

ELA and Social Studies Philosophy of Teaching

The great Socrates said that “education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.” How do educators kindle the flame of learning while simultaneously teaching students ELA and social studies material that they will hang on to for the rest of their life? The answer to this question lies within how and why the student is taught. With these two elements in a mind, a teacher can create an environment that fans the flames of learning.

There are varying answers as to why an elementary student should be taught ELA and social studies in school. The most universal answer however, is simply that students need this foundational knowledge to succeed in life. Although this is an understood conclusion among educators, it is just as necessary if not more necessary, for students to realize why ELA and social studies is taught in school. When a third grader understands that reading well not only gives them good marks, but can also take them on adventures to places they’ve never been, they will want to strengthen their reading comprehension skills. When a fifth grader realizes that the election process isn’t just for their parents to use, but is also important to learn for the election being held in the classroom next week, they will desire to learn about the process. Leading a student to grasp why ELA and social studies is important in life is key to developing a student’s yearning for learning.

Students learn in all sorts of ways. This is why it is important to vary how your students are taught. Some students may be kinetic learners and some may be visual learners. Other students may have learning disabilities while others exceed the average learning curve. Since it is very likely that some or all of these students are learning in the same classroom at the same time, it is crucial to incorporate differentiated instruction to meet the needs of each student. Differentiation can be as simple as repeating a question to keep a student focused, or as complex

as creating an entirely different assessment for an ELL student. Regardless of the severity, each student deserves the opportunity to succeed just as much as the next. Varying the environment in which a student learns is also a beneficial way to meet the needs of students with different levels of readiness. Group work allows students to learn from each other and frees up the teacher to let her work with groups that need more attention. Group work teaches students work with one another to develop collaborative and conflict resolution skills, while individual work helps a student assess what their strengths and weaknesses are in a subject. Incorporating all of these methods of teaching will enable students to learn in the way that is most beneficial to themselves.

- I know there's no conclusion but I wanted to make sure this is what you were looking for before I went and finished it up.