

“Leaders are Learners.” This is a statement that I have heard over and over again in reference to the role of an educator, mentor, manager, or anyone in some kind of an influential role. What it means is that in order to be a good leader, you have to first make your priority to be a learner. You must demonstrate your willingness to learn about those you are leading; you must show your ability to adapt to the changing environments and world at large around you; you must be open to change, and show wisdom and discernment in the process of making it a part of your schema; and by living your life in such a way you will affect those you are leading so that they see this in you and will want to live likewise.

I believe that my students will benefit from my “Leaders are Learners” approach to teaching because they will find that I will care for them – academically and personally. My students will find my classroom to be a dynamic classroom – one where although the rules stay the same, the environment changes. They will find themselves involved in the lives of others: those people they see, hear about, and read about in the media, and also their classmates. They will find themselves in the middle of community, and I believe that in order for this to happen it has to start with me – it has to start with a willingness by their teacher to leave his pride and hardened shell of shallowness behind and engage them in a real, meaningful way.

Needless to say, I believe strongly in the importance of community, empathy, and communal care. I believe that in order to make a global impact, you have to start somewhere – you have to start by making an local impact, and I say this based upon my belief that everyone has some desire to positively affect the lives of others – it is part of what makes us human. I believe that by basing the overarching classroom environment

and rules around this we learn about community, and as I desire to teach and minister to the *whole* person, I believe this to be of utmost importance.

Academically, I believe in the utilization of all forms of learning: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Although it might not be possible to write three lesson plans, (one for each type of learner) I do believe it is possible to incorporate all three types, in varying levels, into each lesson. I want my students to succeed, also I will do what it takes to assist them in this – I want to provide them with the chance to do well, so I will try to do my part in making lessons and examples personal, relevant, and in the vernacular that speaks best to them.

I believe it important for children to learn how to be a critical thinker. I believe that this is possible without teaching them to be critics – teaching them to put-down everything and anything. What I desire for my students is for them to develop the mental ability to properly evaluate, give weight to, and decide upon all the information that is given to them. I do not want them to merely replicate what I say and do – I want them to evaluate all I do, (as I am human and greatly flawed) and I want them to decide which parts of me and my message they should take to heart. I then want them to take this skill into their everyday lives: when they watch TV, listen to the radio, are talking to the parents at dinner time. I want to provide them with the skills to make decisions, and to how to make informed, confident decisions.