

My Teaching Credo

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Consistently confused about what I wanted to do when I grew up, I searched for passions that I could dedicate my life too. By taking an Intro to Education class I found my passion: Teaching. With much thought and practice, I not only found my passion for life, but my philosophy for my passion as well. My personal teaching philosophy is based on the views of Progressivism and Existentialism. I believe it is the most effective way for me to be successful as a teacher and create successful, self-actualized, confident, problem solving adults who can better the world and accomplish whatever they set their minds too.

I never knew what I wanted to be when I grew up. Couldn't figure out in middle school, high school, and at the beginning of this year as a first year in college, my mind was still blank. Then I made one of the best decisions of my life, I took Intro to Education. That first week of class let me discover what my true passion was; teaching. I had always loved kids, but now I could contribute to the success and happiness of their future. Teaching and myself was a perfect match. Later on in the class, with myself learning much as well, I began to figure out how I wanted to be as a teacher. I realized that there were five major beliefs that made up my personal education philosophy. Belief in teaching and learning, belief about students, belief about knowledge, belief about what is worth knowing, and belief in the philosophical areas that heavily influence your teaching philosophy. I found out that my beliefs in teaching stem from the existential and progressive values and that a teacher's greatest job is to cultivate individuals.

I first looked at my beliefs in teaching and learning. I found out that I have a constructivist view. I want to be the kind of teacher that creates self-directed learners that can go out into the world and be successful at whatever they set their minds to. By building on the student's interests, prior experiences, and current understandings I believe that being a successful learner is definitely possible. I believe that learning is also the result of internal forces in the student, which are brought out by the instruction and guidance of the teacher. Students should be interested in academic work, develop a desire to get the most out of the subject matter, not just covering the basic of the subject because the curriculum and state standards demands it. I believe in teaching with a structure but not too strict to the

extent of it being stifling therefore hindering the students from constructing concepts for themselves. An example of this belief, for instance, would be an engaging yet structured lesson plan. I would begin with giving the students clear instructions and objectives that were derived from the state standards and then have an activity where they could come up with solutions themselves, but always be there for guidance and to answer questions.

The next belief in my credo is the belief about the students. The most important belief that I have about the students is that they all are capable of learning. No matter their backgrounds, their futures, their home life, all students have the capability in them to learn. All students have different dispositions, skill sets, motivation levels and expectations. I believe in being a flexible and prepared teacher that will figure out the most successful way for that and every student to learn. I believe that adjustment and flexibility are very important part of being a good teacher. Another belief about students, is that you have to find a middle ground in your relationship with them. Some teachers have negative views of their students, which can alter their perception and lead to a relationship that is controlled by fear and coercion; rather than the more important factors such as truth and helpfulness. But having a highly positive view is also problematic and may affect children by not providing structure and direction. The middle ground is truly the best. With an efficient balance I believe I can be a successful teacher with the correct relationship that benefits the student to the maximum.

The third belief in my teaching philosophy is the belief about knowledge and content. Knowledge is one of the most important things in the classroom. It is what

the students learn and it's what progresses them in life. I believe that for knowledge to be attained to the highest degree you need a mixture of conceptual and subject matter. By providing them with facts and information they have to memorize and more conceptual knowledge that enables the students to understand and influence the environment, also adding in a bit of their personal knowledge from their own experiences, students can grow and learn to obtain a full satisfying life.

What is worth knowing is a question on everyone's mind. It is a question that drives us to pursue information and develop knowledge. So when this question came up to define my teaching philosophy, I gave it some good thought. Like everything in life, I believe balance is in order. By blending different views, such as views of the transmission theory and constructivist views, I believe I can find the knowledge worth teaching to prepare students to be efficient and successful in life. That includes the world of work, the world of the realistic and unknown future, and becoming a self-actualized individual.

When you really get down to it the view the teacher has on philosophy is one of the most important parts of their credo. It describes who they are and how they live and want to teach others to live. When it comes to epistemology, I am directed more towards knowing based on Empiricism. Which includes reason and logical analysis. When it comes to Axiology I really have interest in the amount of knowledge learned, but the quality of knowledge as well. A balanced idea on values, ethics, aesthetics, and logic also play a big part in my philosophy.

Even though my philosophy stated, in the previous paragraph, is important; It has not been adapted to modern times. Although these same values have been

carried on and put into new and more modern philosophies, I identify myself with two in particular: Progressivism and Existentialism. I am drawn firstly to Progressivism because it is a child-centered way of teaching rather than focused on the teacher or content. I believe that student's interests are important in having them participate and learn ways that are best suitable for them. I also believe that knowledge in the present could change in the future. We are learning new things every day and a great way to adapt to the ever-filling tank of knowledge is to teach problem solving techniques. I will give the students freedom, but make sure they know I am an authority figure. I want my students to know how to act in everyday life and I believe that a progressive view is one of the best ways to do so.

Existentialism is also important because I believe that everyone's personal experiences can be a great tool for learning. It gets the students interested, involved, and gives perfect examples of actual scenarios in the real world. I also believe that every student will prosper with personal attention and a little bit of individual focus. Students need to know they matter, and what they are doing is important for them. While I admire when content focuses on meaning that results in personal awareness that Existentialism stands for, I do not believe the view it has that states "life in general has no meaning"; that they think optimism, the good, and the beautiful are all creating a false impression on existence. These things are important to find motivation to learn.

In conclusion, I have stated all I feel, believe, and admire about the many teaching philosophies. My personal combination with emphasis on Progressivism and Existentialism, will be a successful way to teach children to become successful,

self-actualized, confident, problem-solving adults who can better the world and accomplish whatever they set their minds too.

