

My teaching philosophy is based around my passion for science and learning. Many people have come to me with concerns that they are not 'science people' but that is always overcome when they see how much fun science can really be. I was both a biologist at the Children's Aquarium at Fair Park and the Dallas Zoo for several years before returning to school full time. I did public feed shows, school tours and answer sessions with the public. It is those experiences that shape my outlook on education. It has always been a pleasure to see someone make a connection between concepts or be thrilled when they see science in action. My goal as an educator is to ensure that the instruction adds value and is not just test driven.

Being an educator also means having a relationship with my students to not only challenge them but to be flexible enough to adapt to their demands. I believe that all students can learn. In my lessons I will use all learning styles and incorporate technology to meet the wide diversity of needs of my students. I will base curricula on students' natural desire to explore and to use fewer situations where students are passive learners. For example, I will use modeling eliciting activities and field opportunities to actively engage students in the learning process. Children learn in variety of ways- all of which should be included in lesson plans. The plans should be a variety of reflection, social participation, meaningful activities (not busy work), practice and application. Misconceptions will be identified, with the help of formative and summative assessments, and addressed. Lesson plans will be based on the scaffolding of concepts and questions that foster problem solving strategies. Parents and colleagues should also be included on some level in the lesson plans. In the workplace, a teacher's relationship with colleagues should be collaborative and

consensus building. Also, parents should be viewed as a resource not an adversary. Parents should be able to actively have input on how to better serve their child. They should be kept up to date by weekly calendars, handouts, visits, and classroom newsletters. These relationships with the community and other teachers ensure that the classroom instruction will be student centered and not teacher centered. With students as the focus the needs of the individual can be balanced with the needs of the entire class.

Additionally, I believe that classroom management is especially important to provide a safe environment. I will outline age-appropriate rules and expectations as well as implement a rewards student chart. In grading assignments, I will include a grading rubric so each student knows what strive for. Clear expectations help focus the students on what we will achieve during the school and what they can expect from me. In this way I will foster a positive environment and a positive vision for the student's future.

The role of a student is to acquire knowledge and understanding of the presented lesson plan and to apply them to real world problems. As teachers we should provide clear and realistic goals as well as engage the students in different learning styles. We have to use our knowledge and understanding to uplift our students. Only then can we help students be life long learners.