“Only the brave should teach…” wrote author Pearl S. Buck. Am I really brave enough to stand in front of twenty or more students and teach? Yes, I believe that I am. I also believe that bravery is not the only thing needed to teach. Courage, patience, willingness to teach and learn, and a positive outlook on the career and the future are also needed to teach.

I feel that the decision to go into the teaching profession should not be taken lightly. Much thought is needed to decide if this is the right career. I decided to go into the teaching profession for many different reasons. One was that I had a great number of good teachers. They inspired me and influenced me, but mostly they taught me. Whether it was in grade school or high school I found many teachers who really cared about their students. They were always willing to talk with and help their students. I was lucky, I know of some people who say their teachers never helped them.

Tying into those wonderful teachers, I was inspired to do the same. I want to inspire and influence students to be the best they can be. I want to help them with problems and share my knowledge with them. I can only hope that I can be as good of a teacher as those who inspired me to teach.

I also want to teach because I feel it would be a fulfilling career. To be able to help students and in turn enjoying it myself would be wonderful. I know that most elementary education teachers must teach a variety of things, including music and art. I love music and art and teaching would encompass those. I also love children and love
working with them. Children have such a different outlook on the world than adults and I like to hear their views.

I am also aware of the many challenges that the teachers of today must face. One is a child with special needs. Whether those needs be a physical handicap or a mental disorder, a teacher has to face them and must be capable of handling that type of situation. There is also a slight fear of standing up in front of students to teach, especially for the first time on your own. They also have to deal with those students who do not want to be there and who do not want to learn. The teacher then has to find some way of motivating those students.

Each teacher has a different philosophy on teaching and everyone teaches in a different way. Some teachers may be behaviorists or essentialists while others may be progressivists or existentialists. As for me I feel that I am a mix of behaviorism, progressivism, and essentialism. I take the seating chart idea from behaviorism, but that is all I take from it. I do not believe that there is no free will. From progressivism I take hands on work, group work, field trips and respect for the individuality of each student. From essentialism I take discipline, structure, and partly academic rigor.

I feel that academics are important as well as structure and discipline (when needed). I feel that students should do hands on experience as well as working in groups. The hands on experience helps them learn concepts and the group work allows them to develop speaking and social skills while learning.

I feel that teachers need to be the best that they can be. I also feel that they should not only be just a teacher but a role model to students as well. So in response to Pearl S. Buck’s quote “Only the brave should teach…” I feel that yes, teachers do need to be
brave. They need to be brave enough to be willing to help all children regardless of race, color, religion, or special need. That is what I am going to try to do. I will try to do all of these things using the examples I have been given by others as well as what I have inside of me.