

Teaching Philosophy

An effective teacher has a strong understanding of teacher identity and a commitment to professional development that achieves the three aims of the Quebec Education Program. My purpose as an educator is to help students construct a world-view, create an identity, and become empowered (QEP). In the following sections, I will outline how I will achieve those goals through classroom management, assessment methods, and my relationship with my students. A classroom that functions as a learning community helps students discover, through a support system, their unique talents and skills.

Construction of Identity

As a social sciences teacher, my objectives are to be a leader of social change and cohesion, to create a safe space for my students to grow and develop their learning strategies. I believe that all students can learn, as Kottler et al. (2007) draw from Howard Gardner's (2004) concept of multiple intelligences. Gardner's concept clarifies that no one student is the same, and students require various assessment forms that suit the type of learner they are. Assessing students through assignments that validate their intelligence and promote creativity will help students discover their potential, skills, and talents. Drawing inspiration from Parkay et al. (2009), students understand what creates meaning for them by adopting an existentialist viewpoint for assessment. Purpose provides students' with a desire to learn as students feel passionate about what they are learning and feel comfortable constructing an identity for themselves.

Redefining Learning Through the Teachers Role

I believe that as a teacher, I should be included in the learning process. Parkay et al. (2009) argue that a progressive approach to teaching is when teachers serve as guides. It is clear to my students that I am included in the learning process, but I play a slightly different role as a guide. My role as a guide is to help students feel confident and comfortable participating actively and asking questions. By incorporating myself in the learning process, I will actively assess my student's reactions and adjust my teaching style and methods to adapt to the diverse learners within my class so that all my students feel welcome and included.

One way to create a learning community within my classroom is through a method proposed by Windschitl et al. (2012), referred to as inquiry-based learning. My classes will begin with questions that prompt students' communication and participation skills, allowing students to form and express opinions on the subject matter. Students will refine critical judgment skills through debate and learning to work together in small groups.

Empowerment and Construction of World-View

The QEP encourages teachers to provide time for students to assess their learning and judge the effectiveness of their learning strategies (QEP). When students evaluate their knowledge, they can determine the type of learner they are and methods that help them excel at remaining lifelong learners. At the end of each week, I will allocate time for a classroom activity for students to reflect on their learnings. Students will write down one win, one loss, and one learning. In doing this, I hope to redefine what failure means to my students by encouraging my students that failure is inseparable from learning. I believe students should not feel discouraged when they hit a road bump but rather develop the habit of self-reflection and problem-solving skills to overcome obstacles. This activity will empower my students to feel a sense of agency and motivation over their learning.

To further empower my students, the type of instructional method that I will employ is outlined in the Quebec Education Program and is referred to as differentiated instruction. When planning classroom activities, I will plan individual and group work that allows students to make meaningful connections to their lives by accounting for students' prior knowledge, individualized cognitive styles, and interests (QEP). Students will engage in presentations and assignments that elicit teamwork and draw upon previous knowledge to understand the subject material deeper. By working collaboratively with others, students will learn and appreciate their classmate's unique and individual cultures and talents, reinforcing awareness of others and the world.

Commitment to Professional Development

I believe strongly in professional development, as students are only as strong as their teacher. Drawing from Fullan (1993), to be an effective teacher, a teacher must remain a career-long learner of more sophisticated pedagogies and technologies to work collaboratively with students and stakeholders. To be an effective teacher, I need to improve and evolve my teacher methodologies throughout my career. I will remain committed to professional development by attending workshops, personal learning to remain dedicated to lifelong learning, and networking with the community to build and encourage meaningful learning opportunities for my students.

Conclusion

My goal as an educator is to spark a lifelong passion for learning in my students that is representative of their unique identity. Teachers should be charismatic and compassionate to inspire a love for learning and create supportive relationships between the students and teacher while fostering a classroom environment where students feel important and valued.

References

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