

Danielle Moeller

October 4, 2004

Credo

When I was little and people asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I would always reply “I want to be a teacher.” My love for little children was the only reason that I had for wanting to be a teacher. I never really thought about any other motivations that I had to want to teach. I now realize that there are many reasons why I am adamant about entering the teaching profession.

I want to instill in my students a desire to learn. Because I will be working with small children, it is important to give them a good foundation on which to build their education careers. Benjamin Mays once said, “A child must learn early to believe that she is somebody worthwhile, and that she can do many praiseworthy things” (quotations.about.com). A teacher should provide his or her students with a positive learning environment, one in which they can explore and learn through experimentation. By encouraging hands on activities and having a positive learning experience, the students are able to associate learning with fun. I think that a good environment can be achieved in many ways. I want to be able to provide my students with many different activities to play with on their own as well as in groups. These can range from coloring to blocks to Twister. Anything that stimulates a child’s mind and encourages learning while they are having fun is going to leave a good impression in their minds.

I want to make a difference in my student’s lives. I feel that it is important to not just care about my students academically, but to truly care about all aspects of their lives. I want to be able to help them grow socially and spiritually as well as academically. I hope to be able to have a relationship with my students other than the teacher-student relationship. I want to be

someone that they can come to with their problems and accomplishments throughout their education, not only when they are a student of mine. Promoting teachers as guides and advisors helps the students to feel that they can open up to them. The students will not see their teachers as just an authority figure but as someone that they can trust and go to for help with anything.

I have a really close relationship with my high school choir director, and it has helped me tremendously in many ways. He has always been a shoulder that I can lean on and a huge support in everything that I do. He helps me with my questions in music as well as those in life. He is a great inspiration to me, and I hope to be half as good as he is in communicating and caring about his students. This concept is so important because “a teacher affects eternity: he can never tell where his influence stops” (Henry Adams www.inspirational-quotes.info). A positive role model is something that the students will carry with them for the rest of their lives, and that is an impression that I want to leave upon my students.

Throughout my teaching career, I want to make my mark on education. The traditional ways of teaching are not enough for me. I like the tradition of the teacher teaching his or her students from the front of the classroom, but I also think that more is needed in order to satiate the academic appetites of younger children. Young children need interaction as much as direction. I am a very big supporter of crafts and projects that tie in with academic lessons. These give children a tangible object which they can associate with their lesson. Many students learn better using this approach; therefore it is a tool which I plan to use in my classroom. I believe that a dynamic environment is a good way to stimulate the young growing minds. Giving teachers the opportunity to expand the traditional ways of teaching and incorporating some of their own unique techniques is one way in which a dynamic environment is achieved.

My classroom is going to revolve heavily around music. Music is another approach to learning that helps students to further understand the concepts covered. I believe that students remember things better if they learn them through song. One educator developed a system called the Shurley Method which puts phonics into songs. This helps the children to retain more information easier by remembering a simple song. My brother has learned cute little songs to help him remember things from the states and their capitols to correct hand washing. Music is a wonderful tool to use in every type of learning environment.

There also needs to be room for individual growth of the students. Working in groups can be helpful and desirable in many situations, but a student should also be given the opportunity to express himself through individual work. Given the chance, I think that many students who do not participate actively in group work will blossom and grow in a situation where they are in control. Students love to showcase their talents in any way that they are given.

Many of my reasons and theories follow the guidelines set out by essentialism. The concept of tradition is very appealing to me, but I also believe that change should be encouraged. I think that instilling the essentials of academic knowledge is an important tool. Even though our society is constantly changing, the traditional teaching methods are a great base on which to start a child's education. Emphasis on skills in reading, writing, arithmetic, and computers is a great tool as well. These subjects are important in a child's education. They will use these skills throughout their educational careers and in the real world also. Being competent in these areas is essential to advancing in their education and careers.

I also like a few points from the other theories. The main thing I agree with from progressivism is the attitude of change. If every classroom that a child has throughout his or her schooling is run exactly same way, the experience is likely to become monotonous and will make

it harder for the child to get excited about learning. Each teacher should be able to incorporate his or her own methods to create a diverse environment from other classrooms. Perennialism entices me because of its focus on the major books. Religion and the Bible have always been a very big part of my life; and if possible, I want it to be a big part of my classroom. The other major books are important tools of learning to use in the classroom as well. Although many of my theories revolve around essentialism, my classroom will be a mixture of all three theories of education.

God has given us many talents. I have always known that one of my talents is being able to work and connect with children. For a short time I wanted to be a pediatrician because they make a lot of money and I would still be able to work with children. I soon learned that money is not everything. I feel such a strong bond with children that salaries no longer make my career choices for me. In the words of Mother Teresa, "Unless life is lived for others, it is not worthwhile" (quotations.about.com). I realize now that I do not care about my personal wealth as much as I care for the educational wealth of young children. I can not wait to put my many ideas to use in my very own classroom.