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Introduction to Teaching  
The Credo  
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### The Credo: The Desire and Philosophy of Teaching

I did not always want to be a teacher. As a child I wanted to be a veterinarian. However, I soon discovered that my love of animals was not enough to make veterinary medicine my life's dream. I found my dream as a life with children. I began working as a helper in a special education preschool. My three years of experience gave me a new passion upon which to focus, and I found a mentor in Cindy Kostoff. Similar to the veterinarian, however, a love of children is not enough to become a teacher.

Some people focus on the immediate rewards of teachers such as: summer vacations, breaks for holidays, and a stable schedule. All of those reasons make teaching more attractive as a profession, but they are not the only reasons why I want to be a teacher. The biggest reason I want to be a teacher is the children. I love children, and I want to make my living by bettering their lives. Teaching is a very rewarding profession beyond the schedule.

Educators can take great pride in their work. They can improve lives, be a role model, and have community respect. Life is not about money; it is about happiness. These are principles I have always held, and my mentor instilled them even deeper in my thinking. Cindy Kostoff is the most selfless, loving, and compassionate teacher I have ever encountered. She inspires my goals and my love of children. I take a lot of satisfaction in giving help and hope to children. It is a greater reward to change lives than to make a lot of money. Children are the country's future, and I want to be one of the people shaping the future. Teachers have an enormous impact on communities and

on individuals. I want to make a difference with my life, and I want to make the world a better place. The best place to start is the country's best resources: our children.

Being an educator is rewarding, but the biggest focus is the children. I want to not only be an educator, but I want to be a good educator. It is my hope to have a loving, safe, enriching environment so students can learn. Fairness, compassion, and honesty will be strong components of my professional life. My philosophy of teaching will incorporate all of these things and more.

To develop my own philosophy of teaching, I looked at the five main education philosophies: essentialism, progressivism, perennialism, existentialism, and behaviorism. I found that I adhere to no single philosophy. Each one has strengths and weakness, and I derived my philosophy from the strengths.

I was first drawn to the philosophy of perennialism. Rational thinking is a skill that all children should learn. In this time of constant change, children will need to be able to adapt what they know to new situations. I strongly believe rational, logical thinking will be a necessary tool for children.

I do not, however, consider myself a staunch perennialist. I also like ideas from the essentialism philosophy. I believe there are certain subjects all children should be taught. My challenge as a teacher will be to keep the required subjects interesting. I also plan to stay updated with new technologies so the curriculum can alter slightly with the times.

I was first opposed to the progressivist philosophy. I do consider myself more of an essentialist, but I see strengths in progressivism. I recognize children have individual needs, but it may not be possible to make a classroom completely individualized. I want

to make a curriculum with topics interesting to the children, hands-on activities, and problem solving aspects. Children need to be interested and engaged. It will not be possible to please them all, but keeping them interested will always be a goal I strive to achieve.

The final two philosophies have the final important points of my teaching philosophy. Existentialism and behaviorism have points used in some form by most educators. Existentialism emphasizes personal responsibility. Children need to learn to take responsibility for their actions, right or wrong. Also behaviorism is a philosophy I expect I will use frequently. Children learn proper behavior from rewards or punishments. Especially young children need to be taught what is and is not acceptable. In my mind, positive reinforcement is the most important aspect of behaviorism. Children need to be told when they are doing the right things. However, punishment is also important, and it can deter unwanted actions. It will be my responsibility to see that both rewards and punishments are given out in a fair and just manner.

Children are the country's future. I want to be an influence to as many as possible. My philosophy will guide me to teach the children the necessary skills in an interesting, unprejudiced, and fair way. The children of America need to be prepared, and I will be ready to prepare them. Children are wonderful gifts, and my rewards will be immeasurable.

