
The Importance of Educators' Philosophy of Education in Preparing Their Students for Their Lives After School

Every educator has a philosophy of education. Throughout this prospective educator's experience there has been many conclusions drawn. The most important conclusion is that educators should be aiming to prepare their students for their lives after their educational experience. This can be done by offering them easy to understand conclusions from courses. Students are more likely to remember themes than specific events so that should have a greater emphasis that simply memorization. Material should be taught in a way that students can comprehend or relate to it in their own life. If students do not see a purpose in learning material other than to receive a grade in a course then they are most likely to not retain the material in the long run. It is assumed that it is every educator's goal for their students to learn the material of their course and retain their information for their life. While some courses such as advanced mathematics and science courses may be hard to relate to students' lives, courses such as social science courses can be easily related to students' lives. This can be done by showing how their lives or other people's lives may have been affected if historical events had occurred a different way or even how lives were changed by events that did happen. Classic lecture style can achieve this "relate" style of teaching. Often lecturing can fail students but that is because it has a tendency to be a teacher regurgitating information. If the teacher can spark an interest in the students by giving an example of how something taught in the course has affected their lives the students will be more likely to remember that event than if the teacher reads information off of a presentation made from information in the course textbook. Once that ground work had been laid, then the teacher should offer a list of possible events to be researched and allow the students to make a project where they show how the event has had an effect on their life. This could be a project that is done at the beginning of a course that way it can elevate the interest in the material from the start. It also allows the students a way to get creative in because they are able to choose the topic and how to present the information, the more choice students receive in the matter the more engaged in the topic they will be.

Too many educators do not view the long term ramifications of their job. They look at their job as how they make a living and the way that they will continue to make their living. This ideology needs to stop. The most successful teachers in today's society and those who make connections with their students, this has become easier with social media. The reason why this is important is because if teachers have a connection with their students the students will be more likely to develop an interest in their subject matter. This is the same as when students do not like their teacher, the disdain for a teacher can destroy any interest or future interests in a subject because of the negative experience. Teachers need to realize the impact these positive

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or negative experiences can have on students. My dream is not to have a class full of future educators or historians in my future classes because I know that that is unrealistic no matter how much I would enjoy it. My goal is that at least one student in every class develops a long term interest in history or education. This can be as simple as daily reading of current events or as thought out as going to college for some type of subject that I taught. It would be heartbreaking to hear one of my students tell me that the way I taught or my class was the reason why they did not have an interest in the subject. If that happened it would make me rethink the entire way I taught the course. This idea is the same as the idea that Rafe Esquith uses in his book, *Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire*. The way that Esquith uses it is in how to develop a love for reading in his elementary school students so that way they become readers for life. I do not expect to manufacture historians but I hope to inspire an interest of social science in my students.

Common themes should be taught in schools. Students will retain information better if they can understand the situation or event in the context of the overall theme. Once themes are established then the students can group items together and draw parallels, furthering the educational experience. Even at the high school level there is often things taught that students have never been exposed to. A subject that jumps out is economics and how the economy works. Speaking from firsthand experience, I had no idea how the economy worked, any ideas I had were from the media which is not always reliable. It was not until I was a sophomore in high school that I was taught that it is not always right to place all of the blame on presidents when the economy fails. The way that the teacher taught this was that he showed a chart that showed roughly every twenty or so years there was some type of economic uptick or downtick. From this theme, I was able to better understand material in a college economics course when we covered economic shocks and government intervention. Drilling material into students is not the ideal way to go about educating. Students will study the material that they need to know for the upcoming test or evaluation that way they can receive a grade they want. After that test, the information begins to fade into memory before being forgotten all together. If basic themes are taught then students will be able to recognize the themes in other classes or in life. Students won't remember the fact that the battle of Saratoga took place in New York or that it started on September 19 and ended on October 7 (Morgan 82-83). However, students will remember that Saratoga was the turning point of the American Revolutionary War because the victory secured an American alliance with France. While there is not a specific theme to that event that may relate to other events, there is an overall conclusion drawn that should be retained by students. Some AP classes tend to do this type of drilling of information such as memorizing the dates and specific location of events when they should be more focused on the overall conclusion.

Lecturing and classroom discussion can be used to identify themes. Lecturing can be done to explain the event and what the teacher is looking for the students to do when identifying the themes. Once the event has been properly discussed then the students can break into small

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groups where they can discuss their ideas. This is a simple and short exercise that will allow the students to present their ideas to others without facing the ridicule of the entire class. Constructive talking amongst students is one of the better ways to get students to better understand a topic. The free flow of ideas that can occur in small groups is positive because it exposes students to other perspectives that have been developed by their peers. For a long term individual project this can be done by the teacher providing resources such as a list of possible topics and providing work days to accomplish the task. An individual project would be better as it will allow for the students to develop their own idea and not having to conform to their other group members' ideas.

Educators should evaluate their long term impact on their students. This is to better understand how they can develop hatred or love for their subject. Themes should be taught to students that way they will not develop an animosity that can develop from memorizing information and the low retention rate that comes with it. In order to teach themes, teachers should allow for their students to discuss their ideas in small groups to allow for exposure to other ideas. For an individual project this themes approach can also be used. It is important to allow for the students to be able to develop their own idea without facing criticism from other.

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