

# *A Liberal Arts Education*

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A liberal arts education is much different than a traditional education from a non-liberal arts college. Liberal arts has many advantages and disadvantages. These advantages and disadvantages can affect the type of education you receive while at college and can have an affect on how I can teach my own students in an elementary classroom in the real world.

The liberal arts have enhanced my education and have helped me to develop one of my many reasons for teaching. Through the liberal arts classes I have taken here at Manchester College, I have learned that there are many aspects of education that I was not aware of. These are important parts of anyone's education, not only one of a college student. Many of these classes in which I have participated in have not been very much fun; however, they have proved to be an important part of my education.

One class I took just this last January was Trial Advocacy. This may not be a typical liberal arts class; however, it did meet one of the requirements as a part of my liberal arts education. This class had us acting as attorneys and witnesses in a United States Court Room. This may not relate directly to the teaching field; however some of the same skills used n a courtroom can be used in the classroom. I learned a lot in this class about extemporaneous speaking. My professor stressed with me and the other education majors in my class the importance of being able to think and speak on our toes in the field of education. Not only is this skill necessary in the classroom, but it is also vital during parent teacher conferences or IEP conferences and meetings. Parents will always have questions related to the education of their child and when they ask a question they want an answer. As the teacher, our job is to provide them with that answer when they ask the question. This is how one of my classes has helped me.

Following the completion of the liberal arts classes at Manchester College, I find that I do view some people differently. I do not necessarily see them as different, but I think I see them as who they are, not someone who I have placed a stereotype on before the completion of these courses. One course in particular where I learned to view people for who they are, not the stereotype many others give them is in Experiencing the Arts. This class did not study people in particular, but it does look deep into many different people's ideas and art. I am not really interested in many of the arts studied in this course, but I did find an interest in the different types of people compared to the art they created. These courses have given me an opportunity to look at myself also. I view myself differently now than I did before the completion of these courses. Now I see myself and others as who we are and I hope to be able to do the same with the children in my class so I can teach to the whole child, not just the perfect child. One course that really had me look into myself as a person was Intro to Philosophy. Philosophy had me think deeply about lots of things. One of these things was often ourselves. Looking into myself and thinking about how I live has helped me to see myself compared to everyone else, mainly to see the differences between myself and others. This is another way my liberal arts courses have greatly improved me as a future teacher.

Broadening my view on liberal arts is very important. As an elementary teacher, I will be required to teach students of varying backgrounds. Each student in my class will come from a different family with different views and different beliefs. I believe my liberal arts education from Manchester College will help me to teach each student to their fullest ability.

Because of my liberal arts education, I have been exposed to a wide variety of ideas. These ideas include art, music, physical education, philosophical thinking, and many other multicultural settings and experiences. These courses and experiences will help in my future classroom. I will be teaching a wide variety of students from different backgrounds that have had different experiences. Because of my liberal arts education, I will be better equipped to work with and teach these children than a teacher from a traditional four-year college.

In conclusion, I feel the liberal arts education I am receiving here at Manchester College is superior to any other teacher education program at another college. I think much of the important knowledge that I am receiving is made possible from the liberal arts connection the college has. I am glad I chose to attend a liberal arts college and I think my education at Manchester will prove to be a valuable one which will take me far in my career and in my life.