My Credo:

An Aspiring Teacher

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An aspiring teacher’s personal philosophical views of education are essential to leading children to a rewarding and gratifying future. In the education profession there are six branches one could possibly undertake in their teaching career. These consist of, Perrennialism, Progressivism, Essentialism, Existentialism, Behaviorism, and Social Reconstructionism (Parkay & Stanford, 2007, 2004, 2001, 1998). In my opinion, all of the views carry some positive and flawed points. I would rather base my beliefs about teaching from multiple views rather than just one in my search for an educational philosophy. I carry this belief because when I think of a special teacher, I not only consider how he or she lets the students be creative, but if the teacher is more of a guide rather than a dictator. I am not implying that a teacher should allow children to have free reign in the classroom, but I encourage creativity, motivation, and personal interest. I believe if any person took upon these views they may find that the children could be more attentive and knowledgeable about things in life outside the classroom as well as in the classroom. This may be a bit of a stretch for the non-creative types, but it would be worth considering how it would help any teacher be open minded to a child’s interests, and let children’s laughter remind us of how we used to be!

The three important philosophies I base my beliefs on, at least in most ways, are Existentialism, Essentialism, and Behaviorism. The primary, Existentialism, states that the teacher is a highly subjective philosophy that focuses on the meaning of the individual and their personal emotional promise to life (Wyatt, 2005). Existentialists believe, like me, that the student should have a say over the meaning of rational matters. I feel that every person has to make choices in his or her life to figure out who they are inside. I envision my
classroom setting to be inspired by the children’s artwork. My lesson plans will be carefully narrowed down by not only my selections, but by the children’s interests as well. However, the Extentialistic point of view is flawed in the fact that some believe children will have free reign in the decision process, which is not true if taken upon correctly. I believe that as a teacher I should have the final say in what goes on in the classroom. Yes, I feel a child’s interests should be addressed in most assignments, but basic knowledge is a necessary aspect while evolving into an educated adult.

Essentialism is more “the basics” of educational theories. Essentialistic beliefs are focused more on the moral and intellectual values of a person (Cliff, 1996). Every child should have these principles instilled in them, if not by the parent, then by the educator. Although this theory is not as disciplined as Perrennialism, I strongly believe that each child needs a set of basic disciplinary rules set forth by the teacher. These rules will help in a child’s future when it comes time for employment. They will not be shocked when something is expected of them. I feel though, in Essentialism, that sometimes the view is used with no other philosophical influences and can make change in a society hard to accomplish (Parkay & Stanford, 2007, 2004, 2001, 1998). With that in mind, my classroom rules will be placed in a spot for all to see clearly. I may take the Existentialist way and have the children give me some ideas about what disciplines should be in place. This will not only let each child know the punishments for their actions, but they will have had a say in the punishments set forth.

Now that the methods and needs of core curriculum have been discussed, it is necessary to include the element of classroom management. Behaviorism falls under this category. This theory determines that it is the teacher’s duty to set behavioral goals. When children achieve these goals I feel the teacher should reinforce good behavior with praise,
motivation, and recognition (DeMar, n.d.). I judge this theory harshly because I feel that free will is not completely non-existent. To keep this theory my own, I plan on letting the children feel as if they have a choice in their actions. They will know the consequences, and will be punished if they choose to make the wrong decision. However, if a child makes a good decision, whether that is helping a peer or correcting a behavioral mistake, I believe it would be necessary to positively reinforce that child with praise. My classroom will be more manageable if I choose to adopt the Behaviorist view.

The philosophical views; I believe, that work the best for teacher student-interaction will not be able to work in one single school, all at once. The six branches of philosophy are just too different, like how children are different. I believe more than anything that each person learns differently and should be given the opportunity to be heard. An individual should have the opportunity to study something of personal interest and substance. In my experience with teachers, I have based greatness on ones who were open-minded to children’s thoughts and opinions. Children, I believe, have many things to offer the world in the future.

Teaching is a lifelong process, what you may learn one year may be different the next year. I feel if you take concepts from your colleges, parents, the community, and especially the children, your classroom will be one of great remembrance. My class will have fresh, new experiences inspired by the different interests of the students. I do believe “the basics” of past education is necessary to be taught to the upcoming generations. Not only that, but my classroom will have a visual set of guidelines to be followed. When I become a teacher, I will not be afraid to use the knowledge I have, smile with new experiences, and enjoy my time with happy intrigued students.
References

http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Essentialism.html


Boston et al.: Pearson