Theory Viewbook Item #9

Increasing Student Motivation

1. Create an environment that fosters confidence in learning. This can be anything from the classroom setup to the individual classroom culture created by the students who occupy it. Allow the students to own their own learning space.
2. Create challenging and relevant classroom instruction. If the students see the benefit of their assignments, they will be more motivated to do them. Included in this, also, is the honesty with students about the purpose of an assignment. Tell them why the assignment is important; don’t require that they guess. It may not be as obvious to them.
3. Create positive relationships within the classroom, both between teacher and students, as well as student and student. If possible, encourage the students to find a mentor or role model to help with homework or to simply practice speaking English with.
4. The instruction needs to be challenging, but not impossible, for the students. They need to be able to see their progress. This can be shown to them through their own responsibility in keeping track of their own assignments, or through teacher-student conferences in which goals are discussed and set for the next term.
5. Above all, allow the students to take responsibility for their own learning. They will see that learning is not something that has to be mandated but that can happen naturally and painlessly. Teachers need to be students greatest cheerleader in this aspect.