

Prompt A Response:

I have made the majority of my coursework related to History, the field I intend to teach. My classes at Evergreen have given me insights into histories that other institutions wouldn't speak of, such as queer history and Israeli history, and have provided a much needed view into the stories of people both like and apart from what I identify as. So far I have taken courses looking over the history of fascist ideology, and how the ideology develops and what to look out for as warning signs. I have taken a course looking over the history of gender and sexuality over the last few centuries, looking into the struggles of those who did not identify with the majority and were cast out for it. I have Looked into the struggles of the Israel-Palestine conflict with a course on the history of what is now known as Israel, and learned the nuances and complications with that political situation. I have taken two courses on the history of the Ancient world and Archeology, learning the processes that make archeology and the uncovering of the worlds of the past possible. Through all of these courses I have broadened my knowledge of history, and paid attention to the techniques my professors use to teach said history.

I would consider my strengths to be my ability to speak publicly in settings with over one hundred people without mistake, as well as my experience working with and hosting for young people and engaging them in collaborative team based activities. I would also consider my passion for history to be a strength, as I love teaching about history and want to share my passion with others.

My main weakness would have to be Inexperience with working with large groups of young people, as I have not yet been responsible for groups of children larger than 7, and I still require instruction on how large group education works, and all the teaching strategies that teachers use to get through the day.

Prompt B Response:

Throughout my life, starting when I was no more than a little boy, history has always been my passion. Ironically, I found history classes to be quite boring and very tedious in my younger years. I would always end up learning history that interested me from external sources like family or books and be fascinated by the subject as long as it wasn't in a classroom. I went on like this until highschool, where the way I was being taught history changed, and so did my view of the subject in school. I had a teacher teach history with less emphasis on the dates and times that important events happened, and less about memorizing the endless lists of names and places, and instead focused on the hows and whys of history. Instead of being asked to name all the dates of the civil war's battles, I was being asked to understand why they happened in the first place, and this simple change inspired me to believe that history in a classroom can be interesting. This experience has made me want to try and try again to make history more interesting to learn for students, as well as to experiment and see what styles of history teaching get the most engagement and understanding from the classroom.

Aside from my time in school, I have also run activities as a host for people of varied age groups, ranging from middle school to adulthood, and have had experiences settling disputes, maintaining engagement, and insighting collaborative activities. These few years of experience working with varied groups of people have given me confidence that I am ready to start on my path to become a teacher.

With all this experience, I still need to learn and experience class preparation. Nothing in my current experience has taught me how to actually prepare a lesson plan or how to put together collaborations with other teachers, as most of my work so far has been based on improvisation.

Prompt C:

Education improves lives, of this, there is no doubt. Education has led to the development of communities, to the betterment of lives, and to opportunities not possible to those without an education. Many in the workforce today would not be where they are right now without either the basics that the K-12 program makes sure everyone has, or for their experiences and academics in college. Because of Education, society as a whole is in a better place than it would be if there were not as many opportunities for understanding various subjects. With all this in mind, Education and the systems responsible for teaching are not equal.

Education standards are mostly based on standardized testing, which involves, in most cases, a student sitting down for large periods of time and being focused on nothing other than the test in front of them. This is fine for most students, but some students have special needs or are special cases, such as students on the spectrum that have no trouble understanding the material, but do have trouble sitting still and focusing.

This also applies to group based activities, where students with impaired social skills suffer in activities not designed with them in mind. Many, many facets of the current education standards are designed to be good for the majority of students, but lacking in opportunities for those that fall outside the range of 'normal'.

Besides special needs, there is also the issue of race and class, along with the disparity in quality of education depending on those factors. Minorities in America, as well as the poor, have a harder time finding the necessary tools that are readily available to white and wealthy students, such as the ability to afford a tutor, or an instrument for musical arts which are proven to help expand the mind.

These issues cannot be solved by one teacher, but these issues can be addressed by reaching out to those students who need additional help, and by creating opportunities for those that need help to receive it, such as helping fund programs designed to give out opportunities and aid.

Prompt D:

In my experiences hosting, I have had to deal with the troubles and complications of being responsible for a group of young people. This includes managing schedules, resolving disputes, resolving emotional dilemmas and problems, and generally making sure everyone is happy. Even though at times it is a lot of work, I love what I do and the games we play when I host for community members, and the experiences both good and tiring from those interactions have not made me less passionate about the idea of becoming a teacher. While not an exact match in any regard, I do believe that my experience as a host will have at least some degree of overlap with the skills required to become a teacher and to manage a classroom effectively and with care.

I have also been the babysitter for young people in the family on multiple occasions, such as with younger cousins or other extended relatives, and part of the responsibility that came with that was helping with their lessons. I would walk through concepts such as math and reading, along with, occasionally, my favorite subject history. This helped me practice the strategies that either worked for young people or did not, and I got a glimpse into the techniques needed and the sensitivity required around educating young people. This experience as a babysitter also meant I could see a less fun side of things, especially when I was teaching history, I would be told that I was teaching the wrong history, or even that I was incorrect about basic things by adults around, even one claiming I was wrong about the first amendment saying anything about religion. Even with the difficulties of adults and children in mind, this did not lessen my want to be a teacher.

Additionally, I got some brief experience in a classroom at an elementary school, where I got to see and be mentored on the politics of education, as well as the difficulties that result from parents who will not listen, as well as the resulting children who need special care being in the same classes as those who do not. I was tasked with personally tutoring a young boy who was having trouble paying attention, more so than most children, and he was a delight apart from his inability to sit down. I successfully taught him some basic addition and subtraction even though he didn't know all of his numbers. I absolutely loved the experience even with the troubles.

My experience with young people gave me some much valued insight into the world of education, and through it all I still want to be a teacher.