

## Goal Reflection Essay: *Why Did You Become A Teacher?*

Recently, one of my students asked me a question: "Why did you become a teacher?" I wanted to become a teacher because I loved learning, and I wanted to instill that love in students. From the time I was in first grade I knew I wanted to become a teacher. When I began my journey as an undergrad at Michigan State, it was never a question what my major would be, education. My goal then was to learn how to be the best teacher I could be. Fast forward to today, my classroom has taught me valuable lessons in reaching kids through meaningful conversations, relevant lessons, and nurturing responses. As an educator, it is essential that I am constantly learning and growing, and I knew the **Master of Arts in Education program at Michigan State University** would fulfill that goal. When I began this program, my goal was to develop new skills and learn cutting-edge methods of literacy instruction, but I have discovered so much more than my original goal.

Throughout the program, I have been constantly pushed to challenge myself to discover how great of a teacher I could be: always questioning and analyzing best practices, classic texts, and instructional methods to determine what is best for my students. My goal of learning the newest and best teaching methods was indeed met, but this is truly a lifelong goal towards which I will always be striving. After this program, my goal is to be open to trying new things and taking educational risks in the classroom. During this program I have been pushed to try techniques, procedures, and technology that I previously knew nothing about. In the classroom, I am now trying lessons that are different from my normal teaching practices. I learned from my successes and adapted areas that I could improve. The program forced me to do this, but now it is up to me to seek out new and innovative ideas on my own. My goal is to not be afraid to try something new because it would have immense benefits for my classroom.

Looking back at my program goals from the beginning to today, they are connected to one another. It is not enough to learn new ideas in literacy instruction, but I actually have to implement those ideas. The instructional methods I try will not always be perfect or work for my students, but this program has provided me with options to try for my students. Now, it is up to me to research, study, and discover these practices on my own. As an educator, I can never know enough about educating my students. I need to be learning and growing constantly in order to help my students become successful members of society. My student's question reminded me that learning is at the center of being a teacher. After this program, the reason that I love being a teacher is that I am constantly discovering new things about my students, the world, and myself.