

## Exploring the World of Reading: A Philosophy of Literature in my Classroom

As a young student I was not passionate about reading because no one of my around me expressed their love for books; including teachers. Growing older, I've realized how valuable books can be for children and how they can inspire people. Utilizing quality literature is an incredible method to emphasize my lessons and to create a literature-rich classroom. I will instill a love of learning and reading into my students with the help of children's literature.

From day one my students will be called "explorers". We will explore the world and the literature that different regions has presented us together. My explorers will have their reading itinerary to show their reading plan. They will choose an informative book that can be used for research on a country with their animal, a certain place, thing, or cultural values. Once they have completed research they must choose a book from any genre that best represents their findings. After they have read these prints they will share their knowledge with their fellow explorers and perform a skit, song, dance, poem, or any art expression to help enhance their learning experience. By performing an act, creating a presentation, or visual aid, they will have successfully learned to properly research as well as speak in front of an audience. After they have "traveled", or read about this country, they will receive a stamp in their classroom passport and we will put a tack on that specific country on our world map which will be displayed on our wall of "Extraordinary Cultures".

Recognition of diversity will be present in my classroom and in my teaching. To influence character building in my students and to help them better grasp the idea of being unbiased, I will embrace developmental, gender, language, socioeconomic status, and other aspects of diversity that will help my students. Certain aspects such as age and gender will be greatly emphasized in my class to help improve my students' sense of self and build up their self

esteem. To help students understand their families and each other more, I will incorporate multicultural stories into my lesson plans. They will be able to explore different aspects of diversity through resources I supply them with. My students will research these aspects and create an artifact to post on our wall of “Extraordinary Cultures”. I believe multicultural stories can enhance the curriculum by exploring different aspects of people. Recognizing different cultures expands the learners’ knowledge and appreciation of cultures. Researching these diverse cultures will bring awareness and insight to my students. This will hopefully establish an eagerness in my learners to continue learning about different regions and cultures of the world. A way of showing respect for other cultures is a willingness to learn about their lifestyle, customs, and their beliefs.

Not only should all genres of quality literature be present in the classroom but they should also be used to create calming and collaborative learning sessions in class. Read-alouds will be used daily in my classroom which is strategic as an instructor because this promotes critical thinking and reflection, classroom discussions and/or debates, as well as a creative outlet for students. These read-aloud sessions can be scheduled daily or can take place during specific lessons. For instance, if I were teaching my class a history lesson and we read our textbook, I would then proceed with a read-aloud related to the history lesson to enhance the learning experience.

Literature is essential for students because it helps build their critical thinking skills. Also, a lot of students find themselves relating to characters or situations displayed in a book which can help their sense of self and development. Establishing a love of learning and reading is the art of being a teacher because only then will students explore all forms of literature because of a new found appreciation for beautiful words and illustrations.

