

My Teaching Beliefs

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Abstract:

For 18 years of my life, with the help and support of my teachers, I have spent an enormous amount of time discovering who I really am, both personally and professionally. Through years of contact with my teachers and the relationships I have with them, I have shaped the way I think, look, and feel about the teaching profession. They have swayed the way I learn and the way I teach, which translates into my personal beliefs about the teaching and learning process. I personally believe in a mix of progressivism, existentialism, and essentialism philosophy. As a teacher, I will be responsible for teaching and preparing the young mind for success in the future. My goal is to help my students prepare for life by gaining essential skills that are needed to succeed both in the classroom and the world.

As one person once said, “You might be one person to the world, but the world to one young person.” For 18 years of my life, with the help and support of my teachers, I have spent an enormous amount of time discovering who I really am, both personally and professionally. Through years of contact with my teachers and the relationships I have with them, I have shaped the way I think, look, and feel about the teaching profession. They have swayed the way I learn and the way I teach, which translates into my personal beliefs about the teaching and learning process. In Webster’s dictionary, teaching is defined as “to train by example, practice, and exercise.” As a teacher, I will be responsible for teaching and preparing the young mind for success in the future. I take the responsibility that I will be given seriously. My goal is to help my students prepare for life by gaining essential skills that are needed to succeed both in the classroom and the world.

It was very early in elementary school when I first began to see myself as a teacher. Two of my elementary teachers, Mrs. Tooley and Mrs. Rohrer, who were my first and third grade teachers, inspired me to become a teacher and live a life of helping others. They made learning interesting and fun, so it was always enjoyable to go to school. The lessons I learned in their classroom, such as how to read, write, add and subtract, and always try your best, carried me, not only through middle and high school, but also to college. They taught me not only basic skills needed for success, but valuable life lessons as well. In both Mrs. Tooley and Mrs. Rohrer’s classes, I was not only prepared for the next grade level, but shown how to be the best person I possibly can be by the ideas and values put forth in the classroom.

As a teacher, I will be liable for teaching children the knowledge and skills that are essential to succeeding in the world. During the teaching-learning process, both the student and teacher are involved equally. The teacher’s role is to provide students with knowledge that will help them build on future knowledge, and the student is responsible for learning this knowledge and applying it to the outside world. When I am teaching, I know I will learn just as much from

my students as they learn from me. As a teacher, I believe student independence is critical and a valuable part of education. I also believe that students learn best through student-teacher interactions. In my classroom, I hope to apply procedures and events that help foster independence along with strong student-teacher relationships. Children learn best when they can openly express their thoughts and opinions with their peers instead of keeping them to themselves. My ultimate goal is to create a classroom that encourages student independence and diversity with strong guidance from the teacher, which shows my progressive belief in education. I don't believe that tests should be used as a sole determination if a student passes or fails. Sometimes, tests can mask a student's true knowledge of a subject because of the standardization. Although tests are fairly important, I believe that if a student can exhibit adequate understanding of a subject through different ways, such as a writing, presentation, or projects, they have successfully learned the material. The classroom should be focused on learning and growing, not competition on who gets the best grades or who is the smartest in the class. Learning should be fun and consist of many different ways of evaluating success. The teaching-learning process is very complex and is something that needs time to develop. Even though the teacher student relationship may be difficult, I believe it plays a major factor in student success. A positive relationship with my teachers definitely helped my education experience.

Knowledge plays a large role in education. As a future educator, I must be prepared to answer questions about knowledge and "how we know what we know". I will also have to decide what is true about the content I am responsible to teach, and the best way to transmit that knowledge to the students. Through much instruction, I will be able to use different techniques and procedures that will aid in helping me teach my students about knowledge and why it is

important to learn. The ultimate goal for my students will be for them to reasonably and logically think through processes to come up with a sensible conclusion to any problem. I want my student's to believe something based on experience, personal beliefs, and logical reasoning, not just because they read something in a textbook or on the internet. My goal is for my students to continually ask "why" so they can discover new and exciting things because it interests them. With my progressive philosophy, I will strive to make this a reality.

Through my journey in discovering what I believe about education, I have discovered that I am a blend of several teaching philosophies. My personal style is a mix between progressivism, existentialism, and essentialism. I strongly sympathize with the progressivism idea that education should be focused on the child and what interests them, and that education should be active. I believe that students will learn best if they are learning about what interests them instead of learning about things that don't appeal to them. I believe that all students should learn and be very effective at problem solving. With adequate problem solving skills, students will be better prepared to live life out in the real world. I also believe that the schools should help students develop personally and socially. If a student can develop his or her own set of values, they will be beneficial to society and can help change the world. Along with the view of progressivism, I also believe in existentialism. Each person is capable of making their own choices in life, whether good or bad. These choices define who you are as a person. I believe that students define themselves in the choices they make regarding their education, which in turn plays a part in who they are. Schools can try their best to influence the way a person views of education, but in reality, it is up to individual choice. The last philosophical view I agree with is essentialism. Every student should be able to use the basic skills because without them, students

would not be able to succeed in the world. Teachers should teach basic skills so that the student is able to learn more about something if they wish, and be a productive member of society.

Teachers also have different beliefs regarding their students. As for myself, I believe in a constructivist orientation. I believe that learning is an active, meaningful process. Students should be actively engaged with what they are learning, not just the recipient of the lesson. I plan on having a classroom full of engaging and exciting activities that will help them make sense of what is happening. I understand that a student's learning is affected by other outside influences that cannot be controlled, and therefore, I believe that the student is very important in determining the curriculum. In my classroom, I will focus on student interest, while teaching the standards and curriculum that must be taught.

Over the past 18 years, I have spent a lot of time in schools and around teachers. Many of my teachers have been a huge influence in my life. They have helped me become the unique person I am today. They gave me the gift of knowledge and skills so I can pass it down to a younger generation of eager learners. They have inspired me to follow my dreams and become an educator. The solid foundation that they have provided for me will help me become the best educator I possible can be. They have encouraged me to do my best and to learn new things outside of class. It is because of them that I want to help others and become a productive member of society.

Works Cited

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