

# Teacher in america

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



Final Paper My Call To Action More than ever, I believe that my place is in the classroom. I have now completed two and a half years of teaching and have had a lot of emotions and questions running through me. Sometimes they made me question whether I should be in the classroom or not. I mean, how can I be a teacher and have all these negative thoughts and feelings about how our school system works. I thought I was alone in feeling this way.

However, from the readings, reflections and discussions during the course of this class, I have now realized I am not alone in feeling this way.

In fact, most teachers have the same apprehensions that I share. One major thing I have noticed since becoming a teacher is how my views on education have changed. Before I became a teacher I assumed things about teaching that are not at all correct. I thought that when I became a teacher, it would be really easy. After all, my teachers (and mother) made it seem fairly easy. I was completely wrong. I thought I would be able to stand up there, teach and every single student would understand what I would be teaching. I thought all the students would do their work, behave and listen to me.

Boy was I mistaken. There are so many different learning styles that I have to accommodate for, different activities I have to come up with in order to spark the students' interests, and behaviors I never dreamed I would have to deal with. I am only into my third year of teaching I have been teaching for only three years, and each year I have had to make changes to accommodate the types of students I have. Some teachers assume the students will be the same every year and do not make changes at all. The learning process for each individual student is different.

For some, it comes easier, for others it can be might be a little more difficult. ' Teachers who develop classroom plans based solely on beliefs and expectations born of their own life experiences are likely to be ineffective (Hinchey Pg. 23). ' Most of us became teachers because somewhere in our past we had a really good experience with school and our teachers. Just because what we experienced was good does not necessarily mean that the same exact thing would work with our students today. I know that I catch myself looking back to when I was the same age as my students.

I am often trying to do things with my students that my teachers did with me. Not surprisingly, a lot of them are not working as I thought they would. Before my first day of teaching, I had certain expectations for my students. Starting off with the same expectations that my teachers had for me is not feasible where I teach. ' Most public school teachers come from significantly different cultures than their students (Hinchey pg. 27). ' I know I have had to completely adjust my way of thinking in the classroom because my educational experience is the complete opposite of what I teach.

When I was a student, my friends and I had complete support from adults in our lives. Today, my students hardly have any adults around them outside of school guiding them in the right direction. When I was in high school, there was no question about receiving your high school diploma and going to college. In my community, a high school diploma alone was not good enough, you needed to get that college degree. In the district I work in, the atmosphere is different. In Waukegan, people act like earning the high school diploma is golden.

One big assumption of mine that has changed in my short three years of teaching is thinking all students are the same outside of school. When I was growing up, it seemed that my life and my friends' lives were all the same. Consequently, I grew up assuming that everyone lives where a mirrored image of mine. Teaching opened my eyes up to see how wrong I was. I have some students who come from a loving home with two working parents, and then I also have some students who are homeless because both parents are in prison.

As teachers, we are told to treat every student the same, but that is completely impossible. Every student has his or her own story and each of those stories needs to be treated differently. I have also questioned my own judgment on what it means to be well educated. Being well education should not only relate to what is learned inside of a school building, but also what is learned outside of the school walls. I have a lot of students who are educated about topics that are not covered by a school curriculum, so should I consider that knowledge to be worthless because they did not learn it in a classroom?

Is your education measured on what you are taught or what you remember? If it is based on what you remember, then most of American can fall into the category of being uneducated. The brain forgets what it does not use. In fact, it is impossible to remember everything you have been taught. There is not enough space in the brain to retain all those facts. Lastly, ' Students from poor communities often have their own very strong evidence that schooling is not likely to make a significant difference in their own lives (Hinchey pg. 24). ' I hear students talk like this everyday in my classroom.

I constantly hear ' how is this going to apply to my life, it's not like I am going to college anyway. ' These students think there is no hope for them. As a teacher, how am I supposed to change the minds of 15 and 16 years olds when this is what they have been told their whole lives? This is a battle that those of us who teach in urban schools fight everyday. Yes, I believe it is important to educate our students on academics, but I believe it is more important teach our students how to set realistic goals for themselves. Goals they are truly able to obtain.

One major drawback of school is the way it is structured. School has a " one size fit all" curriculum, which doesn't work. There are so many different learning styles with students. Schools need to come up with a unique way to be able to aid each student in his or her own learning style. Schools also function like factories, which isn't a surprise because they were founded when the country moved more towards an industrialized economy. Students, just like factory workers, have learned the process of lining up, walking in straight lines and staying quiet for long periods of time.

Is this how schools should be? Schools have been functioning this way for decades. If we made changes, would it benefit or harm schools? 'If all it takes to succeed is hard work, then poor people must be lazy. ' Everyday I tell my students that if they want to be successful in life they need to work hard. However, this does not mean that people are poor just because they never worked hard. In fact, poor people work harder than most rich people. Most poor people work several part time jobs averaging 50-60 hours a week at a minimum wage rate.

They work more hours than a middle class person, but still make a lot less money. Next time you go out to eat, pay attention to who is working hard, for minimum wage, in the kitchen. 'Rather than believing economic success comes from hard work, and failure from laziness, students must ask what besides laziness might explain why so many families are living in poverty and why the widening chasm between our wealthiest and poorest citizens.' It is my job to get my students to believe that they can meet their goals, if they are willing to put the effort into it.

However, because of the struggles seen at home, many of them cannot see their future in a positive way. My students live in a poor community and that know a lot of people who have earned their high school diploma but cannot find a decent job close by to where they live. If they want a decent job they have to travel far. Sadly, many of them do not have a car and their only means of transportation is the city bus. As a result, it may take over an hour for them to get to work; so many of them do not take the job. As someone who has had a car since I turned 16, I do not know what it is like to struggle without a car.

Twenty miles does not seem far to me, but to someone who doesn't have his or her own means of transportation, it could be too much of a hassle than what the job is worth. I know understand why people do not take job offers that are a certain distance from their home. This trickles down to the teenagers. Its no wonder they think it doesn't matter if they work hard, they wont find a decent job anyway. I never considered myself 'privileged' just because I was white. However, since reading Hinchey, I now realize how much easier my life is just because of my skin color.

Before I started teaching I was mostly around Caucasian people; people who are just like me. I was able to go shopping without being harassed. I was able to take any job I wanted without having people think I got the job only because of my skin color. Basically, I never had to worry about anything. Now that I work (and live) in a city where a majority of the population is either Hispanic or African American, my eyes have been opened to how people of color are mistreated. My students see and experience this in their everyday lives. I am struggling on how to teach my students how to overcome this.

As of now, I have not figured out a way. One thing that my students have pointed out to me, as well as Hinchey, is that white people hold most of the power in our country. A majority of CEOs, politicians and even every president, until President Obama, has been white. No wonder my students think they will always come second to the 'white man,' they have only known white people to be in charge. This class has been very beneficial in my teaching practices. As a new teacher I feel I am still naive about certain things that relate to school. I have always tried to teach my students to the best of their abilities. Sometimes I would be frustrated because they went grasping certain basic concepts. I now view learning, teaching, school and society in a completely different way than I did before starting this class. I am now less frustrated with my students since learning more about their history and thoughts towards education. My whole thought on how schools are operated has also changed. The current ways that schools function is not conducive to help the students in urban schools in any way. It is actually

harming them. As teachers, we need to take a stand and fight for what is best for our students.

As an educator, I am teaching for each and every one of my students. I am educating them not only on academics, but life issues. They are #1 and everyone or everything else comes second to that. As teachers, we have every and any obstacle to overcome that one could imagine. We actually do not have the world behind us pushing us forward; we have it in front of us pushing us backwards. Right now, I would like to challenge myself that, no matter what hurdles I may come across in my practice, that I always fight for my students to put them first and always have what's best for them in mind.