

Teaching Philosophy

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My ultimate goal as an art educator is to create a space in which students learn to think critically, deeply, and with ambition. I believe that the students are the artists, and the art room is their studio. I want my students to feel the power of their own voice, and feel ownership over their own learning. As such, my duty is to instill in my students a respect for art, the people who make art, and the materials we make art with. I will make every effort to understand my student's motivations, interests, and curiosities about the art world, and facilitate their investigations of it.

The art studio is the perfect place where students can feel free to explore, experiment, be curious, and feel comfortable enough to try new things without fear of failure. Students today face significant pressure to perform academically. I believe that in the art room, students stand the most to gain when the fear of failure is eliminated. In my art room, "mistakes" become "learning opportunities". I value growth over perfections, and want to show my students that moments of uncertainty and experimentation build the foundation for artistic innovation. As a practicing artist I am no stranger to the feeling of an idea turning out differently than I had imagined. These necessary moments in the artistic process provide an opportunity to think critically and reflectively, and may pave the path to success. I never want my students to feel afraid of mistakes when I introduce a new medium, a new concept, or a new challenge. I will make my own artistic practice a part of my instruction so that students can see the beauty of the process behind the product. I will provide time for experimentation, and scaffold my instruction so that when students face a new challenge, or attempt to execute an ambitious idea, they may do so with confidence.

I believe that an artistic environment must be one of inclusivity, cultural enrichment, and one that encourages curious minds. Not only do I commit to making art accessible to every student in the room, I provide opportunities for students to think of art in terms of accessibility: to consider art as a human pursuit, and a human right. I want my students to see art as inclusive, and to see that by bringing their own experiences, perspectives, and identity to the classroom, everyone's art can benefit. In my art room, I celebrate diversity and encourage individuality. Furthermore, I want my students to make connections between themselves and the art world, relating what they learn to the contexts of their own experience. When students make connections to art concepts, techniques, history, and contemporary work, they are able to find deeper meaning, and develop their critical thinking skills. I craft my lessons to be relevant to my students, so that they can engage with it deeply. They can synthesize prior learning, with new ideas, all within the framework of their own curiosity and interests. By always connecting art to context, students are able to combine their imagination with endless possibilities in the real world.

Positive art practices such as these: respect, curiosity, investigation, experimentation, inclusivity, and reflection, are key to making meaningful connections and engaging deeply with artwork. Students who practice these skills make strides towards being great thinkers, great artists, and great citizens. I make providing such a space for growth my duty as an art educator.