

“My Difficult Yet Rewarding Educational Road”

I have had a difficult time in my process of learning. Due to my learning disability, I have encountered many obstacles throughout my educational career. Each academic year I go through brings on many new challenges. I believe that without the understanding nature of many of the teachers and professors I have had, I would not be where I am today.

Some of my early childhood memories are vague. When I was in elementary school and just beginning to learn the basics, I can recall having some difficulty in learning to read and write. I don't recall the method that was used to help my classmates and me learn to read and write. I do, however, remember that I was very eager to learn in school. I paid close attention in class and genuinely enjoyed being there. I did have to attend resource classes every week. I quite enjoyed the time I spent in the resource room. I don't remember feeling ashamed about it either. I just went along with it as part of my day. I think the problems I had were more centered with learning to read than learning to write.

Soon after learning to read I discovered reading for pleasure. This habit was strongly encouraged at home. Every opportunity was made to provide me with books I enjoyed. The habits I formed, in middle school and high school has stayed with me into my college years. I learned that I had to work twice as hard to get a particular task done. I realized that I needed to become very organized, and also needed outside school help. This is when I started to regularly attend a tutor. This tutor helped me with basic grammar and spelling. Also, my tutor would assist me in doing whatever assignments I had for that day. Extra help enabled me to get a handle on my strengths and helped me

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improve on my weaknesses. I have had a bit of trouble in my writing throughout my educational career, but find I am steadily improving.

My early memories of school and home events regarding learning are somewhat cloudy, but certain things stand out for me. Before my brother or I could read, my mother would sit down with us near to our bedtime each night and read a story to us. It did not matter what story we read, as long as we were listening and paying attention. I enjoyed being read to each night. It was something I truly looked forward to. As I began to learn to read, I would help my mother read the books we chose each night during our reading time. My brother then began reading during our nightly book time. As time went on I began reading by myself in my room, more complex books than before. The nightly reading session also acquired a few more individuals. First my sister came along and then another brother. So when they were of age, they both began to participate during the reading time. I remember as I grew older, wanting the independence badly, but I missed the closeness and tenderness my mother and siblings provided when I sat down with them. Concerning school, I do not remember being read to by my teachers. I'm sure it did occur, but it has not stuck in my memory as the nightly family time reading has. I also attended nursery school in a church. I enjoyed relating to other kids and playtime. Reading time was a special treat for me because the teacher was very dramatic and made the story come alive.

From middle school on I began experiencing a more challenging time at school. This had to do specifically with the amount of work assigned and my emerging health struggles. Though now I am finding I am having difficulty in different areas. I tended to

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take twice the amount of time to read and write. Progressively, I did not absorb the material as well as I had in my middle school years. The homework I was given began to seem overwhelmingly difficult. It was in high school that I had brain surgery to correct hydrocephalic condition.

From a very young age I have had a very positive view of teachers. The role of a teacher in a child's literacy life can be pivotal to their success with learning. I believe that a literacy system must be stimulating and repetitive for the average learner. I think that experiencing literacy in a positive way that encourages and allows them to move at their own developmental rate is important. Through learning, particularly reading and writing a person becomes more knowledgeable and aware of the world around them. This is in my opinion one of the most important goals a teacher must help their students achieve.

At the present time I would like to better manage the large amounts of reading and writing in my course work. My goal is to be more efficient in my approach to the assigned work. Ultimately, I would like to be able to understand and express extremely complex ideas in reading and writing. In the future, I would like to achieve a return to enjoying reading as I did when I would read with my mother and brother, and as a youth when I read for pleasure. I want to be an early childhood education teacher, because I have very strong motives to nurture children as they begin academic learning. I want to be sensitive to the struggles that young kids are having in their learning process, whether it has to do with reading or writing. I realize from personal experience that everyone is different and advances at different rates.

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I am looking forward to these education courses, which will further prepare me for a career in teaching. I think being as prepared as one can, when going into the world of teaching, is very important. Through my years of school, I can specifically remember certain individuals and the amazing talent they possessed to help me grow in my own abilities to learn. Without these extraordinary people, I would not be the person I am today. I also may not be in the field I am in if it were not for these individuals. They showed me that I was just as important as anyone else, it did not matter how I learned. Their goal was that I learned.

I hope to take the best features of each of those people, as well as the educational material I have learned, in order to become a teacher that is well prepared to meet an eager generation of learners.