

Educational Philosophy

Teachers have many hats. Not only do we deliver instruction, but we are also role models, caretakers, and confidants. Before we can teach children, we first need to foster relationships. Forming positive, healthy relationships in my classroom is of utmost importance, and we spend our school year building a community of trust, understanding, and empathy.

My Role as a Teacher

In my classroom, it is important to make everyone feel welcome and safe. One of the ways we accomplish this is through a daily [Morning Meeting](#), where each person in the room is greeted, listened to, and participates in a team-building activity. Each of these, in addition to collaborative activities, helps to foster a sense of community in our room.

Creating a positive culture. The climate that I create in my classroom is an open, positive learning environment. I want my students to come into my classroom feeling safe and welcomed. I embrace differences and promote various types of learning. I treat my students as people, not just as children, giving them responsibility in our classroom. I believe students should feel the classroom is theirs as much as it is mine. We work together as a team to make our classroom an inviting place for all.

My Instructional Philosophy

Content can be taught in a variety of ways, and it takes a creative, innovative teacher to accomplish that. I believe it is important not only to teach students the content they need to know, but to foster a love for learning that will stay with them throughout their lives.

The instructional role for a teacher has migrated from a “sage on the stage” to a “guide on the side”. I do not see myself as a deliverer of content, but rather an assistant and guide in discovering necessary information. My goal for my students is for them to enter the world as problem solvers, critical thinkers and innovators. Rather than rote memorization or explicit teaching of facts, I teach my students through experience, inquiry, real-world problems and hands-on approaches. For example, using Augmented Reality (AR) in order to learn about the elements creates an engaging, interactive approach to learning an important concept.

Experiential learning. “I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.” A pillar to defining experiential teaching, this well-known proverb sums up the way students learn in my classroom. Classrooms are melting pots of individuals, with each student bringing her/his own experiences. As a teacher, I incorporate these experiences into my teaching while bringing new experiences to my students to further their learning. By inviting in guest speakers, Skyping with scientists, and taking field trips, students can experience learning outside the confines of a classroom. Within the classroom, I integrate my travel experiences into my lessons to expose students to topics they may otherwise not be exposed to. For example, as a [NOAA Teacher at Sea](#), I have incorporated research alongside scientists on the ships to help students better understand the issues our ocean is facing. When students are provided with varied experiences, they can expand on their own learning and knowledge.

Project-based learning. As our world and educational system continue to evolve, so do the methods by which we teach. Project and problem based learning are integral

to my teaching style, and drive the instruction I provide my students. By opening up a unit of study with a powerful, inquiry-based driven question, I take my students on a journey, weaving content with 21st century skills that will prepare them for future endeavors. Not only are students receiving in-depth learning of our topics of study, but they are also learning interpersonal skills necessary to collaborate with others. Through the project-based learning process, they are given the freedom to explore topics within a unit that interests them, providing opportunities for students to self-regulate their learning.

The Role of Technology

With education evolving, so has the role technology has played in the classroom. From showing videos to video creation, we are now able to integrate technology as an active rather than a passive tool. Students in my class use technology not only to learn, but also to create. Students learn about being positive digital citizens through the active use of technology, such as crafting a well-written Tweet or blog post. By using technology to support student learning, I am preparing my students for future endeavors.