

## Professor Matthews' Dilemma

Fresh out of graduate school, Assistant Professor Matthews was about halfway through his first semester of teaching college English. On this particular day, he was sitting in his office in a big funk because his class attendance had dropped from 25 to 16. Usually, only about 12 students came to class on a regular basis.

Right then, the best student in the class stopped by the office, nineteen year old Lisa Simpson. "Can I see you for a moment?" Lisa asked.

"Sure, come on in," Professor Matthews said, excited that a student was showing an interest in class.

"Every day I find it harder and harder to hang in there," Lisa explained. "I've lost my motivation. But if I drop out, my mom will be crushed and my dad will kill me. What should I do?"

Just then, Lisa noticed the time and said she'd stop by tomorrow to follow up. Professor Matthews decided to ask a few other professors for advice on how to help Lisa.

**Professor Kravitz** said, "Motivate her with money. Give her the statistics that show college grads earning nearly a million dollars more in their lifetimes than nongrads. Tell her the choice is between driving a used Pinto or a new Lexus. Remind her that a college degree is money in the bank."

**Professor Apple** said, "Appeal to her sense of purpose. If she's as talented as you say, she's going to want to leave a legacy she can be proud of. Show her that going to college is her key to making a contribution to the future of humanity."

**Professor Durtz** said, "I've been teaching for 30 years, and if there's one thing I've learned, it's this: You can't motivate someone else. If this young woman isn't motivated to stay in college, let her go out and experience the world. If college is right for her, she'll discover it for herself, and she'll come back full of motivation."

**Professor Kiedis** said, "She's too young to be making a life-changing decision like dropping out of school. She doesn't understand the consequences. You have to do whatever you can to keep her enrolled. I would play up how disappointed her parents would be if she drops out. Lay the guilt on thick. She'll thank you years from now. And so will her parents."

**Professor Spears** said, "Make a personal appeal. Let her know she matters to you and that you'll be personally disappointed to see her drop out. Offer to mentor her even after she finishes your class. Let her understand she has a champion in you."

**Professor Moby** said, "You say she can easily earn an A in your class, right? Well, tell her that. Urge her to hang in there to get the A. After that, she can decide what to do for the next semester."

Listed below are the six professors in this story. Rank the quality of their advice on the scale below. Give a different score to each professor. Be prepared to discuss your choices.

Best Advice 1 2 3 4 5 6 Worst Advice

**Professor Kravitz** \_\_\_\_\_

**Professor Apple** \_\_\_\_\_

**Professor Durtz** \_\_\_\_\_

**Professor Kiedis** \_\_\_\_\_

**Professor Spears** \_\_\_\_\_

**Professor Moby** \_\_\_\_\_