Interpreting Metaphors

DIRECTIONS: The passage below is from the novel *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens. Read the passage. Then answer the questions. Use a dictionary to look up any words you do not understand.

So, Mr. M’Choakumchild began in his best manner. He and some one hundred and forty other schoolmasters, had been lately turned at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs. He had been put through an immense variety of paces, and had answered volumes of head-breaking questions. Orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody, biography, astronomy, geography, and general cosmography, the sciences of compound proportion, algebra, land-surveying and levelling, vocal music, and drawing from models, were all at the ends of his ten chilled fingers. He had worked his stony way into Her Majesty’s most Honourable Privy Council’s Schedule B, and had taken the bloom off the higher branches of mathematics and physical science, French, German, Latin, and Greek. He knew all about all the Water Sheds of all the world (whatever they are), and all the histories of all the peoples, and all the names of all the rivers and mountains, and all the productions, manners, and customs of all the countries, and all their boundaries and bearings on the two and thirty points of the compass. Ah, rather overdone, M’Choakumchild. If he had only learnt a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more!

1. What is the narrator’s opinion of Mr. M’Choakumchild? Choose at least one metaphor from the passage and explain its meaning to support your answer.

2. What is the narrator’s opinion of the quality of the education Mr. M’Choakumchild received in order to prepare him to be a teacher? Choose at least one metaphor from the passage and explain its meaning to support your answer.