

Educational Philosophy

I believe in a collaborative classroom culture. As opposed to the notion of teacher lecturing to student, I believe in the teacher helping the child discover their own new knowledge in a way that supports their natural excitement for learning. A student who feels they can relate to their learning experience is much more ready to absorb new ideas. For instance, at the beginning of the school year, I help my classes decide their own rules which remain posted in our room all year. Also, when I allow students to vote on a piece for a concert program, they are always enthusiastic to play any music that they choose. Students are the most genuine and receptive when they feel like they're heard.

My philosophy encompasses a nonsectarian view of education. We commonly think about knowledge belonging to exclusive domains, with such disparate titles as biology, psychology, language, history, music, and seemingly countless others. However any domain of thought is interwoven with other disciplines, and ultimately all forms of knowledge share common ground. This more inclusive way of viewing knowledge empowers students to view the classroom as a true space of discovery.

Thus the fine arts relate to the other realities of our life, and can allow us to deepen our perspective. Creative music is perhaps the most widespread of the fine arts. Classical music is one of civilization's great achievements, and the coming generation always holds a responsibility to interact with this tradition. Jazz is possibly America's greatest contribution to creative music at large, and continues to serve as a rich source of culture and expression. Providing all students with access to music education does make an impact in our world.

I am still forming my viewpoints about intelligence. The idea of general intelligence which relates to different forms of intellect dominates the scientific literature. Because of this idea, we see kids undergo IQ tests in order to determine their brainpower, and placed in different schooling tracks according to general intelligence. However some of my experiences with students make me critical of this stance. Ultimately I can side with Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, which fractions intelligence into roughly nine categories. Under this idea, musical-rhythmic intelligence is presented as a distinct form of intelligence. While studies show that music education increases of other areas of a child's intellect, I do ultimately see musicality as its own intrinsically valuable form of knowing. Every child deserves access to music education for it is an experience that is uniquely valuable and truly irreplaceable.

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