

Education: Inspiring Change and Lifelong Learning

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” -- Nelson Mandela.

Mandela's words are an inspiration to me as a student of education. I believe that teachers have the power to change the future by being positive role models for their students, and by giving them the tools they need for the future. Valuable skills such as critical thinking and problem solving will allow students to think for themselves, and to take initiative and responsibility in their lives. Education can also foster respect and caring in students, and an appreciation of the diversity in our society. In this way, societal issues such as discrimination and racism can one day be eliminated.

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” -- William Butler Yeats.

This quote reflects my attitude towards how students learn best, and what the role of the teacher is in education. Although I believe that direct teaching methods can be effective in some situations, student-centered approaches should be used as often as possible. My hope is that as a teacher, I will be able to guide students to construct their own meanings and make their own discoveries. Exploring prior knowledge is essential when introducing a new concept, to ensure that students are not bored by material they already know or confused by concepts they have never encountered. By allowing students to freely explore topics, they are given a sense of ownership of their education. I believe that by stimulating interest in what is to be taught, and by creating relevance to student's lives, teachers can motivate students to succeed without relying on rewards or punishments. By creating a positive attitude towards lifelong learning, teachers can instill in their students an intrinsic motivation and desire to grow as human beings through education.

“Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.” -- John Cotton Dana

Since learning is a lifelong process, teachers must also continue to grow and develop professionally. As I continue my education and gain more experience, undoubtedly my philosophy on

teaching will grow and develop as well. In addition, society is changing, and the education system must reflect these changes. The educational system is slowly changing as new research develops about learning, teaching, and a plethora of other related fields. I believe that it is a teacher's responsibility to stay up-to-date with these advances, and it is my hope that I can be a part of this evolution of education. Perhaps by harnessing the power of education, by lighting the fires of lifelong learning, and by continuing my own professional development, I can make a difference both in the lives of my students and in society as a whole.