

My philosophy on education is based on behaviorism; the idea that a child's behavior is based on how they were raised, who they were raised by, and the environment they were raised in. It focuses on observable behaviors where I reward for good behaviors and punish for bad behaviors. For example, sending a child to detention for bad behavior (punishment) and taking a school trip for not having any detentions (rewarding). In this paper, I will focus on pre-AP biology for tenth graders who are fifteen to sixteen years old.

I view the role of school in society as a tool to teach new members how to function and how to be productive members of society. Schools can teach tenth graders more than knowledge by also providing life skills: cooking, welding, finance, agriculture, sewing, and many other necessary skills. To be considered a productive member of society, a child must be able to function on their own without their parents' help once they reach a certain age. If we did not have school to teach those necessary skills, a student may not become independent and have those life skills that is needed. In this age group, students are learning how to separate from their parents and find independence, but without the guidance on of teachers in those age groups, then they will learn independence the hard way.

How can we as society assure that schools are serving students well? I do not believe there will ever be a perfect way to measure the levels at which a school is successfully reaching a student, however there are standards that a school should strive for in order to try for perfection. Standardized tests, for example, are not a perfect way to measure a school's success in reaching its students because not every student is good at taking these types of tests. For Pre-AP students, they are being prepared for the advanced placement test at the end of AP biology. One way to measure a school's ability to serve its students is to ensure that there is a place for every student. For example, special needs kids have classrooms adapted to their learning ability as well as their

personal disability. The students who love science can join my pre-ap biology class. Another way to assure a school is successful in serving its students' is to enforce stricter policies when hiring on new teachers. I personally believe in this measure because whenever I was in eighth grade our class time was used to watch MythBusters, so I was personally unprepared whenever I moved to ninth grade pre-AP science.

I believe that a student's role in their education is to be proactive learners. This means they come to class prepared by doing the work they are assigned, and if they feel they are falling behind then they speak up. In biology, or any science class, you must be prepared for labs. That means reading the chapter or material needed for that lab to continue. If we are dissecting animals for a few weeks, then I need my students to be prepared so I do not have to lecture and waste time. This gives them more time with the specimens. They can come to us as teachers and make it known that they need some extra help. One way to make sure that students are more proactive in their education is to involve the parents by making sure the parents come to parent/teacher conferences. Another way to make sure parents are more involved in their student's education is by sending home weekly grade reports that require a parent's signature. This serves two purposes: the first is ensuring the student goes to the parent and shows them their grades for the week, and the second is giving parents and students a way to communicate. Students are more likely to succeed in their education if they feel they can openly communicate with their parents whenever they make good or bad grades.

I view the role of a teacher as being both a facilitator and an authoritative figure. Tenth grade pre-AP biology is a subject that has a lot of specimen dissections, which are hands on projects. In this setting, the teacher serves as a facilitator by making sure the students know how to perform the procedure whenever they need assistance, but they do not teach the student how to

perform the procedure step by step. I do view educators as being masters of knowledge so they could offer some pre-procedure background knowledge that allows the students to build off the basics. This gives students a chance to broaden their mind and expand their problem solving/critical thinking abilities. When planning experiments in biology, they need to think critically about their hypothesis and their research questions. This will help them take the authority to think more critically about the experiment. While doing this, I still view teachers as an authoritative figure because in order to be a good teacher they need to be a combination of warm and welcoming so that students feel comfortable with them, but they also need to be strict when enforcing necessary rules. My views of a teacher are consistent with how I feel a student should take responsibility of their education; for a student to successfully be proactive a teacher must also be approachable, adaptable, and understanding. Teachers who are unapproachable make it more difficult for students who are falling behind to want to be open about their struggle. Educators must also be adaptable to create a curriculum that encompasses all students, including those who are hitting obstacles.

I believe the primary values for a teacher in a diverse society need to make sure that all students are treated equally by making sure there is no exclusion in the classroom. Teachers also need to be alert of students who come from lower socioeconomic home environments so they can spend equally as much time with these kids and their education as they spend on students who are in middle to higher socioeconomic classes. Students in lower socioeconomic classes are often put on the back burner because society tends to focus on the students in successful socioeconomic classes as they feel that these will be the more successful members of society.

In order to create my curriculum around diversity, I would first allow for more open discussions to incorporate for different cultures, different opinions, and allow children who do

not normally speak up to speak up and make their voice heard. Each student will have an adequate amount of time needed to speak to prevent one or two students carrying the conversation and others not getting to speak at all. I would also bring in speakers of different cultural backgrounds to come in and present based on the subject we are covering in biology. It will allow for different points of view on the same subject so students can see various aspects of topics being discussed. I would also like to bring in more diverse learning materials so that the children are not simply reading from a textbook. For example, I could have them read *The Immortal Life of Henriette Lacks*. It is a book about a black woman who had cancer and died, but her cancer cells were still “alive”. Reading material like this would allow diversity within my classroom.

As a teacher in a culturally and racially diverse population I would learn the different cultures of students in my care. This would allow me to make sure I am educating these children to the best of my ability by catering to the ways in which they learn the best. I would also identify children of lower socioeconomic status so I can apply for grants that allow me to help with purchases such as school supplies that some of these families could not afford. I would communicate with the families of every student, identifying areas of need as well as ways in which I could help. If the parent or guardian was not available to attend parent/teacher conferences, then I would pursue other alternatives, such as a personal phone call, facetime, etc. A student’s environment can shape the approach they take in school. My philosophy of education on behaviorism focuses on every child deserving a positive, equal opportunity, and successful education.