intangible

aspects of the job that make it a fantastic way to spend your life will come back and bear fruit for them.

VICKI: So teachers, happy Motivational Monday. Get out there and teach and remember how important you are. Thank you so much for listening.

Last call. February 15th we'll be drawing for the MakerBot Replicator Mini Plus. Thank you for all your reviews. Leave those Twitter and Instagram handles, and we'll be drawing them so very soon. Thank you everybody.

Thank you for listening to the Ten-minute Teacher Podcast. You can download the show notes and see the archive at coolcatteacher.com/podcast. Never stop learning.

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