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# Philosophy of Education

Introduction to Education

MLED 2033

Dr. McJunkin

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With both of my parents being teachers, I grew up in schools. I saw them connect and make a difference in students' lives. This made me want to help prepare all students for their futures in the same way. I also work at the tutoring center at ASU and really enjoy working with all different types of students. This helps me realize that each student learns differently and I must use different strategies to help each student learn. I feel like mid-level grades are a critical time for students, both academically and developmentally. Divisions in achievement levels begin to widen, so it is important to have teachers that are focusing on helping *all* students succeed. All of these life experiences have motivated me to become a teacher.

In our democratic society it is important that I will treat all students equally regardless of gender, class, race, etc. so that all students may have the opportunity to succeed. Schools exist to educate all students, with no bias, with a base knowledge to prepare them to succeed in their futures (jobs, college, etc.); that is the goal of education: student success. Democracy is about freedom for all people, so as a teacher that will motivate me to make sure all students have equal chances to learn and succeed. As a teacher, I will make sure all students have the ability to speak openly in my classroom. America has so many different cultures represented it is important that I make sure all of the students of those cultures have a chance at a valuable education.

In my classroom all students will be treated fairly. Respectful discussion will allow students to learn more about each other in an educational but open environment. When students learn about other cultures first hand from other students, it can erase stereotypes and help them value others' perspectives. In my classroom I will motivate students to break cultural barriers and view each other's differences as strengths to learn from. As a mid-level English/social sciences teacher, my class may encounter various sensitive subjects, it is important that my students feel comfortable with each other to take part in educational discussions and speak

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openly. Students need to feel safe and valued in the class to learn the most from it. Everyone's opinion will be respected and accepted in my classroom. Along with discussion I plan to implement diverse group work, which will allow students from different cultures a chance to work together. I will finally make sure that while teaching, I present every subject in an equalizing manner, with all fairness shown to each culture, race, gender, etc.

I believe that the development and personal growth of a healthy child depends on a well-rounded atmosphere at school, at home, and in the community that provides mental, social, and physical education to help the child go on to succeed in high school. Middle school is a difficult age for young adolescents. It is important that I make this time positive for each student, treat them with respect, help them become involved in their learning, and make connections from the material to their world (Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education, Supporting Young Adolescents). I can identify both the Humanism and Progressivism philosophies because I see each child as an individual with unique needs and desires (Ebert E. and Culyer R. pg 321). I will also work with each child to help them make personal connections to what they are learning, in hopes that they may retain it more effectively. I must make sure each child knows the foundation skills from the primary grades, so that I can build on those skills to help students move up to high school. Some teaching strategies that I could utilize are working with students individually to master concepts, seeing their point of view, and using discussion to help each child bring forth their unique perspectives. While growing up in middle school students will gain responsibility, I will help them use planners to manage classes and teach organization. I will also encourage my students in middle school to pursue personal interests in the form of extra-curricular activities. This is important for the developing adolescent because it helps them form an identity, helps them be social, and may even help physical health.

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I am a blend the theories of Progressivism and Humanism especially in classroom management. While academics will be important, I also want each student to find purpose in what they are learning. I will create assignments that interest the children and teach a lesson. Discussion between students, when kept educational, can benefit students' learning processes greatly. It can help them to become more interested in their subject, causing more retention, as Progressivism suggests. In my classroom I will set the desks up to allow for discussion (possibly in a large circle). Rules need to be simple: be respectful, organized, responsible, and giving effort. My classroom will always have a general procedure, to ensure an expectable routine for students. I identify with the Managing Learner-Centered Classrooms perspective of classroom management. I want to begin with clear rules and procedure expectations so students never have to question what is allowed. That way they know I am using the same standard for all students, emphasizing fairness. However, I will keep it Humanistic by evaluating each student's case because no two students are the same. I will be student focused on learning in a fun, connectable way, while being respectful of each other's educational needs to stay under control.

It is important to use various teaching models when teaching middle school adolescents. I must be passionate about what I am teaching to ensure students become interested. I will use instructional techniques like using discussion to help students become interested in giving their own opinions. This idea is guided by Progressivism, allowing students to connect their interests to the material. This will also keep them alert in class. Possibly when studying literature my students could break up into groups and discuss their own impressions and opinions of the book (why they think what they think about it). This cooperative learning would help them move on to higher levels of thinking such as analysis and synthesis. To help students accomplish objectives I must set goals, tell students about goals (what I am going to teach them), teach them, guide their

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practice, let them work individually, and then assess them. I will also give them opportunities for hands-on activities that will help them look at information in a new way. I plan to implement layered curriculum, in which students have the ability to choose options that are most relevant to them individually. This will allow for differentiating within the classroom for students of all levels. There are varying degrees of ability in all classes; one model I would like to utilize is to work with small groups within a large class. This would allow me to individualize instruction to better meet the needs struggling students. This is another way that learning can be interesting and fun.

I will assess my students by setting certain objectives they must reach while also measuring progress with pre and post-tests. This is a true measure of student learning. While yes there are certain standards they must reach, it is also important to realize each student starts at different place and learns at a different rate. I will measure progress by the pre- and post-tests. This strategy will also help see how much effort a student put into learning, effort does say a lot. But on the other hand they must reach a certain level to continue their educations, this is why there will also be standards set that students must master. I'm willing to work with students individually as long as it takes to help them succeed.

Some of my views on education, when guided by the theories of Progressivism and Humanism, include making sure all children can learn (without barriers of race, gender, etc.), seeing each child as a unique individual, and using classroom management and teaching strategies that focus on the student and what is best for them. These philosophies fit with me because I view the students as individuals and want them to be interested in what they study. Teaching is guiding all students, no matter diversity, to learn so that they may succeed in their futures.

### **References**

Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education, Supporting Young Adolescents. May 14, 2009. *NYSED.gov*. Retrieved on 11/11/12 from <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/mle/mlepolicy.html>

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