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Dean Sperry, distinguished faculty, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen, and especially to you exhausted graduates--

It is an honor to be invited to share a few words with you this evening. As a proud public school teacher for 23 years, perhaps I have learned a few things that may be of use to you as you enter or continue your service in this most noble of professions. So if you will indulge me for the next few minutes, I offer you my list of

### **Helpful advice for the education graduate**

Keep your sense of humor. It will keep you sane and it is the only sure treatment for stress.

Really listen to your students. You are there to serve them. You can't help them move forward until you learn where they are.

Don't believe everything a student says. If children saw the world as adults, they wouldn't need us.

Make friends with the librarian. If she doesn't know the answer, she knows how to find out.

Make friends with the custodians. You need them much more than they need you.

Make friends with the lunchroom workers. Sometimes an extra cookie on your tray can brighten a terrible day.

It is especially important to make friends with the head secretary. If you don't know why, ask any teacher.

This is critical. If you ignore this advice you are putting yourself at great risk. Trust me on this.

Remember the best teacher you ever had. Some days you will need to remember why you chose to become a teacher.

Remember the worst teacher you ever had. This, too, will remind you why you chose to become a teacher.

Join the Union.

Vote.

Take classes.

Don't quit your summer job.

Stand for idealism - even when it is hopeless.

Read out loud to your class - even if you teach math.

Don't salivate when the bell rings.

If you start to feel like a rat in a maze, look for a higher perspective.

Don't treat your students like rats in a maze.

Behaviorism is the enemy. Find allies, draw the line, and fight dirty.

Be unpredictable. Randomness confuses the enemy.

Whatever your long-range career plans may be, teach until you are no longer naive.

On the other hand, for the kid's sake, quit before you become cynical.

If it ain't broke, fix it anyway. It ain't perfect yet.

Look up to those you went before you, but don't bow down before them.

When attacked by the Borg, don't let them assimilate you. Make them accommodate you.

Multiple choice: A. If your class is quiet, they aren't learning. B. If your class is noisy, they aren't learning.

The correct answer is A.

Remember, multiple choice tests are too simplistic to give meaningful results.

Occasionally shut the door and try something new and slightly outrageous. Teaching is still a subversive activity. That's why politicians are afraid of us.

Keep a level head. No matter what the situation is, or who your adversary may be, the one who raises his voice first loses the argument.

And finally, remember, when the equipment breaks down, and the students are out of control, and Susie needs to go to the restroom, and the substitute next door needs your help, and the intercom has interrupted your class for the third time today, and the assistant principal walks in to observe your class just as the fire bell rings ---

Keep your sense of humor.

Good luck graduates, and to those of you who will be first time teachers—Welcome to the family.