My Teaching Philosophy

At this point in my teaching career, I have completed my certification requirements for teaching secondary English. Within the last year, I have completed my student teaching in a suburban middle school and had filled a two-month permanent substitute position in the same classroom. Through these experiences, my teaching philosophy centered on individuality was reinforced. I was able to find success with my students by looking into their interests, talking with their other teachers, and finding relatable material on an individual to create a profitable learning field.

I want to be able to look at students and know why they are different from the student sitting behind them. Ideally, I would like to understand each of my students completely; however, I believe if I strive to know all of my students, I will understand more outlets of learning that are available for each student, and it is less likely for one to fail. From my student teaching, I have seen students that come from a variety of backgrounds with polar opposite interests. I made a point to relate to each student on some level, which, in turn helped me decide what kinds of assignments to create and how to improve lessons for the future. Making the attempt to see each student for what he/she are interested in and capable of facilitates solid lesson plans that accommodate varying levels. In the few months that I have been a teacher, I have found myself changing lesson plans by the hour in order to accommodate different students. It is this constant challenge of meeting my students on the level they need and expect that gives me great satisfaction within the teaching profession.

In classroom curriculum, I will also make it individually based. For my instruction strategies, I believe in varying techniques in order to reach more students on a level they feel comfortable with. Whether it is taking creative writing outside, comparing Black Tuesday to Halo 2 sales, or watching The Simpsons to display dramatic irony, I will tap into as many resources I can so that each student will be able to make a connection to myself and my lessons. In addition, my assessments will also be individually based. It can be as simple as creating an essay exam with different types of questions to choose from or as complicated as students creating an original project one-on-one along side me, but I want each student to feel they have a place in my classroom. They are able to express themselves, free from anxiety, because I give them outlets and resources to do so.

Individuality will influence every aspect of the classroom. While it is important to have equality and fairness, I also believe some students are not given an equal chance to succeed because they are lumped together with other students in the classroom; that is what I hope to avoid doing by making room for individual differences. For some students, disciplinary actions such as a referral are necessary; however, many students are simply typecast within school, and those are the students that I feel can benefit most through individual understanding. I have found that once students understand that I am there for them, classroom management becomes a group effort with a collaborative effort of individuals, rather than myself against them.

In reality, of course, I will not have the time nor resources to understand each student as much as I would like; however, I feel the more I do strive for this goal, the better I will be at teaching and the better my students will be at learning.

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