**Interview 1: Nicole Houston**

**Me:** How do you define teaching and learning?

**Nicole:** Oh gosh. That is a hard question actually. Um, teaching to me is giving my students skills that they can use in school and outside of school.

**Me:** Can you elaborate a little more?

**Nicole:** It is basically me giving them the knowledge to be prepared for either college or careers, whatever path they choose.

**Me:** Okay, great! How do you define learning then?

**Nicole:** Learning to me is demonstrating knowledge of skills and concepts and being able to apply them to your life.

**Me:** Okay, what learning theories do you support or implement in your classroom?

**Nicole:** Basically, I ensure that I create a positive environment and I give them that environment to enable them to succeed. I do a lot of group work and I give the students the materials needed and expect them to broaden their understanding of the concepts given.

**Me:** With that being said, what are your thoughts on reinforcement/punishment in the classroom?

**Nicole:** Personally, I do not have or implement much punishment when it comes to my classroom. I tend to really focus on giving them a positive environment and in my opinion that means not a lot of punishment. I expect a lot from my students and I am not there to baby them. I give them responsibility to make decisions and take control of their learning.

**Me:** Okay so do you believe that learners are active in constructing their own knowledge?

**Nicole:** Yes, definitely. If students aren’t motivated and prepared to learn then they won’t and there isn’t much that can help that.

**Me:** But you intervene and make sure that they are actually learning correct?

**Nicole:** Yes absolutely. I present them with the information but it is up to them to take it and expand upon it.

**Me:** You said that you like to have your students work in groups, so do you believe that interactions with peers can lead to more learning than interactions with a teacher?

**Nicole:** Um, a lot of times yes. Peers can relate to each other more than I can with them and that often leads to them understanding a concept.

**Me:** Do you have any examples?

**Nicole:** Yes, actually I recently just gave my students a group project where I had my students write a paragraph with four minds and I didn’t help at all. They learned a lot and worked together to create it and then I gave them feedback and they had to go back and correct their mistakes and improve.

**Me:** So what do you believe is the best way for one to teach/learn?

**Nicole:** You have to be willing to let the kids figure it out. I can’t just give them the answers. I like to let them struggle a bit.

**Me:** You make sure that they are still learning the concepts correctly though?

**Nicole:** Yes, I let them struggle but I realize that not every student learns the same way and I ensure that through my guidance they understand the concepts.