

Teaching Credo:
Inspiration

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Students will not remember what their teacher taught. They will however remember how that teacher made them feel.

My high school history teacher, Keith Zimmer, said that quote one time. His professor told his class it one time during his days at Manchester College. It made me pause and reflect upon the truth in it and I found that it could not be more accurate. I thought back to all the teachers who classes I had sat in for many months and learned that while I did not remember who had taught me what but I clearly recalled how each teacher had made me feel. My favorite teachers made me feel intelligent and great while the others made me feel insecure and dumb. As I begin my journey to become a teacher, I return to the quote constantly with aspirations and desires to not only become an educator that inspires her students to learn but also inspire them to become the best they can be in every possible way.

In kindergarten, my teacher asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up; I replied, “A teacher.” Did I know I would eventually be in classes to become one? No, to be honest I do not even remember the reason I wanted to become one, except for maybe that my teacher that year was terrific. Every day was an adventure in her class. With every week brought a new letter into this system, she called the alphabet, but before we learned the letter my classmates and I would have to find it, hidden somewhere in the room. She was my first wonderful teacher; I went to school for preschool but as of now I remember nothing of it. Therefore, kindergarten was the birthplace my dream to become a teacher—all because of a teacher who inspired and made learning into a game full of excitement and thrills.

I plan to become a kind of teacher similar to that of my kindergarten one. Mrs. Hoover taught more than just the necessities. She showed us how enjoyable learning was and made her

student feel intelligent every single day. She was not the only teacher in my life to motivate me to become a teacher. My fourth and fifth grade teachers, I believe, are the ones who made the biggest impact on my life. They both brought out a love for learning like nothing I have ever felt. Mr. Fulton, fourth grade, taught me to do all I can to reach my goals. I do not remember what I learned specifically in his class but I do remember the feeling of accomplishment when I finished the last history card of the sixty he provided students, and I remember the pat on the back I received. As for fifth grade with Mrs. Cole, I remember learning. I can vividly recall her history lessons about the Oregon Trail and I still think about the books that she used to read us after lunch. My days as a fourth and fifth grader are gone but the lessons, the lessons that went beyond the textbooks, lectures, and studies, still follow and guide me today.

As I mentioned before I have always wanted to be a teacher, however, it was not until high school when the urge to teach really hit me. As a high school student, I was very active, participating in many activities. All of them: cross-country, track, student council, PEERS, student helper, Golden Guard, National Honor Society, and SADD helped in some way to decide to become a teacher. Nevertheless, two, PEERS and cross-country, had more of an influence. PEERS, an organization that enabled high school students to influence younger students in grades sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth, to abstain from sex, drugs, and alcohol, allowed me to have my first experience as a teacher. Four or five other students and I would go to the local elementary school and junior high and talk to the students. It was during my four years in this group that I experienced first hand just how much of an influence teachers have. My dream, a dream that I had wanted since I was little, was reborn. Being a captain on my cross-country for two years also influenced my decision greatly. I remember helping the younger runners with homework on the bus and just working with them in other parts of their life. I was their

teammate but I was also more. They looked up to me and watched me, I may have only been a few years older, but I held a level of respect in their eyes.

After I decided I wanted to teach I decided to do an internship during my senior year, where I sat and learned in an eighth grade classroom. My teacher, who did not know exactly what to do with me, had me look up educational topics online. As I looked up multiple intelligences, philosophical ideas, learning styles, classroom management methods, etc I began to formulate ideas on how I would one day teach my students.

I wanted to inspire my students the way my teachers had inspired me. I wanted to push my students to achieve more than they thought possible, as my teachers had pushed me. I wanted to show my students just how smart they were as my teachers had showed me. My plans on how to do this are not complete; in fact, it would be hard for them to be more vague. Yet, the few things I do know I will work amazingly. I am a person who learns by hearing and doing yet I know many of my students will not be this way. My goal is to teach in a variety of ways, making some aspect of each lesson correspond to a certain learning method. It will not be easy, but if I put in the extra work, my students will learn the skills quicker and become excellent scholars.

As I learned and relearned the philosophical ideas of education I was shocked to learn just how all over the board I am. There were five categories according to Parkay and Stanford, perennials, essentialism, progressivism, existentialism, and social reconstructionism; and because of an inventory created by them, I was able to find out which philosophical idea I fit into the best (2007). The results showed I fit into each one; my numbers were very close, with the lowest in essentialism with eighteen points and the highest in existentialism with twenty-two. This means that I will teach from multiple viewpoints, which will greatly benefit my students. I may lecture

some but I will also be able to stand back and only facilitate my students' learning. My board views into the philosophies of teaching will make it easier for my students to learn—it will be nearly impossible for me not to at one time or another teach the way that is best for them.

Teaching is not just enabling students to learn it is also about balancing what the states mandate students to learn and what the world expects students to be able to do in life after school. I believe teachers must teach the basics yet also teach problem solving skills. The basics are important, there is no question about that, but student must know how to fix problems in order to accomplish tasks in everyday life. For example, two times two is wonderful when a person is trying to figure out how to double a recipe. However, four divided seven does not help much when a person is forced to decide what task to finish first when a supervisor give him three at one time. My goal as a teacher will be to find the happy medium and teach my students the basics while still educating my students on things they enjoy and care about in everyday life.

My plan is not to just become a teacher. I plan to become a great teacher to give credit to the teacher who came before me and taught me to love learning. I did not just wake up one morning and decide to become a teacher. I had amazing and wonderful teachers who inspired me beyond words. The way I plan to teach will of course evolve over the next few years and, I am sure, over my life. However, I am open to change and will do anything in my power to become the greatest teacher I can be.

References

Parkay, F. and Stanford, B. (2007). *Becoming a teacher*, 7th ed. Boston: Pearson