
TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Living and teaching internationally for the whole of my career has helped me learn a lot as a teacher. I have learned how many different cultures teach their students, and draw on the strengths all approaches have on the learner to better teach my students in the international classroom setting. I believe that all students can and should learn in the way that is best for them. I believe that trying new methods of teaching in my classroom helps my students because they all have different ways of learning and communicating. The approach that helps me learn best is not the same for my students, so I must always be ready to adapt and teach in new ways.

If another teacher would walk into my class, they would probably have a hard time finding me. Not because I wouldn't be there, but because my students are always moving around working with groups of students, doing gallery walks around the room, working on large posters on the table or floor making concept of definition maps or timelines, or playing games that help them review. At most, I only lecture for a few minutes to introduce the new concept. I believe in experiential learning where my students are in the driver's seat of their learning process. I provide a space for my students to ask questions, make mistakes, learn and grow as students, and achieve the goals they create for themselves.

21st century skills are seamlessly integrated into my lessons because I believe in the importance of teaching my students how to be contributing citizens of today's world. I see the computer and smartphone as more than just a social tool; students need to know how to effectively use technology to learn, be organized, and to communicate. I also fundamentally believe that it is my responsibility to teach my students how to safely and appropriately use technology on a daily basis by modeling this type of behavior and explicitly teaching the importance of this.

I am extremely passionate about the life sciences, and I hope students leave my class with a greater understanding of the world around them, how the systems are connected, and what their impact on the world is and could be. I also hope my students leave my class with other important, and in some ways more meaningful, lessons, such as how to solve problems, how to make informed decisions, how to critically think, how to communicate professionally and effectively, and what it means to show empathy and compassion to all people. I model these skills and reinforce the practice of these skills through problem-based instruction where my students need to use the content they're learning to fix a hypothetical or real problem happening in today's world in a group setting.

By giving my students the safe space to grow as people, learn how to communicate with others, and maturely receive feedback on their choices and words, they are able to use these skills in all other aspects of their education and their lives. By giving my students a variety of assessment types, they're able to demonstrate their learning effectively so I can give them the best feedback so they can continue to grow. Learning doesn't stop once the students finish their educational years; we will always be learning new things. By instilling an inquisitive passion in my students, I can help them realize their paths in life. By encouraging them that they are capable of anything they put their minds to with hard work, I can pass on the same passion to them that my teachers passed on to me.

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