

Prompt A: Look over what **area you intend to teach** and indicate how **your course work** has prepared you to teach in this area. This should match the endorsement area you indicate in your application. Name your strengths in preparation, areas needing growth, and plans for next steps.

In reviewing the coursework I've completed during my Bachelor's degree, Master's degrees and beyond, I am confident that I am well prepared to serve my students an art classroom. While my personal work is primarily oil, acrylic, and graphite, I have learned from ceramicists, printmakers, sculptors, and performers. I have a background in theatre and theatrical scenic painting that has informed much of the work I make today. Additionally, I am always exploring and experimenting in my personal art practice. I am a knitter as well as a beginner in using natural dyes. I find the uniting quality in all my favorite art educators has been curiosity. The teachers that have helped me grow the most have been deeply curious people. This is something I hope to embody as well as an art teacher.

In addition to the studio classes I have taken, I also deeply value the opportunities I've had to learn from some incredibly knowledgeable art historians. My art history classes have provided a foundation and context for the work that I see and make. Incorporating historical figures, works, and movements is important to me as an art educator. I have found so many students feel alienated by modern and contemporary art and either lose interest or lose confidence. Exposing students to work that might challenge their understanding of art and empowering them to investigate their own feelings with open curiosity can build connections where before there were none.

I would like to build on and expand my knowledge of ceramics, printmaking, and digital art. Taking classes with Arbutus Folk School in Olympia for hand-building and throwing is something I am considering. I have been developing my skills in printmaking with woodblock and lino cut at home, though I would be interested in finding a community printing press. As for digital art, I am looking into online learning resources like skillshare, domestika, and youtube. Ultimately, I want to have a strong foundation across all these media so I can be a useful resource for my students.

Prompt B: Look over what **area you intend to teach** and indicate how your **life experience** has prepared you to teach in this area. This should match the endorsement area you indicate in your application. Name your strengths in preparation, areas needing growth, and plans for next steps.

I have taught in an extremely broad range of contexts and classrooms. In 2009, I obtained my Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Subsequently, I taught for one year with a private language school in HCMC, eventually specializing in advanced and test-preparation English. While in Vietnam, I was also able to teach a few classes in public elementary schools in the area. It was an incredible learning experience and I owe much of my approach to teaching to the CELTA methodology. The CELTA course promotes a distinctly student-centered and student-driven classroom. One rule of thumb an instructor gave us was to have 90% of the speaking in the classroom be student speaking. Teachers should be speaking no more than 10%. It is a lofty goal, but one that still informs my lesson planning.

In 2012, while living in Los Angeles, I began work as a tutor with a non-profit called STAR Education. I worked at Cowan Elementary with students from first through sixth grade. During my time there, we struggled to implement a classroom management system that worked for our students. We had many very high-need students for whom the more traditional approaches were not appropriate. After speaking to a teacher friend of mine, who recommended the Whole Brain Teaching Method, I approached my manager about implementing some of its elements. We found it to be a helpful and positive change in our after-school program. Additionally, I developed an art curriculum for Cowan that I taught on a weekly basis.

While I wasn't able to stay with STAR as they could not offer full-time work, I did come back in 2014 and 2015 to teach a "STEAM" course called Art & Optics in a number of school districts across Los Angeles. Stepping into new classrooms everyday and working with new groups of students regularly challenged me and allowed me to grow as an educator. When I started emergency substitute teaching in Lewis County, WA in 2018, I was glad to have had this experience.

In addition to my work as a tutor and teacher, I believe my experience as an artist is an asset to myself and my prospective students. Navigating a career in Fine Art is something I am still learning, but I understand the ins and outs of putting up a show, selling work, and working with galleries. I also have ample experience discussing the more existential questions around Fine Art thanks to my MFA program. Engaging with students around the practical and ideological aspects of art is something I look forward to.

In moving forward as an art teacher, I am interested to learn more about Washington State's curriculum and standards. While I loved teaching college-level drawing, I do not have direct

experience with high school students as an art teacher. These are things I am hoping the MIT program at Evergreen will allow me to explore and practice.

Prompt C: Education is both a social good and structurally unjust. Explain your understanding of this contradiction and ways it can be addressed.

While it is arguable whether or not education can lead to economic empowerment, as is promised in American meritocracy, it is undoubtably the key to a deeper understanding of oneself and the human condition. In this way, education can allow one to live a more meaningful and intentional life. Regardless of the societal, political, or economic outcome of education; it must be accepted that the benefits it affords its recipients are undeniable and intrinsically valuable. Additionally, as any liberal arts college will tell you, a well-educated electorate is the foundation of a functioning democracy. On its face and in these broad-strokes, it can be difficult to see something as “pure” as education as structurally unjust. Just like any cultural product however, education is a direct reflection of the imperfect group of human beings who created it.

American education and its structure and form are a product of a historically white supremecist, heteronormative, ablist, patriarchal culture. It must then, by design, serve the goals of such a culture. Invisibly. Silently. As an educator and queer woman, I am always reevaluating the ways I interact with students, the content of my lessons, and the expectations I have for what a classroom is or should be. I must acknowledge, however that even with these efforts, I may still be blind to my own biases. I may still, unwittingly reify those same values and dynamics I seek to reject. The students whose identities and power threaten the hegemonic structures of American culture are done a great disservice by our educational systems.

I recently read an article by Jacob Koster called, “bell hooks and the exhaustion of critical pedagogy,” that pinned down an idea I have been considering for some time. In deploying a critical pedagogy, a la bell hooks, one might hope to sidestep the traps our blindspots leave for us and upset the usual power dynamic of teacher and student. And, indeed, maybe we can avoid those traps. But in so doing, have we engaged our students in a way that inspires political action or have we assured them that the problem of liberation has been solved and now we just talk about it in classrooms? It is this fine line that I consider often. Have we domesticated liberation by allowing academia to swallow it up?

I cannot say I know how to address the injustice of our educational system. But I can continue to adjust and readjust my understanding of what education should look like. I can honor and respect my students and their experiences. I can listen. I can change.

Prompt D: How has your time working with youth informed your decision to become a teacher?

My time spent in middle and high school classrooms has always been incredibly rewarding. As a very young EFL teacher I had the opportunity to teach an advanced class of high schoolers in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. One of the more common activities for us was to read a selected article and discuss in pairs or groups. I loved getting to know my students in this way. Hearing their perspectives and opinions never failed to challenge beliefs I didn't even know I had and deepen my understanding of my students' cultural and personal identities.

Working with this age group always makes me look forward to the day ahead. The questions that adults have grown out of or grown bored of are still interesting to teens and pre-teens. (And they are still interesting to me!) What is art? Why is it important? What does it mean to be a part of a community? I am particularly interested in working with middle school and high school students because, in my experience, they are excited to weigh in on these big ideas. Though it may take some patience, there are few greater honors than being privilege to a teenager's honest opinion.

As an emergency substitute teacher, I had a few opportunities to sub long-term in a few high school classrooms. Because I worked in rural districts, certified teachers were not available for these positions. The science classroom was my particular favorite. While I certainly hold no degree in science, I do have a personal interest in it. Approaching the students' assignments with them and problem-solving together was exciting and rewarding. Playing a supporting role to a student's self-directed discovery is something I am interested in building a career around.