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Philosophy Statement

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Philosophy Statement

William Butler Yates said, “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” I tend to think it’s a balance of the two things—filling a pail **and** lighting a fire. Inherent in every human is the potential to play a role in this world that is created exclusively for them. That belief serves as the basis of my philosophy of education which is divided among the four categories of Essentialism, Cognitivism, Reconstructionism, and Humanism. I believe that maintaining a balance in these four philosophies is important in the process of educating students.

At the very heart of my philosophy of education is the Humanism Theory that “considers learning from the perspective of the human potential for growth, becoming the best one can be” (Cohen, 1999). Students can be taught that they’re free to choose; but every choice has a consequence—negative or positive. I believe every student possesses a style in which they learn and unlocking it is the key to beimg an effective educator. That is where the Cognitivism Theory enters into my philosophy. Each “learner actively constructs his or her own understandings of reality through acting upon and reflecting on experiences in the world” (Cohen, 1999). This must factor into the education process for each student to learn in a manner that is truly beneficial to them.

In addition to the Humanism and Cognitivism Theories is the Essentialism Theory that every student needs to be taught the basics of reading, writing, arithmetic, and moral behavior to move forward into life; whatever path they might choose. These are all elements necessary to function successfully in life. “Students should be taught discipline, hard work, and respect for authority” (Cohen, 1999). Along with these essentials, I believe in the Reconstructionist Theory that they should be taught that they have a responsibility to contribute to, and be an active member of their community and country. It’s important to teach them to “use critical thinking skills, inquiry, question-asking, and the taking of action”, and that they can affect change in their world (Cohen, 1999).

All of these philosophies working together to “fill the pitcher and light a fire” in each student will be my goal as an educator. I hope that the students I teach will leave my class with the desire to achieve their full potential, and take responsibility to make a positive difference in the world around them.

References

Cohen, L. M. (1999). Educational Philosophies Self-Assessment Scoring Guide. *Module One:*

*History and Philosophy of Education*. Retrieved June 19, 2015 from

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