

Developing Your Philosophy of Education

A Self-Inventory

Following are 20 statements about teaching, students, school/college and the curriculum. Using a five-point scale (5 = strongly agree; 4= Agree; 3= neutral; 2= disagree; and 1= strongly disagree), indicate your beliefs and feelings about each of the following statements.

- ___ 1. Essentially, students learn by doing and by discovering things on their own.
- ___ 2. The goal of the schooling should be rigorously to prepare students to be productive and engaged members of the society.
- ___ 3. The teacher's role is to respond to the learner's information needs, not to be a mere information dispenser.
- ___ 4. Teachers should be expert in content knowledge, ready vigorously to engage students in the culture's accumulated wisdom.
- ___ 5. Older students should be primarily taught to be trained to uncover key ideas and truths through Socratic questionings.
- ___ 6. The teacher's role is to stimulate students' interest and then to be an effective facilitator of those interests.
- ___ 7. The true purpose of the education is to make as strong enough to overcome the evils of society.
- ___ 8. Students are in college primarily to acquire the knowledge that has lighted the way for human kind from our earliest years.
- ___ 9. Because we live in a democracy, schools and colleges should be built around democratic principles, with a major focus on learning how to exist together in democratic harmony.
- ___ 10. Students are in college to learn and listen the knowledge and skills that they will need to function and prosper in a modern economy.
- ___ 11. Education is serious business, so teachers should avoid methodological frills and focus on tried and truth teaching strategies.
- ___ 12. Colleges should aid students in becoming socially adept and politically literate so they can take up their responsibilities as democratic citizens.
- ___ 13. Instructionally, as a teacher must focus on creating an interesting and productive learning environment and, whenever possible, on individualizing instruction.
- ___ 14. Elementary schools should concentrate on basic skills whereas secondary schools and colleges should focus students' learning on disciplined knowledge and scholastic achievement.
- ___ 15. Students are naturally good, and their self-esteem must be protected and fostered.
- ___ 16. During the elementary school years, teachers should ensure that students should master the basics, which will enable older students master the basics, which will enable older students to study materials reflecting universal themes containing humanity's enduring knowledge.
- ___ 17. Teachers need to be skilled in group processing strategies and be able to get students to work together on projects.
- ___ 18. The teacher's primary concern should be teaching a common body of useful knowledge rather than focusing on cultivating the intellect, self-esteem, or democratic living.
- ___ 19. The curriculum should be fluid, based on the interest of the learner, but students should not be forced to study.
- ___ 20. The college should be devoted to changeless vision of what is essential for human beings to know.

Interpreting Your Self-Inventory

Each of the twenty questions to which you have responded represents one of four philosophies of education (Note: there are more than four philosophies of education but for purposes here the four major ones are used). The four philosophies and the five statements primarily associated with them are listed here. Fill the score you gave each statement and then add up the topic score for each philosophy. The maximum score for any philosophy is 25 and the minimum is 5. These numbers will give you an indication of your philosophy of education preferences as you begin a closer analysis of this topic. You may wish to re-take this inventory as you gain more teaching experience as a means of seeing how your philosophy of education develops and changes over time.

PERENNIALISM	ESSENTIALISM	ROMANTICISM	PROGRESSIVISM
4 _____	2 _____	3 _____	1 _____
5 _____	10 _____	7 _____	6 _____
8 _____	11 _____	13 _____	9 _____
16 _____	14 _____	15 _____	12 _____
20 _____	18 _____	19 _____	17 _____
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Total _____	Total _____	Total _____	Total _____

Reference

Schools of Educational Philosophy, Chapter 9: What are the philosophical foundations of American Education.