

Teaching Philosophy

My philosophy of teaching is based on Piaget's constructivist learning theory, Vygotsky's sociocultural development theory, and Dweck's concept of growth mindset. My belief is that learning should empower students to take control of and be responsible for their education. As a teacher, it is my responsibility to provide a safe environment that encourages active participation and collaboration among peers, instills problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and supports students in becoming life-long learners.

I will create a student-centered classroom that promotes active learning, in which students will do more than watch, listen, and take notes. To elicit student engagement, I will utilize responsive teaching techniques that focus on student thinking, also helping me in addressing their individual needs. Students will be expected to work together in structured, cooperative groups in which there are understood expectations and clearly defined goals. Students will work through problem-based and inquiry-based learning activities or projects that require them to apply what they have learned in order to make more profound connections to the material. This student-directed approach puts the student in the driver seat of their learning, forcing them to take ownership of their education.

The most effective way for students to build their knowledge and understanding is through their social and cultural experiences. Social interaction is critical for cognitive development. By interacting with their peers, mentors, and teachers, they are able to attain a deeper understanding than they would if learning independently. A learner's area of capability, or zone of proximal development (ZPD), is influenced by support from the teacher. With the assistance of others more knowledgeable, the student can be pushed to expand their level of understanding. As a teacher, I will implement scaffolding techniques in order to challenge students, enhance learning, and support their mastery of skills.

Knowledge building and knowledge building environments will be utilized to promote collaboration among students, who are often of different cultures or backgrounds. Because students learn from their environment, these interactions will support them in building their existing knowledge, constantly working to revise their ideas and construct new knowledge. My overarching goal as a teacher is to build a community of learners that extends beyond the classroom and continues to develop throughout their lives.

Intelligence is not fixed, but constantly growing. As a teacher, it is essential to foster a growth mindset in my students. They are not just learning core curriculum to progress to the next grade; they are developing the skills necessary to succeed throughout their lives. A growth mindset embraces challenges and sees failure, not as an indication of a lack of ability, but as an opportunity for growth. In my classroom, they will learn that failure (when productive) is only short-term and will lead to long-term success. This idea is not only about praising effort, but about teaching students how to learn and develop the strategies they need to overcome challenges.

I firmly believe that assessment solely through testing is not the best way to measure student learning. A combination of formative and summative assessments and evaluating student work in groups, projects, and research is the best way to understand what a student has learned. Students should demonstrate an ability to apply key concepts, rather than recite memorized formulas and equations. In addition to the traditional quizzes and exams, I intend to use collaborative research projects, presentations of learning, portfolios, interactive activities, and class discussions to assess student understanding.

All students deserve quality instruction and a stimulating learning environment. My goal is to inspire all of my students to become the next scientists, engineers, doctors, or even teachers – as mine have inspired me.