

My Professional Teaching Credo:

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Introduction to Teaching 111

Mrs. Stetzel

Abstract:

When I think about teaching, I get excited and a little nervous all at the same time. I believe students need an environment where they feel safe, comfortable, and free to express themselves. I also want my students to grow and develop on their own in the best and easiest way for each of them. To accomplish this, I must use a variety of teaching methods. I want to incorporate three philosophies into my classroom; essentialism, progressivism, and existentialism. With these philosophies, I believe my classroom can be a place where learning happens, but also where students have fun and enjoy their time.

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According to Henry Adams, “A Teacher affects eternity: he can never tell where his influence stops” (Adams). This quote sums up what teaching is all about. Touching someone’s life does not always have to be in a big obvious way. Many times teachers do not know they are influencing a child, and later finding out what an impact they had, is the most rewarding thing. To help children learn, not only required material, but also about themselves, would be the most rewarding profession for me. Teaching children changes from day to day and is never the same. Educators must have find ways to keep teaching and learning exciting and stimulating for students. As a teacher, I hope to do just that in my classroom.

In my classroom I want each student to feel unique and special. I know that each student learns at a different pace and level. I would like to be able to assist all of my students and accommodate them when needed. I want my classroom to be an inviting environment and a place where all of my students feel safe and excepted. So, as a teacher, I need to be able to incorporate many philosophies into my teaching. By using parts of different philosophies, I want to make my classroom an inviting place for students, and help students be well-rounded good citizens.

William C. Bagley’s philosophy essentialism is the thinking that students need to be taught the basic skills for everyday living (Parkay 87). As a teacher, I need to be able to teach my students not only math, reading, and writing, but also how to deal with others. Dealing with other people is an essential skill that every person should know how to do well. In my classroom, I want to teach my students to be respectful of adults and fellow students, and know how to talk through problems that may occur in their lives. Also I believe by using essentialism in my

classroom, I will be able to teach my students about hard work and how far they can go if they try and push themselves. These skills are used every day, so it is important to implant them into students as soon as possible.

Progressivism is another philosophy I would like to use in my classroom. This philosophy is “based on the belief that education should be child-centered rather than focused on the teacher or the content area” (Parkay 87). I think teaching is all about the children and not just about what the teacher wants. When students have the freedom to choose their own things, I believe they come out of their shell. Furthermore as a teacher, I want to be able to trust my students enough to allow them to choose where they sit, and who they work with. Also giving my students freedom of choice, I believe will raise their grades. When students like the topics teachers use, then they will want to get involved and participate. In my classroom, I want to incorporate this philosophy not only into my teaching style but also into the arrangement of my classroom. As a student I loved it when teachers would set up our desks into groups or pods. Therefore, that is my desire for my classroom. When I have a class, I want my room to be inviting and a place for my students to feel safe and wanted.

The last philosophy I want to incorporate into my teaching is existentialism. This philosophy focuses on students’ freedom of choice, and creative choice (Parkay). I believe students need to feel comfortable enough in their class to express themselves. My students will know that it is okay to make mistakes, and that no question is dumb. Another part of existentialism is that students ask questions and try to answer the question themselves. This method allows students to think deeply about questions, looking at every aspect of the question, and thinking creatively about the answer. Also when students figure out an answer themselves, this gives students’ confidence in themselves. Allowing students to make mistakes, and letting

them know it is okay to make them, will allow students to grow and learn from their mistakes. I want my classroom to be fun and filled with learning. Therefore, I believe by using topics students like, this will increase the enjoyment of learning.

These three philosophies, when combined, can make a fun and learning environment in a classroom. They allow students to make their own choices, and mistakes, and learn from them. Also students can find the importance of learning and how exciting learning can be. By using these philosophies together, students will benefit not only in their school work, but also in their lives outside of school and into the future.

Choosing to go into teaching was not one that came easy for me or right away. After working at a daycare and public library, I now know that teaching is all I want to do. Knowing that every day I will touch someone's life is all the reward that I need. I want to help students not only learn math, reading, and writing, but also about themselves and the potential they can have. I want to be the teacher that all the students want to have, that they admire and remember. I want to make a difference in someone's life, and being a teacher definitely does that.

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