

# **Personal Philosophy of Theatre Education**

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Theatre is a crucial element in the development of young minds. It allows students to experiment and challenge themselves in an environment that is not readily available in their core classes. Many students, who do not feel that they “fit in” at school, find theatre an outlet to meet people, make friends and find success. I try to create a non-threatening, inviting atmosphere in my classroom to reduce student inhibitions and peer tensions. The variety of opportunities the theatre offers allows for students with special needs to achieve equally with their peers.

Interactions between peers, which occur naturally in theatre, are vital to students’ development of human skills. Students’ learn to work with many different personalities in the theatre. They are forced to make compromises, work as a team and realize the importance of following through with their individual responsibilities. The students must solve problems to work toward the ultimate goal, whether a production, small group project or individual presentation.

Theatre itself is a classroom for real life situations. From the audition, which resembles an interview; to the closing night that parallels a sense of loss or death, students learn much more than their lines or how to paint a set. Real life experiences—speaking, organizing thoughts, assessing one-self is performing!

My goal in teaching theatre is to work toward fostering an appreciation of theatre as a means to build self-confidence and success in public speaking situations. The majority of students won’t become professional actors, public speakers, or anchorpersons. However, I can lead them to recognize theatre as a viable art form and an extremely influential societal contributor. Life is our constant stage.