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Teaching Social Studies Philosophy

It is often portrayed that Social Studies is referred to as a subject in which students sit in a desk, turn page after page in their Social Studies textbook, look at the boring pictures and figures, reading “popcorn style” about people in the history; however, it seems that the incredible and breathtaking stories that lay within the boring pages seem to be trapped inside the cover and never remembered or used in the life of the students. Many students say that they do not find history interesting or they do not get why they need to learn about the past. What does it have to do with them living right now and into the future? As a teacher in the Social Studies, it will be a goal of mine to create a classroom where students are aware of the importance of studying historical events. The message that if we do not learn from our past, it will become our future will be a founding ground of history sessions in the classroom.

Students must be engaged in the learning process in order to learn anything at all. As a teacher, it is my role to help the students make connections to their own lives and relate how historical events have affected our present day society and lives. Students must be given the opportunity to learn about historical events from a variety of resources, including outside the textbook. Using primary and secondary sources are a great tool when teaching students. Hands-on learning will be a vital learning method used while teaching the Social Studies.

I also feel that students benefit from being able to form discussion groups in which they may talk about and debate over different historical topics. The students not only learn about the event, but also how their peers may view a historical event as having a different significance than

the first student does. Students should also be given the opportunity to step inside their history books and act out the events portrayed there. I feel that students will become passionate about history if they are given the opportunity to explore and act out what they are reading. The more often students are active and engaged, the more likely that each child will hold onto the knowledge that they have been taught that day for years to come.

To me, Social Studies is more than just reading out of a textbook. Social Studies is a continuous study of human life and the events that have built our society into what it is today. My classroom will feature impacting lessons for each student, while allowing all students to express his or her opinions and make connections within the text. The students that are sitting in the classrooms today are the architects of the future; however, they must first understand the founding ground of history. I want my students to take in the information and keep it stored in their memory for a lifetime- not just a week during the chapter in the textbook.