

# **Amy E. Hissom-Daugherty**

## **Teaching Philosophy**

For me, teaching provides an opportunity for continual learning and growth. One of my hopes as an educator is to instill a love of learning in my students, as I share my own passion for learning with them. I want my students to understand that learning should take place not only in the confines of the classroom, but throughout their everyday lives. I will strive to help them become life-long learners and to seize their own opportunities to gain knowledge.

I believe that each student is a unique individual and it is my desire as an educator to help students meet their fullest potential emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially. I feel that this can be accomplished by establishing an environment where the teacher acts as a guide, allows student's natural curiosity to direct his/her learning, and promotes respect for all things and all people.

When the teacher's role is to guide, providing access to information rather than acting as the primary source of information, the students' search for knowledge is met as they learn to find answers to their questions. I want my students to possess the means necessary to search for knowledge, construct personal meaning from that knowledge, and then to use that new found knowledge to take advantage of opportunities of self-discovery.

Students need the opportunity to discover for themselves and practice skills in authentic situations in order to construct knowledge. Providing students with access to hands-on activities and allowing adequate time and space to use materials that reinforce the lesson being studied creates an opportunity for individual discovery and construction of knowledge to occur.

Equally important to self-discovery is having the opportunity to study things that are meaningful and relevant to one's life and interests. Developing a curriculum around student interests fosters intrinsic motivation and stimulates the passion to learn. One way to take learning in a direction relevant to student interest is to invite student dialogue about the lessons and units of study. Given the opportunity for input, students generate ideas and set goals that make for much richer activities than I could have created or imagined myself. When students have ownership in the curriculum, they are motivated to work hard and master the skills necessary to reach their goals.

Understanding that each student is unique and that they learn in different ways, I believe it is essential for educators to differentiate lessons to better meet the needs of their students. I will be flexible and willing to adapt programs and resources that ensure each student has the best support needed to suit them individually. I will use a variety of teaching instructions, strategies and tools to create interest and prevent boredom, while meeting the needs of all learning styles. I also support that building positive rapport with students is essential for trust to be gained and thus, learning to thrive.

I will continue to improve my own teaching by engaging in careful reflection. This will allow me to think critically about what works and what doesn't and enable me to adapt my own teaching to better meet the needs of my students. Entering this ever evolving field of education where new technologies are being implemented and innovative strategies are being discovered, I will continue to keep myself educated and constantly reading and learning about new ways that may meet the needs of my students even more effectively.