

Throughout my time in dealing with classes of educational psychology, learning theory, and best practice in addition to the time I spent in the classroom with students I have come to understand, deeply, my educational philosophy.

I had recently finished my student teaching in Hillsborough High School, where I had the privilege to teach five wonderful classes, with sophomores, juniors, and seniors represented. It was a great experience and I was saddened when I had to leave.

A few weeks ago I went back to the school to get a few items that I had left their and I happened to see many of the students I had just taught. Many of them were very happy to see me and urged me to come back and teach. As many of them had said “we had fun and learned at time.” This speaks to the spirit with which I will teach all of my classes.

Education is perhaps one of the most important ventures in life that anyone can undertake. It gives everyone the tools necessary to become successful in life. This definition of successful may be subjective, and varies between people, but it is the job of the teacher to make those successes obtainable and realistic for all students. In order to do this I as a teacher will endeavor to understand my students and be able to connect with them; understand how they “tick” in order to spark the wonderment and excitement in those students as if they were little kids looking upon the clouds or a waterfall for the first time. It is this excitement and wonderment that a teacher can foster within his or her students that will truly lead them to persevere and succeed in any endeavor.

In many of my graduate level classes, the comparisons between those students that are passively learning to those that are actively learning were often highlighted. Professors often spoke of ways to get students to remember content and become engaged in what is being taught in the classroom. A teacher’s ability to establish what makes his or her students “tick” is so vitally important. In public speaking, one of the things that are learned is how to identify and connect with your audience; the same holds true in the teaching profession.

So often I see a sterile environment in which the teacher presents information, the student sits and listens, and when the bell rings, everyone disappears. Learning in this fashion takes away the wonder that the teacher has for the subject, as well as the ability for the student to come to understand that wonderment within that subject. Granted not every student will not find the subject interesting, but if the teacher does not show that enthusiasm and passion, chances are, neither will the student that may have been interested.

In addition, teachers are supposed to be role models for his or her students. In such a sterile environment, it is impossible for the students to feel comfortable with the teacher. Teachers are supposed to be warm, respectful, open individuals that student’s can feel comfortable approaching for help or advice. For a student to feel comfortable approaching is a great feat, the student will benefit in more ways than just raw content could ever foster.

Teachers are far from working with figures or products. They are working toward creating successful individuals in all sense of the word. Students are moral, feeling filled, sensitive, thoughtful human beings. I believe that as a teacher, it is my responsibility to stretch beyond content to include the needs and interests of the whole child and foster that natural wonderment that is present in my love for science. As John Dewey had said "Education is a process of living and not a preparation for future living". I believe that students should be living through their education and my teaching will reflect this idea.

I also believe that fair education is an essential part of my teaching philosophy. Fair education is when each student is given the tools that he or she needs to be successful at any academic endeavor. As a teacher and advocate for student, I feel that it is my job; to do what I feel is necessary to level the playing field for all students that are motivated to succeed.

I also believe that as teachers, it is our responsibility to be life long learners. Teachers who become lifelong learners are those that are receptive to outside suggestions, and continue to endeavor towards the best possible practice that is obtainable. I have two souls, the soul of a scientist, and the soul of an educator. Because of this, I never want to stop learning new things through what I may be taught by a professor or administrator, or what I may learn through being in the classroom with my students.