

Kristina Friedgen  
7-12 Educational Philosophy

As an educator, I am most passionate about shaping theatre artists. From designers to actors, playwrights to directors, I love to see students fostering their creativity and discovering the many ways they can express themselves through theatre. I believe strongly that developing theatrical skills builds compassion, innovation, and collaboration among students—essential qualities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century learner. I strive to provide an academic and artistic environment for my students that will not only encourage their interest in theatre and the arts, but make them more creative, motivated, and compassionate global citizens.

I believe our society should value the individual and their learning needs to better mould future adults with a mastery of essential skills. The 21st century learner must possess the ability to create, innovate, and collaborate in the workforce. Therefore, I subscribe to the philosophy that within my high learning standards for my students I must have the freedom to adapt the curriculum to their students' needs and abilities, especially with the push toward greater inclusion in the classroom. I believe wholeheartedly in differentiating lessons to reach every student in a personal and meaningful way. Students learn best when they are able to confidently demonstrate their learning or mastery while being challenged. They must have the experience of manipulating or experimenting with new concepts to further cement their understanding. And finally, if possible, students need an opportunity to teach that concept or skill to a peer. This “Learn, Do, Teach” approach allows students to access and apply content, concepts and skills to strengthen their mastery over any lesson.

In accordance with this “Learn, Do, Teach” approach, I continuously strive to improve myself through evaluation, student feedback, formal and informal observations, and continuing

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education. By continuously reflecting and re-working my curriculum and teaching methods after every year, I find that I am able to refine my skills and better stimulate my students.

An excellent teacher is a model, a guide, and a provider of experiences. I strive to model not only a lifelong love of learning and passion for my content area, but also a respect for my peers as well as my students. In such a creative subject, there are times for play and exploration, and times for students to behave as a captive, mature audience. Modeling appropriate behavior for each scenario is vitally important. As a guide, I want to stimulate my students' interest and curiosity while providing them with the ability and resources to find their own answers and develop their own conclusions. In order to best achieve this, I must provide them with opportunities for experience.

Creating a safe space where students can be open and honest provides students with not only an effective learning environment, but a place to grow and be challenged. I believe in supporting my students and encouraging their hopes and goals, especially artistically. Being able to relate to students about the projects and experiences that are most meaningful to them can have an incredibly powerful effect and hopefully inspire them to be generous members of their own communities some day.