

Philosophy of Education

I believe that teaching is about educating the whole child, expanding their horizons, and developing the skills and knowledge necessary to reach their full potential. To achieve a truly holistic approach, a multicultural perspective is key. Diversity enriches the experiences of not only the students but also myself as their teacher, as each year new students enter with unique backgrounds, which are waiting to be tapped into. Having a diverse student population is a resource that money cannot buy; instead of inviting guest speakers in, the students can share personal histories and cultures, improving their learning and understanding of the global society they will be entering. Ensuring an equitable learning experience is the challenge, as each child should be able to achieve their full potential.

I think it is essential for the classroom to be a safe environment, where students can experiment with different styles of learning and not be constrained by the curriculum planned, or the style of teaching. Having regular class meetings to discuss not only issues that arise, but also celebrate success, will encourage my students to be partners in the learning process, rather than listen to me lecture facts that they have to learn by rote. Having high expectations for all students is key. Developing their growth mindset, as Carol Dweck (2008) suggests, enables all students to reach their full potential, as they no longer feel there are limits to their learning. Using collaborative approaches, reduces anxiety, but also promotes communication amongst students, and by regularly changing groupings I hope to create a strong class culture. Creating an open classroom, and encouraging caregivers to participate, fosters not only a class

culture, but one that spreads in to the community, cultivating pride in the school. I feel strongly that students should have the ability to make choices in their learning, and in doing so, each individual's learning style can be tapped into. Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences are still being added to, demonstrating the need to reach all learners within my classroom, by using a variety of teaching strategies, from the visual to the kinesthetic. I believe that it is important for the students themselves to understand their own learning styles, which they can then use within collaborative group work, and also have access to resources that supports their individual needs.

Project based learning is something I have used before within my classroom, and the use of authentic assignments with real audiences, enables students to make connections, not only between lessons in school, but also to the wider world. By making these connections, the students fully understand the purpose of education, wanting to complete assignments set as they are not being filed away, but used to solve problems or to persuade an organization to change their mind, for example.

By using a variety of teaching styles, resources, and assessments, I hope to develop students' critical thinking skills, and motivate the students to recognize multi-viewpoints, when researching topics in class, using scaffolding when necessary, and differentiating tasks in order for all students to succeed. Ultimately the classroom is a shared space, with shared ideas that enable the students to develop their unique perspective on the world they live in. I am there to support that growth and give each student the opportunity to reach their full potential.

References

Dweck, Carol S.. (2008) *Mindset :the new psychology of success* New York : Ballantine Books,

Gardner, H. (2006). *Multiple intelligences: New horizons* (Completely rev. and updated.). New York: BasicBooks.