

Me as a Teacher ~ My Philosophy of Teaching

All students learn best by doing. As the famous quotation says “Tell **me** and I forget, teach **me** and I may **remember**, involve **me** and I learn.” Students need to be active participants in their learning, which is why I use the workshop model. I model a lesson to my students, and then I give them the opportunity for guided practice, and then I end the lesson with a chance to share and discuss what we did. I also give my students a lot of opportunities to “turn and talk” because students learn by doing and discussing – not having someone just talk to them, but having the opportunity to talk about the content themselves. This is also a wonderful classroom management tool as it limits the chance for answers being shouted out as all students have the chance to share. I am careful about how I group students because I also like to allow students the opportunity to learn from each other as well as to teach each other, so I find reciprocal teaching as a method of differentiated instruction is very successful as well. Students are always given the chance to practice the concepts in groups, in pairs and then on their own. Once I feel they have mastered the concepts, then I usually give an open book quiz which has a very similar structure to the unit test. I do this because I am not trying to trick my students, and as ELL learners, they appreciate being familiar with the structure, and layout of the test.

My room is covered with important terms, as well as the rubrics that we use so that students can become more self-reflective. My daily bell work incorporates the 8 Traits of Discussion as well as the 4 Traits of Presentation, so I feel that my students have a lot of opportunity for speaking and listening. Once a week we do mini-speeches and each student is asked what they did well on and what they could work on next time – their presentation skills have improved dramatically. Students also have The 6 Trait Writing Checklist that they use as part of the writing process. I feel that these techniques encourage them to become independent learners and evaluators of their own work.

My class starts with me greeting my students at the door. They come in and start with the bellwork. The teaching point is displayed each lesson, as well the classroom rules and the homework board, so students are aware of the expectations. In fact, as a class, we came up with the rules together, so there is a great deal of buy-in. I also model my use of a reading and writing journal so my students see me reading and writing.