

Liberal arts education

Education



I am a recent graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history. I am deeply committed to the importance of a liberal arts education, and am fortunate to have been taught by a handful of truly qualified teachers and professors. I understand that teaching has varied responsibilities that go well beyond offering facts to a classroom of pupils. I understand that students have varied needs, and that it is my job as a teacher, should I be granted the honorable opportunity to assume such as position, to be as flexible as my students are diverse.

My goal is to become a high school social studies teacher. It is important for me to be as precise as possible in regard to the subject matter in which I am looking to teach. At the high school age, students are in an interesting stage of their educational development. Their knowledge and understanding is becoming more subjective. It is at this age, roughly from thirteen to eighteen years old, that students will begin imagining their lives beyond their youth. They will begin considering their future endeavors and responsibilities.

They will also begin developing their long-term passions. I do not expect that each student I teach will go forward, studying history or political science at the undergraduate level. However, I do anticipate that the majority of my students will at the very least leave my classroom with a clear understanding of the world outside their immediate surroundings. I anticipate that my students will be informed citizens, and that they will have respect for the global community.

I recognize the responsibility of teachers to take on more than just the most basic education of their students, the absolute minimum for which they are responsible. It is a teacher's responsibility, their absolute duty if they wish to

leave any lasting impression on their students, to work as hard as possible, to reach out to students and to make them passionate about the subject matter. Granted, teachers are overworked and spread far too thin, but it is important for an educator to put forth the utmost effort in order to positively influence students.

After all, more important than teaching a fixed curriculum is developing within the student a true love of learning. A philosophy, if you will. I am specifically interested in teaching history, as this is my passion and was my area of concentrated study as an undergraduate. History is particularly interesting because it encompasses many aspects of the learned world. It encompasses geography, politics, ethics, science, literature and even business.

In studying a half-century a student of history can learn about the rise of the and fall of the stock market, evolution, laissez faire government, the decadent and modernist periods of literature, women's suffrage, industrialization, an economic depression and two great world wars. This, of course, is only in the United States and Western Europe. I am passionate about history, and I am a firm believer that it takes passion in an area of study in order to instill a sense of passion for that subject in the student.

There is nothing less effective than a teacher who obviously cares very little for the subject matter in which he or she teaches. These are my convictions, but they fall short of telling the committee who I am and how I would be a good teacher. As previously mentioned I am passionate and am willing to take the time to teach the students. I not only have the ability to empathize

with the students, but I have the willingness to develop relationships and to share my own experience with the students, within proper reason of course.

I recognize that should I become a teacher, I have a responsibility to teach and to do so in the most effective way possible. To be an effective teacher I recognize that an instructor must be creative and that he or she must approach the subject matter at a variety of different angles, in order to ensure that no student goes without understanding the lesson. Perhaps the largest indicator of my commitment to this occupation is my dedication to remaining a lifetime student.

I am not planning on doing this in the formal sense, after all college tuition today is equivalent to nearly a year's salary. I will continue formal studies as needed, but more importantly I will be an avid reader and I will stay up-to-date on the subject matter that I am teaching my students. I will be involved in the student community and I will be available to my pupils in order to advise student groups and organizations. I recognize that there are many formalities to becoming a licensed teacher, and I respect the need for such bureaucracy.

However, I understand to an equal degree the necessity in going a step beyond what is required. I am fairly confident that I will become a teacher, but my goal supersedes obtaining such a title. My objectives will not be met by achieving my license, but from having the opportunity to teach, and to watch my students as they learn. The wonderful thing about teaching the age group that I am interested in working with is that an instructor has the opportunity to watch a student close the door on a very important chapter of his or her life.

I will be able to watch as my students make plans for the years after their graduation. Perhaps I will even be awarded the pleasure of having a few dedicated students, deeply interested in history and the social sciences. Perhaps I will write the student's letters of recommendations and be present when they receive their acceptance letters. My goals are not glorious and overcomplicated. They are simple. I want to teach, and I am confident that I have the knowledge, the ability and the passion to be an excellent teacher.