

My Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy contains elements from Constructivism, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia philosophies supported by a Love and Logic classroom management philosophy. My goal as a teacher is to create an environment where students are able to explore, grow, and become who they were created to be. In the following, I detail my expectations for my students and myself based on this teaching philosophy.

I believe that students construct their own knowledge, so I will present learning opportunities and tools to explore those learning opportunities and all students to construct knowledge from those opportunities. I will include hands-on projects and problem-based learning in every subject, every day. I believe that students construct their knowledge through the manipulation of materials, visuals, and real-life connections through simulations and problem-based learning. These elements will be consistently present in my classroom.

I believe that students need time to independently manipulate materials and engage in learning content. This individual work time present in Montessori classrooms allows students to train the focus and prolonged engagement with content and learning that will enable them to become life-long learners. I believe that students need opportunities to train this focus and deep engagement with content through these work times. Additionally, I believe that exploration with self-correcting materials and activities, a Montessori element, helps students train their critical thinking and self-reflection skills which enables them to become reflective learners. Lastly, I believe that incorporating structure in routine and expectations gives students the sense of safety to freely explore, learn, and grow.

I believe that students benefit from deep, lengthy explorations of driving questions through a variety of art mediums and supports provided by the teacher. I believe that through these deep explorations students gain a more complete view of content they engage with due to the extended period of time dedicated to it and the variety of ways that they interact with the content. I believe that these projects and units flame students' natural curiosity, teach them how to utilize resources to learn concepts, give them knowledge about themselves and how they learn best, and empower students to take ownership of their learning.

As a teacher, I strive to create an environment of curiosity and unconditional acceptance of each student. By creating this environment, I seek to flame the spark inside each young child that burns for truth and beauty and purpose. I will create this environment by utilizing *Love & Logic* techniques like promoting responsibility, problem-solving, clear and high expectations, and real-world consequences. All of these techniques will have their foundation in an unconditional love and acceptance for each student. I will utilize choice in every lesson and subject. I will expect students to take initiative and responsibility for their learning through those choices and their hard work. I believe that my role as a teacher is to support each student in a personalized way in their pursuit for truth and learning. I am not there to give information, but to open the doors to the information. Students will be highly involved in the classroom and their learning.

I believe that each child is unique, and that, as such, they require different support and different tools to learn. Through my experience with students with special needs, students who are English Language Learners, and students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds, this truth has been impressed upon me. Each child deserves a unique

relationship with their teacher and unique supports for their social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and educational success. I will strive to differentiate my teaching for and form a unique relationship with each student.

Growing up, and to this day, I have a long list of people who unconditionally love me. The knowledge of this unconditional love has given me confidence and courage to pursue what I desire and use the talents that have been given to me. Too many children in this day and age have few, if any, names on their list. If I can but add one name to that list, mine, then I will have taught well. I will have given my students the foundation to start their learning journey. I will have given them the confidence and courage to pursue that journey and the support to be successful in it.