

“The love of learning, the sequestered nooks,  
and all the sweet serenity of books.” –Henry W. Longfellow:  
A philosophy of Literature in my Classroom

Reflection Caption:

In this essay I will be explaining what quality literature is, what makes a quality literature classroom, why is literature important and the benefits, and what depositions make a wonderful literature teacher? Quality literature is not only about picking a good book to read, but having a friendly literature-rich classroom, knowing the importance of literature and developing many depositions to becoming a quality literature teacher.

**“The love of learning, the sequestered nooks,  
and all the sweet serenity of books.” –Henry W. Longfellow:**

A philosophy of Literature in my Classroom

“The best thing to hold onto in life is each other.” –Audrey Hepburn. Perhaps Audrey Hepburn was wrong; I believe the best thing in life to hold on to is a book. Growing up I hated reading, but I did have a favorite book, Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes. The other day while my mom and I were cleaning out our garage we came across Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse and said “I remember when you were younger you made me buy you this book with the matching purse. You had me read this book to you every night before bed, and every morning before school.” I then took the book up to my room and read it to my younger sister. As I was reading it I could remember how happy this book made me as a child. I could remember my second grade teacher reading it to me twice a week during lunch recess. If there is one thing I have learned, it is that “There’s no friend as loyal as a book.” –Ernest Hemingway. Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes always made my day as a child and even as an adult. I hope that my future students find a book that they can hold onto through their life.

As an educator knowing and finding quality literature for my students is extremely important for their development. Reading should be enjoyable for the children from the very start. By showing the students how much fun reading is and telling them all the benefits about reading, it will make reading enjoyable for the children throughout their life. While finding enjoyable books for the students, first I must distinguish what makes quality literature. Reading should be enjoyable and the books should be simple. If the book is simple then the children will follow along better and it will not be challenging for the students to understand. An enjoyable book also has wonderful illustrations that go along with the text. Illustrations to follow the text will also help the students follow along to the plot better. Second, I will pick books with creative, engaging, and original illustrations. When the illustrations are fun the students will pay more attention to the story. I will make sure that the book uses appropriate vocabulary for their grade level. Appropriate vocabulary encourages the readers mind to grow. Appropriate vocabulary is when the words are not too hard for the students to read or understand, it is vivid, interesting, and expressive. Not only are the words easy for them to read but there should be new words in the text that broadens their vocabulary. Finally, quality literature includes all literary elements: plot, theme, characters, conflict, resolution, and climax.

A literature-rich classroom is important for the students because it is stimulating to the brain. It is also important because it helps the students’ mind grow. As a future kindergarten educator, a literature-rich classroom should have labeled items, inspiring posters, word walls, and a classroom library or reading center. It is important that the items are labeled so the students can recognize the words for different things; also having a picture along with the

word for the younger grades is a helpful way to put the item along with the word. Having inspiring posters around the classroom and word walls for the children to read will encourage reading, writing and will also encourage the reader to want to read more. In the classroom library I plan on having a couch or sitting area with pillows, reading buddies – stuffed animals, and a wide variety of books. Not to mention, a classroom library or a reading center is always fun to have in a classroom setting. The students will enjoy going to a relaxing area where they can read a book or just look at the pictures. These centers are also great for putting an upset or distracted child in an area where they can settle down and calm their self by reading a book or come up with a story by looking at the pictures.

Literature is important inside and outside of school because not only does it describe reality, it adds to it. Literature is a portrayal of thinking patterns and social norms prevalent in society. For example, Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is a fine example of portrayal of thinking patterns and social norms in today's society. Although we do not live in those times, and the language is a little different, the story is still relatable to society today. Classical literature serves as a food for thought and a tonic for imagination and creativity. Exposing a child to good literature is like providing them with the finest educational opportunities. On the other hand, the lack of exposure to classic literature is equal to depriving the students from an opportunity to grow as an individual. Quality literature should encourage the mind to grow. It will help the students to an open mind, and provides the students a better vocabulary. Quality literature fosters creative and imaginative skills of the reader. It also helps the readers empathize and understand others better. That is why quality literature is so important inside and outside of the classroom. With authors such as Jon Scieszka, J.K. Rowling, Dr. Seuss, Steven Kellogg, and many others, it is nearly impossible not to include rich literature in my classroom and at the students' homes.

Along with knowing the importance of literature, having a literature-rich classroom for the students, and knowing quality literature, there are many dispositions I can develop to be a great literature educator. A wonderful literature teacher will encourage the students to read. I will have a positive attitude about reading and I will be motivating. A few ways I will encourage reading at school and home I will allow my students to take my books home, do pop-corn read alouds, use fun colored transparencies when we read, making sure the books have fun illustrations

and modeling reading. I will also establish a reading area and time for reading, take trips to the library, and introduce the students to new genres so the students are able to enjoy reading more. When the teacher has a positive attitude and motivates the students to read, then the students will be excited about reading. I will learn and know the Reading Standards/Common Core Standards for the specific grade level I am teaching. A great literature teacher can meet the students' needs and has an inspiring love for reading. If I can meet the students' needs and know the specific standards, then the students will do great on state assessments. One day I shall be a wonderful literature teacher who can provide and share my new found love for reading and writing with my students.

As a future educator I plan to do all of what I elaborated on plus more I want to be the best me I can be and encourage my students to be the best readers they can be. Quality literature is not only about picking a good book or story to read, but having a friendly literature-rich classroom, knowing the importance of literature and developing many depositions to become a quality literature teacher.