

FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION



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3.1: Why Teach

Why Do Teachers Teach?

By Alyschia Conn

Why Teach?

Why do teachers teach? It is a rather simple question, however the question, what is a teacher, must be addressed first. Merriam-Webster's definition of a teacher is "one whose occupation is to instruct" (Merriam-Webster, 2008, para. 1). That is a rather one dimensional definition of a teacher, as teachers these days, offer so much more to the class than just the information. They offer themselves. A collective definition of a teacher, is someone who "yearns to help children learn, watch them grow, and make a meaningful difference in the world" (Teacher Support Network, 2007, para. 2). This definition must be the main reason as to why individuals pursue teaching as a career. Generally the pay is low to fair, but the overall rewards are much greater, for as a teacher one can touch the hearts of the young and open their minds in order to tap their thirst for knowledge.

The Long Road

Becoming a teacher is a lengthy process obtained by numerous routes, such as night school or attending a four year college. Regardless of the process it is important to obtain at least a Bachelors degree in the desired teaching area, as well as a teacher certification which should include clinical experience (Lewis, L., Parsad, B., Carey, N., Bartfai, N., Farris, E. & Smerdon, B., 1999, para. 3). The average starting salaries were about \$31,704 in the year 2003-04, whereas the average teaching salary was about \$46,597 for the year 2004-2005 (Pearson Education Inc, table). Compare this to the average cost of living in the United States today which is continually rising (Boskey, para. 3).

Teacher's Salaries Across the US

Teaching is not a pocket cushioning job, but one with long hours and a flat rate of pay. The income of course, depends on where the teacher is instructing. Private schools generally pay their teachers less for they do not need to have proper credentials, whereas schools located in urban areas pay more for those with proper credentials (Vedder, 2003, Public vs. Private, para. 1). Despite the lower pay for private school teachers, it is the students, the teacher's individual commitment to faith, and the freedom provided by not being governmentally run that attracts teachers (Vedder, 2003, Public vs. Private). Considering the figures above, it is clear that teaching is not a lucrative profession. It is the prerogative of these individuals to choose a career in teaching, and often they have a strong motive behind their decision. Perhaps teachers teach for personal gain, or they have the desire to spread knowledge, or to watch children reach their full potential beneath their instruction. Regardless of the reason, the reward must be substantial to compensate for the lack of monetary reward.

Passion

There are multiple factors in deciding to become a teacher. For one, it is a healthy alternative to other professions as the TDA's research has found that about twice as many teachers truly enjoy their work, as opposed to those who have careers in marketing, IT and accounting (TDA, In Summary, para. 1). Although work is not truly, work, if it is enjoyed. For example, Beth Ashfield, a math teacher, spoke of her job with passion "I love my subject, but I know it's not socially acceptable to say that... in school, I can be as enthusiastic as I want to be. I'm able to convey that enthusiasm to the students, to allow them to become confident and creative in their approach to the subject" (TDA, Beth Ashfield, Maths teacher, para. 1). Becoming a teacher was important for her, due to her great love of a particular subject, and the desire to share it with others in hopes that they might discover the same for themselves. As a teacher one is always learning, whether it is of one's content material, or something new from a pupil. Being a teacher requires an open mind, for the teacher is always the student. A teacher guides his or her charges on a path to self discovery where they learn about the world, and ultimately, themselves.

Love

Beyond passion, another reason that teachers teach is simply for the love of teaching. As stated by (Liston & Garrison, 2003) Love is a "creative, critical, and disruptive force in teaching and learning." A teacher who loves his or her job will be a better teacher and have a greater impact on the students he or she influences. Classroom efforts to manage, instruct, and direct groups of twenty to

thirty students frequently requires a feelings for others and an intuition that connects teacher to student and to subject matter. (Liston & Garrison, 2003) For the new teacher that multiple tasks entailed in this activity can be overwhelming. (Liston & Garrison, 2003) For the experienced teacher they can seem almost unconscious. (Liston & Garrison, 2003) This connection between students and teachers can sometimes be a form of love and concern for the well being of other human beings. A teacher must have a strong desire to see the well being of young students is advanced and know that at the end of the day they have played a small part in the bettering of these students. Most teachers truly have passion for what they do, but they also have a love for it as well.

The Challenge

There are points when teaching becomes a challenge, but it is those that thrive on the challenge of reaching kids who are truly the most effective. Though they may seem under appreciated, the individuals who instruct in our country's challenge-schools, or schools located in poor urban areas, are very important. Laura Hendrickson conducted a study that looked into high-challenge urban schools, and how good teachers affect the students education. It was obvious that with three years of quality teaching the students performed almost nearly as well as those who were not situated in a high challenge school. Often teachers leave such places due to their struggles with reaching the children in those areas however, those that stayed had the following reasons; "relationships with students, rewards, instructional focus, collegiality, feeling needed and a desire to help others, challenges and parents" (Morris, 2007, Abstract para. 4). The teachers took their responsibility to not merely be educators, but also to provide different avenues of understanding so that all students could "master basic learning objectives" (Cotton, 2001, para. 3). These objectives were acquired through the encouragement and support of the teachers who established the connection between the student's effort and his or her outcome, as opposed to luck or good fortune. The effort of these teachers was remarkable as they faced the challenges of the student's unstable and sometimes uneducated backgrounds and found ways to reach the children by being flexible with their teaching style and creative with rewards (Cotton, 2001, para. 5).

Creativity Is Key

Beth Anders, once a physical education teacher, now heads the coaching faculty of the field hockey team at Old Dominion University. Her view on teaching was similar to that of Beth Ashfield, for she loves to teach and develop people. "Life is learning and to be part of people developing and acquiring knowledge. Every person is unique and the challenge is to find fun ways to guide individuals to learn and understand what they are interested in learning" (B. Anders, personal communication, February 2, 2008). There are many ways to be creative in the classroom, whether it is using projects, videos, and presentations, but what if the creativity stemmed from the teacher?

Being creative is important in teaching, for the students are the audience. No one knows this better than entertainers, who are creative and use their ingenuity to bring to life rather dull aspects of education. This in and of itself is talent, and there are those who devote themselves to that. Paul Keogh, a Modern Languages teacher had always aspired to be an entertainer, however, he chose teaching as his profession instead. He does not regret this choice for, he's always got someone to perform for. He equated teaching to entertainment, but more importantly he remarks, "I love to see them growing personally, socially and academically" (TDA, Paul Keogh, Modern Languages teacher, para. 3). This statement itself encompasses the point of education, for there cannot be growth without learning, and learning stems from observing from someone of an educated status higher than one's-self.

The Rewards

The rewards received by being a teacher are different than those received by someone like a salesman for example. If a salesman is doing well, he makes his quota, and he then earns his monetary bonus. It is possible that he receives a plaque to hang behind his desk stating that he was the number one salesman for this period in time. Teacher's rewards are not so tangible, but rather, "they are rewarded more by witnessing their students succeed and follow their dreams than by any plaque" (Daily Egyptian, 2005, para. 7). A group of school teachers who had participated in a study that looked into why teachers taught in high challenge schools, jointly agreed that what their students achieve under their instruction was reward enough for all the time that they devote to their students. "Student achievement was another reward the teachers discussed as a reason for staying. When their students were successful, the teachers felt incredibly rewarded." (Morris, 2007, pg 58). The reward teachers receive is a feeling, and feelings are more special and memorable than gold and silver plaques hung stoically on a wall proclaiming an individuals success. For teaching, it is not

about what the teachers can achieve, but what they can get their students to achieve, and through their students, reflects a teacher's greatest achievement.

In Conclusion

Ten Reasons to Become a Teacher

Review Questions To address the opening question, why do teachers teach? The answer is simple, “they teach for the love of children and to contribute to the well-being of all of us” (Teachers are Important, 1998, para. 4). It is something inside them. It is a drive, a force, a passion, a talent that they wish to dispel upon his or her students in order to watch them succeed. Choosing to be a teacher is not for the money, as a teacher's monetary compensation is hardly adequate given all that they give to their students. Becoming a teacher is almost like heading a calling. It is not for the light at heart, but rather, for those who love children and people, who have a passion for education, and who love to share in that passion. Teachers yearn to see the burning desire to learn, and love to see the excitement of discovery, and that, is why teachers teach.

1) How does the average salary of a teacher compare to that of a teacher who is just beginning?

- A. greater
- B. less
- C. much greater
- D. much smaller

2) Beth Ashfield speaks animatedly about why she teaches. What emotion shows through when she speaks of her reasons?

- A. Interest
- B. Concern
- C. Passion
- D. Aggression

3) Explain what the teachers of ‘high-challenge’ urban schools provide to the students that they teach?

- A. compassion and advice
- B. encouragement and direction
- C. encouragement and support
- D. safety and security

4) The classroom can become a platform for learning and growing for students, and teachers can bring their own flair to the class. What flair did Paul Keogn bring to the class, and did the students respond well to it?

- A. Singing; the students loved it
- B. Singing; the students hated it
- C. Entertaining; the students hated it
- D. Entertaining; the students loved it

5) What feedback rewards teachers the most?

- A. Support from the PTA
- B. Teacher Appreciation Week
- C. Plaques and signs of honor
- D. Witnessing students succeed

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Answer Key

1) A 2) C 3) D 4) D 5) D

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3.2: Why Leave

Why Teachers Leave the Profession

By: Sarah Wolff

Learning Targets

- Reader should be able to identify key factors that influence a teacher's decision to stop teaching.
- Reader should be able to identify the effects of low teacher retention.
- Reader should be able to identify ways by which states and schools can boost teacher retention.

Introduction

Why do teachers leave the profession? Teacher attrition has been on the rise for the past two decades and it is no surprise that it has become a major concern. (Brooks-Young, 2007). Every year, approximately one-third of the nation's teaching force turns over and the retention rate of new teachers after five years is only sixty-one percent. (Kersaint, 2007). Researchers believe that teacher shortages are caused not by lack of interest in teaching, but by too many teachers leaving the profession. (Williby, 2004). What must be addressed are the factors affecting teachers' decisions to leave, the effects on the students and schools of low teacher retention, and the possible solutions to increase teacher retention.

Factors Influencing Teacher Turnover

According to Smithers and Robinson, there are five main reasons for teachers leaving the profession: workload, new challenges, school situations, salary, and personal circumstances. Among those five main reasons, workload was the most important factor in affecting teacher turnover, while salary was the least important. (Smithers & Robinson, 2003).

Workload

Being a teacher is not an easy job. Teachers must teach their students, as well as complete paperwork, lesson plans, assessments, etc., and at times this can be overbearing. There is an increase on assessment and accountability of teachers, which means there is an emphasis on testing, evaluation, and passing state standards. Teachers are required to teach to state standards and for their students to pass standardized tests, adding another requirement to be placed upon teachers. Also, many times, teachers are expected to sponsor a club or activity on top of everything else they must do. This means spending more time at school working. Meeting these requirements and juggling these tasks can be hard and frustrating, especially for new teachers with little experience.

New Challenges

New Challenges often cause new, inexperienced teachers to leave the profession. For the most part, their first few years in the classroom are spent trying to get organized, get a grasp on the pace of teaching the material, and learning how to effectively manage a classroom. Disruptive or troublesome students can make a teacher's job that much more difficult by having to deal with the students and in some cases having to take disciplinary actions

School Situation

School situation encompasses many different things. It can be how the school is run, who runs the school, what type of programs are available to teachers, geographical setting of the school, and much more. Geography can play a major role in affecting a teacher's decision on whether to leave the profession. In rural settings, the main reasons for teachers leaving was due to cultural differences, the geography (i.e. being too far away from a city or town), and professional isolation. (Williby, 2004). For urban settings, the reasons for leaving were an emphasis to oversee extracurricular activities and whether they were teaching at an at-risk school. How the school is run is also another factor causing teachers to leave. A lack of administrative support is damaging to a teachers self-esteem, poor facilities cause teachers to become frustrated, and insufficient mentoring leaves the teacher with nowhere to look for advice, and ultimately cause teachers to leave.

Personal Circumstances

Since teaching requires a lot of time and effort, sometimes personal circumstances can affect a teacher's decision on whether or not to leave. The most common personal circumstance that causes teachers to leave is family. This encompasses everything from pregnancy, spending more time with family, and taking care of family. For women who get pregnant while teaching, they may find it more cost effective to leave and become a stay-at-home mother (Kersaint, 2007). For other teachers, quality time with their family and taking care of their family is very important and the workload of being a teacher doesn't allow them much time to do this. Age is also another personal circumstance that causes teachers to leave. Typically, it is younger teachers or older teachers approaching retirement that usually leave the teaching profession. For older teachers, there is a direct correlation with early retirement and pension-plans. (Ingersoll, 2001). This means that it is more likely for an older teacher to retire if they have a pension plan.

Effects of Teacher Turnover

The cost of teacher turnover is over \$7 billion dollars a year. (NCTAF, 2007).

The effects of teacher turnover is astounding, not only for the school systems, but for the students as well. Teacher turnover can have a negative effect on student learning. Schools usually hire last-minute teachers who are under-qualified and inexperienced. (Kersaint, 2007). According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, inexperienced teachers are noticeably less effective than senior teachers. These new, inexperienced, and under-qualified teachers passing in and out of the school systems can have an emotional and physiological effect on students and student learning.

For the school systems, teacher turnover is a fiasco. It drains resources, diminishes teacher quality, undermines the ability to close the gap of student achievement, and is financially burdening. (NCTAF, 2007). Resources are drained due to the need of experienced teachers to train and mentor new teachers. Financially, schools are suffering from teacher turnover because of the cost of recruiting, hiring, advertising, and providing incentives. (Harris & Adams, 2007). Ultimately, the effects of teacher turnover on the school systems directly impacts the students; the financial cost of teacher turnover takes money away from other projects that could be beneficial to the students, the quality of teachers hired directly impacts student learning and student achievement, and the school community and effectiveness can be destroyed.

Boosting Teacher Retention

So now the question is, what can be done to boost teacher retention? Teachers leave the profession for several reasons from lack of administrative support to poor facilities to low pay. There are several steps schools can take to boost teacher retention.

To retain teachers that are inexperienced, schools can implement a well-organized induction program. This type of program would include mentoring and peer review evaluations. This allows teachers an outlet for help and instruction, as well as advice on how to improve performance. These types of programs also prepare teachers on what to expect and how to effectively do their job. Studies show that teachers who receive intensive mentoring are less likely to leave than those who receive little to no mentoring. (Williby, 2004).

Other ways to boost teacher retention include new administrative and organizational strategies. Since workload is the major reason for teachers leaving the profession, strategies such as job sharing or part-time work may be more appealing to some teachers, or time to get work done during the school day through extended planning time, etc.

Hiring incentives are also another way to boost teacher retention. Although salary is not the biggest force driving teachers away from the profession, incentives would give them more of a reason to stay. These incentives include: hiring bonuses, health insurance, pension plans, and higher salaries.

Conclusion

All-in-all teacher turnover is a growing problem and must be solved. The reasons for why teachers leave the profession vary from teacher to teacher, but there is no doubt that something must be done to boost teacher retention. Teacher turnover effects student learning, student achievement, and the school systems. The cost is astounding, and new programs and strategies must be developed so teacher retention does not become an even bigger problem than it already is.

Multiple-Choice Quiz

1. What is the retention rate of new teachers after 5 years of teaching?

- a. 51%
- b. 47%
- c. 61%
- d. 67%

2. What is the most influential factor affecting teachers' decisions to leave?

- a. Salary
- b. School situation
- c. Personal circumstances
- d. Workload

3. Susan is thinking of leaving the teaching profession because she feels like she has no one to give her advice, instruct her on classroom management, and provide assistance to her. What would most likely influence her to continue to teaching?

- a. a bonus
- b. mentoring
- c. health insurance
- d. peer evaluations

4. John has noticed a high level of employee turnover at his son's school. What may this be concerning to John?

- a. It shows there may be a problem with how well his son's school runs and functions.
- b. It shows that teachers hate their jobs
- c. It shows that the students cause teachers to quit.
- d. It shows that his son is not receiving the proper education.

Answers

- 1. c
- 2. d
- 3. b
- 4. a

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3.3: Is Teaching a Profession

Is Teaching A Profession?

By Jessica M. Vasiliou

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Introduction

Teaching as a profession has become a huge concern in our society. I would think all parents would want their children to be taught by a professional. However, teaching as a profession is the question that remains to be answered clearly. The academic society needs to spell out a sense of professionalism in order to ease this concern. “Unlike other professions where you make ‘machines’ work, this profession allows one to deal with the most complex phenomena on earth. Ranging from most studious to most mischievous students, the teachers need to maintain a balanced attitude and approach in transforming them to mature individuals” (Kishore, 2000, paragraph 4). Professionalization of the teaching workforce is a major concern that needs to be addressed because it is a field of significant knowledge. The process of teaching can influence the lives of many students.

The Definition of Profession

Eliot Freidson, author of Professional Powers (1986), cautions, “a word with so many connotations and denotations cannot be employed in precise discourse without definition” (Freidson, 1986, p. 35). In trying to break down the debate about teaching as a profession, we must first look at the concept of “profession.” Originating from the Latin, *professio*, profession originally meant “the declaration of belief in or acceptance of religion or a faith” usually related to religious beliefs (Dictionary.com). However, by the sixteenth century, this rather narrow meaning expanded to include “body of persons engaged in some occupation” (Dictionary.com). The meaning of profession seems to be very unclear which is why people still cannot determine if teaching can be known as a profession.

The noun profession, referring to an occupation, also dates back to at least the sixteenth century, and is equally vague. Profession as a noun is defined as “a vocation requiring knowledge of some department of learning or science” (Dictionary.com). It is compared to a “learned profession” such as that of medicine and law (Freidson, 1986). “Inherent within this context is the elite and prestigious connotation many hold of ‘the professions’ to this day” (Freidson, 1986, p. 3). As Freidson said, “the original professionals addressed each other and members of the ruling elite who shared some of their knowledge and belief in its virtues. They did not address the common people or the common, specialized trades. So it is our time” (Freidson, 1986, p. 3).

If we as teachers are going to be “professionals” in our occupation, we need to realize that professionalism is for the most part a state of mind. Preparation is vital in the teaching world in order to provide every student with a proper education. Hence, one who calls themselves a professional teacher would want to conduct their classroom with character and dignity. A professional teacher would take the time to produce an intellectual exchange within their classroom. Professionals in education would want students to learn from the methods, ideas and lessons presented in their classroom.

A Professional Teacher

“I believe I am a professional because I am a master at what I do, I love what I do and I make a living at what I do. I engage in this activity known as teaching so much that it is what I live for. Therefore, I believe that I am a professional” (Brown, 2008, January 28).

It is not easy to find someone who is opposed to the concept of teacher professionalism. Juliane Brown, a teacher in Lancaster, Pennsylvania said, “I believe I am a professional because I am a master at what I do, I love what I do and I make a living at what I do. I engage in this activity known as teaching so much that it is what I live for. Therefore, I believe that I am a professional.” Teachers are no longer being seen as people who simply transport packages of knowledge. Rather, teachers are evolving in a way that they are seen as information-holders and knowledge-makers, possessing much skill, which newcomers to the world of teaching must strive to obtain through experience, study, thought and reflection. Professionalism of teachers will insure our students with the finest education yet.

Teaching-Not a True Profession?

Some people have concluded that teachers need more training. For example, a Bolton-born education expert claims, “Teaching should not be considered as a profession because not enough training is given to those who go into it” (Bolton-born education expert, Teaching not true profession, 2005, paragraph 1). Possibly to get to the point of teaching being a true profession more in depth education may be needed. Many think that teaching cannot compare to that of a career in medicine and law in terms of professionalism because it “has a shorter qualification route” (Phil Revell, Teaching not true profession, 2005, paragraph 2). Perhaps in the future more years of education will be needed to become a teacher.

Professional Versus Non-professional

A professional could be said to be a person who has an extremely developed talent or skill (Buijs, 2005). All professionals whether it be a professional dancer or doctor receive pay for what they are doing. On the other hand, a non-professional or amateur may not receive pay (Buijs, 2005). A more significant contrast is that “being a professional conveys the connotation, not only of a high level, but of a consistent level, of performance. Professional athletes or professional entertainers, for instance, can be counted on to perform in diverse, and sometimes adverse, circumstances; they can, and often do, perform regardless of personal mood, motivation, or even injury. Neither the expectations nor the level of performance of a professional is demanded of an amateur” (Buijs, 2005, p. 331). What is trying to be explained here is the fact that there is a certain standard of performance for professionals that should be met, but does not have to be met by that of an amateur or a non-professional.

What is the American Government Doing?

The American government is very involved in improving the education systems (Denlinger, 2002). However, the government may not be concerned with the right issues when it comes to teacher professionalism. “Instead of looking at the real problem-poor working conditions and low salaries- the government is arguing that we need to become tougher on our teachers, demand more in terms of work, and do more testing to see if teachers are doing their jobs” (Denlinger, 2002, p. 116). Low wages is the true dilemma in this field, which our leaders are refusing to admit (Denlinger, 2002). “Bush has proved this by his approach to another, similar problem: low morale in the armed forces. To cure that problem, has he argued that we need to demand more of our soldiers? No... Instead, Bush has decided that we need to increase the salaries of our armed forces” (Denlinger, 2002, p. 116). Denlinger went on to say, “His business logic is self-evident; the only way to draw the best talent is to pay the best wages. It’s not that the talent isn’t there to staff our armed forces-they’ve just chosen to go where the pay and appreciation matches the job’s demands” (Denlinger, 2002, p. 116). This is happening with our college graduates who are graduating with a teaching degree. These graduates choose to enter a higher-paying job and a career that they will have competitive wages, are appreciated and gain rewards. If the salaries became more competitive in education perhaps there would not be such a scarcity of teachers and “the quality of education would improve markedly” (Denlinger, 2002, p. 117).

Conclusion

In the world of education, teachers are a guiding light to students. I think teachers are miracle workers when it comes to trying to get every student to pass a test. Do doctors get all their patients to pass their tests in terms of being healthy and physically fit? If they did, I would consider doctors miracle workers as well. Teachers are also knowledge workers, transporting much knowledge while shaping the minds of our youth and thus have a responsibility and image to uphold. In today’s work force, there are many options available and college graduates are choosing careers simply because of the pay rather than choosing something that they love to do. Whether looked at as a profession or not, teachers should be respected for what they are doing just as doctors and lawyers are. In order to maintain some structure of professionalism in the educational environment, education systems need to take steps to make sure they handle this task efficiently.

According to Valeri R. Helterbran, EdD, an associate professor in the Department of Professional Studies in Education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, “identifying and engaging in professional strategies to develop one’s own level of professionalism is important to the overall understanding of this topic and may be the lynchpin that makes the difference in determining whether or not a teacher is a professional. Teachers must decide who they are and how they want to be perceived in the classroom. Becoming increasingly professional implies a commitment to change, to strengthen, and to grow as a person and as an educator. It is equally apparent that it is imperative for teachers, individually and collectively, to consider what they can do to ensure that they are practicing the art and craft of teaching in a manner that is of service to children’s achievement and society. A

more thorough understanding of the attributes of professionalism can serve as an introduction for preservice teachers and a reminder to both novice and seasoned teachers to ensure that they conduct themselves as professionally as possible. Professionals take ownership of their job responsibilities, assignments, and personal conduct. Being a professional is a matter of personally emulating and modeling the qualities we demand of our students and colleagues as scholars, contributors, and owners of personal destiny. (Valeri R. Helterbran, *Professionalism: Teachers Taking the Rein*, 2008, p. 126)”

Multiple Choice Questions

1.Many times people do not see teaching as a profession because of?

- A. Low wages
- B. Poor training
- C. Summers off
- D. Teachers not communicating

2. Angela loved to dance. She especially liked ballet and knew she wanted to concentrate on that style of dance while she was growing up. When she became old enough she tried out for the American Ballet in New York City. She got the role as Victoria

Page in the famous ballet *The Red Shoes*. Angela gets a weekly salary for what she loves to do most in life, which is ballet dancing. According to the Wikibook article, Angela is now considered a person who has

- A. An exciting pass time
- B. A neat hobby
- C. A job performing ballet
- D. A professional career

3.Profession as a noun is defined as?

- A. A person who teaches or instructs useful information.
- B. A vocation requiring knowledge of some department of learning or science.
- C. A person or thing that leads and develops ideas and skills.
- D. A person who speaks about what they are educated in.

4.Instead of entering a career in education, many colleges graduates are choosing to enter a _____ and a career that they

will have competitive wages and gain rewards.

- A. Higher-paying job
- B. Job that involves traveling
- C. Job that involves working with animals
- D. Job that involves traveling

5.Education systems as well as teachers should take steps to handle the responsibility of teachers being professional in the classroom. Which answer listed below is not one of these steps?

- A. Pay teachers adequately
- B. Maintain schools properly
- C. Treat teachers with respect

D. Give good benefits

Answers 1.A 2.D 3.B 4.A 5.D

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3.4: Training

Teacher Training: Ideal vs. Reality

By Adrienne Scott

Introduction

Teachers have the rare opportunity to mold a person's life forever. It's no wonder that with such a tremendous responsibility comes conflict. People are beginning to question if what teacher candidates are learning is effectively preparing them for their career. The question presented by this issue is clear, "do the ideal training teachers receive match with the reality they will face?" The answer however, is not as clear. Critics believe that institutions fall short when it comes to equipping teachers, not taking into account certain factors. Some of these factors are gender, technology availability, classroom experience, diversity, and social issues. On the other side are those who support institutions and their teaching programs. These supporters believe that teaching programs are sufficient and to make the programs any more specific would be detrimental to future teachers. There is no clear right or wrong answer on this issue. This chapter will serve as a source of information on the topic at hand. The goal of this chapter is to educate you on the topic so you will be able to make a more informed decision concerning teacher training, the ideal vs. the reality.

Go Teacher U.!

Teacher candidates often receive the best building blocks from their institutions. These blocks are styles, methods, and techniques, which give teacher candidates a foundation to build on. Many people criticize institutions for how they choose to prepare future teachers. The critics believe that an unreachable image of what teaching will be like is painted. In reality, institutions equip future teachers with all the tools they will need to become an effective teacher. For example, a course on integrating technology into the classroom might not be practical for teachers who will teach in inner-city schools, low budget school districts, or in communities suffering from digital divide. However, institutions realize that technology is becoming more accessible and that teachers need to learn how to be flexible and adapt to whatever school district they are in. It is the job of the institution to educate teacher candidates on the basics of teaching. Those candidates will then be able to take their problem-solving and application skills, which they also learn in college, and tweak the basics to appropriate their school.

Institutions educate future teachers on how to be effective in their classroom. The bottom line is that there is no way institutions can prepare teacher candidates for everything that might happen throughout their teaching career. The U.S. Department of Education conducted a study of teachers' reflections of their educational institutions. They found that most teachers believed "there were issues for which no college or university could have prepared them" (U.S. Department, 2008). Lisa Shipley, a seventh and eighth grade teacher in Missouri, believes that her university prepared her the best it could for the expected, but the unexpected is another story (U.S. Department, 2008). Shipley states "college did not prepare me for the student whose mother was murdered by a jealous boyfriend; for the student who witnessed a drive-by shooting; for the student who was removed from her home because of an abusive father. These realities do not exist in textbooks, yet they are, sadly, all too often the realities that people—with real lives and real problems—bring into my classroom" (U.S. Department, 2008). Teacher preparation programs prepare future teachers in an effective manner, it is unfair for third parties to criticize this preparation because there is no way which teacher candidates can be completely prepared for the emotional stress their new job will bring.

Even after participating in teacher preparation programs, individuals really must complete on the job training in order to become more prepared and effective teachers. One semester of student teaching generally does not adequately condition a future teacher in that it is impossible for them to encounter every possible conflict, just as Lisa Shipley had lamented (U.S. Department, 2008). It takes a fair bit of on-the-job training or roughly two years to become competent at classroom management, and around six to seven years to become an effective teacher (Wallis, 2008). This is where the harsh reality of the real world comes into play as many teachers struggle in their early years and consequently throw in the towel. "Between a quarter and a third of new teachers quit within their first three years on the job," and this is due to how under-prepared the teachers are and what little support they receive from their respective schools (Wallis, 2008).

Welcome To The Real World

In college, students are taught that boys and girls should be treated the same at all times however, in the classroom it is important for the teacher to make the distinction between the two groups. This distinction should not be made to favor one group over the other but to target each group with the specific teaching styles that will best reach them. David Kommer, middle levels specialist at Ashland University, does not agree with what teacher candidates learn in college. Kommer believes that it is essential for teachers to be aware of differences in gender so that they are able to be “purposeful in the treatment of each, and so they are able to send the healthiest messages” (Kommer, 2006). In fact, Kommer doesn’t even believe that boys and girls should be treated the same, “Our goal is not to try to make boys and girls the same; we tried that several decades ago. We might have more success if we teach boys and girls to respond to each other as people” (Kommer, 2006).

Most colleges now require teacher candidates to take a course in technology integration. This course is wonderful; it enlightens future teachers on how technology is necessary and shows them how to use it to enhance the curriculum. The only problem with this class is that it makes the assumption that all schools will have up-to-date computer labs with various software and technology in every classroom. The reality is that many teachers will graduate college and begin their teaching career in an inner-city school, a school that doesn’t have the resources to provide students with constant access to technology, or in a community suffering from digital divide. Digital divide is “the gap between those who benefit from digital technology and those who do not” (Smith, 2008). Digital divide may not seem that important but in reality it has a huge impact on the poverty problem around the world. “Access to digital technology greatly enhances the effectiveness and affordability of efforts to improve the water supply, improve rural health and education, generate jobs and address any of the other interrelated problems of poverty” (Smith, 2008). It is important for future teachers to be educated on digital divide and ways to close the gap.

“Everyone should be treated equal”, this is a quote that many people pride themselves on, however, in education this declaration of equality could end up harming student’s education. Teachers against prejudice (TAP), is an organization devoted to erasing prejudice in school systems. TAP believes that future teachers need to be trained “to create a level-playing field respecting the inherent right of all to self-identify rather than be labeled” (Teachers, 2008). In the classroom, not every student is equal. Not every student learns the same way or has the same experiences, and teachers who treat them as though they do explicitly hinder their learning experience. Dr. Aretha Faye Marbley, an associate professor at Texas Tech University, believes that “the future welfare and the national security of our country depends not only on how well we educate our children, but also on how well we prepare teachers for working with racially and culturally diverse learners” (Marbley, 2007).

Institutions are not properly preparing teacher candidates for their future profession if they are not altering course content to match the present workforce. When teachers first enter a classroom they need to have knowledge about some of the social problems effecting children today.

Today’s Social Issues This picture shows two high school students. One is drinking a beer and the other is pregnant. This picture is a snapshot of two major issues that teenagers are dealing with today, alcohol and sex. Effective educators need to be able to address these topics with sensitivity in a way that will reach their students.

Future teachers should have even more knowledge about the social problems affecting the specific age group they plan to teach. Melissa Luroe, a seventh and eighth grade teacher in Maryland, feels as though her institution failed to prepare her for the social issues her middle-school students were dealing with. Luroe confesses, “My children are dealing with issues I never imagined when I was a 13-year-old. AIDS, abuse, neglect, drugs, and sex are ‘buzz words’ I overhear in the hallways, classrooms, lunchroom, and library” (U.S. Department, 2008). Luroe’s college did not prepare her for handling these issues, but that will not keep her from tackling the problems, “as a teacher, mentor and friend, I have to deal with these issues every day” (U.S. Department, 2008).

Bridging The Gap

As you may recognize from the information provided on this topic, there is no right or wrong answer when it comes to figuring out if teaching training is ideal. However, choosing a stand on the issue is just the first step. Whether you support, oppose, or are just undecided on your view of teacher preparation programs, you must realize that many programs are not being finely altered. What this boils down to is that regardless of what teacher candidates believe, they must find a way to bridge the gap between the ideal and reality.

Teacher candidates can help their ideal education become more like their future reality by taking initiative. One way for them to bridge the gap is to make the most of the experiences they do have. For future teachers this mean devoting time to studying and researching their subject and grade level and then putting those efforts into application during observation and practicum. This also means that teachers should be experimenting with different techniques and methods of dealing with children during their field experiences. Another way for future teachers to take initiative is by seeking outside opportunities to work with children and gain classroom experience. For some this may mean getting a job substituting in public schools or working at a day care center while for others, it may mean getting a summer job as a camp counselor. Taking responsibility is another way teacher candidates can help bridge the gap. Future teachers should know about the social issues their students are facing. Some way to do this are by attending PTA meetings, attending school board meetings, communicating with experienced teachers and community outreach programs, or simply by watching the local news.

My opinion of whether or not institutions are properly preparing future teachers falls somewhere between the two extremes. I believe that many colleges and universities are doing a good job by equipping teachers with basics that they will be able to mold and apply to many situations. However, it would be beneficial if these programs could focus more on realities teachers will face and classroom management. Good teaching can only go so far if the teacher can't reach the children, whether its gender, technology, diversity or social issues getting in the way. That said, educators need to stop blaming their teacher preparation programs for not being ready for the work force and except some of the blame themselves. Our generation differs greatly from that of our parents, so imagine how out of touch we will be with our students if an extra effort isn't extended. I believe that this extra effort is essential in a classroom to achieve effective learning.

Multiple Choice

1. It's Mrs.Foreman's first year teaching fifth grade and she is shocked when one of students accidently drops a cigarette on the floor. She never would have expected this and she doesn't even know how to begin to remedy this problem. This sceanario is an example of what issue?
a. Gender b. Technology c. Diversity d. Digital Divide
2. In what way could Mrs.Foreman have become more ready for this problem?
a. Researched different school districts to make sure she wasn't accepting a job in a poverty-stricken area where crimes and delinquency rates tend to be higher. b. Take part in the PTA and community organizations to find out what her students are dealing with and how to takle those issues. c. Have a strict disciplinary actions in place for students who fall victim to social issues such as these.
3. Some believe that institutions do a more than adequate job at educating teachers because:
a. They teach them everything they will ever need to know. b. They teach them building blocks which teachers can then mold and apply in different situations. c. They hand them a diploma.
4. Why is it important for teachers to be aware of social issues prevalent to their student's area and age group because?
a. So that teachers make sure to ignore those issues completely. b. So that teachers are able to understand the notes they find in desks. c. So that teachers are able to connect with their students and figure out a style of teaching and interacting that will best benefit the student.
5. How can you bridge the gap between ideal and reality?
a. Use only the materials proided to you by your university or institution. b. Research the social issues that children in you intended age group and area are dealing with. c. Choose your school district carefully.

Answers

- 1.)C 2.) B 3.)B 4.)C 5.)B

Essay Question

Do you think that your educational institution is doing a good job of preparing you for your future career? What suggestions, if any, would you offer your institution to make your experience more benficial?

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3.5: Qualified

Are the Best Teachers Highly Qualified?

by Kelley Atkins

Introduction

What is teaching exactly? Some argue that it is a learned profession, others say it requires many years of training. I believe it is a combination of both. “Teaching is, or ought to be, a difficult and complex endeavor. When one considers what is expected of a teacher in terms of end results- the preservation and improvement of our culture and civilization- teaching is perhaps the most important job in a democratic society.” (Troen and Boles, 34 and 35)

Personally Qualified

Teachers are a special kind of human beings. They are willingly entering a career with minimum room for promotion, hardly any recognition from society, a dastardly amount of pay, and in many cases, unfavorable working conditions. It takes a special person to become a teacher, especially to become a good teacher. Anyone can become a teacher, hence the phrase, “Those who can’t do, teach.” In order to become an influential teacher you not only have to be highly qualified, you have to be highly dedicated. In the book “Extraordinary Teachers, The Essence of Excellent Teaching,” Fred Stephenson outlines the qualities of an extraordinary teacher:

1. Extraordinary teachers have a great passion for their work.
2. Extraordinary teachers know what to teach, how to teach, and how to improve.
3. Extraordinary teachers excel at creating exciting classroom environments.
4. Extraordinary teachers connect exceptionally well with students.
5. Extraordinary teachers challenge students to reach their full potential.
6. Extraordinary teachers get extraordinary results.

Stephenson, Introduction page xix.

Standards, degrees, laws, or any other structural requirement is not stated on this inspiring list. The essence of teaching is wanting your students to excel, genuinely caring about their success, and having the will to improve your own methods. It is a sad misconception that anyone can teach, and that it takes minimal skill and talent. To be a highly qualified teacher, one must be a dedicated, hard-working person, who is drawn to teaching through a sense of high purpose and social conscience. “They genuinely like children and want to help them achieve success.” (page 32 Troen and Boles) Aside from these personal characteristics, a highly qualified teacher should also be competent. This is the side of teaching that requires passing exams, mastering material, and holding up to government standards.

“In my opinion, mastery of the subject matter and staying current, having a teaching plan, and being organized, and developing one’s communication skills are the responsibility of *every* teacher. These are components of effective teaching that teachers owe their students.

Keith J. Karnok, “Thoughts on College Teaching”

Standards

If our teachers are to become more highly qualified in an academic sense, we should make it a priority to make the standards and/or qualifications as well as their implementation more clear and concise. In a study performed to uncover the “implementation of the highly qualified teacher provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act,” the following was found:

- While the majority of teachers were aware of the state requirements for highly qualified teachers, nearly half of the teachers said they had not received official notification of their status.
- Special education teachers were almost four times as likely to report that they were not considered highly qualified (15 percent) than were general education teachers (4 percent).

- Nearly all teachers reported taking part in content-focused professional development related to teaching reading or mathematics, but only 20 percent of elementary teachers participated in more than 24 hours of professional development on reading strategies, and only 8 percent participated in extended training in teaching mathematics.
- About half of high school mathematics teachers (49 percent) said they received no professional development focused on the study of mathematics content.
- States have been working to update their data systems, but most reported difficulty tracking some data elements and in collecting and maintaining data on teacher qualifications.
- A minority of districts provided targeted support for teachers who were not considered highly qualified. About one-third of districts reported providing increased amounts of professional development to teachers who were not highly qualified with little variation by poverty or minority level or district size.
- Almost two-thirds (63 percent) of Title I instructional paraprofessionals were identified as qualified; 28 percent did not know their status. Paraprofessionals in medium- and high-poverty schools were notably less likely to have completed two years of college or an associate degree (one of the three NCLB requirements) than were paraprofessionals in low-poverty schools.

The No Child Left Behind Act has a meaningful and potentially influential purpose, but it has not been implemented to its full degree. If teachers were actually held to the standards it provides, school systems today would be a completely different level of achievement. Some of standards set by the NCLBA are listed below:

- Elementary teachers must pass a state test demonstrating their subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading/language arts, writing, mathematics and other areas of basic elementary school curricula.
- Middle and high school teachers must demonstrate a high level of competency in each academic subject area they teach. Such demonstration can occur either through passage of a rigorous state academic subject test or successful completion of an undergraduate major, a graduate degree, coursework equivalent to an undergraduate major, or an advanced certification or credentialing.

“Good teaching requires a lifelong commitment to learning.”
by Fred Stephenson, “Extraordinary Teachers, The Essence of Learning”

The NCLBA defines “a highly qualified teacher as one who has (1) fulfilled the state’s certification and licensing requirements, (2) obtained at least a bachelor’s degree, and (3) demonstrated subject matter expertise.” Meeting these standards is very important in the process of becoming a highly qualified teacher. In order to relay information to his/her students, a teacher must be confident in their own mastering of that information. “Research shows that teacher subject-matter knowledge is greatly associated with student learning.” (wikiweb3) When a teacher is confident in their knowledge, it makes portraying that information easier and more effective. Requiring that teacher candidates pass certain tests and attain certain degrees gives further insurance of their competency.

Conclusion

To become a highly qualified teacher is no easy task, in any sense of the term. Not only do you have to meet government standards, which are evaluated and altered very frequently, you also have to meet your own standards. Starting with personal characteristics that include compassion, dedication, and patience is ideal. Combining these attributions with standards provided by a higher power only completes the model. Highly qualified teachers are indeed the best teachers, they are the only teachers. If a teacher is not highly qualified, I do not believe they are a teacher at all. An un-qualified teacher is merely someone looking to pay the bills, not change lives.

Questions

1. What percent of high school mathematics teachers said they received no professional development focused on the study of mathematics content?
 - A. 17%
 - B. 25%

C. 49%

D. 45%

2. While the majority of teachers were aware of the state requirements for highly qualified teachers, how many of the teachers said they had not received official notification of their status?

A. nearly all

B. none

C. nearly half

D. all

3. What kind of degree does the No Child Left Behind Act require for teachers?

A. Bachelor's

B. Associate's

C. Master's

D. no degree

4. Is teaching viewed as a prosperous career by society today?

A. Yes

B. No

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3.6: Direct Discovery

Direct Instruction vs. Discovery Learning

Learning Targets

The reader will...

- be able to identify the differences between discovery and direct learning and where each style stems from.
- be able to explain methods of teaching for both instruction types.
- be able to discuss the debate of which learning style is most efficient, and what educators and scholars think about each.

Introduction

Mrs. Smith escorts the students, in her kindergarten classroom, outside to the playground. She asks her students to take off their shoes; she wanted them to feel the grass between their toes, to walk on the rocks and cement, and all the things that had different textures. They spent a little time while outside, just taking in the air and observing things around them. Then she asked them to put their shoes back on and follow her in a line back into the building. On the way back into the school, Mrs. Smith asked her students questions like, “What do you see as we walk down the hall?” “What does it smell like?” “Do you hear anything?” When all of the students returned to their desks, their teacher continued asking questions for the students to brainstorm. She asked them “What color was the fence?” “Did they see any people?” Then she asked her students “what parts of your bodies did you use to get all of this information?”

Across the hall, another kindergarten teacher starts her class; she takes out a folder full of worksheets and distributes them around the classroom; on each worksheet are five square boxes, and in each square is a picture. One picture was a hand, representing touch; a nose was in another box, representing smell. The students study each box, trying to better understand what their teacher was going to teach them today. The teacher takes out some markers and begins to write and draw on the board; she explains to her students what each of the five senses is, and she has them write the words in the correct boxes as she writes them on the board. She explains in detail everything she can possibly think of that her students would need to know about the five senses, including what body parts each sense works with, what smells and tastes one may discover, and even ways some people do not have all of their senses. The teacher talks and explains as her students listen, draw and write the things she puts on the board.

Both of these teachers have taught their students the same information today, however, they each used a different method of teaching to do so. Teacher one, who took her students on a field trip, was performing discovery learning through exploration; whereas, the teacher across the hall was implementing direct instruction.

What is Direct Instruction?

Direct Instruction can also be referred to as explicit teaching; it occurs when educators teach using lectures, presentations and text books to demonstrate a lesson to their students. This type of teaching is the most common way of instruction, and includes direction by the teacher. To teach by direct instruction, you must know what you want your outcome to be; teachers must have a purpose and a specific reason for teaching the subject in order for it to be structured and well planned out (Saskatoon).

What is Discovery Learning?

“Discovery learning is a type of learning where learners construct their own knowledge by experimenting with a domain, and inferring rules from the results of these experiments (Joolingen, 1999, p.385).” In other words, this means that students actively learn through hands-on and interactive experiences. In a discovery learning atmosphere, students are free to work with little or no guidance in order to discover information (Mayer, 2004). Discovery learning focuses on the beliefs of Jean Piaget, in which students should be able to choose how they are going to learn, discover new information, and do so without

correction from an educator (Mayer, 2004; Piaget,1970). Of course, teachers would still be present in a discovery learning situation; they would monitor each student and ensure things ran smoothly.

“Each time one prematurely teaches a child something he could have discovered for himself, that child is kept from inventing it and consequently from understanding it completely.”

(Piaget, 1970, p.715)

Educator’s Preference

Most educators in mathematics and science typically instruct using discovery learning, as opposed to direct instruction, because they believe it is the best way to achieve an understanding of the subject that will stick with the student, because students learn best by doing (Klahr, 2004). “Over the years, however, some researchers and educators have challenged the argument for hands-on learning. They maintain that a more straightforward approach—known as direct instruction—has the potential to help students learn science more effectively” (Cavanagh, 2004, p.12). Some educators also believe that using discovery education for younger children works better than direct learning, because it enables the young learners to be engaged and not bored with the subjects they are learning (Klahr, 2004).

What Statistics Show

A study was conducted by the Department of Psychology at Carnegie Mellon University, in which it was discovered that “many more children learn from direct instruction than from discovery learning” (Klahr, 2004, p.661). This study was conducted on 112 third and fourth grade students and it measured their ability to acquire and retain new information. Based on this information, it is obvious that discovery learning requires some past knowledge of the subject being “discovered” in order to obtain new information. Based on a “half-century of advocacy associated with instruction using minimal guidance” or discovery learning, there has never really been any scientific evidence that proves discovery learning works better than direct instruction (Kirschner, 2006, p.83).

What Method I Would Use in My Classroom

“If we teach today, as we taught yesterday, we rob our children of tomorrow”- John Dewey

Personally, I think the ideal classroom would be one that incorporated both direct instruction and discovery learning. I think novice information could be taught using direct instruction and then supplemented by discovery learning. For example, students could be taught the basics by their teacher and then allowed to work independently to discover more about that topic. I don’t foresee a classroom being able to run smoothly when their focus is solely on discovery education, because, in my opinion, at some point direct instruction would have to occur. I believe that educators should make it a priority to incorporate activities into their classroom that allows for students to discover and explore; technology is so readily available, yet so infrequently used for classrooms; something as simple as a WebQuest could allow direct instruction and discovery learning to intermingle as one teaching method.

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Test Your Knowledge

1. Which expert is related to the concept of Discovery Learning?

- A. B.F. Skinner
- B. Carl Rogers
- C. Ivan Pavlov
- D. Jean Piaget

2. What are three tools for Direct Instruction?

- A. hands-on activities, interactive games, and lectures
- B. lectures, text books and presentations
- C. lectures, demonstrations, and interactive games
- D. text books, labs, and group discussions

3. Mrs. Heath's class is learning about volcanoes; Each student constructs an erupting volcano and discusses with the class how he did so. What is this student demonstrating?

- A. Direct Instruction
- B. Discovery Learning
- C. Explicit Learning
- D. Guided Instruction

4. What would be the most efficient way for Mrs. Heath to incorporate Discovery Learning into her classroom?

- A. Allow her students to construct a lab in which they dissect a grasshopper.
- B. Assign a chapter in the text book to read and answer questions on.
- C. Create a worksheet for her students to fill out while listening to her lecture.
- D. Write definitions on the board and let her students memorize them.

Answers: 1. D; 2. B; 3. B; 4.A

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3.7: Ethics

What does it mean to be an ethical teacher?

By: T. Burrell

Introduction

“In teaching, as in life more generally, core principles relating to virtues such as honesty, justice, fairness, care, empathy, integrity, courage, respect and responsibility should guide conduct and interpersonal relations” (Campbell, 2006, p.32). These virtues are a good description of what an ethical teacher should be, but the use of these virtues can be a difficult task when a teacher is faced with so many unpredictable situations in the classroom and in the school system. The teacher’s knowledge of what ethics is and the practice of it, will aid the teacher in making the best decision when ethical predicaments arise in their daily teaching lives.

Knowledge

Ethical knowledge is an intrinsic feature of awareness between moral and ethical principles. A teacher’s possession of these principles will allow teachers to display moral and ethical values, which includes a sense of right and wrong, treating others with respect, being objective, patient and compassionate. Embodying ethical knowledge gives the teacher the ability to practice their teaching skills with morals and ethics and not just viewing their job as being teaching only. It goes beyond the curriculum, assessment and technical conditions of the profession. The practicing of ethical knowledge by the teacher can be modeled by returning graded papers to the student in a timely manner, by being sensitive to the use of classroom materials that may offend some students, using precaution when displaying a student’s work or by selecting student achievement without bias. The use of ethical knowledge by a teacher can be expressed by the way a teacher projects the tone of his/her voice towards the student, by avoiding student embarrassment and by reminding students of how their behavior can affect other classmates. There are many ways to show how a teacher can demonstrate their ethical knowledge, but a teacher can only do but so much to implement moral and ethical behavior on a daily basis. As we may know, teaching can be a very demanding profession, with moments of chaos, frustration and unexpected events of the day. This tells us that a teacher’s reaction to these situations cannot be choreographed and why the practice of ethical knowledge can help teachers become aware of their “ethical” behavior when such events occur (Campbell).

Personal

The personal ethics for each individual teacher varies according to the teacher’s belief of what is ethical. Each teacher may believe that their interpretation of ethics is being practiced in their behavior and in their personal lives and if this is true, then he/she is demonstrating “ethical principles” and “virtues” of a “moral person” and a “moral professional (Covaleskie,2005,p. 134).” By demonstrating the characteristics of ethics and virtue in the classroom with the use of actions, attitudes and words will make a positive impact on the many students that the teacher will come into contact with throughout their teaching career. This demonstration of ethics will also let the student know, “that if I respect you, then you can respect me” (Campbell).

Classroom

Classroom ethics involve issues the teacher comes into contact with on daily basis concerning their students within the classroom. A teacher is placed in the position of deciding what is the ethical thing to do when issues such as student consideration, content coverage and assessment arises. The assessment issue or better “known as grading” should have “fair standards” that shows the student’s knowledge of the curricula. The teacher has to decide what impact the grade given, will have on the student’s future career choices, the school’s reputation and the parents of the student. The teacher also has to decide the best way to explain to a student why they received an unsatisfactory grade on a specific assignment. The explanation may not be an easy one, but it is only to help improve the student’s academic performance. The content the teacher brings into the classroom questions the teacher’s ethics of what “subject matter” they want to include in their instructions. The teacher has to decide whether there will be enough time to cover each skill of the content area and if there is, “Should some critical thinking skills be included even though my school does not require its coverage? Or, should I just leave out the difficult parts of the course content, even though the students will need it (Kienzler)?” The teacher also has to decide which actions to take, especially when considering the emotional needs of the student. Content of a subject matter that is being discussed in the classroom may reflect upon the home-life of a student whose mother and father maybe going through a divorce or the loss of a parent. How does a teacher deal with these issues in the

classroom? And how certain subject matter is taught? Each of these questions requires “that one is not only doing the right thing, but doing it in the right way, at the right time and for the right reasons” (Covaleskie, 2005, p.134).

School

The ethics of the school may not agree with the ethics of a teacher. A teacher may be faced with numerous moral problems when it concerns the school’s leadership practice of disciplining students. The teacher may question the reason behind the discipline and whether or not it will deter or increase future student behavior (Colnerud,2006,p.378). Ethical tensions do exist within schools among individual teachers (Allison,2003,p.124). A teacher may see a colleague mistreating a student and try to make a decision of whether or not to intervene in the situation. “The teacher cannot bring himself/herself to intervene; the teacher says that fear is the reason for their silence and that intervening is considered to be a breach of loyalty (Colnerud, 2006, p.378).” This is a clear example of what teachers deal with on a daily basis in relation to the ethics of their colleagues.

The National Education Association’s preamble for its code of ethics.

“The Educator, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence and nurture of the democratic principles. Essential to these goals is the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards.”

Dilemmas

Teachers encounter ethical dilemmas throughout their teaching careers. This brings up the question, “How do teachers deal with deciding what is the right or wrong thing to do when such dilemmas arise?” When a teacher is faced with ethical and moral dilemmas concerning their students and profession, they use specific codes of ethics written by many educational organizations to help them make ethical decisions. Teachers do need a guide when they are faced with the decisions of what to do if a child has a learning disability, what content matter should be taught, what should be done in defense of a student and a number of other events that will require ethical decisions. The National Education Association (NEA) has created a code of ethics for the different occupational needs of the teaching profession. The NEA created their code of ethics in 1975, which is divided into two sections. The first section lists eight ethical commitments the teacher has to the student and the second section also lists eight ethical commitments the teacher has to his/her profession(Brady, Buchotz and Keller).

National Education Association Ethics Indicators for Educators:

Commitment to the Student

Restraint of individual action and pursuit of learning

Access to varying points of view

Do not distort subject matter

Protect students from harm

Do not embarrass or disparage

Do not discriminate

Do not use professional relationship for private advantage

Do not disclose confidential information

Commitment to the Profession

Do not make false statements in application of a position

Do not misrepresent qualifications

Do not assist someone unqualified gain entry into the profession

Do not make false statements concerning a candidate’s qualifications

Do not assist a noneducator in the unauthorized practice of teaching

Do not disclose personal information about a colleague unless required by law

Do not knowingly make false statements about a colleague

Do not accept any gift or favor that might influence professional decisions

Conclusion

Possessing what it takes to be an ethical teacher can be a difficult task for many teachers, especially when he/she encounters unsuspecting events on a daily basis that will require an ethical decision, which may not be the exact right answer. Hopefully, it will be the ethical answer. This decision making is a great responsibility placed on the teacher, no matter how long one has been in the profession. One can only hope that the years or months of teaching has taught you enough to know what to do when ethical dilemmas occur in the classroom or within the school system.

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Application Questions

1. What is ethical knowledge?

Choose the best answer.

- A. Intrinsic features of awareness between moral and ethical principles.
- B. Knowing what is good or evil
- C. Practicing ethics
- D. The practice of common sense

2. When a teacher demonstrates characteristics of ethics in the classroom it causes what to occur?

Choose the best answer.

- A. Behavioral change of students
- B. Depletion of student interest
- C. Lack of class participation
- D. Positive impact on many students

3. What should teacher assessment practice include?

Choose the best answer

- A. Bias factors
- B. Fair standards
- C. Instructional objectives

D. Opinions of the teacher

4. Many teachers do not intervene when they see their colleague mistreating a student due to what factor?

Choose the best answer.

A. Confidentiality

B. Embarrassment

C. Fear

D. Respect

5. What do teachers use as a guide or reference, when they need to make an ethical decision?

Choose the best answer.

A. Code of ethics for educators

B. Law books

C. School policies

D. Teacher's code of ethics

Answer Key:

1. A

2. D

3. B

4. C

5. A

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

4: Week 2: EARLY-CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

4.1: Early Childhood Education

4.2: Pre-K

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4.1: Early Childhood Education

How can we improve early childhood education (3- and 4-year-olds) for all?

“ 90 percent of the brain has been developed by the time a child is 5 years old. ”

—Unknown

Over the past years, time and resources have been invested in order to improve the K-12 education in the United States. These efforts may be in jeopardy if more importance is not given to early education for 3- and 4- year old children. School readiness is an important factor that needs to be considered, in order to benefit the educational progress. Studies are showing that at risk children are not prepared enough to enter kindergarten, compared to high income children. One of the greatest setbacks is the lack of cohesiveness among federal and local governments when administering programs. The Good Start, Grow Smart early literacy initiative was launched by the Bush Administration in 2002. This initiative was created in order to improve children’s school readiness. To accomplish this the Federal Government intends to broaden the goals of the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and their funding (Clearinghouse on International Developments). Taking all these factors into consideration, early childhood education is a critical component in America’s effort to improve education and create a world class workforce. (A Call To Action From the Business Community).

Supporting Research

“ As states implement the No Child Left Behind Act, designed to ensure that all students are proficient in reading and math by 213-14, we also need to ensure that children enter school ready and able to succeed. Research shows, however, that far too many children enter school ill-prepared. ”

—Corporate Voices for Working Families

The National Research Council released *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, a compilation of current scientific data and knowledge regarding the development of children from birth to age five. Through this research four important findings were identified. First, it is important to understand that the development of the brain, which is affected by early experience, lays down the foundation for moral development, intelligence and emotional health. Secondly the ability for healthy early development depends on nurturing relationships. Thirdly, school readiness is greatly affected by the way children think and more importantly, how they feel. Lastly, children’s needs are not being met amongst the vastly changing society (From Neurons to Neighborhoods).

It is being discovered that by the time children enter kindergarten at the age of five, there is already a wide gap in their readiness for school. It is known that lower SES children enter kindergarten with poor skills in the major areas of learning and development (Lee and Burkam), compared to the higher SES children which are performing 60 percent higher in achievement tests. This can be attributed to many factors, including lower attendance in programs prior to entering kindergarten (Lee and Burkam).

Typically, children’s abilities are related to their families’ income levels. Yet the quality of early childhood experiences can make a tremendous difference and make a difference regardless of family characteristics. Research has shown that children of both high and low SES, who are involved in high-quality pre kindergarten programs, perform significantly higher on measures of abilities and skills that are vital to their success in school (West, Denton, and Reaney). Not only are these programs critical for low SES children but middle SES children can significantly benefit from early childhood education programs (Lee and Burkam). It is important that the existing gap between low, middle, and high SES children when entering kindergarten be reduced in order to ensure success for all students.

Principles

In order for there to be a successful early childhood education program, there must be a set of defining principles. Six main principles have been identified and will be used by The Business Roundtable (BRT) and Corporate Voice for Working Families (CVWF) to create policies and evaluate current programs. The six principles include: learning, standards, teachers, parents, accountability, partnership (A Call To Action From the Business Community).

The first principle is **learning** because in order for the system to be successful, children's learning should be the central mission. In order to accomplish this, positive learning experiences are needed to create interconnections between a child's cognitive, social and emotional development(A Call To Action From the Business Community).

The second principle is **standards**, which will ensure the quality of early childhood education systems, and alignment with state academic standards. Objective, curriculum, and research are all aspects of creating and maintaining standards of these programs.

The third principle is **teachers**; it is vital that teachers and staff possess the skills, attitudes and knowledge to help children enter school prepared and ready to succeed. This can be achieved through the employment of skills teachers with college degrees and adequate knowledge (A Call To Action From the Business Community).

The fourth principle is **parents**; parents are considered children's first teacher and these parents need to be offered high quality programs for their children to enroll in. It is key to be able to make early childhood programs accessible to all families, regardless of their socio-economic status(A Call To Action From the Business Community).

The fifth principle is **accountability**; a successful early childhood program must be accountable for measurable results. Data collection plays an important role in identifying the best practices, performance and assessment systems (A Call To Action From the Business Community).

The sixth principle is **partnerships**; this principle builds interconnecting partnerships that will govern, finance, sustain and improve the system (A Call To Action From the Business Community).

Programs

“ The access of children 3-5 years from ethnic and low- income backgrounds is a serious concern. Only 45% of children from 3-5 years from low-income families are enrolled in pre-school, compared to 75 % among high- income families. ”

There are currently a variety of programs being offered for 3 and 4 year olds. The problem is that high risk children do not have the same accessibility to these enriching programs as other children. Current programs include: head start, early head start , Pre-K and other smaller programs.

Head Start

Head start is a federal program created for children from low-income families. This preschool program is operated by local non-profit organization and are available in most counties throughout the United States (Give Your Child A Head Start). Many other services are provided in conjunction with head start such as medical care and availability to healthy meals. Head start is designed to assist all children in succeeding, enriched with development activities and parent involvement to ensure progress among the participants. Early head start was created as a predecessor to head start, to further ensure school readiness when children enter preschool and Kindergarten. This program believes that children living in high- risk environments need additional aid and support to ensure healthy development. The gaps found in children's social and cognitive abilities are present even prior to their entrance into head start programs at the age of four (Early Head Start Works). Thus this program was created for 3 year old children at high-risk, in order to further ready them for head start and other preschool programs. Although this is a high quality program made available to low SES families, less than three percent of these children are being served by the program (Early Head Start Works).

Pre- K

Pre-K is a state funded program available to three and four year olds in the U.S. The Pre-K program is equipped with well qualified teachers, and different levels of funding through states. Yet only about 15 percent of children eligible are taking advantage of the Pre- K program (Pre-K Now). Pre-K is a high quality program with many researched benefits. It creates successful students , responsible adults and stronger communities (The Benefits of High-Quality Pre-K). The Chicago Longitudinal Study, has provided data regarding the benefits of Pre- K programs. The participants of this program have higher high school graduation rates, do better on standardized tests, and have reduced grade repetitions (Chicago Longitudinal Study).

Benefit vs. Cost

According to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), the benefits of providing quality preschool education to 3- and 4- year olds outweighs the cost of providing such services (Cost of Providing Quality Preschool). The estimated return for every dollar invested is \$7, based on the reduced costs of remedial education and increased earnings. NIEER estimates that the average benefits will be \$25,000 per child, as the result of a universally accessible program for 3- and 4-year-olds. The benefits of such a program considerably outnumber the costs of creating and providing this program.

Principles to Policy

“ In 1990, the nation’s governors and the Administration set as their first National Goal that “ By the year 2000, all children will start school ready to learn. ”

There are many early education programs available, funded through many different sources. Yet these programs are not reaching the children they need to reach. Some programs do not meet the high quality standards, and many programs are simply not as accessible as they should be. Taking into consideration the core principles of a successful early childhood education system, policies need to be implemented in order to see the fruition of these principles. These principles can be used to formulate interconnected state and federal policies, in order to offer a more cohesive early education program for all(A Call To Action From the Business Community).

Conclusion

Future progress of the current education system in America is dependant on the implementation of an early education program. As research has demonstrated, there are tremendous gaps between the school readiness of children from varying social economic backgrounds. In order for all children to be prepared for kindergarten, there must be a universal accessibility to a proper policy driven early childhood education system.

Multiple Choice Questions

Click to reveal the answer.

How would the principle of accountability be applied to an early education childhood program?

- A. Accountability would hold the program responsible for the results it produced.
- B. Research is necessary in order to create accountability.
- C. Accountability can not be found in such a program because there are no measurable results.
- D. both A. and B.

A. Accountability would hold the program responsible for the results it produced.

Why are some children ready to learn and succeed in kindergarten while others are not?

- A. Low SES children are not enrolled in high quality pre-school programs.
- B. The quality of their early childhood experiences.
- C. Income of the family, directly relates to poor readiness.
- D. All of the above.

D. All of the above.

What needs to happen in order to translate principles into policy ?

- A. The state should have complete power over early childhood education, and dictate all policy.
- B. State and Federal resources work together in order to insure policies, that will maintain a proper early education program.
- C. Policy should be created in order to assess the quality of programs.
- D. Both B and C.

D. Both B and C.

Why are current programs not as affective as they should be ?

- A. Low accessibility.
- B. The quality of the programs do not meet standards.
- C. Low percentages of high risk children are enrolling in the programs.
- D. A, B, and C.

D. A, B, and C.

How can a community benefit from a universal early childhood education system?

- A. Successful students become productive adults.
- B. Parents can work longer hours if children are at school.
- C. There are no benefits for the community.
- D. None of the above.

A. Successful students become productive adults.

The central mission in a child's life should be learning, and one way to achieve a lifetime love for learning there should be positive learning experiences. What do positive learning experiences create for a child?

- A. An interconnection between family and social development.
- B. An interconnection between their cognitive development.
- C. No real connection at all.
- D. An interconnection between their emotional, social, and cognitive development.

D. An interconnection between their emotional, social, and cognitive development.

Pre-K programs allow children to form lasting knowledge-based and commonsense-based skills that will help them later on in life. What BEST describes the kind of people these children most likely will become?

- A. A dropout.
- B. A successful adult with lots of money.
- C. A successful student and responsible adult.
- D. A strong community leader.

C. A successful student and responsible adult.

Which principle will allow all proceeding programs to succeed?

- A. The principle of teaching.
- B. The principle of partnerships.
- C. The principle of parents.
- D. The principle of learning.

B. The principle of partnerships.

Essay Question

Click to reveal sample responses.

What is the importance of providing early childhood education for 3- and 4-year-olds?

There are a vast number of importance's in providing early childhood education for 3- and 4-year-olds. Through research it has been found that many high risk children are not prepared and ready when they enter kindergarten. The consequences of this include, children that fall further and further behind, and children that are never able to catch up to their counterparts. Children develop an enormous amount of knowledge through experiences and interaction. By the time they entire into kindergarten a large part of their development has been established. Thus it is necessary to enroll children in preschool programs at ages 3 and 4. This will ensure school readiness among lower SES children, and will benefit everyone.

There are many reasons and issues as to why pre-elementary education is important to three and four year old children's' development. The first key factor for putting a child in an educational program early is to offer them the beginning elements of socialization. Interacting with peers teaches them a multitude of social skills that they will need to develop at some point in their lives. It also exposes them to small doses of diversity at a young, impressionable age. This helps a child learn tolerance early in life so that they do not become too sheltered. Another important advantage to early education programs is that they will be taught critical academic basics earlier on in life than those who may not attend. Teaching young children things like counting, alphabet basics and education based motor-skills early will possibly give them the educational edge they may need to succeed further in life. Moral lessons are also learned earlier in life; things like sharing, right from wrong, and obedience. —Tiffany Sullivan

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4.2: Pre-K



The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life. – Plato

The Pros and Cons of Pre-K

By Andrea Simmons

Learning Targets

The Readers Will Be Able To:

- Identify arguments that support pre-kindergarten education.
- Identify arguments that oppose pre-kindergarten education.
- Understand the vital role teachers have in the success of a pre-kindergarten program.
- Understand the significance of parental involvement in measuring long-term academic gains for children who attend pre-kindergarten.

Introduction

For information on the history of Pre-Kindergarten in the United States visit

http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/site/c.kjJXJ5MPlwE/b.2556065/k.E644/Prek_What_the_research_shows.htm#history

One of the most critical decisions a parent will make is when and where to begin their child's formal education. Various schools of thought exist on the matter ranging from beginning a traditional academic curriculum once the child is toilet trained to retaining the child in the home so the parent can home school. A commonality exists in all cases and that is the expectation for the preschooler to gain a solid foundation in academics, social interaction, and cognitive functioning in order to enable their future scholastic achievements. Before enrolling a child in any sort of preschool program, it is imperative the parents evaluate their child's readiness and define their expectations for the preschool program. In a 2005 study conducted in Charlottesville, Virginia, researchers found dissimilarities between the expectations of teachers and the expectations of parents for preschool children (Lane, Stanton-Chapman, Jamison & Phillips, 2007). Their findings suggest the importance of communication between teachers and parents and the necessity of making the child aware of the desires of both (Lane et al., 2007). A child's success in any early childhood education program hinges on the guidance given to them by their parents and teachers.

The Pros

Potential for Early Identification

Proponents of pre-kindergarten education identify the potential for early identification of learning disabilities as a basis for their position. Early identification increases the likelihood the child will achieve greater academic gains and avoid

the development of secondary problems (Steele, 2004). These secondary problems include “frustration, anxiety, behavior problems, greater academic deficiencies, and subsequent motivation problems” (Steele, 2004, pp. 75-76). As with any prospective problem, an early diagnosis increases the chances of improvement. Thus, experts in various fields agree the ages between birth and five are crucial for early detection of a child's learning deficits (Steele, 2004).

The Early Impact (EI) Program

According to Larmar and Gatfield (2007), “The Early Impact (EI) Program is an early intervention and prevention program for reducing the incidence of conduct problems in pre-school aged children” (p. 703). A 2006 study regarding the effectiveness of the program surveyed 455 preschool children and found significant gains in the management of behavior problems in pre-kindergarten students (Larmar & Gatfield, 2007). Additionally, parents, teachers, and students all acknowledged a positive regard for the EI program (Larmar & Gatfield, 2007). Implications of such research suggest the possibility for implementation in preschools across the country with the prospect to negate behavior problems in a child prior to them entering kindergarten thus reducing the need for further discipline at the elementary school level.

Greater Academic Gains/Closing the Gap

It has been widely noted that significant academic gaps exist for children of low socioeconomic status and varied multicultural backgrounds (Perez-Johnson & Maynard, 2007). According to Perez-Johnson and Maynard (2007), “Our focus on the period of early childhood stems from two critical research-based observations. First, early childhood is when achievement gaps first emerge. Second, early childhood represents an optimal period for intervention, because gaps compound and become more costly and difficult to address as time passes by” (p. 588). It is their belief that if a child from a disadvantaged background can be reached at an early point, then it is plausible they will enter kindergarten on a “level playing field” (Perez-Johnson & Maynard, 2007). Although it seems Caucasian children are more likely to be enrolled in preschool programs assessed to be of better quality, African-American and Hispanic children are still benefiting greatly from their attendance in government sponsored programs such as Head Start.

“Public funding of early education programs is probably already reducing ethnic and racial gaps. Large shares of Hispanic and black children are attending Head Start; as an upper bound, we estimate that the black-white test score gap at school entry might be as much as 24 percent larger in the absence of Head Start” (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2005, p. 187).

Proponents of a universal pre-kindergarten program cite the potential to balance the academic performance levels of all U.S. children as a paramount purpose to substantiate their cause.

The Cons

Pre-K Isn't Cost Effective

With the recent presidential election, this topic has been thrust to the center of a national debate. Critics question spending scarce state and federal resources on the education of preschoolers when students in upper grade levels are not performing as expected. In a recent Wall Street Journal article, two contributors from the Reason Foundation presented evidence against President Obama's claim that “every dollar spent on preschool will produce a 10-fold return” (Dalmia & Snell, 2008). It is their assertion a universal preschool program would be of little value until the failures of the K-12 system can be repaired (Dalmia & Snell, 2008). In Virginia, only 13 percent of those children enrolled in preschool attend a state funded program (VA Snapshot, 2009). Thus, parents who do not meet the guidelines for a state funded program are left to bear the financial burden of enrolling their child in a private preschool. Critics assert that whether the burden is assumed by the state or the parent the gains do not substantiate the cost.

Lack of Parental Involvement

Opponents of mandatory pre-kindergarten contend instruction becomes less advantageous if concepts learned are not reinforced in the home by the caregivers. A study including 77 children attending a Head Start program examined the relationship between a child's language acquisition skills and “parental nurturance” (Merlo, Bowman & Barnett, 2007).

Researchers followed up with the 77 students approximately four years later and found those who lived in a more loving home environment with greater parental involvement displayed greater gains in their early reading skills (Merlo et al., 2007). Unfortunately, no universal preschool program in the world can compel parents to maintain an active interest in their child's academic progress if they choose to be estranged from the learning process.

Inappropriate Curriculum

Currently, preschools, especially private ones, vary widely on the type of programs implemented in their institutions. Additionally, many early childhood educators are not trained to differentiate instruction for students who perform on either end of the academic spectrum. While much focus remains on the early childhood special education, those students who may later be categorized as gifted are left behind. Also, those students characterized as “twice-exceptional preschoolers” can often be overlooked in the preschool classroom. This term refers to those students who may have academic deficits in one area but show extraordinary abilities in another (Chamberlin, Buchanan & Vercimak, 2007). Recommendations for the improvement of preschool curriculum include the merging of special education and gifted education methods to reach children at every sector of the academic continuum (Chamberlin et al., 2007).

Conclusion

In examining the plethora of opinions on early childhood education, certain factors must exist in order for a child to attain lasting academic benefits from their pre-kindergarten instruction. These include open communication among teachers, parents, and students, clearly defined expectations for the young pupils, proper training of early childhood educators, and ample parental involvement. With such components in place, children can derive many advantages from their attendance in pre-kindergarten program including possible early identification of learning disabilities, a decrease in problematic behaviors, and a more level playing field. However, since each child is different, every case needs to be considered on an individual basis with the well-being of the child remaining the primary focus.

As a parent who has researched the subject in depth on behalf of my own child, I would like to offer the following advice for others now making similar decisions. First, know your child. This sounds simple but some programs focus on social growth while others stress academic gains. Enroll your child in a program that best suits them. Second, evaluate your options based on cost, transportation availability, accreditation, and any other elements you find important in a preschool program. Prior to enrollment, interview the director, observe the classroom your child would join, and, if possible, speak with your child's prospective teacher to gain a sense of his or her teaching philosophies. Lastly, I would advocate you trust your instincts both as a parent and as a current or future educator. If the program you are considering does not seem to fit your child's needs, then find one that does. Likewise, if you feel teaching your child the basic skills from home is most beneficial, you should provide ample opportunity for socialization through playgroups and work diligently from home to ensure your child is prepared for kindergarten. Simply, a mandatory pre-kindergarten is not the answer. The answer lies in allowing parents to make decisions based upon the best interest of their child and trusting their determinations.

Q & A

1. Which of the following IS NOT one of the arguments for pre-kindergarten education?
 - a) A decrease in behavior problems as the student enters elementary school
 - b) Lessening parent responsibility for child's academic gains
 - c) Possible early identification of learning disabilities
 - d) The leveling of the playing field for children from disadvantaged backgrounds
2. Which of the following IS NOT one of the arguments against pre-kindergarten education?
 - a) Costs more substantial than academic gains

- b) Inadequate parental involvement and/or nurturance
- c) Lack of adequate curriculum to service needs of ALL students
- d) Possible early identification of learning disabilities

3. Mrs. Smith teaches 4-year old Zachary who exhibits great ability in phonemic awareness but has a documented disability, ADHD. In order to best suit his individual needs, Mrs. Smith wants to utilize the most beneficial research-based teaching strategies available. As a colleague, what sort of advice would you give Mrs. Smith?

- a) Combine both special education and gifted education methods to reach this twice-exceptional preschooler
- b) Focus on Zachary's advanced early literacy skills and hope the behavior corrects itself
- c) Treat Zachary the same as all the other students so as not to stigmatize him
- d) Use positive reinforcement techniques to counteract Zachary's negative ADHD related behaviors

4. One of your brightest 4-year old students, Sophia, seems to grasp number recognition during your lessons at school. Since she is so interested in numbers, you send home worksheets so she can continue to practice while not at school. However, you have begun to notice that after the weekends Sophia returns to school with the worksheets blank and displays little improvement in her overall counting skills. What additional factor seems to be at play in this situation?

- a) Sophia does too many extracurricular activities on the weekend to complete worksheets
- b) Sophia is not receiving the parental nurturing she needs from her single mother who works two jobs
- c) Sophia is probably just not as interested as she appeared to be in class
- d) Sophia may have a learning disability in math

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Answers

1. b) Preschool doesn't lessen a parent's role in their child's academic success.
2. d) Early identification of learning disabilities is an argument for pre-kindergarten education.
3. a) Although Zachary has multiple needs, none of them should be ignored. Mrs. Smith should research twice-exceptional students and utilize both special and gifted education tactics with this student.
4. b) Sophia does not appear to be receiving reinforcement of concepts learned within the home. Therefore, she is not retaining the information as expected.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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- 5.10: APA Formatting: The Basics
- 5.2: Appendix C: The Reflective Practitioner
- 5.3: Why Is APA Documentation Important?
- 5.4: APA Order of Major Sections
- 5.5: APA Title Page Formatting
- 5.6: APA First Main Body Page Formatting
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- 5.9: Creating APA References Entries

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5.1: Library and Research Sources



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5.10: APA Formatting: The Basics

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5.2: Appendix C: The Reflective Practitioner

The experience in reflective teaching is that you must plunge into the doing, and try to educate yourself before you know what it is you're trying to learn.

—Donald Schön, 1987

Donald Schön, a philosopher and educational researcher, makes an important observation: learning to teach often means making choices and taking actions without knowing in advance quite what you need to learn or what the consequences will be. The problem, as we have pointed out more than once, is that classroom events are often ambiguous and ambivalent, in that they usually serve more than one purpose. A teacher compliments a student's contribution to a discussion: at that moment she may be motivating the student, but also focusing classmates' thinking on key ideas. Her comment functions simultaneously as behavioral reinforcement, information, and expression of caring. At that moment complimenting the student may be exactly the right thing to do. Or not: perhaps the praise causes the teacher to neglect the contributions of others, or focuses attention on factors that students cannot control, like their ability instead of their effort. In teaching, it seems, everything cuts more than one way, signifies more than one thing. The complications can make it difficult to prepare for teaching in advance, though they also make teaching itself interesting and challenging.

The complications also mean that teachers need to learn from their own teaching by reflecting (or thinking about the significance of) their experiences. In the classrooms, students are not the only people who need to learn. So do teachers, though what teachers need to learn is less about curriculum and more about students' behavior and motivation, about how to assess their learning well, and about how to shape the class into a mutually supportive community.

Thinking about these matters begins to make a teacher a reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983), a professional who learns both *from* experience and *about* experience. Becoming thoughtful helps you in all the areas discussed in this text: it helps in understanding better how students' learning occurs, what motivates students, how you might differentiate your instruction more fully, and how you can make assessments of learning more valid and fair.

Learning to reflect on practice is so important, in fact, that we have referred to and illustrated its value throughout this book. In addition we devote this entire appendix to how you, like other professional teachers, can develop habits of reflective practice in yourself. First, we describe what reflective practice feels like as an experience, and offer examples of places, people, and activities that can support your own reflection on practice. Then we discuss how teachers can also learn simply by observing and reflecting on their own teaching systematically, and by sharing the results with other teachers and professionals. This is an activity we mentioned in this book previously; we call it *teacher research* or *action research*. As you will see, reflective practice not only contributes to teachers' ability to make wise decisions, but also allows them to serve as effective, principled advocates on behalf of students.

Resources for professional development and learning

At some level reflection on practice is something you must do for yourself, since only you have had your particular teaching experiences, and only you can choose how to interpret and make use of them. But this rather individual activity also benefits from the stimulus and challenge offered by fellow professionals. Others' ideas may differ from your own, and they can therefore help in working out your own thoughts and in alerting you to ideas that you may otherwise take for granted. These benefits of reflection can happen in any number of ways, but most fall into one of four general categories:

- talking and collaborating with colleagues
- participating in professional associations
- attending professional development workshops and conferences
- reading professional literature

In the next sections we explore what each of these activities has to offer.

Colleagues as a resource

Perhaps the simplest way to stimulate reflections about your own teaching is to engage fellow teachers or other colleagues in dialogue (or thoughtful conversation) about teaching and learning: What do you think of this kind of experience? Have you ever

had one like it yourself, and what did you make of it? Note that to be helpful in stimulating reflection, these conversations need to be largely about educational matters, not about personal ones (“What movie did you see last night?”). Dialogues with individual colleagues have certain advantages to more complex or formal professional experiences. Talking with an individual generally allows more participation for both of you, since only two people may need to express their views. It also can provide a measure of safety or confidentiality if your conversation partner is a trusted colleague; sometimes, therefore, you can share ideas of which you are not sure, or that may be controversial.

A somewhat more complex way of stimulating reflection is group study. Several teachers at a school gather regularly to bring themselves up to date on a new curriculum, for example, or to plan activities or policies related to a school-wide theme (e.g. “the environment”). Group meetings often result in considerable dialog among the members about the best ways to teach and to manage classrooms, as well as stories about students’ behavior and learning experiences. For a beginning teacher, group study can be a particularly good way to learn from experienced, veteran teachers.

Sharing of ideas becomes even more intense if teachers collaborate with each other about their work on an extended basis. Collaboration can take many forms; in one form it might be “team teaching” by two or more teachers working with one group of students, and in another form it might be two or more teachers consulting regularly to coordinate the content of their courses. Collaborations work best when each member of the team brings responsibilities and expertise that are unique, but also related to the other members’ responsibilities. Imagine, for example, a collaboration between Sharon, who is a middle-years classroom teacher, and Pat, who is a resource teacher—one whose job is to assist classroom teachers in working with students with educational disabilities or special needs. If Pat spends time in Sharon’s classroom, then not only will the students benefit, but they both may learn from each other’s presence. Potentially, Pat can learn the details of the middle-years curriculum and learn more about the full range of students’ skills—not just those of students having difficulties. Sharon can get ideas about how to help individuals who, in a classroom context, seem especially difficult to help. Achieving these benefits, of course, comes at a cost: the two teachers may need to take time not only for the students, but also to talk with each other. Sometimes the time-cost can be reduced somewhat if their school administrators can arrange for a bit of extra planning and sharing time. But even if this does not happen, the benefits of collaboration will be very real, and often make the investment of time worthwhile.

Professional associations and professional development activities

Another way to stimulate reflection about teaching is by joining and participating in professional associations— organizations focused on supporting the work of teachers and on upholding high standards of teaching practice. Exhibit 1 lists several major professional associations related to education and their Internet addresses. Most of them are composed of local branches or chapters serving the needs of a particular city, state, or region.

Exhibit 1: A selection of professional associations related to education

- [American Association for the Mentally Retarded \(AAMR\)](#)
- [Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance \(AAHPERD\)](#)
- [Association for Experiential Education \(AEE\)](#)
- [Association for Retarded Citizens \(ARC\)](#)
- [ENC Online Resources for Math and Science Education](#)
- [National Association for Bilingual Education \(NABE\)](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#)
- [National Council for Teachers of Mathematics \(NCTM\)](#)
- [National Council for the Social Studies \(NCSS\)](#)
- [National Council for Teachers of English \(NCTE\)](#)
- [National Science Teachers Association](#)
- [Organization of American Historians \(OAH\)](#)

To achieve their purposes, a professional association provides a mixture of publications, meetings, and conferences intended for the professional development of educators, including classroom teachers. Typically the publications include either a relatively frequent newsletter or a less frequent journal focused on issues of practice or research. Very large associations often publish more than one newsletter or journal, each of which is focused on a particular topic or type of news (for example, the National Education Association in the United States publishes eight separate periodicals). Some also publish online journals (there are several listed as

part of Exhibit 2 or online versions of print journals. Whatever format they take, professionally sponsored publications stimulate thinking by discussing issues and dilemmas faced by professional educators, and sometimes also by presenting recent educational research and the recommendations for teaching that flow from that research. We discuss ways of using these publications further in the next section of this chapter

Exhibit 2: A sampling of journals related to professional education

- [CSS Journal: Computers in the Social Studies](#)—dedicated to the encouragement of the use of computers and related technology in K-12 social studies classrooms.
- [Education Policy and Evaluation](#)—published by the College of Education at Arizona State University
- [Educational Theory](#)—publishes work in the philosophy of education and other disciplines.
- [Harvard Educational Review](#)—quarterly journal that provides an inter-disciplinary forum for innovative thinking and research in education.
- [Journal of Computing in Higher Education](#)—publishes articles that contribute to our understanding of the issues, problems, and research associated with instructional technology
- [Revista Iberoamericana de Educacion—Revista de la OEI.](#)
- [Scholarly Electronic Journals](#)—Trends and Attitudes: A Research Proposal

Meetings and conferences sponsored by a professional association also take a variety of forms. Depending on the size of the association and on the importance of the topic, a meeting could be as short as a one half-day workshop or as long as a full week with many sessions occurring simultaneously. Sometimes, too, an association might sponsor a more extended course—a series of meetings focused on one topic or problem of concern to teachers, such as classroom management or curriculum planning. In some cases, the course might carry university credit, though not always.

As you might expect, the size of a professional association makes a difference in kinds of professional development experiences it can provide. In general, the smaller the association, the more exclusively it focuses on local news and educational needs, both in its publications and in its meetings or other activities. At a professional development workshop sponsored by a local teachers' association, for example, you are relatively likely to see colleagues and acquaintances not only from your own school, but from other neighboring schools. Locally sponsored events are also more likely to focus on local issues, such as implementing a new system for assessing students' learning within the local schools. In general, too, local events tend to cost less to attend, in both time and money.

By the same token, the larger the association, the more its professional development opportunities are likely to focus on large-scale trends in education, such as the impact of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation we discussed in Chapter 1 or the latest trends in using computer technology for teaching. Conferences or other professional development events are more likely to span several days and to be located outside the immediate town or region whether you live and work. You may therefore see fewer of your everyday colleagues and acquaintances, but you may also have a greater incentive to make new acquaintances whose interests or concerns are similar to your own. The event is more likely to feature educators who are well-known nationally or internationally, and to call attention to educational trends or issues that are new or unfamiliar.

Whether large or small, the activities of professional associations can stimulate thinking and reflecting about teaching. By meeting and talking with others at a meeting of an association, teachers learn new ideas for teaching, become aware of emerging trends and issues about education, and confront assumptions that they may have made about their own practices with students. Professional meetings, conferences, and workshops can provide these benefits because they draw on the expertise and experience of a wide range of professionals—usually wider than is possible within a single school building. But compared simply to talking with your immediate colleagues, they have a distinct disadvantage: they take effort and a bit of money to attend, and sometimes they are available at convenient times. Well-balanced professional development should therefore also include activities that are available frequently, but that also draw on a wide range of expertise. Fortunately, an activity with these features is often easily at hand: the reading of professional publications about educational research and practice.

Reading and understanding professional articles

Although publications about educational issues and research can take many forms, they tend to serve three major purposes in some sort of combination. A publication could either (1) provide a framework for understanding teaching and learning, (2) offer advice

about how to teach, or (3) advocate particular ideas or practices about education. Benefiting from a professional publication depends partly on understanding which of these purposes a particular article or book is emphasizing.

Three purposes of educational publications

Consider the first purpose, to provide a framework for understanding teaching and learning (Hittleman and Simon, 2005). A “framework” in this context means a perspective or general viewpoint for understanding specific events and actions. They are much like the theories described earlier in this book, though not always as formal or broad. A published article might propose, for example, a way of understanding why certain students are disrespectful in spite of teachers’ efforts to prevent such behavior (perhaps they are reinforced by peers for being disrespectful). It might offer evidence supporting this perspective. In doing so, the author provides a sort of “theory of disrespectful behavior,” though he or she may not call it a theory explicitly.

A second purpose is to offer advice about appropriate teaching practices. An article intended for this purpose, for example, might suggest how to introduce reading instruction to first graders, or how to use fiction to teach high school history, or how to organize a class to include a student with a disability. Often giving such advice overlaps with the first purpose, providing a framework for understanding, since thinking about an educational issue in a particular way may imply certain ways of dealing with it in practice.

A third purpose of a published article is to advocate ideas and persuade others to take actions benefiting students and society. It might take a position about important issues in education: Is it a good idea or not to retain (or hold back) a student in grade level for another year if the student fails the curriculum the first time? Should schools teach about sexuality? Should girls learn science in classrooms separate from boys? In advocating for ideas or policies about such matters, the article may express concern about what is good, ethical or desirable in education, not just about what is factually true or practical. The author may seek explicitly to persuade readers of the author’s point of view. These features do not mean, however, that you need to give up thinking for yourself. On the contrary, when reading an advocacy-oriented article, reflection may be especially important.

Whatever its purpose—understanding, advice, or advocacy—an article or book about a professional issue can stimulate thinking about what you know and believe about teaching and learning. It should therefore create, rather than undermine, your individuality as a teacher. Think of professional reading as a dialogue or conversation about education: some of the comments in the conversation will probably be more helpful than others, but each participant contributes somehow, even if none can give a final answer or everlasting truth. It is the same with publications; some may be more helpful than others, but none will be so perfect that you can afford to cease further reading or further thinking. If you are about to begin a teaching career, for example, you may be especially interested in anything published about classroom management, but less interested in the problems of administering schools or in the political issues that usually accompany educational systems. Yet some publications may discuss these latter issues anyway, and eventually you may find yourself more concerned about them than at the start of a career. Your job, as a reflective teacher, will be sort out the currently useful articles (or parts of articles) from ones you cannot use immediately.

To experience educational publications in this way, however, you must think of the authors as your collaborators as well as general authorities. As a reader, you need to assume that you are entitled to consider an author’s ideas, but not obligated to accept it without journals related to professional education question. There are several strategies for developing this attitude, but to keep the discussion focused, we will look at just two. We have already discussed the first strategy, which is to understand the purposes of any particular piece of research which you encounter, in order to assess its current usefulness to your daily work and your long-term professional goals. We have already indicated several general purposes of educational research publications, but we will go into more detail about this in the next section. The second strategy for relating to authors as collaborators is to think about how you yourself might contribute to professional knowledge by engaging in research of your own, even as a classroom teacher—an activity often called action research (Mills, 2006; Stringer, 2007). At the end of this chapter we discuss what action research involves, and how you might consider using it.

Authors’ assumptions about readers

Authors of professional articles and books also make assumptions about their readers, and it helps to be aware of these while you read. The assumptions affect the style, content, and significance of the author’s ideas in ways that are both obvious and subtle.

One assumption is about the response which an author expects from you, the reader: does he or she expect you actually to do something new, or simply to consider doing something new? Or does the author just want you to be aware of a new idea? Consider, for example, an article reviewing best practices about inclusion of students with special needs. The author may imply, or even urge

you to take a moral position: you should include these students, the author may seem to say. But in a different article—one recommending particular teaching practices—the author may merely ask you to think about alternatives to your normal ways of teaching. Certain strategies worked under certain teaching conditions, the author says, so simply consider whether they might work for you as well.

A second, less obvious difference among professional publications is in their un-stated assumptions about prior experiences and attitudes of readers. This assumption may be either helpful or frustrating, depending on your actual prior background. A piece intended as a “framework for understanding” may assume, for example, that you are familiar with basic theories of learning already. If you have read and understood what we outlined in Chapter 2 of this book, the article may turn out to be relatively accessible or understandable to you even if you have relatively little experience in actual classroom teaching, and even if you have never studied learning theories in detail. The article might seem more accessible than you expect because, for example, it focuses primarily on how teacher’s praise affects students’ learning, an idea with which you may be somewhat familiar already.

On the other hand, a professional publication may assume that you have taught school for a number of years already, or that you are at least familiar with classroom life from the point of view not of students, but of a teacher. An author writing about “withitness” (discussed in Chapter 7), for example, may make this assumption, since the concept originated by observing teachers managing large group classroom activities. If you yourself are experienced at actual teaching, reading about withitness may trigger a lot of questions about just how withit teachers are able to be in practice, and about whether in fact they always need to be withit. You can also ask yourself these questions even if you have not yet been a teacher yourself, of course, but they may seem less immediate or urgent.

A professional article intended to advocate for a particular educational policy or practice may make very different assumptions about you as a reader. It may assume, for example, that you do in fact enjoy persuading others of your point of view, even when others initially disagree or react indifferently. This sort of assumption may show up as much in what the writing omits, as in what it includes: if the term cooperative learning activity is used without explanation, for example, the researcher may be assuming not only that you are the sort of person—perhaps a teacher—who knows what that term means already, but also that you already believe in the value of cooperative learning and are motivated to explain its value to others.

In making these distinctions among published articles, keep in mind a point we made at the outset: that an individual article usually serves more than one purpose at a time and makes more than one assumption about your prior knowledge and about how you are supposed to respond to the article. The differences are only about emphasis. To illustrate these ideas about the purposes and effects of research, look in the next section at three examples of actual published articles relevant to education. The studies are not a full cross-section of educational research or publications, but they do suggest some of the variety possible (and necessary) among them. Each example serves a mixture of purposes, but also emphasizes one purpose in particular (perspective-taking, teaching recommendations, or advocacy) described earlier. The authors of each example also make particular assumptions about you, the reader—about the intellectual work which the authors expect you to do and about the motivations which they assume you have or hope that you will acquire. For each example, we describe the reactions of one of us (Kelvin Seifert) as he read the article.

Example #1: How do children acquire moral commitments?

In 1997, Herbert Saltzstein and several colleagues published a research-oriented article about how children acquire moral beliefs (Saltzstein, et al., 1997). The group of researchers were all graduate students and professors of psychology, working mostly at the City University of New York. When Kelvin read of their affiliation with psychology, he suspected that they would talk about moral beliefs in general, and not necessarily about moral issues in classrooms, such as cheating or treating classmates with care and respect. Still, the article interested Kelvin as a former teacher and current university professor, because he had long been concerned with fostering qualities like integrity, honesty, cooperation, and loyalty in students. If Kelvin could find out about the mechanism or process by which children acquire mature moral beliefs, he reasoned, maybe he could modify his teaching to take advantage of that knowledge.

So Kelvin began reading the article. He discovered some parts were challenging and required careful reflection, whereas others were easier to read. One of the most challenging passages came almost immediately, in the second and third paragraphs; these paragraphs, it seemed, required a bit of prior knowledge about theories of moral development. But Kelvin was willing to

concentrate more fully on these paragraphs, because he expected that they might clarify the rest of the study. Here are the paragraphs, and some of Kelvin's thoughts as he read them:

<p>Initial problem: We began by re-examining the phenomenon of heteronomy, Piaget's assertion (1932/1965) following Kant (1785/1959) that young children equate moral obligation with deference to authority when justifying their moral judgments. The concept is important because it is central to the organismic account of moral development as a series of differentiations and integrations.... [p. 37]</p>	<p>This was one of the difficult paragraphs, perhaps especially because Kelvin had never read the specific book by Piaget or by the philosopher Kant. But Kelvin did recall reading, at various times over the years, about Piaget's views on moral development. Piaget believed that at first, children define morality in terms of what adults think: an action is "good" if and only if adults (e.g. parents) consider it good, and "bad" if and only if adults consider it bad. This is the idea of "heteronomy" to which Saltzstein is referring. Children, in this view, take quite awhile to develop or "grow" into truly autonomous moral beliefs. Autonomous beliefs form slowly out of earlier beliefs, in the way that a young plant or animal might grow. This is the "organismic account of moral development" that Saltzstein is talking about.</p>
<p>...This account has been challenged by Turiel's domain theory (Turiel, 1983). According to Turiel and his colleagues, even young children intuitively distinguish moral from conventional rules. [p. 37]</p>	<p>Here was an idea that was intriguing! Saltzstein and his colleagues were pointing to research (by the person cited, named Turiel) that suggests that even preschoolers know the difference between truly moral rules and merely conventional rules. Apparently they believe, for example, that it would be wrong to steal toys or to hit someone, even if adults gave you permission to do so. But apparently they also know that it would be OK for traffic lights to use different colors—for red to mean "go" and green to mean "stop"—provided that everyone agreed on changing the rule. That is what the researcher named Turiel apparently meant by distinguishing convention from morality.</p>

The introduction continued in this challenging style for about two pages, requiring Kelvin to read slowly and carefully in order to understand its points. Kelvin was not discouraged from continuing, though, because he wanted to find out more about how, in general, children acquire moral beliefs. Did moral beliefs take time to develop—did they "grow" on children slowly after initially being borrowed from parents or other adults? In this case, then maybe Kelvin owed it to his students to adopt and express desirable moral attitudes myself, so as to provide a good model for their developing beliefs. Or were students' key moral beliefs already in place when they entered school—almost as if "hard wired" in their minds, or at least already learned during infancy and the preschool years? In this second case, it might still be desirable for Kelvin to adopt positive moral attitudes, but not for the purpose of modeling them for students. Students already "hard wired" for key moral beliefs might not need a model so much as an enforcer of desirable moral behaviors. Concerning the issue of cheating, for example, the students might already understand the undesirable nature and implications of this behavior. As a result they might not need demonstrations of honest integrity from their teacher as much as affirmations from the teacher of the importance of honesty and integrity, along with consistent enforcement of appropriate sanctions against cheating when it did occur.

For Kelvin, therefore, the outcomes of research on moral development—including Saltzstein's that he was currently reading—posed issues of classroom management, both in university classrooms and in public school classrooms. So Kelvin read on.

Saltzstein proposed resolving the issues about the origins of moral development by distinguishing between moral conflicts and moral dilemmas:

<p>Moral conflicts are conflicts between moral duty or right and a non-moral desire. An example might be the conflict between whether to return a wallet to its rightful owner or keep the coveted wallet with its extra cash. In contrast, moral dilemmas are conflicts involving two moral rights or duties. For example, [a person might feel a dilemma between] whether to steal a drug to save a spouse's life. [p. 38]</p>	<p>The distinction between conflicts and dilemmas looked promising to Kelvin. Moral conflicts looked fairly simple in cognitive terms, even if they were sometimes difficult emotionally. The “right” action was obvious. Moral dilemmas were more complex cognitively as well as emotionally, because two “goods” were being weighed against each other. The moral alternatives might both be right and wrong at the same time, and their relative “rightness” might not be immediately obvious.</p>
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Saltzstein and his colleagues proposed that when young children show awareness of moral rules, they may be doing so in the simpler context of moral conflicts. A young child might believe that you should return a dollar to its owner, even if the child has trouble in practice overcoming a selfish impulse to keep the dollar. The same child might have trouble deciding, however, whether it is “right” to inform his teacher if a best friend has cheated on a test. In that case two moral principles compete for attention—honesty and loyalty to a friend. To sort out the implications of choosing between these principles, a young child might need to rely on older, wiser minds, such as parents or other adults. The minute that he or she does so, the child is showing the moral heteronomy that Piaget used to write about and that Saltzstein referred to early in the article

Understanding these ideas took effort, but once Kelvin began figuring them out, the rest of the article was easier to follow. In reading the remaining pages, he noted in passing that the researchers used several techniques common in educational research. For example, they interviewed participants, a common way of gathering systematic information about individuals' thinking. They also imposed controls on their procedures and on the selection of participants. Procedures were controlled, for example, by posing the same three moral dilemmas and to all participants, so that individuals' responses could be compared meaningfully. The selection of participants was controlled by selecting two age groups for deliberate comparison with each other—one that was seven years old and the other that was eleven. Since the researchers wanted to generalize about moral development as much as possible, but they obviously could not interview every child in the world, they sampled participants: they selected a manageable number (sixty-five, to be exact) from the larger student population of one particular school. In a second part of the investigation, they also selected a comparable number of children of the same two ages (7 and 11) from the city of Recife, located in Brazil. The Brazilian group's responses were compared deliberately with the American group's responses, in order to allow for the impact of cultural beliefs on moral development in general. Kelvin recognized this research strategy as an example of using control groups. In research terms, the Brazilian group “controlled for” the impact of American culture on children's moral beliefs, and vice versa, the American group controlled for the impact of Brazilian culture on children's moral beliefs. Altogether, these techniques helped insure that the interviews of children's moral beliefs really illustrated what they were supposed to illustrate—that they were reliable and valid, in the senses that we discussed in earlier chapters. As Kelvin noticed Saltzstein's attention to good research techniques, he gained confidence in Saltzstein's observations and in the interpretations that the authors made from them.

What did Saltzstein and his colleagues find out—or more to the point, what did Kelvin Seifert learn from what Saltzstein and his colleagues wrote about? There were three ideas that occurred to Kelvin. One was that in everyday life, children probably deal with moral beliefs of all levels of cognitive complexity, and not just “simple” moral conflicts and “complex” moral dilemmas. Saltzstein found that children's solutions to moral dilemmas depended a lot on the content of the dilemma. Children advocated strongly for truthfulness in some situations (for example, in deciding whether to tell the teacher about a friend's cheating), but not in other situations (like in deciding whether to back up a friend who is being teased and who has lied in an effort to stop the teasing). But it was rare for all children to support any one moral principle completely; they usually supported a mix

Another idea that Kelvin learned from Saltzstein's research was about how children expressed moral heteronomy versus moral autonomy. Age, it seemed, did not affect the beliefs that children stated; younger and older children took similar positions on all dilemmas initially. But age did affect how steadfastly children held to initial beliefs. Younger children were more easily influenced to switch opinions when an adult “cross-examined” with probing questions; older children were more likely to keep to their initial position. Moral heteronomy was revealed not by a child's views as such, but by the kind of dialogue a child has with adults.

A third idea that Kelvin learned was about children’s perceptions of adults’ moral beliefs. Saltzstein found that even though older children (the 11-year-olds) showed more moral autonomy (were more steadfast) than younger children, they tended to believe that adults thought about moral issues in ways similar to children who were younger. In the “teasing” dilemma mentioned above, for example, the 11-year-olds opted much more often than 7- year-olds for remaining loyal to a friend, even though doing so meant further untruthfulness with peers. Yet the 11- year-olds also more often stated a belief that adults would resolve the same dilemma in a way characteristic of 7- year-olds—that is, by telling the truth to peers and thus betraying loyalty to a friend. This finding puzzled Kelvin. Why should older, and presumably more insightful, children think that adults are more like younger children than like themselves? Saltzstein suggested an interpretation, however, that helped him make sense of the apparent inconsistency:

...Consistent with our past research, children attributed the kinds of moral choices made by younger children to adults. In our view, this finding tends to support a constructivist rather than a [social modeling] view of morality, which would predict that the child’s judgments mirror (or develop toward) their representation of adult judgments. [p. 41]	In other words, thought Kelvin, if children learned moral beliefs by imitating (or modeling themselves after) parents or other adults, then they ought to see themselves as resembling adults more and more as they get older. Instead, they see themselves as resembling adults less, at least during middle childhood. This would happen only if they were preoccupied with “constructing” their own beliefs on the basis of their experiences, and therefore failed to notice that adults might also have constructed beliefs similar to their own.
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Relevance: a framework for understanding moral development

The article by Saltzstein offered a way to understand how children develop moral beliefs, and especially to understand the change from moral heteronomy to moral autonomy. By imposing controls on the procedures (uniform interviews) and on the selection of participants (particular ages, particular societies or cultures), the researchers eliminated certain sources of ambiguity or variability in children’s responses. By framing their project in terms of previous theories of moral development (Piaget’s, Turiel’s), furthermore, they made it easier to interpret their new results in the general terms of these theories as well. In these ways the investigation aspired to provide a general perspective about children’s moral development. Providing a framework for understanding, you recall, is one of the major purposes of many professional publications.

But note that the authors paid a price for emphasizing this purpose. By organizing their work around existing general theory and research, they had to assume that readers already had some knowledge of that theory and research. This is not an unreasonable assumption if the readers are expected to be fellow researchers; after all, many of them make a living by “knowing the literature” of psychology. But assuming such knowledge can be an obstacle if the authors intend to communicate with non-psychologists: in that case, either the authors must make more of an effort to explain the relevant background research, or readers must educate themselves about the research. The latter activity is not necessarily difficult (the background knowledge for Saltzstein’s work, for example, took me only a few paragraphs to explain in writing), but it must be done to make full sense of research that tries to provide a universal framework of psychological knowledge.

The reader’s role: interested observer of children

In conducting and reporting their research, Saltzstein and his colleagues were not presenting themselves as school teachers, nor were they expecting readers necessarily to respond as teachers. As they put it in the first paragraph of the article, they sought to offer “a more contextualized perspective for understanding the development of moral judgments” [p. 37]. Unlike most teachers, they seemed indifferent to recommending how children’s moral judgements ought to be fostered. Observation of children was their purpose, not intervention. The meaning of the term “contextualized perspective” was not obvious to Kelvin when he first read it, but eventually it became clearer: they were talking about the importance of distinguishing among types of moral decisions and moral beliefs. They did sometimes note information relevant to teaching—for example, they pointed out that for cultural reasons, teachers in Brazil do not command high respect and therefore compared to American children, Brazilian children may feel less compelled to tell the truth to their teachers. But this comment was not the primary focus of their research, nor did the authors discuss what (if anything) it might imply about teaching in the United States.

Yet the non-teaching perspective of the article did not keep Kelvin, a long-time school teacher and current university teacher, from reflecting on the article in terms of its educational relevance. As we mentioned already, Kelvin was attracted to the article because of his own concerns about character development in students—how do they acquire moral beliefs and commitments, and how

should he help them in doing so? Kelvin did not really expect to find an answer to the second of these questions, given the “observation” orientation of the authors. He did hope to find an answer to the first, although even here he also expected that to make allowances for the fact that research interviews are not usually identical to classroom situations. Children might respond differently when interviewed individually by a researcher, compared to how they might respond to a teacher in class. Or perhaps not. So in reflecting on the article, Kelvin had to note the context and purposes of Saltzstein’s study, and to remind himself that once a teacher went beyond simply observing children to intervening on their behalf, the teacher might be led to different conclusions about children’s moral development. But in spite of these cautions—or maybe because of them—Kelvin found much food for thought in the article related to teaching.

Example #2: Learning disability as a misleading label

In 2006, Ray McDermott, Shelley Goldman, and Hervé Varenne published an article that discussed the use of disability categories in education. The article attracted Kelvin’s attention because he had been concerned for a long time about the ambiguities of disability categories (see Chapter 5 of this book) as well as about their potential for stigmatizing individuals. He expected the article to document additional problems with labeling when a student is from a non-white ethnic group. Kelvin’s expectation was fulfilled partially, but he was surprised also to encounter an additional and tougher message in the article. Here is how the study began:

<p>Since about 1850 . . . classifying human beings by mental ability, accurately or not, has been a politically rewarded activity. Those with power have placed others, usually the downtrodden, into ability and disposition groups that they cannot escape. . . . People who live together in a culture must struggle constantly with the constraints . . . of systems of classification and interpretation used in the culture.</p>	<p>Kelvin had a mixed reaction to this opening. In one way it seemed to say something familiar—that classification systems (such as categories for disabilities) may create problems for individuals. But the tone of the paragraph sounded more severely critical than Kelvin had expected: it was saying that power governed all classifications, implying that misclassifications may be widespread or even universal.</p>
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Kelvin’s initial hunch was therefore that the article would express a radically critical view of disability classifications—particularly as they affect the “downtrodden,” which presumably included children from minority ethnic groups. His expectation proved correct as the authors explained their point of view, which they called a *cultural approach* to understanding disability. Using learning disabilities (LD) as an example, here is how they explained their position:

<p>We are not as interested in LD behavior as in the preoccupations—as seen from the level of classroom organization—of all those adults who are professionally poised to discover LD behavior. We are less interested in the characteristics of LD children than in the cultural arrangements that make an LD label relevant.</p>	<p>At this point Kelvin was not sure if he wanted to continue reading the article because it seemed like it might not be relevant to classroom life specifically. It also implied a severe criticism of professional educators—implied that they are too eager to find examples of LD and for this reason may misclassify students. On the other hand, Kelvin was already aware that LD are an especially ambiguous category of disability; maybe the article would help to show why. So he kept reading.</p>
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The authors continued by outlining the history of LD as a category of disability, describing this category as an outgrowth of the general intelligence testing movement during the twentieth century. By the 1970s, they argued, the concept of LD offered a way to classify children with academic difficulties without having to call the children mentally disabled. Because of this fact, the LD category was needed—literally—by well-off parents who did not want their children treated or educated as children with mental disabilities. LD as a concept and category came to be applied primarily to children from the white middle-class, and mental disability became, by default, the equivalent category for the non-white and poor.

To support this assertion, the authors reported a classroom observation of three non-white boys—Hector, Ricardo, and Boomer—while they worked together to design an imaginary research station in Antarctica. Citing actual transcripts of conversation while the boys worked, the authors concluded that all three boys showed intelligence and insight about the assignment, but that the teacher was only aware of the contributions of one of the boys. Hector systematically hid his knowledge from the teacher’s view by getting Boomer to speak for their group; Ricardo participated well in the group work but was rarely acknowledged by the other two boys. Boomer received considerable praise from the teacher, thanks to his speaking for the group. Yet the teacher was never aware of

these subtleties. The authors blamed her oversight not on the teacher herself, but on an educational and cultural system that leads educators to classify or typify students too quickly or easily. Here is how they put it:

The American classroom is well organized for the production of display of failure, one child at a time if possible, but group by group if necessary...Even if the teacher manages to treat every child as capable, the children can hammer each other into negative status; and even if both...resist dropping everyone into predefined categories, the children's parents can take over, demanding more and more boxes with which to specify kinds of kids doing better than other kinds of kids. In such a classroom, if there were no LD categories, someone would have to invent them.

When Kelvin read this conclusion, he did not really disagree, but he did feel that it was beside the point for most teachers. Maybe children do get classified too easily, he thought, but a teacher's job is not just to lament this possibility, as the authors seemed to be doing. Instead their job is to help the real, live children for whom they have daily responsibility. What teachers need are therefore suggestions to avoid misclassifying students by overlooking key information about them. Kelvin wished, at the end, that the authors had made some of these suggestions.

Relevance: a critical framework

In this study the authors offered a sort of backhanded framework of thinking about categories of disability; or more precisely they offered a framework for understanding what the categories are not. In essence they said that disability categories describe qualities “in” students only in the sense that educators and others happen to think of disability categories in this way. An equally reasonable way to think about disabilities, they argued, is that modern society is organized so that its citizens have to be classified for many different reasons. Educators are simply helping to implement this society-wide expectation. A frequent result in classrooms is that teachers classify students too easily and that key evidence of students' capacity is overlooked.

In making this argument, the authors implied an indirect recommendation about how to teach, though the recommendation actually focused on what teachers should not do. Instead of (mis)identifying children with learning difficulties, the authors implied, teachers and other educators should stop concerning themselves with classifying children, and seek to reorganize classrooms and schools so that classification is less important. “Change the school,” they wrote, “and LD becomes less relevant.” This conclusion may be an important reminder, but it is not especially helpful as a recommendation to practicing teachers, who usually need to know about more than what to avoid.

The readers' role: concerned advocate for social justice

It is not surprising that the article lacked concrete recommendations for teaching, given that the authors seemed to speak to readers not as classroom teachers, but as general critics of society who are concerned about fairness or social justice. Their comments made two assumptions: first, that readers will want to minimize unfair stereotypes of students, and second, that readers will seek greater fairness in how teachers treat students. For readers who happen to be teachers themselves, the first of these assumptions is a reasonable one; most of us would indeed like to minimize unfair stereotyping of students. The second is also reasonable, but perhaps not in a way that the authors intended. Teachers probably do try their best to treat students fairly and respectfully. Their responsibilities usually mean, however, that they can only do this conveniently with their own students; the time available to work toward general social justice is often limited. (As you might suspect, Kelvin was not fully satisfied after he finished reading this article!)

Example #3: The impact of bilingualism on reading

In 1995, three education professors—Robert Jiménez, Georgia García, and David Pearson—published a study about the impact of bilingualism on children's ability to read English (1995). The three specialized in curriculum studies, literacy acquisition, and bilingual language development, and were therefore motivated by a concern for the academic success of bilingual children and especially by concern for identifying why bilingual children sometimes have difficulty learning to read English. Too much research on bilingualism, they argued, was based on what they called a “deficit” framework: it focused on what bilingual children lacked compared to monolinguals. They sought an alternative framework, one focused on bilingual students' competence, and especially on their competence to read a second language.

To search for this alternative, the researchers mounted a large research program, and the article published in 1995 was one of the studies resulting from this research. It caught Kelvin's interest not only because of its topic, but because of its approach. Instead of surveying dozens of students with a questionnaire, as researchers sometimes do, these investigators relied on just three students studied intensively. Each student became a case study and included detailed, lengthy observations and interviews of that particular

student. Each student was chosen deliberately for a particular purpose. One was a highly proficient reader who was also bilingual (Spanish and English); a second was a marginally proficient reader who was bilingual (Spanish and English); and a third was a highly proficient reader who was monolingual in English. To qualify for the study, furthermore, each student had to be comfortable reflecting on and talking about their own reading processes, so that the authors could interview them at length on this topic. The researchers asked each student to read six one-page passages in English and (where relevant) in Spanish. They invited all three to think aloud about their reading as they went along, commenting on how they figured out particular words or passages. The oral readings and think-aloud commentaries were taped and transcribed, and became the information on which the authors based their conclusions and recommendations.

Using these procedures, Jiménez, García, and Pearson discovered important differences among the three girls. The proficient bilingual, Pamela, used her growing knowledge of each language to help in learning vocabulary from the other language. When she encountered the English word “species”, for example, she guessed correctly that it meant the same as the similar Spanish word “especies”; and when she encountered the Spanish “líquido,” she guessed correctly that it meant the English “liquid.” Her focus on learning vocabulary was stronger than for the proficient monolingual, Michelle, who commented less on specific words than how the overall reading passages related to her prior general knowledge. The difference presumably stemmed from Michelle’s greater familiarity with English vocabulary—so much greater, in fact, that Michelle did not need to think about individual words deliberately. Both Michelle and Pamela differed, however, from the less-proficient bilingual reader, Christine. Like Pamela, Christine focused on vocabulary, but she did not think of her native Spanish as a resource for this task. When reading a Spanish word, she was sometimes reminded of English equivalents (“cognates,” as language teachers call them), but she did not use her much greater knowledge of Spanish to assist with her more limited English. She did not search for equivalent words deliberately, as Pamela did.

Relevance: recommendations for teaching english as an additional language

The authors of this article focused more directly on particular learning behaviors than did the authors of the two articles described earlier. Jimenez and his colleagues emphasized the importance of regarding a child’s native language as a strength in the process, not a liability, and they then pointed out the importance of facilitating vocabulary development. But they did not claim this recommendation to be appropriate for all children or for all forms of bilingualism. They only focused on a particular pair of languages (Spanish and English in the USA), and on three combinations of skill level in these two languages. These are common bilingual experiences in the United States, but they are not the only ones, either in the United States or elsewhere in the world.

For other bilingual situations, their conclusions might not hold true. For some students (e.g. Chinese Americans), the native language and the second language are much more different in vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar than Spanish is to English, and therefore may provide less of a resource to a child learning to read. In some settings, relationships between languages are more equal than in the United States. In Canada, for example, both the numbers and the overall social status of English speakers and French speakers are more equal than in the United States. In both of these situations, if a child fails to learn to read the second language, it may not be for the reasons suggested by Robert Jiménez, but for other reasons, ranging from difficulties with reading per se to cultural differences in how a child expects to be taught (Johnson, 2004).

The reader’s role: both teacher and researcher

In the published article describing their research, Jiménez, García, and Pearson assumed that readers have some familiarity with bilingual students and with issues related to teaching reading. They began their article by describing previous research studies in these areas—more than a dozen of them, in fact. In the middle they described numerous responses of the three bilingual students to the passages they were asked to read. At the end of the article they made specific suggestions for teaching, such as “focus more on vocabulary development”. When Kelvin read these various sections, he found that his prior knowledge of and reflections about teaching helped to make sense of them. But he also found that did not need to be an expert in bilingualism order to understand the authors’ messages—he had never, in fact, taught English as a Second Language, nor had he ever conducted research on reading or bilingual language development.

Action research: hearing from teachers about improving practice

Each of the professional articles just described offers ideas and recommendations that can stimulate reflection about teaching and learning. But they all suffer from a particular limitation: Although they often relate to teachers and classrooms, teachers’ role in

influencing in designing and interpreting a study is minimal. In the world of educational research, persons other than teachers—typically professors, educational administrators, or other professional researchers—tend to speak on behalf of teachers. All three of the articles described earlier in this chapter had this feature. Persons other than teachers chose the research topics.

The information that emerges from this arrangement often still relates to teaching and learning, and may contain useful insights for classroom work. But by definition, it is framed by people whose interests and fundamental commitments may not be identical with classroom teachers. As a result, the studies are somewhat more likely to attend to problems posed by academic disciplines or by educational administrators. Two of the studies which we described earlier—the ones about moral development and about labels for disabilities—showed this quality. Classroom teachers are concerned, of course, about both moral development and categorizing of students. But if teachers had designed the two projects themselves, they might have re-framed both of them to focus more explicitly on the challenges of classroom teaching. In studying moral beliefs, for example, teachers might have focused more squarely on how to foster moral beliefs in their students. In studying inclusive education, they might have focused more fully on the practical difficulties faced by teachers in assessing students' learning disabilities with validity.

The nature of action research

In view of these issues, a particularly important kind of investigation for teachers is action research (sometimes also teacher research), an activity referring to systematic, intentional inquiry by teachers for the purpose of improving their own practice (Stenhouse, 1985; Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Maguire, 2003; Russell, T. & Loughran, J. 2005). Action research is not to be confused with research about teaching and learning, which are investigations by professional researchers on topics of teachers, teaching, or learning.

Action research has several defining characteristics, in addition to being planned and conducted by teachers. First, it originates in the problems and dilemmas of classroom practice, or in chronic problems with certain students, materials, or activities. Second, its outcomes offer information focused on particular teachers and classrooms, rather than about teachers in general or students in general. Although this feature might make action research seem less useful as a source of advice or knowledge that is truly general, supporters argue that focusing on specific learning contexts makes action research more credible or valid as a source of practical information and ideas. It is, they argue, simply more attuned to the context of real classrooms (St. Clair, 2005). Third, while the audience for action research can certainly include professors and educational administrators, the audience tends to be other teachers (Fenstermacher, 1994; Ackerman & MacKenzie, 2007). Action research is therefore in an especially strong position to provide “insider” perspectives on educational problems.

Action research in practice

Action research makes a number of assumptions as a result of its nature and purposes (Richardson, 1994; Schmuck, 2006). To varying degrees, most such studies support some combination of these ideas:

- that teaching is itself really a form of research
- that action research, like teaching itself, requires substantial reflection
- that collaboration among teachers is crucial for making teacher research meaningful, and for the improvement of teaching
- that teachers' knowledge of teaching has to be shared publicly, especially when gained systematically through action research

To see how these features look in practice, look at several examples of action research studies.

Example #1: Focusing on motivating students

A number of years ago, Patricia Clifford and Sharon Friesen published an account of their effort to develop a classroom program based on students' out-of-school interests and experiences (1993). Clifford and Friesen were co-teachers in a double-sized classroom which deliberately included children from first, second and third grades. Their interest in students' out-of-school experiences grew out of three more basic questions about teaching, which they phrased like this:

- How can curriculum remain open to children's unique experiences and connect with the world they know outside the school? Too often, the official school curriculum lacked meaning for children because it seemed cut off from the rest of the world. The result was unmotivated students and poor learning.
- Why is imaginative experience the best starting place for planning? The teachers felt that imaginative experiences—make-believe play, stories, poems—provided access to children's lives outside school—their make-believe play, or their stories or

poems. Perhaps somehow these could be connected to the goals of the official curriculum.

- What happens when teachers break down the barriers between school knowledge and real knowledge? In drawing on children's outside experiences, would children actually become more motivated or not? Would they take over the program, and fail to learn the official curriculum goals?

To answer these questions, the teachers kept extensive diaries or journals for one entire school year. These became the “data” for the research. In the journals, they described and reflected on their daily teaching experiences. The teachers also talked with each other extensively about classroom events and their significance, and the results of the conversations often entered the journals eventually during the research. In their journal, for example, the teachers recorded an experience with students about ways of telling time. In preliminary discussions the students became interested in how a sundial worked. So the teachers and students went outside, where they created a human sundial, using the students themselves. The teachers' journal kept a chronicle of these events, and noted the comments and questions which students developed as a result:

- If you stood in the same place for a whole day you would see your shadow change places because the earth changes position.
- Why is my shadow longer than I am in the evening, but shorter at noon?
- Clouds can block the sun's rays so sundials won't work on rainy days.
- How did people start to tell time?

As the year evolved and observations accumulated and were recorded, the teachers gradually began to answer their own three questions. They found, for example, that connecting the curriculum with children's interests and motives was most effective when they could establish a personal bond with a child. They also found that imaginative expression helped certain children to feel safe to explore ideas. They found that blending school-based and personal knowledge caused children to learn much more than before—although much of the additional knowledge was not part of an official curriculum. With these conclusions in mind, and with numerous examples to support them, Clifford and Friesen published their study so that others could share what they had learned about teaching, learning, and students.

The study by Clifford and Friesen is interesting in its own right, but for our purposes think for a moment about their work as an example of action research. One of its features is that it formed part of the normal course of teaching: the authors were simply more systematic about how they observed the students and recorded information about classroom events. Another feature is that the research required conscious reflection over an extended time: their journals and conversations contained not only descriptions of events, but also interpretations of the events. A third feature is that the study involved collaboration: it was not just one teacher studying the major questions, but two. The fourth feature is that the teachers not only developed their results and conclusions for themselves, but also shared them with others. These four qualities make the study by Clifford and Friesen a clear example of teacher research. Note, though, that sometimes studies conducted by teachers may not show all of these features so clearly; instead they may show some of the key features, but not all of them, as in the next two examples.

Example #2: Focusing on development

Since 1981, Vivian Paley has published a series of short books documenting and interpreting her observations of young children in classrooms (1981, 1986, 1991, 1998, 2000, 2005). Paley was interested in how young children develop or change over the long term, and in particular how the development looks from the point of view of a classroom teacher. In one of these books, for example, she observed one child in particular, Mollie, from the time she entered nursery school just after her third birthday until after the child turned four years old (Paley, 1986). Her interest was not focused on curriculum, as Clifford and Friesen's had done, but on Mollie as a growing human being; “the subject which I most wished to learn,” she wrote, “is children” (p. xiv). Paley therefore wrote extended narrative (or story-like) observations about the whole range of activities of this one child, and wove in periodic brief reflections on the observations. Because the observations took story-like form, her books read a bit like novels: themes are sometimes simply suggested by the story line, rather than stated explicitly. Using this approach, Paley demonstrated (but occasionally also stated) several important developmental changes. In *Mollie at Three* (1988), for example, she describes examples of Mollie's language development. At three years, the language was often disconnected from Mollie's actions—she would talk about one thing, but do another. By four, she was much more likely to tie language to her current activities, and in this sense she more often “said what she meant.” A result of the change was that Mollie also began understanding and following classroom rules as the year went on, because the language of rules became more connected in her mind to the actions to which they referred.

Vivian Paley’s book had some of the characteristics of action research—but with differences from Clifford and Friesen’s. Like their research, Paley’s “data” was based on her own teaching, while her teaching was influenced in turn by her systematic observations. Like Clifford and Friesen’s, Paley’s research involved numerous reflections on teaching, and it led to a public sharing of the reflections—in this case in the form of several small books. Unlike Clifford and Friesen, though, Paley worked independently, without collaboration. Unlike Clifford and Friesen, she deliberately integrated observation and interpretation as they might be integrated in a piece of fiction, so that the resulting “story” often implied or showed its message without stating it in so many words. In this regard her work had qualities of what some educators call arts-based research, which are studies that take advantage of an artistic medium (in this case, narrative or story-like writing) to heighten readers’ understanding and response to research findings (Barone and Eisner, 2006). If you are studying the use of space in the classroom, for example, then aesthetically organized visual depictions (photos, drawings) of the room may be more helpful and create more understanding than verbal descriptions. If you are studying children’s musical knowledge, on the other hand, recordings of performances by the children may be more helpful and informative than discussions of performances.

Example #3: Focusing on collaboration

In 1996, an example of action research was published that was intended simultaneously for classroom teachers and for university researchers, and which focused on the challenges of collaboration among educators (Ulichny & Schoener, 1996). A teacher (Wendy Schoener) and a university researcher (Polly Ulichny) explored how, or even whether, teachers and university researchers could participate as equals in the study of teaching. Wendy (the two used first names throughout when they published their experiences) was a teacher of adults learning English as a Second Language (ESL); Polly was a specialist in multicultural education and wanted to observe a teacher who was successful at reaching the ethnically diverse students who normally study ESL. Polly therefore asked Wendy for permission to study her teaching for an extended period of time—to visit her class, videotape it, interview her about it, and the like.

What followed is best described as an extended negotiation between teacher and professor for access to Wendy’s class, on the one hand, and for mutual respect for each other’s work, on the other. In the published article, the negotiations are described separately by each participant, in order to honor the differences in their concerns and perspectives. Before, during, and after the observations, it was necessary for Polly and Wendy each to adjust expectations of what the other person could do and was willing to do. As the authors put it, some things were “easy to hear” from the other and some things were “hard to hear”. Wendy, as a teacher, found it easier to hear criticisms of her teaching if they came from herself, rather than from the higher-status university professor, Polly. Polly, for her part, found it easier to hear Wendy’s comments if she matched Wendy’s self-criticisms and evaluations with some of her own experiences. Polly therefore made sure to tell Wendy about dilemmas and problems she experienced in her own (university) teaching. Because they needed to adjust to hearing and talking with each other, the two educators eventually focused less on Polly’s original purpose—studying multicultural teaching—and more on the problem of how teachers and university researchers might collaborate effectively.

Overall, this study qualifies as a piece of action research, though it is not fully focused on classroom teaching. For example, the teachers did collaborate and reflect on their experiences, but not all of the reflection was about teaching in classrooms. The rest was about the relationship between Wendy and Polly. While the problem selected was originally about classroom teaching—Wendy’s—it did not originate with the classroom teacher (Wendy) or concerns she had about her own classroom; instead it was chosen by the university researcher (Polly) and her desire to study multicultural teaching. The researchers did share what they learned by publishing their observations and ideas, but their published report speaks only partly to classroom teachers as such; in addition it speaks to academic researchers and educators of future teachers.

By pointing out differences among these examples of action research, we do not mean to imply that one is “better” than another. The point is simply to show how diverse studies by teachers can be and to appreciate their differences. Whatever their specific features, classroom studies by teachers hold in common the commitment to giving a voice to teachers as they reflect on problems and challenges intrinsic to classroom life. This goal can be accomplished in more than one way: through journals and other record-keeping methods, through oral discussions with colleagues, and through written reflections created either for themselves or for others concerned about teaching and learning. Diversity among topics and methods in action research studies should not surprise us, in fact, since classrooms are themselves so diverse.

The challenges of action research

Well and good, you may say. Action research offers teachers a way to hear each other, to learn from their own and other's experience. But there are also a few cautions to keep in mind, both ethical and practical. Look briefly at each of these areas.

Ethical cautions about action research

One caution is the possibility of conflict of interest between the roles of teaching and conducting action research (Hammack, 1997). A teacher's first priorities should be the welfare of his or her students: first and foremost, you want students to learn, to be motivated, to feel accepted by their peers, and the like. A researcher's first priorities, however, are to the field or topic being studied. The two kinds of priorities may often overlap and support each other. Vivian Paley's observations of children in her classes, described earlier, not only supported her children's learning, but also her studies of the children.

But situations can also occur in which action research and teaching are less compatible, and can create ethical dilemmas. The problems usually relate to one of three issues: privacy, informed consent, or freedom to participate. Each of these becomes an issue only if the results of a research project are made public, either in a journal or book, as with the examples we have given in this chapter, or simply by being described or shared outside the classroom. (Sharing, you may recall, is one of the defining features of action research.) Look briefly at each of the issues.

Insuring privacy of the student

Teachers often learn information about students that the students or their families may not want publicized. Suppose, for example, you have a student with an intellectual disability in your class, and you wish to study how the student learns. Observing the student work on (and possibly struggle with) academic activities may be quite consistent with a teacher's responsibilities; after all, teachers normally should pay attention to their students' academic efforts. But the student or his family may not want such observations publicized or even shared informally with other parents or teachers. They may feel that doing so would risk stigmatizing the student publicly.

To respect the student's privacy and still study his learning behavior, the teacher (alias the "action researcher") therefore needs to disguise the student's identity whenever the research results are made public. In any written or oral report, or even in any hallway conversation about the project, the teacher/researcher would use a pseudonym for the student, and change other identifying information such as the physical description of the student or even the student's gender. There are limits, however, to how much can be disguised without changing essential information. The teacher could not, for example, hide the fact of the intellectual disability without compromising the point of the study; yet the intellectual disability might be unusual enough that it would effectively identify the student being studied.

Gaining informed consent

Students may not understand what is being studied about them, or even realize that they are being studied at all, unless the teacher/researcher makes an explicit effort to inform them about the action research and how she will use the results from it. The same is true for the students' parents; unless the teacher-researcher makes an effort to contact parents, they simply will not know that their child's activities are being observed or may eventually be made public. Students' ignorance is especially likely if the students are very young (kindergarten) or have intellectual or reading difficulties, as in the example we described above. As an action researcher, therefore, a teacher is obliged to explain the nature of a research project clearly, either in a letter written in simple language or in a face-to-face conversation, or both. Parents and students need to give clear indications that they actually understand what class activities or materials will constitute data that could be made public. In most cases, indicating informed consent means asking students' parents signing a letter giving permission for the study. Sometimes, in addition, it is a good idea to recheck with students or parents periodically as the project unfolds, to make sure that they still support participation.

Insuring freedom to participate

When a student fails to participate in an ordinary class activity, most teachers consider it legitimate to insist on the student's participation—either by persuading, demanding, or (perhaps) tricking the student to join. Doing so is ethical for teachers in their roles as teachers, because teachers are primarily responsible for insuring that students learn, and students' participation presumably facilitates learning. If a teacher designates an activity as part of an action research project, however, and later shares the results with them, the teacher then also becomes partly responsible for how other teachers use knowledge of the research study. (Remember:

sharing results is intrinsically part of the research process.) The resulting dual commitment means that “forcing” a student to participate in an action research activity can no longer be justified solely as being for the student’s own educational good.

Much of the time, a simultaneous commitment to both teachers and students presents no real dilemma: what is good for the action research project may also be good for the students. But not always. Suppose, for example, that a teacher wants to do research about students’ beliefs about war and global conflict, and doing so requires that students participate in numerous extended group discussions on this topic. Even though the group discussions might resemble a social studies lesson and in this sense be generally acceptable as a class activity, some parents (or students) may object because they take too much class time away from the normal curriculum topics. Yet the research project necessitates giving it lots of discussion time in class. To respond ethically to this dilemma, therefore, the teacher may need to allow students to opt out of the discussions if they or their parents choose. She may therefore need to find ways for them to cover an alternate set of activities from the curriculum. (One way to do this, for example, is to hold the special group discussions outside regular class times—though this obviously also increases the amount of work for both the teacher and students.)

Practical issues about action research

Is action research practical? From one perspective the answer has to be “Of course not!” Action research is not practical because it may take teachers’ time and effort which they could sometimes use in other ways. Keep in mind, though, that a major part of the effort needed for action research involves the same sort of work—observing, recording information, reflecting—that is needed for any teaching that is done well. A better way to assess practicality may therefore be to recognize that teaching students always takes a lot of work, and to ask whether the additional thoughtfulness brought on by action research will make the teaching more successful.

Looked at in this way, action research is indeed practical, though probably not equally so on every occasion. If you choose to learn about the quality of conversational exchanges between yourself and students, for example, you will need some way to record these dialogues, or at least to keep accurate, detailed notes on them. Recording the dialogues may be practical and beneficial—or not, depending on your circumstances. On the other hand, if you choose to study how and why certain students remain on the margins of your class socially, this problem too may be practical as action research. Or it may not, depending on whether you can find a way to observe and reflect on students’ social interactions, or lack thereof. Much depends on your circumstances—on the attention you can afford to give to your research problem while teaching, in relation to the benefits that solutions to the problems will bring students later. In general any action research project may require certain choices about how to teach, though it should not interfere with basic instructional goals or prevent coverage of an important curriculum. The main point to remember is that action research is more than passive observation of students and classrooms; it also includes educational interventions, efforts to stimulate students to new thinking and new responses. Those are features of regular teaching; the difference is primarily in how systematically and reflectively you do them.

Benefiting from all kinds of research

Although we authors both feel a degree of sympathy for the nature and purposes of action research, we are not trying to advocate for it at the expense of other forms of educational research or at the expense of simply reading and understanding professional publications in general. The challenge for you, as a classroom teacher, is to find the value in all forms of professional development, whether it be participation in a professional association, reading general articles about research, or engaging in your own action research. To the extent that you draw on them all, your ways of learning about teaching will be enriched. You will acquire more ways to understand classroom life, while at the same time acquiring perspective on that life. You will learn ways to grasp the individuality of particular students, but also to see what they need in common. You will have more ways to interpret your own experiences as a professional teacher, but also be able to learn from the professional experience of others. Realizing these benefits fully is a challenge, because the very diversity of classrooms renders problems about teaching and learning complex and diverse as well. But you will also gain good, professional company in searching for better understanding of your work—company that includes both educational researchers, other professional teachers, and of course your students.

Appendix summary

The complexities of teaching require teachers to continue learning throughout their teaching careers. To become a lifelong reflective practitioner, teachers can rely on colleagues as a resource, on professional associations and their activities, and on

professional publications related to educational issues and needs. Understanding the latter, in turn, requires understanding the purposes of the published material—whether it is offering a general framework, recommending desirable teaching practices, or advocating for a particular educational policy or need. Interpreting published material also requires understanding the assumptions that authors make about readers’ prior knowledge and beliefs.

An important additional strategy for becoming a reflective practitioner is action research—studies of teaching and learning designed and carried out by teachers in order to improve their own practice. By nature, action research studies are highly relevant to classroom practice, but there are also cautions about it to keep in mind, both ethically and practically.

Further Resources

The two following websites belong to professional organizations dedicated to action research.

- The first belongs to the [Society for Community Research and Action](#), a division of the American Psychological Association. It promotes and publishes action research in many professions, one of which is education.
- The second website belongs to the [Action Research Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association](#); as you might suspect from its name, it focuses exclusively on action research by educators.

This website offers the lectures notes and videos of class sessions in [a course about reflective practice](#) offered at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The materials are of high quality, and go into much more detail about the concept than is possible in this appendix.

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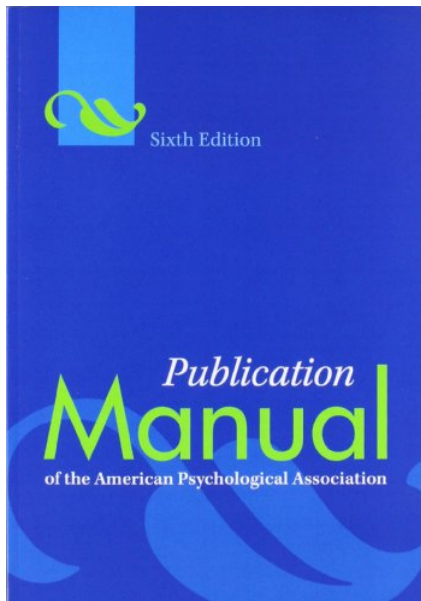
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5.3: Why Is APA Documentation Important?

American Psychological Association (APA) Style is a method of formatting and referencing works in research papers and



manuscripts. This style is most commonly practiced by academics within the social sciences, including the fields of nursing, psychology, and political science, and economics. APA style provides writers with a consistent formula for acknowledging the works of others using parenthetical in-text citations and a page listing all references. Additionally, APA style makes use of specific guidelines concerning the structure, content, and order of each page of a research paper or manuscript. Adhering to the uniform standards of APA style will enhance your paper's organization and allow readers to review your work with greater clarity.

The APA articles and templates on this website were developed in accordance with the 6th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Consult the *Publication Manual* (6th ed.) for more details about formatting and organizing your document.

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5.4: APA Order of Major Sections

Careful adherence to these conventions is likely to make a good initial impression on the reader, while carelessness may have the opposite effect. When the major sections of a paper are carefully arranged in the appropriate order, the reader may be more inclined to show an interest in the paper's ideas.

How should the major sections of an APA-style paper be arranged?

- **Title Page** : acts as the first major section of the document
 - Presents a running head and begins the document's pagination
 - Includes the paper's full title centered in the upper half of the page
 - Contains the name(s) of the writer(s) and their institutional affiliation
- **Abstract** : acts as the second major section of the document
 - Presents a single-paragraph summary of the paper's contents
 - Contains approximately 150 to 250 words
 - Includes select keywords for easy access by researchers
- **Main Body** : acts as the third major section of the document
 - Presents a report of the writer(s)' research and findings
 - Includes four sections (typically): the introduction, method, results, and discussion
 - Provides the reader with pertinent information about the paper's topic
- **References page** : acts as the fourth major section of the document
 - Presents a compilation of the sources cited in the paper
 - Provides a comprehensive list of works that appear as in-text citations in the paper
 - Details the full source information for each entry

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5.5: APA Title Page Formatting

Placement

As the first major section of the document, the title page appears at the top of the first page.

Components

The title page is comprised of a few key elements:

- Running head (or shortened title) and label
- Page number
- Full title of the paper
- Author byline: first name(s), middle initial(s), and last name(s)
- Affiliated Institution(s) or Organization(s)
- Author note (optional)

Follow your instructor's directives regarding additional lines on the title page. Some professors require further information, including the date of submission, course number or title, or name of the professor.

General Format

Like the rest of the paper, the title page should be double-spaced and typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. The margins are set at 1" on all sides.

<https://youtu.be/tNuYwptSzP8>

How should the running head be formatted on the title page?

The running head and label is flush with the upper left-hand corner of the title page, while the page number is flush with the upper right-hand corner of the page. The label "Running head" should only appear on the title page; on all other pages, simply include the shortened title of the paper. All letters of the running head should be capitalized and should not exceed 50 characters, including punctuation, letters, and spaces.

Example of a correctly formatted running head on the title page:

Running head: EFFECTS OF NUTRITION ON MEMORY

*Note: The title page is distinct in that the shortened title of this page is preceded by the label "Running head" followed by a colon; **no other page** of the document features this label.*

How should the full title of the paper be formatted?

The full title of the paper is centered in the upper half of the page, and the first letter of each major word is capitalized. The paper's title should be a maximum of 12 words and fill one or two lines; avoid using abbreviations and unnecessary words. Do not format the title with bold, italics, underlining, or quotation marks.

How should the author byline be formatted?

The author byline is comprised of the author(s)' first name(s), middle initial(s), and last name(s); this line follows after the full title of the research paper. Note that two authors are separated by the word and, but more than two authors' names are separated by commas.

What should the institutional affiliation include?

Following the author byline is the institutional affiliation of the author(s) involved with the research paper. Include the name of the college or university you attend, or the name of the organization(s) that provided support for your research.

Any additional lines of information requested by your professor may be situated after the institutional affiliation. If your instructor requires you to include an author's note, position it in the lower half of the title page.

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5.6: APA First Main Body Page Formatting

Beginning at the top of a new page, the main body of the research paper follows the abstract and precedes the References page. Comprised of the introduction, method, results, and discussion subsections, the main body acts as the third major section of the document and typically begins on the third page of the paper.

General Format

Like the rest of the paper, the pages of the main body should be double-spaced and typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. The margins are set at 1" on all sides. While the running head is flush with the upper left-hand corner of every page, the page number is flush with the upper right-hand corner of every page. Note that all letters of the running head should be capitalized and should not exceed 50 characters, including punctuation, letters, and spaces.



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The full title of the paper is centered directly above the introduction with no extra space between the title and the first paragraph. Avoid formatting the title with bold, italics, underlining, or quotation marks. The first letter of each major word in the title should be capitalized. Unlike other sections of the main body, the introduction does not require a heading or label.

When writing each paragraph, note that the APA recommends using two spaces after sentences that end in a period; however, sentences that end in other punctuation marks may be followed by a single space.

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5.7: APA In-Text Citations

An essential component of a research paper, in-text citations are a way of acknowledging the ideas of the author(s) of a particular work.

Each source that appears as an in-text citation should have a corresponding detailed entry in the References list at the end of the paper. Including the required elements in every citation allows other researchers to easily track the references used in a paper and locate those resources themselves.

There are three pieces of information that should be included in a citation after quoting another writer's work: the author's last name, the year of publication, and the page number(s) of the quoted material, all of which are separated by commas. The page number should follow a lower-case letter 'p' and a period.

- Basic structure: (Author, Year of Publication, p. 142)
 - **Example : (Kutner, 2003, p. 451) [1]**

If the quoted material was taken from more than one page, use two lower-case letter 'p's.

- Basic structure: (Author, Year, of Publication, pp. 194-196)
 - **Example : (Kutner, 2003, pp. 451-452) [1]**

How should multiple authors of a single source be cited?

There are a few guidelines to follow when citing multiple authors for a single source. Separate the names of the source's authors by using commas. Depending on the location and instance of the citation, an ampersand(&), the word *and*, or the term *et al.* may also need to be used.

When should an ampersand be used?

Ampersands (&) should only be used in parenthetical in-text citations. An ampersand separates the last and second to last author of a cited work.

- **Example: Research has demonstrated that “synesthesia appears quite stable over time, and synesthetes are typically surprised to discover that other people do not share their experiences” (Niccolai, Jennes, Stoerig, & Van Leeuwen, 2012, p. 81). [1]**

When should the word *and* be used?

The word *and* should only be used in a sentence or paragraph; do not use it in a parenthetical in-text citation. The last and second to last author of a cited work are separated by the word *and*.

- **Example: Niccolai, Jennes, Stoerig, and Van Leeuwen (2012) observed that “synesthesia appears quite stable over time, and synesthetes are typically surprised to discover that other people do not share their experiences” (p. 81). [1]**

When should the term *et al.* be used?

When citing a single work with many authors, you may need to substitute some of the authors' names with the term *et al.* The term *et al.* should not be italicized in your paper, and a period should be placed after the word *al* as it is an abbreviated term. Follow these guidelines regarding the usage of *et al.*:

Use *et al.*:

- The first time and every time you cite a source with at least six authors.
 - **Example: The in-text citation of *Zoonoses: Infectious diseases transmissible from animals to humans*, a book authored by Krauss, Weber, Appel, Enders, Isenberg, Schiefer, Slenczka, von Graevenitz, and Zahner, would appear as follows: [2] (Krauss et al., 2003, p. 91)**
 - As Krauss et al. (2003) observed, ...
- Every following time (after the first instance) that you cite a source with at least three authors.

- **Example: Citing the article “Modality and variability of synesthetic experience” by Niccolai, Jennes, Stoerig, & Van Leeuwen would appear as follows: [1] The first instance: (Niccolai, Jennes, Stoerig, & Van Leeuwen, 2012, p. 81)**
- Every following instance: (Niccolai et al., 2012)

Avoid using *et al.*:

- The first time you cite a source with up to five authors.
 - Instead, list all of the authors at their first mentioning.
- To cite a work that only has two authors.
 - Instead, always list the two authors’ names in every citation (separated by either an ampersand or the word and, depending on the location)

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5.8: APA References Page Formatting

Placement

The References page is located at the end of the main body of the paper and begins at the top of a new page. Appendices, footnotes, and additional materials should follow after the References page.

General Format

Like the rest of the paper, the References page should be double-spaced and typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. The running head should appear flush with the upper left-hand corner of the page, and the page number should appear at the upper right-hand corner of the page.

The title of the References page is capitalized and centered at the top of the page without any formatting, including bold, italics, underlining, or quotation marks. Avoid mislabeling the References page as “Works Cited,” “Sources,” or “Bibliography.”

Entries

Each entry should be formatted as a hanging indentation: the first line of each citation should be flush with the left margin while each subsequent line of the citation is indented five spaces from the left margin. Alphabetize the entries in the References page based on the authors’ last names (or the first word of a work’s title, if a work does not name any authors). Though it will vary from source to source, the general structure of a print book citation is as follows:

Author Last Name, Initials. (Year of publication). *Title of the work*. Publication city: Publishing Company.

Electronic sources generally require more information than print sources, such as a uniform resource locator (URL), a digital object identifier (DOI), or the date the source material was accessed.

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5.9: Creating APA References Entries



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Following is a list of sample citations for commonly used sources. Consult the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) for a complete list of guidelines for formatting entries on the references page.

Print Examples

Single-Authored Book

Hoppensteadt, F. C. (1997). *An introduction to the mathematics of neurons: Modeling in the frequency domain*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Book with Multiple Authors

Two or more authors

Pandi-Perumal, S. R., Cardinali, D. P., & Chrousos, G. (2007). *Neuroimmunology of sleep*. New York, NY: Springer.

Seven or more authors

Krauss, H., Weber, A., Appel, M., Enders, B., Isenberg, H. D., Schiefer, H. G., . . . Zahner, H. (2003). *Zoonoses: Infectious diseases transmissible from animals to humans*. Washington, DC: ASM Press.

Book by an Association or Organization

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Article or Chapter in an Edited Collection

Riding, R. (2001). The nature and effects of cognitive style. In Sternberg, R. J., & Zhang, L.-F. (Eds.), *Perspectives on thinking, learning, and cognitive styles* (pp. 47-72). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Collected Content in an Edited Book

Single editor

Gray, W. D. (Ed.). (2007). *Integrated models of cognition systems*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Multiple editors

Reynolds, W. M., & Johnston, H. F. (Eds.). (1994). *Handbook of depression in children and adolescents*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Article in Print Periodical

With DOI

Marsh, J. K., & Ahn, W. (2012). Memory for patient information as a function of experience in mental health. *Journal of Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 26(3), 462-474. doi:10.1002/acp.2832

Without DOI

Murphy, V. M. (1960). Anxiety: Common ground for psychology and sociology. *The American Catholic Sociological Review*, 21(3), 213-220.

Electronic Examples

Book in Electronic Form

Levitin, D. J. (2002). *Foundations of cognitive psychology: Core readings*. Retrieved from <http://ehis.ebscohost.com>

Article in Online Periodical

With DOI

Oruç, I., Krigolson, O., Dalrymple, K., Nagamatsu, L. S., Handy, T. C., & Barton, J. S. (2011). Bootstrap analysis of the single subject with event related potentials. *Journal of Cognitive Neuropsychology*, 28(5), 322-337. doi:10.1080/02643294.2011.648176

Without DOI

Niccolai, V., Jennes, J., Stoerig, P., & Van Leeuwen, T. M. (2012). Modality and variability of synesthetic experience. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 125(1), 81-94. Retrieved from JSTOR database at <http://www.jstor.org/>

Article from a Webpage

By Multiple Authors

Vorvick, L. J., Longstreth, G. F., & Zieve, D. (2011, January 10). E. coli enteritis. Retrieved from <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000296.htm>

By an Organization/Group

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). Lead. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/lead/>

Unknown Author, Unknown Date

Water, carbon and nitrogen cycle. (n.d.) Retrieved from http://www.etap.org/demo/biology_files/lesson6/instruction4tutor.html

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- Referencing Sources in APA Style: A Basic Introduction. **Authored by:** Memorial University Libraries. **Located at:** https://youtu.be/gGtKh_-9OC0. **License:** CC BY: Attribution

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

6: Week 4: MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

6.1: Accommodating Cultural Diversity in Practice

6.2: Culture

6.3: Gender

6.4: Code-Switching

6.5: LGBT

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6.7: Violence

6.8: Help for Kids the Education System Ignores

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6.1: Accommodating Cultural Diversity in Practice

As the comments in the previous section imply, accommodating to cultural diversity involves more than adding cultural content to the curriculum—more than celebrating Mexican holidays in an American social studies class, for example, and more than discussing the history of slavery of African-Americans. These are useful actions, but they are only a starting point for truly *multicultural* education (Banks, 2009). In addition it is important to engage students in exploring the culturally based assumptions of whatever subject they are studying. In studying the “Westward Movement” (the settlement of the American west), for example, it is important to point out that this movement was “westward” only from the point of view of the white Americans living in the eastern United States. To the indigenous American Indians, the “west” was the center of their world; to the Mexicans, it was “north”; to the Asian laborers living in California, it was “east.”

James Banks has proposed five features of a fully multicultural educational program (2009). The first two of these were mentioned in the paragraph above, but not the next three:

- Integrating *cultural content* into the curriculum wherever possible.
- Stimulating *knowledge construction* to help students understand cultural assumptions.
- *Flexible teaching strategies* that give all students access and success with learning. If some students prefer to learn cooperatively rather than independently, for example, then teachers should make provisions for cooperative learning activities.
- *Encourage prejudice reduction* among all students. This can and should happen even in classes that do not seem culturally diverse on the surface. Such classes always have diversity, even if it is not visible immediately: students’ families will vary in their financial circumstances, students themselves will vary in their gender preferences, and students will vary in their attitudes about religion, politics, and many other issues.
- *Encourage the entire school to be aware* of cultural diversity and its effects. What is the racial composition of the school staff? What are their attitudes? What school policies favor particular students unfairly?

Of all of these strategies, the most important is the third: being flexible about the choice of teaching strategies. By allowing for various styles of learning, teachers can accommodate a wide range of students, whatever their cultural backgrounds, and whatever cultural background the teacher herself may have. And flexibility has an added advantage: by honoring students’ individuality, it avoids the danger of stereotyping students’ learning needs on the basis of their cultural background.

References

Banks, J. (2009). *Teaching strategies for ethnic studies, 8th edition*. Boston: Pearson Education.

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6.2: Culture

Build a Bridge: Become a Culturally Responsive Teacher

by Jenny Pennington

Learning Targets

The reader should be able to identify how Culturally Responsive Teaching can be integrated into the classroom

The reader should be able to recognize examples of different cultural norms that may conflict with standard classroom behavior

The reader should be able to understand how typical teacher candidate training may create culturally insular educators

The Increasing Need for Cultural Response

As our nation's cultural diversity continues to evolve, teachers are finding it necessary to adapt their mindset and lesson plans to accommodate students with varying cultural identities and experiences. A common phrase for helping students from different backgrounds adapt to each other is building a cultural bridge. According to the "InTime: Integrating New Technologies Into the Methods of Education" (2002) website, teachers can become proactive in combining "academic abstractions" and "lived sociocultural realities" through Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT). Today's teachers have a greater responsibility to address the growing "melting pot" of students in their classrooms and to adapt lesson plans to respect the varying cultural identities of a heterogeneous group.

Noted scholar Gay describes Culturally Responsive Teaching as "Validating, Comprehensive, Multidimensional, Empowering, Transformative, and Emancipatory" (as cited in Edwards and Kuhlman, 2007)

What Is It?

Culturally Responsive Teaching is "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them" ("Intime" par. 1). Being mindful of this type of teaching requires "teach[ing] to and through the strengths of students" ("InTime", 2002, para. 1) by using "multicultural information, resources, and materials in all subjects" (para. 1).

Some characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching include:

- "Acknowledg[ing] the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum
- Us[ing] a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles
- Teach[ing] students to know and praise their own and each others' cultural heritages" ("InTime", 2002, para. 2).

How CRT Affects Teachers

Noted and oft-cited scholar in CRT studies, Gay contends teachers tend to be "culturally insular" (as cited in Edwards and Kuhlman, 2007, para. 3), or narrow-minded, and can learn how to use CRT as a "means for releasing the potential of ethnically diverse students by exploring both the academic and psychosocial abilities of the students" (para. 3). Gay finds teachers "often focus on what their students 'don't have and can't do' while claiming cultural neutrality, believing that their own personal experiences are normal" (para. 6). Furthermore, Gay explains the reason behind this mentality is that teacher candidates begin their teaching careers "with little preparation for working with children who differ from them racially, culturally, and economically" (para. 7). Obviously, Gay's stance is not true of all teachers and their training. Yet it is worth questioning if teaching in an area where students' backgrounds are similar to each other or similar to the teacher is the fault of either. It is hard to imagine anyone disputing the need for cultural sensitivity whether students experience different cultures firsthand or study them in class. Barnes (2006) notes in her article "Preparing Preservice Teachers to Teach in a Culturally Responsive Way" that the "teaching force remains homogenous—predominantly white, female, and middle class" (para. 1). The perception that the teaching force is not heterogeneous highlights a larger issue that isn't addressed here, but the idea that those who typically choose to enter the teacher profession exhibit similar traits certainly does not mean the teachers are doomed to complacency in their lessons or apathy toward

their students. There may be a “cultural discontinuity” between teacher and student (para. 1), but it can be inferred that as the diversity in our population increases, it will be evident among teaching staff, not just students. Diversity is more apparent in urban school settings; however, research indicates that teachers across the nation train through “curricula historically grounded in Euro centric traditional styles of pedagogy” (Barnes, 2006, para. 1). Therefore, until the teacher training curriculum reflects an understanding of different cultures (i.e. reading literature from authors with more diverse backgrounds), new teachers may have to adopt the practice that how they teach is not how they were taught. Respecting and having a passionate curiosity in each other’s cultures are ways to break the perceived disconnect in the teacher-student relationship.

Another factor that may account for a lack of Culturally Responsive Teaching in the past is the common “fostering” of individualism in U.S. school systems (Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield, and Trumbull, 1999, p. 64), which “emphasizes information disengaged from its social context” (p. 64). Educators may recognize collectivistic values in some students, or values that “emphasize the interdependence of family members” (p. 64). Teachers see collectivism in students who tend to join or help others in a task so that they are “contribut[ing] to the success of any group they belong to” (p. 64). Collectivism may also account for students who relate school-based instruction to stories told in their home instead of discussing learned information in more “scientific language” (p. 66). Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield, and Trumbull (1999) suggest that as part of “advocating cultural sensitivity [. . .] teachers recognize their own practices as cultural in origin rather than as simply the ‘right way’ to do things” (p. 66). Acknowledging cultural differences and how they affect learning is akin to the need to realize that everyone has an accent—everyone has a culture and we all should respect that if we wish to address the needs of all our students.

In “Cultural and Academic Excellence Leaves No Child Behind,” Stickney (2003) states that “[e]ffective educators understand the verbal and nonverbal communication styles of cultures other than their own” (para. 6). Cultural norms may dictate students perform or react in ways anathema to what teachers expect, which is using “eye contact, tak[ing] turns, speak[ing] one at a time, and us[ing] body language that shows they are being attentive” (para. 6). One example of this perceived deviation is in African American cultures in which students “sometimes use call-and-response banter when communicating (a self-explanatory practice in which someone speaks and another replies = banter), [in] Latino cultures [when students] at times talk along with speakers to show support for what is being said, and [in] Hawaiian cultures [when students] communicate more effectively by storytelling than by quick replies” (para. 6). Teachers will need to research the cultural norms of their students—such norms are far too varied and complex to be summarized here, and new norms may emerge each year as new students enter our classrooms. In general, students’ behavior in classrooms will “depend upon cultural norms regarding what is polite or respectful, [even] culturally accepted gender roles” (para. 7). If one is to incorporate cultural sensitivity in his or her teaching, “lesson plans need to blend information on how students can become comfortable with American culture with ways that other students can become culturally responsive to members of diverse cultures” (para. 7). As the U.S. population diversifies, an inspiring definition of American culture will be just that—diversity, the idea of the “melting pot” becoming a lived reality in more and more places.

Ladson-Billings (Education Alliance, 2009) contends that Culturally Responsive Teaching is “an approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.”

What Can CRT Do?

CRT can capitalize on cooperative learning (“InTime”, 2009, para. 11) as students “become social critics” (para. 10) with “more caring, concerned, and humane interpersonal skills” (para. 12). Students can benefit from CRT by gaining a “better understanding of interconnections among individual, local, national, ethnic, global, and human identities” as well as “acceptance of knowledge as something to be continuously shared, critiqued, revised, and renewed” (para. 12). “The Knowledge Loom” (2009), a site created by the Education Alliance at Brown University, maintains CRT is “premised on the idea that culture is central to student learning” (para. 1), and also suggests CRT is a means to “recognize, respect, and use students’ identities and backgrounds as meaningful sources for creating optimal learning environments” (para. 1). One can deduce that the CRT concept negates the groundbreaking notion that students’ minds are a blank slate, or *tabula rosa* (“The Knowledge Loom”, 2009, para. 4), since background and experience are integral factors in the learning environment—and can provide richer learning experiences for student and teacher.

In the Classroom

The premise of a learning community can come to fruition in a culturally responsive classroom. Since CRT can expand to all subjects, teachers can collaborate to make students’ experiences multidimensional through: “curriculum content, learning context,

classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, and performance assessments” (“InTime”, 2009, para. 6). In fact, teachers of varied subjects like language arts, science, social studies, and music can collaborate “in teaching a single cultural concept, such as protest” (para. 6). Cooperative learning lends itself not just to student groups but to a group of teachers who can work together to strengthen cultural understanding.

CRT and NCLB

A strong correlation between the No Child Left Behind act and Culturally Responsive Teaching is the result of higher test scores because “educators’ integration of cultural nuances and acceptance of different cultural communication styles in classrooms positively correlate with improvements in time on task, attending behaviors, participation in classroom dialogue, concept mastery, recall of factual information with greater accuracy, and more student enthusiasm and confidence in learning” (Stickney, 2003, para. 4). Proponents of the NCLB act promote CRT since they consider “students from less dominant cultures [. . .] to be at particular risk for school failure” (para. 1). Cooperative learning through students working in groups helps students get to know each other’s backgrounds while working together to complete a task or meet a goal. If anyone can argue against a student feeling accepted into a diverse group, it may be from a homeogenous mindset a la speaking in Standard English or all people using/speaking the same language.

Conclusion

Studies of Culturally Responsive Teaching indicate that teachers’ “perceptions of culturally relevant teaching varie[s]” (Edwards and Kuhlman, 2007, para. 27), but one can integrate CRT in the classroom in the same vein one works with students “who may have emotional and physical problems” (para. 28)—i.e., by continuing to acknowledge and accommodate diversity among student populations. Edwards and Kuhlman (2007) urge teachers to “know that the process of becoming a culturally responsive teacher is nurtured by living, experimenting, traveling, and reading” (para. 28). Combining teachers’ knowledge of different cultural norms with classroom application creates an “opportunity to insert education into culture rather than culture into education” (para. 11). Imagine a classroom in which the teacher and student stir who they are, where they come from, and what they believe into the collective pot, creating a respectful school culture where diversity is the accepted norm.

Questions

1. What is a proven benefit of culturally responsive teaching as it relates to the No Child Left Behind act?
 - A. great cultural diversity
 - B. call and response system
 - C. increased student productivity
 - D. higher test scores
2. A student who decides to help another student in a task such as cleaning a chalkboard is participating in what norm for certain cultures?
 - A. Serving others before self
 - B. Possessive personality
 - C. Collectivism
 - D. Accepted gender norms
3. A secondary school English course instructor incorporates materials from the standard literary canon of typically white, male authors. The instructor’s teacher training probably stems from what focus?
 - A. Euro-centric
 - B. Collectivism
 - C. Culturally responsive
 - D. Multicultural
4. The season of Spring is fast approaching. How might teachers of different subjects collaborate to create a learning community

for elementary age children studying the season?

- A. The teachers join the students outside on the first sunny day for field day sports.
- B. The history, art, and physical education teachers create a lesson to teach students about May Day.
- C. The school has a fundraiser selling flower bulbs to the community.
- D. The Easter bunny visits students and hands out candy during lunch.

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===Answers to multiple choice questions===: 1.D, 2.C, 3.A, 4.B

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6.3: Gender

Gender Issues In the Classroom



By Euticha Hawkins

Learning Targets

By reading this article, the student should be able to:

- 1) Identify the general developmental differences between boys and girls
- 2) Describe how to create a classroom that is fair to both genders
- 3) Explain Title IX and the push for women's equality in education
- 4) Understand the debate over single-sex schooling

Gender Differences and Teaching to Both Genders

The vast majority of public educators will spend their careers in co-educational classrooms. As a result, they get to observe firsthand how “boys and girls create very distinct cultures” (Kommer, 2006, sect. 1, para. 4). The challenge for these teachers is to create a learning environment that is both fair and equal, taking into account differences in gender.

Boys and girls do differ, both socially and intellectually. Generally speaking, boys are more physical and more competitive than girls (Kommer, 2006). They like to move around a lot and learn through “exploratory play” (Geist & King, 2008, No. 5, para. 1). They often enjoy challenges where they can compete individually to see who is “the best” (Geist & King). Girls tend to be less physical – they often find it easier to sit still – and they focus more on cooperation and collaboration (Kommer). Girls are more likely to put the needs of the group first (Geist & King).

If teachers wish to teach both genders effectively, they must learn to use methods that incorporate both competition and cooperation (Geist & King, 2008). They should create both individual and group projects for students. They must also encourage physical exploration, since so many boys are kinesthetic learners (Geist & King).

Teachers must also understand male and female brain development and difference. Although the two genders are essentially equal in intelligence (Raymond, 2008), they are hard-wired for learning differently. Girls tend to use both hemispheres of their brain, while boys are predominantly right-brained (Kommer, 2006). As result, girls tend to excel verbal tasks like language and reading, while boys tend to excel in spatial activities like “mathematics, graphs and maps” (Kommer, sect. 2, para. 7).

Teachers can help close learning gaps by helping students learn language and math in their own ways: for instance, girls may do better by learning math “verbally,” as in having math problems presented in the form of word problems. On the other hand, boys may find it easier to learn language skills “spatially,” such as by means of charts or graphs (Geist & King, 2008). In any event, teachers can draft problems or assignments that can be solved or completed in different ways (Geist & King). This makes it easier for both boys and girls to learn.

As Kommer notes, “Girls mature more quickly than boys” (2006, sect. 2, para. 3). As a result, boys’ language skills, fine motor skills, and handwriting skills take a bit more time to develop (Tyre, 2006). This is not to say that girls are inherently “better” than boys – boys eventually fully catch up with girls (Geist and King, 2008). But it is important for teachers to understand that boys and girls mature on different timetables.

The differences between boy and girls become magnified with age. At the middle school level, children “begin to explore gender roles” (Kommer, 2006, sect. 1, para. 3). Boys feel pressed by society to control their emotions, while girls become more in tune with their seemingly innate “emotional intelligence” (Kommer). Girls are still, of course, maturing more quickly than boys. The onset of puberty arrives sooner; hormones, such as progesterone, help girls develop bonding tendencies (Kommer). Boys soon experience an upsurge in testosterone which is a double-edged sword: while possibly making boys more confident, it can also cause them to engage in risky behaviors (Kommer).

Because their brains mature more quickly, middle-school girls “process information faster” and more accurately than middle-school boys on timed tests (Tyre, 2006, para. 17). Although boys eventually catch up with girls in this respect, it is important for teachers to be aware of this important developmental difference (Tyre). Teachers can, for instance, make sure they are giving students of both genders enough time to finish assignments, especially timed tests.

Although they are outpacing boys in terms of maturity, girls in middle school experience a sudden drop-off in their levels of confidence (Kommer, 2006). It is vastly important that girls of this age be encouraged to keep developing their skills in math and science, since women tend to be underrepresented in these fields.

During adolescence, both boys and girls begin to care deeply about how the opposite sex perceives them, and a cult of appearance or personal beauty develops (Kommer, 2006). Kommer proposes that students of this age be educated in “media literacy,” so they may combat unrealistic media portrayals of how they should look, or how thin they should be. In this way, schools may actually reduce the incidence of eating disorders and body image disorders, which affect boys as well as girls.

Title IX and Fighting for Gender Parity

In 1972, in response to the civil rights movement, Congress passed the law commonly known as Title IX (“Title IX Legal Manual”). This law stipulates that any school receiving federal funds must allow equal access to educational programs. Although Title IX is most often associated with athletics, because it is written so broadly, it actually paved the way for many improvements in women’s status in academics (“Achieving Success Under Title IX”; *Title IX – Gender Equity in Education*). It is important to remember that Title IX protects both sexes from discrimination. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, “Title IX benefits both males and females and is the lynchpin of thirty-five years of efforts to promote and establish gender equity in schools” (“Title IX – Gender Equity in Education”, para. 1).

Despite the progress initiated by Title IX, many educators still felt women and girls were feeling the pangs of discrimination. In 1992, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) published a major study titled *How Schools Shortchange Girls*. This study shed light of the ways in which schools consciously or unconsciously discriminated against girls. Among other things, the study noted how girls were often stereotyped or neglected by the educational system. The study claims that curricula and tests were sometimes even biased in favor of males (“How Schools Shortchange Girls”). At times, females are also victims of sexual harassment in schools, which can cause a huge disruption in the learning process (“How Schools Shortchange Girls”).

How Schools Shortchange Girls elicited national attention and action. However, a popular backlash has recently begun to develop. According to Thomas (2008, para. 7), “In recent years, a number of critics have said that attempts to achieve greater gender equity [are] producing unintended negative effects on boys.” In other words, boys may be the ones getting shortchanged now. Boys are now deemed more likely to exhibit behavior problems and to need remedial assistance (Kommer, 2006). Although groups like the AAUW still contend that girls’ advances have not come “at the expense of boys,” many feel it would be wise to bolster our support of boys (Thomas, para. 1; Tyre, 2006). We can do this by incorporating methods that specifically appeal to boys: kinesthetic learning, visual learning, and competitive learning.

The Debate Over Single-Sex Schooling



In the wake of the so-called “gender wars,” a new idea has recently come into play: the concept of single-sex schooling. The rewriting of Title IX in 2006 approved the creation of single-sex public schools. In the past, co-educational schools were seen as “more socially appropriate, liberating, and enlightened” (Meyer, 2008, sect. 2, para. 5). The co-educational movement of the 1960s and 1970s vastly improved opportunities for female students, offering them entry into previously closed prestigious institutions (Meyer).

Nowadays, many Americans have come to believe that single-sex classrooms can still be fair and equal for both sexes. In fact, they claim that such students in such classrooms do better because there are fewer distractions, meaning that students can focus more on the material, and because teachers can “[address] gender differences in learning” (Meyer, 2008, sect. 5, para. 2). Rather than catering to both genders at once, a teacher can tailor the instruction for one gender only.

Critics of single-sex classrooms claim that they do not adequately prepare students for the real world. After all, as Kommer notes, “[W]e do not live in a gender segregated world” (2006, Section 1, para. 10). Critics also claim that single-sex classrooms actually undermine the accomplishments of Title IX by making education unequal. (In their view, separate cannot be equal.)

The debate over single-sex classroom will continue to rage. What is clear is that the research about its effectiveness is still not sufficient (Salomone, 2006). In effect, single-sex schooling is still experimental. It remains to be seen whether it should be something implemented on a broader basis.

Click this link to hear views on single-sex schooling –

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6678835200912737577&ei=cjjVSJapJpGu-AHxvNW7Ag&q=single-sex+schooling>

In Brief



Within the last century, education has come a long way towards achieving gender equality. It is important that teachers understand the many differences between boys and girls, but children should still be treated as individuals. Gender differences should be recognized as general truths, not specific truths that apply to all children across the board.

In a co-educational classroom, the needs of boys and girls should be balanced. Single sex classrooms remain an interesting option for promoting fairness and teaching specifically to each gender, although critics contend there can be no equality between separate institutions. Only time and further research will prove whether single-sex schooling is in fact superior.

What is fair to say is that all teachers strive for equality and wish the best for their students, whether male or female. Getting there is the hard part.

Q & A

Girls tend to be more:

- (a) Focused on leaning by physical activity

- (b) Focused on group collaboration
- (c) Focused on classroom competition
- (d) Focused on spatial problem-solving

A teacher who encourages “exploratory play” in his or her classroom is:

- (a) eliminating the need for separate physical education classes
- (b) violating the federal law commonly known as Title IX
- (c) supporting single-sex education
- (d) creating a gender-affirming classroom that aids many boys who are kinesthetic learners

Bill is an 11th grade student in Virginia. Bill has noticed that the boys’ locker room is old and decrepit, while the girls’ locker room has been recently remodeled and outfitted with better equipment. Bill soon learns the school has no plans to upgrade the boys’ locker room. Bill’s school is most likely violating:

- (a) the law passed in 1972 known as Title IX
- (b) the student’s right to free speech
- (c) the business code of ethics
- (d) the American’s With Disabilities Act of 1990

Marsha is a middle school teacher who sees many of her students struggling with eating disorders and unhealthy body images. What could Marsha do to help these students?

- (a) propose the school offer a mandatory course in “media literacy”
- (b) propose the school make its physical education program more rigorous
- (c) suggest that these students start to bring their own lunches
- (d) suggest that the school buy a new candy machine

Answers: 1) b, 2) d, 3) a, 4) a

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6.4: Code-Switching

Adding a Tool to the Toolbox: Code-Switching

Written By: Trenice Durio

Learning Targets:

Upon reading this article, the reader will be able:

- 1.) To know the three types of code-switching: borrowing, calque, and intersentential.
- 2.) To use strategies/ activities to increase their students' abilities to code-switch effectively.
- 3.) To recognize the negative and positive aspects of code-switching.

What is Code-Switching?

Code switching is the ability to recognize that different scenarios require a change in speech among multilingual groups. A person must identify that a change in a social situation has occurred in order to switch codes. Codes refer to different contexts of speech, such as formal vs. informal language or Spanish vs. English. Students who are bilingual or who come from different cultural backgrounds are noted for their ability to code switch. Since standard English is not their primary language, it takes these students added efforts to speak according to the standard. Some are able to code switch fluently from one language to another, while some are unable to switch back and forth with ease. Unless a proper understanding of when and how to code switch is attained by the student, a lack of understanding will sometimes translate to a lack of knowledge. (Wheeler, 2008) For African-American students this lack of knowledge means “persistent over-representation in special education and remedial basic skills classes to under-representation in honor classes, to lagging SAT scores, to low high school graduation rates” (Wheeler, 2008).

Types of Code-Switching

There are three types of code-switching: borrowing, calque, and intersentential. The first type refers to using words from the secondary language in the same grammatical format, but words unavailable in the primary language (Hughes et al., 2006). Calque is literally translating a phrase without regard to proper context (Hughes et al., 2006). Third, intersentential is inserting an entire phrase from the secondary language into a conversation using the other language (Hughes et al., 2006). All types refer to switching back and forth from one language to another to communicate to others based on the situation.

Code-Switching As A Valuable Tool

For bilingual speakers, code-switching is a valuable tool for various reasons. It offers another language to use when words in the primary language are insufficient due to the speaker or listener's limited English proficiency (Hughes et al., 2006). Since code-switching is motivated by situations, the speaker may use it to identify with a particular group of people (Hughes et al., 2006). Also, it can be a sociolinguistic tool, used for clarification, emphasis, separation from feelings, and achievement of a dramatic effect (Hughes et al., 2006). By giving the speaker more ways in which to communicate, code-switching is a useful tool in the bilingual community.

Code-Switching As a Negative Tool

Although code-switching can add to a student's toolbox, it can also be a sign of delay in language ability. Bilingualism can be viewed as either a subtractive or an additive language process. Subtractive refers to increasing the fluency and vocabulary in one language while the ability in the other decreases (Hughes et al., 2006). Therefore, this process involves the replacement of one language for the other. The additive process is when the speaker holds on to the knowledge of the first language and adds on the skills of the second language (Hughes et al., 2006). Some people view code-switching as negative because they view it from the subtractive perspective, believing that the addition of a second language shows lack of knowledge. Also, a bias of which language is inserted into English is evident. For example, if a French phrase such as “je ne sais quoi” is used it shows academic achievement, while Spanish phrases such as “adios” signifies a lower status (Hughes et al., 2006). If a language is not used at a proper time or place, a student's ability to communicate effectively may be misunderstood.

They're Not Speaking Incorrectly!

A child says to his teacher, “I be doing my homework” or “Hola! How are you?” These examples both represent using vernacular language in an improper setting or lack of code switching (Wheeler, 2008). Teachers often identify this as speaking incorrect standard English. However, these students are not in fact making errors, but are simply speaking in their vernacular language. They were not attempting to communicate in Standard English, therefore the problem does not lie in correcting their speech, but teaching students an alternative means of communication (Wheeler, 2008). By knowing the focus of education, teachers are able to more effectively meet the students’ educational needs. To help teachers meet the needs of struggling students, Rebecca S. Wheeler designed a three-step strategy, including: Scientific Inquiry, Comparison and Contrast, and Code-Switching as Metacognition (2008). The first step, Scientific Inquiry, is to build a code-switching chart identifying grammar patterns in the student’s writings. The chart is divided into five sections: examine sentences, seek patterns, define the pattern, test the hypothesis, and write informal English pattern. This step identifies the area of struggle for students and the pattern they use in informal language. For example, instead of using “owner + ‘s + what is owned” (i.e. Leon’s ball) as in formal language, students may use “owner + what is used” (i.e. Leon ball) in their informal language (Wheeler, 2008, p. 56). After the pattern is defined, the next step, is to compare and contrast the Formal English with Informal English, using the chart. Now, the students can visually and audibly know the difference between the two forms of language. Lastly, in Code-Switching as Metacognition, the child practices code switching between the two. Students will identify the appropriate language for a given setting. Students can understand the two choices of formal and informal language and know the appropriate time to use each. (Wheeler, 2008) By giving students an alternative form of language and not changing their primary form of communication, teachers give students an additional tool in their education toolbox.

From the Perspective of a Teacher

In William McCoy’s article, “Helping Students Find A Voice, by Giving Them the Words,” a teacher gives a personal account of how he succeeded at teaching 26 “at risk” students how to code-switch effectively. He believes it is the lack of understanding of their expectations and an insufficient academic vocabulary that causes students to fail in school. The first step in using the right words for a given setting is to know the audience (McCoy, 2006). He uses code-switching activities in his class, such as:

- Simulating a job interview with two applicants, one using slang and the other formal language. Through this activity, students understand that the type of language used has a strong impact on other’s perceptions of that person (McCoy, 2006).
- Writing a conversation in informal language on the board, and asking students to translate into the language used by professionals, such as a lawyer or professor (McCoy, 2006).

McCoy reports that at the beginning this exercise is a struggle for his students, but with practice their performance improves. After identifying the proper audience for a situation, students are to acknowledge the difference in situations and appropriate word usage. To teach this lesson, McCoy gives them a phrase like “I want some money,” and has them discuss how their speech would differ when robbing someone at a bank, asking for a raise at work, and requesting money from a parent. It is easy to see that each situation merits a different set of words by the speaker. Finally the students can use their knowledge and apply it to writing, focusing on having a purpose for their work. The goal is for the writer to have a thesis, support it with details, and recognize the opposing side’s argument. As a result of McCoy’s work, he stated “I was reminded that students can succeed when given the tools and experiences to do so” (McCoy, 2006, p. 25). Without first identifying that students did not possess the skills to succeed, he would not be able to give them the tools needed for success.

Quiz Yourself

1. The term code-switching refers to

- A. changing your password when you forget it
- B. modifying your speech when changing cultures/situations
- C. speaking in one language at all times
- D. switching from one school to another

2. “Sientense students” is an example of what type of code-switching?

- A. Borrowing

B. Calque

C. Intersentential

D. Mixing

3. Identifying that in informal language students will say “Him goes to the store” and in formal language students will say “He goes to the store,” is what step of Rebecca S. Wheeler’s strategy?

A. Comparison and Contrast

B. Metacognition

C. Scientific Inquiry

D. All of the Above

4. When speaking to the President, which form of language should be used?

A. Foreign language

B. Formal language

C. Informal language

D. Unwritten language

Answers

1.) B

2.) C

3.) A

4.) B

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6.5: LGBT

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Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual, and Transgender Students (GLBT) in the Classroom

By Jocelyn Carter

Learning Targets

Students should be able to:

- a) Identify Homophobia in Class.
- b) Identify the Importance of incorporating GLBT curriculum in the classroom.
- c) Describe strategies for creating a safe classroom for GLBT Students.

Introduction

Human diversity is a normal, natural thing. We teach our kids that it is alright to be different, but we don't tell them how different it is okay to be. Today, the most common place to study differences of the world is in the classroom. If children are to grow up prepared to live in a complex, multicultural society, more issues of diversity need to be discussed in the classroom (Banks 1993). The issue of sexual orientation has become of great importance to today's children. Researchers and Social scientist suggest that 1 to 3 of every 10 students is either gay or lesbian, or has an immediate family member who is (Wood p.16). This article will focus on homosexuality and homophobia, GLBT students in the classroom, social bias, and what can be done to provide a safe classroom for GLBT students.

Why is “Homophobia” present in the Schools?

Most people would agree that the topic of homophobia carries very negative undertones; I guess that is unless you are homophobic. Homophobia is the fear, dislike, and hatred of same-sex relationships or those who love and are sexually attracted to those of the same sex. It occurs in schools on personal, institutional, and societal levels (Woods p 14). Homophobia is often based on ignorance, because an individual is so closed-minded that they are not willing to educate themselves on something they know nothing about. When Eric Marcus, a homosexual man and author, addressed the question, “What do students learn about homosexuality in elementary school and high school?” his answer was simply stated. “Students learn plenty about homosexuality in school, almost all of it informally, and nearly all of it bad. The first lesson occurs when one child calls another a fag in elementary school cafeteria, and the lesson continue right on through high school, when a group of students decides to torment a theater teacher they think is gay” (Marcus, 1999 p 173)

We are taught when young that being “gay” is bad. You may not even know what the word gay means, but your parents and everyone else around you have already put in your head that it is wrong and not accepted. Everyone is afraid of what they don't know. When you are introduced to something new, it is a natural reaction to be skeptical about it. You hesitate to try it, or you state from the beginning; I know that I am not going to like it. How do we teach students about GLBT related topics? How do we protect our GLBT students in the school?

Why is it important to include GLBT related issues into the curriculum?

“Many of us, particularly in the dark days before the Stonewall riots, remember going into libraries to check for references that would give some validity to the vague stirrings inside us we knew marked us out as different” – Curry

Imagine this, Lindsey is sitting in her 4th grade class on the first day of school, and everyone is sharing stories about their families. When it's Lindsey's turn she tells the class that she has two moms because they are lesbians. The class is confused and Megan asks "What is a Lesbian?" What do you do as a teacher? DO you answer the question or ignore it and change the subject? How do you answer this without overstepping your ethical boundaries? When discussing the inclusion of GLBT it is important to understand the diversity in a classroom. There may be students in your class that are already struggling with understanding their own sexual orientation. One report indicated that lesbian, gay, and bisexual students first come to realization of their sexual orientation at age 10(D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993) When you put that age into perspective, that child is in the 3rd or 4th grade. People fear the unknown. They fear what they are unfamiliar with. On the issue of homophobia, Kevin Jennings, executive director of the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network states, " If you really want a long-term solution to homophobia, you'd better start when kids are young, and start teaching very early" (Quinlan, 1999).

Opposition

There are different reasons why incorporating GLBT issues in the classroom may come result in negative results rather than positive. It may not be the best to bring these issues up with children that are 8 or 9, even though some may already be experiencing a feeling of attraction towards the same sex, and not understand why they feel that way. Teachers could feel great discomfort in speaking about this subject in the classroom. Many parents feel that incorporating GLBT curriculum into the classroom, may cause their child to choose a gay lifestyle. When a teacher raises gay and lesbian issues in the classroom, some students respond with intellectual curiosity, but often the consequences are less positive. Some students: become embarrassed and uncomfortable, become hostile, or even question the teacher's sexuality. A lot of times students tend to make homophobic accusations against other students in the class or against other students and staff within the school (Lipkin 1999). Negative results could come about when GLBT issues are raised in the classroom.

Creating a Safe learning environment for GLBT Students

Everyone is entitled to a safe learning environment, no matter what your sexual orientation is. I think it is important to let the GLBT students know that we care, and that they are not alone. It is the duty of a teacher to keep order and command respect for everyone in their classroom, and I am sure many people sincerely would like to create a safer environment for GLBT students. There are ten suggestions that were compiled by Youth Pride, Inc. that would help with reducing homophobia in your environment:

1. Make no assumption about sexuality.
2. Having something gay-related visible in your office or classroom.
3. Support, normalize and validate student's feelings about their sexuality.
4. Do not advise youth to come out to parents, family and friends as they need to come out at their own safe place.
5. Guarantee confidentiality with students.
6. Challenge homophobia.
7. Combat heterosexism in your classroom.
8. Learn about and refer to community organizations
9. Encourage school administrators to adopt and enforce anti-discrimination policies for their schools or school systems which include sexual orientation
10. Provide role models.

It is important to incorporate this suggestion into the school. GLBT students need to be protected and I think the best way to start that is by educating their classmates and peers on what it means to be GLBT. "Opening these conversations with young children gives us an opportunity to prevent prejudice, discrimination, and violence and to support the lives of all children just as they are" (Chasnoff and Cohen, 1997, p 10)

Conclusion

An estimated 6 to 11 percent of school children have gay or lesbian parents, and another 5 to 9 percent will at some point realize that they are homosexual (Chasnoff and Cohen, 1997). Even with these statistics, schools are still hesitant to include gay or lesbian curriculum into the school. The fact remains that in the present 21st century, gay and lesbians no longer represent a

taboo. Students are choosing to come out while still in school, and they are expecting to be accepted. No matter what a student's sexual preference is, they deserve to be able to come to school and feel like they are safe. Whether or not it is the teacher's or school's responsibility to educate students on GLBT issues, is still to be decided. But in the meantime it is of utmost importance that these students are treated with respect and equality.

Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following is NOT a way to reduce homophobia in the classroom?

- A. Challenge homophobia
- B. Point out all the GLBT students in your classroom and tell the students not to make fun of them.
- C. Provide role models
- D. Support, normalize and validate student's feelings about their sexuality.

2. What is the definition of Homophobia?

- A. Refers to sexual behavior with or attraction to people of the same sex, or to a homosexual orientation.
- B. Refers to sexual behavior with or attraction to people of both sexes, or to a bisexual orientation.
- C. The fear, dislike, and hatred of same-sex relationships or those who love and are sexually attracted to those of the same sex.
- D. To cause harm to those who are not like yourself within sexual preference.

3. Researchers and Social scientist suggest that ___ of every 10 students is either gay or lesbian, or has an immediate family member who is gay?

- A. 1 to 3
- B. 4 to 6
- C. 7 to 10
- D. 2 to 4

4. If a teacher hears a student yell out “ That is so Gay” how should they respond to the student's outburst?

- A. Ignore it.
- B. Laugh with the students, because it's not like they called a specific student gay.
- C. Take the student to the side and explain to him or her why that is an inappropriate thing to say.
- D. Tell the student to go to the principal's office.

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Answers 1. B 2. C 3. A 4. C

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6.6: Poverty

Poverty in Education

By:Lauren Mike

“If all the rich and all of the church people should send their children to the public schools they would feel bound to concentrate their money on improving these schools until they met the highest ideals.” Susan B. Anthony

Learning Targets

Students should be able to:

1. Define Poverty and Glocalization
2. Understand Poverty in America
3. Understand No Child Left Behind Policy

What is Poverty and Glocalization?

Not having a roof over your head or food on the table is not the only poverty in the nation. Poverty also plays a huge role in education. The Merriam – Webster Dictionary defines poverty as the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. Education and poverty go hand in hand especially throughout different regions of the United States. “Glocalization is a term that was invented in order to emphasize that the globalization of a product is more likely to succeed when the product or service is adapted specifically to each locality or culture it is marketed in (Language Translation, 2006.)” Some parts of the United States of America have better education than other regions because of their location and their poverty level. In the wealthier places, they can get the resources that they need to be able to teach; as for the non-wealthier places it is harder for them to get the same resources to teach effectively and up to date.

Poverty in America

In 2007, the statistics of people in poverty in the United States was 37.3 million. According to LexisNexis Academics the number of the poor was 9.5% in the Midwest region of the United States and 12.5% in the South region of the United States during the year 2000. The south’s poverty rate was at the lowest it has ever been. The United States Census Bureau states that the poverty rate during the year 2007 was the lowest rate ever since the year 1959 and those rates of 2007 were the highest than during the year 2000 rates. The percent of poverty for children under the age of 18 was at 18.0% in the year 2007. Robert E. Rector and Kirk A. Johnson, Ph.D stated in Understanding Poverty in America, that the two main reasons why children are poor are because their parents do not work enough or they live in a single family home. They say that only sixteen hours of work a week is the amount that their parents work, which adds up to eight hundred a year. Two-thirds of children are children that are living in single family homes, it is stated that if the parents weren’t single then the children would be lifted out of the poverty level (Heritage.Org).

To Read More on Poverty in America <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Welfare/bg1713.cfm>

No Child Left Behind Policy

In January 8, 2002, George W. Bush signed No Child Left Behind into the law. “It redefines the federal role in K-12 education and will help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. It is based on four basic principles: stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work (ed.gov)” The funding for NCLB is an issue for the schools in the states. Some states have different funding to buy certain materials and even to hire high quality teachers. Most people criticize the funding aspect on NCLB. Susan B. Neuman states her concern with the policy, “In [the most disadvantaged schools] in America, even the most earnest teacher has often given up because they lack every available resource that could possibly make a difference. . . . When we say all children can achieve and then not give them the additional resources . . . we are creating a fantasy” (Wikipedia). Susan B. Neuman is absolutely correct about not given additional resources. Most school districts throughout the nation are not on the same

page with additional resources. Even in the same school districts some of their own schools are not even on the same page with resources.

As a substitute for the City of Virginia Beach, I have experienced it right before my eyes. For example, the funds are low when it comes to textbooks. I went Salem Middle, a school in the Virginia Beach Public School District that issued every student a textbook for the year but when I substituted at Bayside Middle another Virginia Beach Public School, the students informed me that they there are not enough textbooks to issue to each student. Salem Middle School is in a middle class area of Virginia Beach while Bayside Middle School is in a lower area where there is much of section eight housing. So how could the No Child Left Behind Policy work for all the schools in the nation if they are not even on the same page for funding? Some schools cannot even purchase enough textbooks. Globalization is not effective for the NCLB policy and the education system.

In My Own Opinion

I believe that every school in the United States of America should be on the same page. All of the schools need to have the same resources to teach the students. It is not fair for some students to have a better education than others. Each state should have the same funding no matter if it is a wealthy area or non-wealthy area. When every school has a different funding towards resources and curriculum it is not fair to the student. An example, a student lives in an area that the funding is better towards the material but then has to move to a district in which the funding is horrible. The student has to readjust to that district's material and resources for the student's learning environment. Now the student has to lower their learning standards to meet with the new district. No matter if you're rich or poor everyone is still entitled to the same education and should get the same education.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. According to LexisNexis Academics, what is the lowest region in poverty?

A) South B) North C) Midwest D) East

2. In the year 2007, how many people in the United States of America are in poverty?

A) 12.5 Thousand B) 20.8 Million C) 37.3 Million D) 14.9 Million

3. If you as a teacher wanted to know what exactly the No Child Left Behind Policy was how would you go about finding out the answer?

A) Google B) Look up the policy on the government's website C) Contact your school district/school D) Both answers B and C

4. Which can be considered living in poverty stated by Robert E. Rector and Kirk A. Johnson, Ph.D.?

A) Having clothes to wear B) Having food to eat C) Having cable D) All of Above

Answers A,C,D,D

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6.7: Violence

How Schools and Teachers Can Create Safe Schools and Eliminate Bullying

Wiki Article by Amanda M. Artzer

Learning Target

This article's learning targets are designed to help future teachers. Outside links are provided to help readers even further. The article is broken down into many sections for easy understanding.

The point of this article is to enable readers to gain control of their classroom. It focuses on bullying, and how to identify bullies.

Readers should be able to recognize some of the signs of school bullying.

Ideas and ways of preventing bullying will be suggested to help future teachers eliminate violence in schools. Readers will have a grasp of what to do about bullying.

Bullying

Children are more often the target of violence, rather than the cause. Schools should be a safe place for all students. (U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences , 2007)

For statistics visit <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/crimeindicators2007/>.

Bullying is a form of violence. What is bullying?

From 1994-1999, 253 deaths were associated with violent events. Of these, 74.5% were caused by guns.
"In 1998-99 academic year, 3,523 students were expelled for bringing a firearm to school."
"Nearly 8% of adolescents in urban junior and senior high schools miss at least one day of school each month because they are afraid to attend."

Bullying can be physical, threats, teasing, and exclusion. The bully will often blame their target for their actions. (StopBullyingNow)

Why are people bullied? Here are some examples (Teens health, 2007).

- They are shy
- They look different
- They do not fit in
- Race
- Sexual orientation
- They are an easy target
- Social status

Types of Bullying

- Physical
 - o Punching, kicking, sexual assault, showing, tripping, etc.
- Psychological
 - o An example of this gossip, and spreading rumors about a person.
- Verbal
 - o Such as teasing and taunting a person.
- A newer one is Cyber bullying
 - o Cruelty through instant messages, web pages, emails, etc.

Who bullies?

They are people who feel the need to dominate others. They can think of themselves as the greatest, or be very insecure. Others have personality disorders (Teens health, 2007).

What is bullying?

“Physical aggression: hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, punching

• Verbal aggression: threatening, taunting, teasing, starting rumors, hate speech.

• Exclusion from activities: This does not mean that a student should have to be friends with every other student; it does mean that children should not be allowed to systematically exclude others: “No one play with Mary;” “No one wants to play with him;” “Don’t be her friend.”

(StopBullyingNow)

The McKinney North High School and The Texas Cheerleading Scandal

Five cheerleaders at McKinney high school in Dallas, Texas were at the heart of a huge scandal. They did not just bully students, but they bullied teachers as well. The girls called themselves the “Fab Five” and were the top social clique at their school. The “ringleader” of the group was the daughter of the principal, Linda Theret. On homecoming night, some of the girls arrived to the dance already drunk. “When one teacher told a squad member to quit chatting on her cell phone in class, the girl replied, “Shut up, I’m talking to my Mom.” When another teacher, on a separate occasion, was disciplining her, the girl replied, “Pull your panties out of a wad.” The girls drove five cheerleading coaches to quit in three years.

The last coach the girls dealt with, Michaela Ward, was bullied by the girls as well. “Among the pranks they allegedly pulled on Ward: giving her what the report described as a “chocolate tampon” and sending racy text messages from her cell phone to her husband and another coach.” When pictures of the girls surfaced on the internet of them in Condom shops, and drinking; the girls were suspended from the cheerleading squad. When they were told they would be kicked off if another incident occurred a girl replied, “Good luck with that.” Ward is the one who took action. She resigned from the school, and went to the media (Kovach, Campo-Flores , 2007).

Reducing Violence

Why is it important to rid schools of violence?

If violence is addressed in a school, before the students reach adulthood, it can help eliminate violence and crime in communities (SafeYouth).

How can schools reduce violence?

In order to effectively address the problem, schools must have a plan and not act blindly. According to the 2000 Safeguarding Our Children:An Action Guide, from the Departments of Education and Justice and the American Institutes of Research, studies have found plans need three separate criteria:

1. Positive behavior must be addressed and supported. This does not just include discipline, but extends to academics as well. Teachers must provide a “caring school environment,” and engage students to participate and excel. Love and support should be shown to all students, and not just negative behavior should be noticed.
2. Students who have “...severe academic or behavioral difficulties early on...” should be recognized and helped immediately. This should begin early on, before problems can escalate and become overwhelming challenges. Services, such as tutoring and counseling, should be provided.
3. Students who are “...experiencing significant emotional and behavioral problems...” should have intervention from schools. Schools needs to collaborate with outside sources, such as “...social services, mental health providers, and law enforcement and juvenile justice authorities.”

How can teachers prevent violence in their classrooms?

How will you, a future teacher, recognize gang members? Schools must work with their teachers. General staff meetings are routinely held at schools to help teachers understand the specific threats of violence in their school’s community. An example of

this would be possible gang activities, and ways to identify members of a nearby gang. Administrators also listen to teachers, because teachers may have prior knowledge through interaction with students (Schwartz, 1996).

How do you prevent students from being involved in gangs?

Positive attention is the best way to prevent violence before it happens. Teachers often identify problems before administrators, because of their close contact with students. Teachers should offer help with schoolwork, let administrators know of possible concerns with a student, "...or even just [be] a sympathetic ear." If you notice any at risk student, or a student being bullied, let the administrators of your school know. Do not ignore your concerns (Schwartz, 1996).

But, how can schools further help future teachers?

Possible future and further help for teachers would be training how to prevent violence. Many bus drivers already go through similar training. This will help teachers feel more secure, and "...to deal safety with violence should it erupt." Programs must include identifying risks and what to do in situations (Schwartz, 1996). Unfortunately, not all schools provide these services. If your school does not, provided below are a few links for help.

Links:

<http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/interven1.htm>

<http://www.nobully.org.nz/guidelines.htm>

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/teachers/wr/article/0,27972,1859590,00.html>

Above is mentioned that a teacher must have the right environment. But, how do you create a nurturing classroom? What are some things a teacher SHOULD NOT do?

In order for children to gain your trust, and have a nurturing classroom, do not sit back behind a desk while students do exercises at their desks. Let them know you are there to help. Walk around and make sure no one has questions.

Do not verbalize frustration, or "pick on" students. Be very mindful of comments that can be hurtful, or considered negative reinforcement. Never yell or scream at a student. Make sure that you, the teacher, do not become a bully (StopBullyingNow).

Link for more information to assess what makes a teacher a bully:
<http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/bullying%20by%20teachers.htm>.

"T.E.A.C.H.

T – Tailor for diversity. Make it a point to know as much as possible about your students, including their diverse cultural, ethnic, behavioral, and learning characteristics, along with stressors they may experience outside of school.

E – Encourage positive behavior. Aim for a 4:1 ratio of positive comments to negative corrections for all the students.

A – Arrange the environment for success. Teach your behavioral expectations directly and immediately through collaboratively-established classroom rules and well designed classroom routines.

C – Consult your peers. Seek collaboration with experienced teachers and specialists before difficult problems start to become entrenched.

H – Hug yourself. Prevent stress and burnout by focusing each day on what you are accomplishing and not just on what is frustrating."
(The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment)

Look for at Risk Students

How do I identify these students?

Students who are not attending class, and are disruptive are an example. Other factors are listed on the TeachSafeSchools website. It is important to catch them early (The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment).

Look for disruptive behavior, and wonder why a student is acting that way. Try to understand students as best as possible. Enforce behavior in September to establish authority. Sit disruptive children near the teaching area. For more ways to intervene, go to http://www.teachsafeschools.org/bully_menu5.html#5b.

Some of the examples listed are:

“Never use victim’s names with the bullying student so as to reduce retaliation possibilities.”(The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment)

Personal Analysis

Teachers are not just responsible for teaching, but also need to look out for students. They have a responsibility to students to try to help them out as much as possible. Teachers should make students feel safe and comfortable to learn in their classroom.

The Overall Summary of this Article

1. Do not be afraid to tell administrators your concerns.
2. Positive reinforcement allows for a better classroom environment.
3. Stop problems before they become problems.
4. Collaborating allows for more effective problem solving.
5. Teaching is not the only responsibility of teachers in the classroom.

Questions:

Some might have more than one answer. Select from the choice what the best answer is.

1. On the first day of school, Ms. Stevens is welcoming her class of fourth graders. Her student, Sean, immediately begins being disruptive. He is talking and making jokes while they are reading out loud. Of the choices below, which would be the best action for Ms. Stevens to do?

- a. Send Sean to the Principal’s office.
- b. Verbalize her discontent for his behavior with anger, and make him write his name on the board.
- c. Next class she should move him closer to her desk, and try to enforce positive behavior.
- d. Sit him in the back of the classroom and ignore him the rest of the day.

2. What does bullying include?

- a. Showing off, being disruptive, teasing
- b. Refusing to do activities
- c. Teasing, being rude to others
- d. Physical and Emotional abuse

3. What percentage of adolescents in urban and junior and senior high schools, miss at least one day of school each month because of fear to attend?

- a. 5%
- b. 6%
- c. 7%
- d. 8%

4. Mrs. Evans suspects a student in her class of being involved in a gang. What is the best action?

- a. Call his parents
- b. Notify an administrator
- c. Ignore her concern
- d. Give him detention

5. Behavioral enforcement and rules should begin when?

- a. After exams
- b. After a student acts up
- c. The first day of class
- d. When many students are disruptive

- Answers to questions:** 1. The best answer is “C.” Ms. Stevens does not know why Sean was acting that way. Was he bored? Did he finish ahead of the other students? Is he having trouble reading? Or is it another issue?
2. “D” is the answer. Please review the bullying section.
 3. “D” is the answer here as well, and the information is in a sidebar.
 4. “B” is the best answer. Mrs. Evans should not ignore it, and the parents may not care that he is in a gang.
 5. The best answer is “C.” Let students know from the first day of class what the rules are, and what you expect.

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Other Links Listed

<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/crimeindicators2007/>

<http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/interven1.htm>

<http://www.nobully.org.nz/guidelines.htm>

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/teachers/wr/article/0,27972,1859590,00.html>

<http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/bullying%20by%20teachers.htm>.

http://www.teachsafeschools.org/bully_menu5-2.html#5g

http://www.teachsafeschools.org/bully_menu5.html#5b .

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6.8: Help for Kids the Education System Ignores

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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8.1: Educational Philosophy Defined

What are Education Philosophies?

by **Dionne Nichols**

Introduction

What makes a teacher? Teaching is like a salad. Think about it. If you were to attend a party for any given holiday, the number of and variations to each salad recipe that might be present for consumption could outnumber those present at the party. There are so many different ways to teach, varying circumstances to take into account, and philosophies to apply to each classroom. And what better way to have a positive impact on the world than to offer knowledge for consumption? The term ‘teacher’ can be applied to anyone who imparts knowledge of any topic, but it is generally more focused on those who are hired to do so (teach, n.d., n.p.). In imparting knowledge to our students, it is inevitable that we must take into account our own personal philosophies, or pedagogies, and determine not only how we decide what our philosophies are, but also how those impact our consumers.

An analogy is one of a teacher’s most useful tools. It helps the instructor relate a difficult concept to something the students will already have the infrastructure for, thus enabling the students to cement the ideas in their mind.

Lessons in Pedagogy

Early teacher education classes frequently separated the concept of philosophy into separate schools (Roberson, 2000, p. 8). “Philosophy has been taught in the theoretical realm rather than the practical sense,” meaning that the ideas were placed before the teachers without the scaffolding to create a bridge into the classroom (Roberson, 2000, p. 7). The teachers, as students, were given a body of thought and expected to translate that into lessons for their own students. Once you have the idea, how do you apply it to teaching?

What, exactly, are education philosophies? According to Thelma Roberson (2000), most prospective teachers confuse their beliefs with the ideas of teaching (p. 6). Education philosophies, then, are not what you want to do in class to aid learning, but why you do them and how they work. For example, Roberson’s students state they “want to use cooperative learning techniques” in their classroom. The question posed is, why? “[I]s cooperative learning a true philosophy or is it something you do in the classroom because of your belief about the way children learn?” (Roberson, 2000, p. 6). Philosophies need to translate ideas into action – if you want to use certain techniques, then you need to understand how they are effective in the classroom to create that portion of your education philosophy. It helps to have an overview of the various schools out there.

Philosophies of Education have traveled down a tree of branches. The first four support branches of philosophy are the Idealist school, the Realist school, the Pragmatist school, and the Existential schools of thought (Ornstein, 2003, p.99). It might help to look at the tree and its individual branches rather than read about them...

- Idealism – focuses on a subject-matter curriculum emphasizing the great ideas of the culture. You must ponder ideas to make them whole (Ornstein, 2003, p.99).
- Realism – A subject-matter curriculum stressing objective knowledge and values. Reality is objective, meaning everyone should obtain the same results regardless of what he does or how he consider concepts (Ornstein, 2003, p.101)
 - Perennialism – Focuses on human concerns that have caused concern for centuries, revealed through ‘great works’ (Ornstein, 2003, p.110)
 - Essentialism – Rooted partially in Idealism, as well – Emphasizes skills and subjects that demonstrate the cultural heritage and contribute to society (Ornstein, 2003, p.110)
- Pragmatism – Instruction is organized around problem-solving following the steps of the scientific method – emphasizes the need to act on concepts by testing them (Ornstein, 2003, p.104).
 - Progressivism – Instruction features problem solving and group activities – The instructor acts as a facilitator as opposed to a leader (Ornstein, 2003, p.110)
 - Social Reconstructionism – Instruction that focuses on significant social and economic problems in an effort to solve them (Ornstein, 2003, pg.110)

- Existentialism – Classroom dialogue stimulates awareness – each person creates an awareness gleaned from discussion and encourages deep personal reflection on his or her convictions (Ornstein, 2003, p.108).

Perennialism

Perennialists are instructors who feel that the knowledge that has been passed through the ages should be continued as the basis of the curriculum, like the classic works of Plato and Einstein. Perennialists base their teachings on reason, logic, and analytical thought. Only information that stood the test of time is relevant. They do not illicit student input. The classes most likely to be considered under this approach would be history, science, math, and religion classes (Educational Philosophies in the Classroom, pg.1).

Positivism

The instructors whose teaching philosophies are based on documented facts and tangible truths are normally those who would be in the math and science departments. These teachers do not feel that religion and the supernatural should be a part of the thinking process. The idea of uncertainty and the unknown is considered illogical (Educational Philosophies in the Classroom, pg.1).

Behaviorism

Behaviorists believe in rewards and punishments as an approach to controlling the teaching environment due to their belief in the intrinsic nature of humans to react to internal or external stimuli. This teacher-centered system ultimately allows the students to be controlled by the educator, who makes the environment pleasant or unpleasant depending on the students' behavior (Foundations of Education, pg.1).

Essentialism

Essentialists believe that there is a universal pool of knowledge needed by all students. The fundamentals of teaching are the basis of the curriculum: math, science, history, foreign language, and English. Vocational classes are not seen as a necessary part of educational training. Classrooms are formal, teacher-centered, and students are passive learners. Evaluations are predominately through testing, and there are few, if any, projects or portfolios. These instructors easily accept the No Child Left-Behind Act because test scores are the main form of evaluation (Foundations of Education, pg. 1).

Progressivism

This is a student-centered form of instruction where students follow the scientific method of questioning and searching for the answer. Evaluations include projects and portfolios. Current events are used to keep students interested in the required subject matter. Students are active learners as opposed to passive learners. The teacher is a facilitator rather than the center of the educational process. Student input is encouraged, and students are asked to find their interpretation of the answer (Educational Philosophies in the classroom, pg.1).

Reconstructionism

This student-centered philosophy strives to instill a desire to make the world a better place. It places a focus on controversial world issues and uses current events as a springboard for the thinking process. These students are taught the importance of working together to bring about change. These teachers incorporate what is happening in the world with what they are learning in the classroom (Educational Philosophies in the Classroom, pg.1).

Constructivism

Active participation is the key to this teaching style. Students are free to explore their own ideas and share concepts with one another in nontraditional ways. "Hands on activity [...] is the most effective way of learning and is considered true learning" (Educational Philosophies in the Classroom, pg.1).

Humanism/ Existentialism

Also a student-centered philosophy, this educational method is based on the idea that the students should be presented with choices about the learning process. The student is engaged in all aspects of learning and works together with the teacher and her peers to

develop a curriculum and evaluation system that allows for individual interests and abilities (Educational philosophies in the Classroom, pg.1).

Your philosophy of education is what you believe about education and the way children learn.” – Roberson pg 4

In addition, the ‘constructivist’ school of philosophy, rooted in the Pragmatic pedagogy and branched off from the ‘Social Reconstructivist’ school, has gained much popularity. Around the turn of the century (early 1990s), many teachers felt the rote memorization and mindless routine that was common then was ineffective, and began to look for alternate ways to reach their students (Ornstein, 2003, p.111). Through the constructivist approach, “students “construct” knowledge through an interaction between what they already think and know and with new ideas and experiences” (Roberson, 2000, p. 8). This is an active learning process that leads to deeper understanding of the concepts presented in class, and is based on the abilities and readiness of the children rather than set curriculum guidelines (Ornstein, 2003, p.112). Constructivism “emphasizes socially interactive and process-oriented ‘hands on’ learning in which students work collaboratively to expand and revise their knowledge base” (Ornstein, 2003, p.112). Essentially, knowledge which is shaped by experience is reconstructed, or altered, to assist the student in understanding new concepts (Ornstein, 2003, p.112). You, as the teacher, help the students build the scaffolding they need to maintain the information even after the test is taken and graded.

Four Philosophies in Assessment

Once you know how you want to lead your classroom, it is important to consider how to assess your students’ progress. And when we think of school, we automatically consider the threesome subjects, Reading, Writing, and ‘Rithmetic. In all aspects of learning, however, the ability to communicate comes to the forefront. Communication is used in class discussion as well as unit test short answers. Writing is present in almost all subjects in some form, and writing translates to communication. Richard Fulkerson (2000), in his article “Four Philosophies of Composition,” questions whether “a [...] set of four philosophies of composition might exist, each one stressing a different element in the communicative transaction” (p. 3). Fulkerson’s schools of communicative philosophy fall into the following categories:

- **Expressionism:** a way of writing that demonstrates the students’ thoughts and can be lead by “non-directive teachers, some of whom insist that one neither can nor should evaluate writing” or more hands-on teachers who “design classroom activities to maximize student self-discovery” (p. 5). This school of thought emphasizes the student.
- **Rhetorical:** this school states that good writing is adapted to achieve a specific reaction from the audience (p. 6). This is focused on the connection between goal and process in completing assignments, and it emphasizes the audience.
- **Mimesis:** states that “a clear connection exists between good writing and good thinking” and focuses on logic and reason as exemplified in the completion of assignments (p. 5). This school emphasizes a well-rounded student in that, research, prior knowledge, and the ability to recognize both sides of an argument are necessary for success (p. 6).
- **Formalism:** this school focuses primarily on the form of the assignment – it disregards content to the extent that poor grammar can distract the audience from absorbing the content, and therefore, the work is judged “primarily by whether it shows certain internal [mistakes]” (p. 4).

While most teachers fall primarily into one school of composition pedagogy, Fulkerson (2000) points out that it is necessary to hold on to them all when he states “they are not mutually exclusive” (p. 6). The trick is to learn when each is applicable and to what extent it should be employed.

Hooked on Phonics?

So, you know how you want to lead your class, and you have an idea as to which kind of ‘grader’ you are. What next? Another area where teachers have struggled is simply in helping their students learn to or improve their reading. How do we teach reading? The two battling schools of thought are between those who support Whole Language, and those who support Phonics. “The disputes have been dubbed the Reading Wars, and the participants call them ‘vicious’” (Collins, 1997, n.p.). Several states have even intervened and enacted laws mandating one or the other.

But what are they? Just as their names state, the difference is in how the words are read. Phonics was taught primarily in the 1970s (Collins, 1997, n.p.) and study the individual components of each word, called ‘phonemes,’ which are the “smallest meaningful sounds in a language” (Collins, 1997, n.p.). “Cat, for example, has three: “kuh-aa-tuh” (Collins, 1997, n.p.). A reader needs to understand how the words are broken up and that each letter has its own sound in order to read (Collins, 1997, n.p.). Phonic

teaching focuses on code learning. Once the students understand the ‘code,’ and how the words phonemes are put together, they are supposed to be able to understand the entire word.

Whole language advocates disagree with the process of breaking each word down. They feel readers cannot focus on every letter in a word, or every word in a text (Collins, 1997, n.p.) and made their opinions known during the 1980s (Collins, 1997, n.p.). If they did, “and if they tried to translate what they saw into sounds, reading would be much too cumbersome” (Collins, 1997, n.p.). Instead, whole language teachers instruct their students in ‘skipping strategies’ – ways of guessing which word comes next to fill in any blanks (Collins, 1997, n.p.). Overall, reading is considered an organic process by which the students learn phonics “only when a question about phonics comes up in the course of reading” (Collins, 1997, n.p.). Whole language focuses on the meaning behind the words.

Which is better?

Just as in many other walks of life, statistics and studies show that one philosophy of teaching will prevail over another. The National Assessment of Educational Progress, as stated in J. Collin’s article (1997), claims that “from 1971 to 1980 there was a steady improvement in the reading comprehension of nine-year-olds. However, during the 1980s...the scores did not improve and rather declined” (n.p.).

The 1990s brought the topic full circle. It was then that Marilyn Adams, a cognitive psychologist, wrote a book describing the best methods to teach learning. “Programs that combined systematic phonics instruction with meaning emphasis seemed to work best of all” (Collins, 1997, n.p.). The key to reading is that words need to be recognized so the brain can interpret the meaning behind it (Collins, 1997, n.p.). Thus, putting the two methods together was necessary for correct comprehension of the concepts presented.

What else do I need to know?

We’ve discussed the accepted definition of pedagogy, varying schools of thought for assessment, and the difference between reading philosophies. Your salad components are increasing by number exponentially. But what toppings to you add to your thought salad? What else do you need to consider when you are setting up your classroom, your teaching styles, and your lessons?

Teaching is the hardest job you can have. You are in a position to touch hundreds of lives over the course of a career, and yet, how do you succeed? The fact remains that “when a teacher and his/her students face each other in the classroom they must truly work with each other” (Cadenas, 1999, n.p.). How else can you ensure that the students are learning what you are teaching?

[You] may spend as much as 60 hours a week creating lesson plans, teaching, advising students, grading, supervising extracurricular activities and meeting with colleagues and parents” Valerie Marchant – *Time*

The first thing to keep in mind is your own knowledge basis. Cadenas (1999) recommends that you “renew and refresh your knowledge of the subject matter” (n.p.) to stay on top of changes and help you incorporate them in to your lessons. Our world changes so rapidly that to stay on top of technology, your field of expertise, or even other areas that can be integrated into your subject matter, it is necessary to take a class or attend a seminar every once in a while (Cadenas, 1999, n.p.).

Next, “prepare interesting, colorful, captivating lesson plans and deliver them with gusto” (Cadenas, 1999, n.p.). An entertaining teacher will help cement information into a student’s memory with much more ease than one who is monotone or inactive (Cadenas, 1999, n.p.). The more entertaining you are, the deeper a connection you will make with your students, as well.

In addition to the captivating lesson, make sure “it [is] a number one priority to ensure that your student can follow the lesson” (Cadenas, 1999, n.p.). This will assist all your students in grasping the information you are placing before them in class, and will help you reach students of all learning styles (Cadenas, 1999, n.p.). You don’t want to end up teaching only to the auditory learners and leaving the visual learners to fend for themselves!

Last, “help your students to put their learning to use immediately” (Cadenas, 1999, n.p.). Show them how the lessons you are teaching are applicable to them so they feel like school is worth an investment of time and energy (Cadenas, 1999, n.p.). If nothing else, have them help each other out in class to reinforce the lesson!

Conclusion

You are ready to graze at a Fourth of July picnic. You walk over to the table, and you see an array of salads ready for you to dive in to them. How do you pick which ones you want to sample now or save for later? How do you narrow the choices down?

Educational philosophies are as abundant as salads at any holiday spread. And even though the difference between one potato salad and the one next to it is an addition of mustard, the two are by no means exactly alike. Your classes will be just as diverse. You will have students from all economic classes, with differing levels of English language ability, and all bringing various and beautiful experiences to your class. How do you reach each individual?

Knowing who you are as a teacher before you enter the classroom will help significantly. Teaching is so much more than just the content. Teaching is a learning curve on philosophy that will never be finished. Just as your classroom will change every year, continue to alter your philosophies. See what works for you and your students on a collaborative level. **In the words of J. W. Apps, “a working philosophy is never completely developed the ultimate working philosophy never reached. We’re always moving toward, hopefully, a more complete, and thus more useful, working philosophy.” (The Educational Philosophies of Training and Development Professors, Leaders, and Practitioners, pg. 1)**

Study Questions

1. Amy is working with her third grade class to improve their reading skills. She is asking them to write the words on a specific list down and break them apart based on their syllables and then combine them back into their original words. Amy is making use of which theory for reading?
 - a. Whole Language
 - b. Phonics
 - c. A combination of the two
2. Lou asks his students to critique their formal essays for APA formatting and grammar. He then asks them to write him an informal letter explaining their thought process on the formal essay, and how they thought they did overall on it. Lou is implementing which two schools of philosophy of assessment?
 - a. Formalism and Mimesis
 - b. Mimesis and Rhetorical
 - c. Rhetorical and Expressionism
 - d. Expressionism and Formalism
3. A student who is writing her formal pedagogy paper for class expresses an interest in incorporating technology into her history class. She then lists several ways she will consistently make use of technology in her classroom. In order to ensure technology is part of her pedagogy, what does this student need to do?
 - a. Develop the reason behind why she wants to use technology, including an explanation for what she hopes to accomplish
 - b. Develop her lesson plans fully so she has alternatives in case the electricity goes out, her LCD projector blows a bulb, etc.
 - c. Research statistics that show pros and cons to using technology in the classroom
 - d. Interview experienced teachers to hear what they have to say about using technology in the classroom
4. A student receives his paper back from his teacher and on it is written a comment, “Where is the opponent’s viewpoint?” This student’s teacher is focusing on which philosophy for assessment?
 - a. Rhetoricism
 - b. Mimesis
 - c. Expressionism
 - d. Formalism
5. Adam has been teaching for 11 years and needs to complete his recertification points to maintain his licensure. He signs up for a conference on reaching students with learning disabilities. Which step is he taking to help him stay focused on his original purpose of teaching?
 - a. Applicability to real life
 - b. Ensuring all students can participate

- c. Refresh his pedagogical knowledge
- d. Preparation of lesson plans

Answers: 1(b); 2(d); 3(a); 4(b); 5(c)

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8.2: Major Theories and Models of Learning

Several ideas and priorities, then, affect how we teachers think about learning, including the curriculum, the difference between teaching and learning, sequencing, readiness, and transfer. The ideas form a “screen” through which to understand and evaluate whatever psychology has to offer education. As it turns out, many theories, concepts, and ideas from educational psychology do make it through the “screen” of education, meaning that they are consistent with the professional priorities of teachers and helpful in solving important problems of classroom teaching. In the case of issues about classroom learning, for example, educational psychologists have developed a number of theories and concepts that are relevant to classrooms, in that they describe at least *some* of what usually happens there and offer guidance for assisting learning. It is helpful to group the theories according to whether they focus on changes in behavior or in thinking. The distinction is rough and inexact, but a good place to begin. For starters, therefore, consider two perspectives about learning, called behaviorism (learning as changes in overt behavior) and constructivism, (learning as changes in thinking). The second category can be further divided into psychological constructivism (changes in thinking resulting from individual experiences), and social constructivism, (changes in thinking due to assistance from others). The rest of this chapter describes key ideas from each of these viewpoints. As I hope you will see, each describes some aspects of learning not just in general, but as it happens in classrooms in particular. So each perspective suggests things that *you* might do in *your* classroom to make students’ learning more productive.

Behaviorism: changes in what students do

Behaviorism is a perspective on learning that focuses on changes in individuals’ observable behaviors— changes in what people say or do. At some point we all use this perspective, whether we call it “behaviorism” or something else. The first time that I drove a car, for example, I was concerned primarily with whether I could actually do the driving, not with whether I could describe or explain how to drive. For another example: when I reached the point in life where I began cooking meals for myself, I was more focused on whether I could actually produce edible food in a kitchen than with whether I could explain my recipes and cooking procedures to others. And still another example—one often relevant to new teachers: when I began my first year of teaching, I was more focused on doing the job of teaching—on day-to-day survival—than on pausing to reflect on what I was doing.

Note that in all of these examples, focusing attention on behavior instead of on “thoughts” may have been desirable at that moment, but not necessarily desirable indefinitely or all of the time. Even as a beginner, there are times when it is more important to be able to describe how to drive or to cook than to actually do these things. And there definitely are many times when reflecting on and thinking about teaching can improve teaching itself. (As a teacher-friend once said to me: “Don’t just *do* something; *stand* there!”) But neither is focusing on behavior which is not necessarily less desirable than focusing on students’ “inner” changes, such as gains in their knowledge or their personal attitudes. If you are teaching, you will need to attend to all forms of learning in students, whether inner or outward.

In classrooms, behaviorism is most useful for identifying relationships between specific actions by a student and the immediate precursors and consequences of the actions. It is less useful for understanding changes in students’ thinking; for this purpose we need theories that are more *cognitive* (or thinking-oriented) or social, like the ones described later in this chapter. This fact is not a criticism of behaviorism as a perspective, but just a clarification of its particular strength or usefulness, which is to highlight observable relationships among actions, precursors and consequences. Behaviorists use particular terms (or “lingo,” some might say) for these relationships. One variety of behaviorism that has proved especially useful to educators is operant conditioning, described in the next section.

Operant conditioning: new behaviors because of new consequences

Operant conditioning focuses on how the consequences of a behavior affect the behavior over time. It begins with the idea that certain consequences tend to make certain behaviors happen more frequently. If I compliment a student for a good comment made during discussion, there is more of a chance that I will hear further comments from the student in the future (and hopefully they too will be good ones!). If a student tells a joke to classmates and they laugh at it, then the student is likely to tell more jokes in the future and so on.

The original research about this model of learning was not done with people, but with animals. One of the pioneers in the field was a Harvard professor named B. F. Skinner, who published numerous books and articles about the details of the process and who pointed out many parallels between operant conditioning in animals and operant conditioning in humans (1938, 1948, 1988).

Skinner observed the behavior of rather tame laboratory rats (not the unpleasant kind that sometimes live in garbage dumps). He or his assistants would put them in a cage that contained little except a lever and a small tray just big enough to hold a small amount of food. (Figure 1 shows the basic set-up, which is sometimes nicknamed a “Skinner box.”) At first the rat would sniff and “putter around” the cage at random, but sooner or later it would happen upon the lever and eventually happen to press it. Presto! The lever released a small pellet of food, which the rat would promptly eat. Gradually the rat would spend more time near the lever and press the lever more frequently, getting food more frequently. Eventually it would spend most of its time at the lever and eating its fill of food. The rat had “discovered” that the consequence of pressing the level was to receive food. Skinner called the changes in the rat’s behavior an example of **operant conditioning**, and gave special names to the different parts of the process. He called the food pellets the **reinforcement** and the lever-pressing the **operant** (because it “operated” on the rat’s environment). See below.

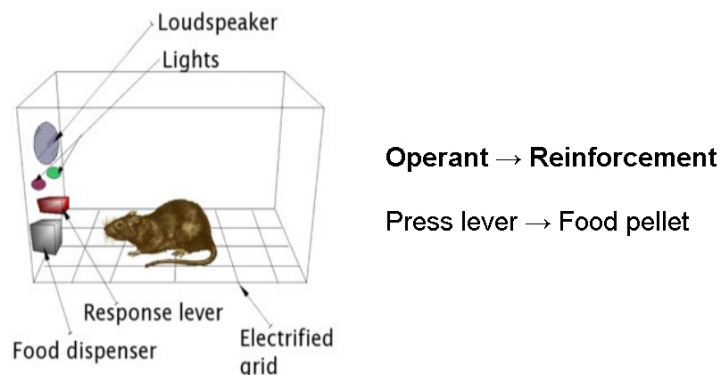


Figure 1: Operant conditioning with a laboratory rat

Skinner and other behavioral psychologists experimented with using various reinforcers and operants. They also experimented with various patterns of reinforcement (or **schedules of reinforcement**), as well as with various **cues** or signals to the animal about when reinforcement was available. It turned out that all of these factors—the operant, the reinforcement, the schedule, and the cues—affected how easily and thoroughly operant conditioning occurred. For example, reinforcement was more effective if it came immediately after the crucial operant behavior, rather than being delayed, and reinforcements that happened intermittently (only part of the time) caused learning to take longer, but also caused it to last longer.

Operant conditioning and students’ learning: Since the original research about operant conditioning used animals, it is important to ask whether operant conditioning also describes learning in human beings, and especially in students in classrooms. On this point the answer seems to be clearly “yes.” There are countless classroom examples of consequences affecting students’ behavior in ways that resemble operant conditioning, although the process certainly does not account for all forms of student learning (Alberto & Troutman, 2005). Consider the following examples. In most of them the operant behavior tends to become more frequent on repeated occasions:

- A seventh-grade boy makes a silly face (the operant) at the girl sitting next to him. Classmates sitting around them giggle in response (the reinforcement).
- A kindergarten child raises her hand in response to the teacher’s question about a story (the operant). The teacher calls on her and she makes her comment (the reinforcement).
- Another kindergarten child blurts out her comment without being called on (the operant). The teacher frowns, ignores this behavior, but before the teacher calls on a different student, classmates are listening attentively (the reinforcement) to the student even though he did not raise his hand as he should have.
- A twelfth-grade student—a member of the track team—runs one mile during practice (the operant). He notes the time it takes him as well as his increase in speed since joining the team (the reinforcement).
- A child who is usually very restless sits for five minutes doing an assignment (the operant). The teaching assistant compliments him for working hard (the reinforcement).
- A sixth-grader takes home a book from the classroom library to read overnight (the operant). When she returns the book the next morning, her teacher puts a gold star by her name on a chart posted in the room (the reinforcement).

These examples are enough to make several points about operant conditioning. First, the process is widespread in classrooms—probably more widespread than teachers realize. This fact makes sense, given the nature of public education: to a large extent,

teaching is about making certain consequences (like praise or marks) depend on students' engaging in certain activities (like reading certain material or doing assignments). Second, learning by operant conditioning is not confined to any particular grade, subject area, or style of teaching, but by nature happens in every imaginable classroom. Third, teachers are not the only persons controlling reinforcements. Sometimes they are controlled by the activity itself (as in the track team example), or by classmates (as in the “giggling” example). This leads to the fourth point: that multiple examples of operant conditioning often happen at the same time. A case study in Appendix A of this book (*The decline and fall of Jane Gladstone*) suggests how this happened to someone completing student teaching.

Because operant conditioning happens so widely, its effects on motivation are a bit complex. Operant conditioning can encourage **intrinsic motivation**, to the extent that the reinforcement for an activity is the activity itself. When a student reads a book for the sheer enjoyment of reading, for example, he is reinforced by the reading itself, and we can say that his reading is “intrinsically motivated.” More often, however, operant conditioning stimulates *both* intrinsic *and* extrinsic motivation at the same time. The combining of both is noticeable in the examples in the previous paragraph. In each example, it is reasonable to assume that the student felt intrinsically motivated to some partial extent, even when reward came from outside the student as well. This was because *part* of what reinforced their behavior was the behavior itself—whether it was making faces, running a mile, or contributing to a discussion. At the same time, though, note that each student probably was also **extrinsically motivated**, meaning that another part of the reinforcement came from consequences or experiences *not* inherently part of the activity or behavior itself. The boy who made a face was reinforced not only by the pleasure of making a face, for example, but *also* by the giggles of classmates. The track student was reinforced not only by the pleasure of running itself, but *also* by knowledge of his improved times and speeds. Even the usually restless child sitting still for five minutes may have been reinforced partly by this brief experience of unusually focused activity, even if he was *also* reinforced by the teacher aide's compliment. Note that the extrinsic part of the reinforcement may sometimes be more easily observed or noticed than the intrinsic part, which by definition may sometimes only be experienced within the individual and not also displayed outwardly. This latter fact may contribute to an impression that sometimes occurs, that operant conditioning is really just “bribery in disguise,” that only the *external* reinforcements operate on students' behavior. It is true that external reinforcement may sometimes alter the nature or strength of internal (or intrinsic) reinforcement, but this is not the same as saying that it destroys or replaces intrinsic reinforcement. But more about this issue later!

Key concepts about operant conditioning: Operant conditioning is made more complicated, but also more realistic, by several additional ideas. They can be confusing because the ideas have names that sound rather ordinary, but that have special meanings with the framework of operant theory. Among the most important concepts to understand are the following:

- extinction
- generalization
- discrimination
- schedules of reinforcement
- cues

The paragraphs below explain each of these briefly, as well as their relevance to classroom teaching and learning.

Extinction refers to the disappearance of an *operant behavior* because of lack of reinforcement. A student who stops receiving gold stars or compliments for prolific reading of library books, for example, may extinguish (i.e. decrease or stop) book-reading behavior. A student who used to be reinforced for acting like a clown in class may stop clowning once classmates stop paying attention to the antics.

Generalization refers to the incidental conditioning of behaviors similar to an original *operant*. If a student gets gold stars for reading library books, then we may find her reading more of other material as well—newspapers, comics, etc.—even if the activity is not reinforced directly. The “spread” of the new behavior to similar behaviors is called generalization. Generalization is a lot like the concept of transfer discussed early in this chapter, in that it is about extending prior learning to new situations or contexts. From the perspective of operant conditioning, though, what is being extended (or “transferred” or generalized) is a behavior, not knowledge or skill.

Discrimination means learning **not** to generalize. In operant conditioning, what is **not** overgeneralized (i.e. what is discriminated) is the operant behavior. If I am a student who is being complimented (reinforced) for contributing to discussions, I must also learn

to discriminate when to make verbal contributions from when not to make them—such as when classmates or the teacher are busy with other tasks. Discrimination learning usually results from the combined effects of reinforcement of the target behavior and extinction of similar generalized behaviors. In a classroom, for example, a teacher might praise a student for speaking during discussion, but ignore him for making very similar remarks out of turn. In operant conditioning, the **schedule of reinforcement** refers to the pattern or frequency by which reinforcement is linked with the operant. If a teacher praises me for my work, does she do it every time, or only sometimes? Frequently or only once in awhile? In respondent conditioning, however, the schedule in question is the pattern by which the conditioned stimulus is paired with the unconditioned stimulus. If I am student with Mr Horrible as my teacher, does he scowl every time he is in the classroom, or only sometimes? Frequently or rarely?

Behavioral psychologists have studied schedules of reinforcement extensively (for example, Ferster, et al., 1997; Mazur, 2005), and found a number of interesting effects of different schedules. For teachers, however, the most important finding may be this: partial or intermittent schedules of reinforcement generally cause learning to take longer, but also cause extinction of learning to take longer. This dual principle is important for teachers because so much of the reinforcement we give is partial or intermittent. Typically, if I am teaching, I can compliment a student a lot of the time, for example, but there will inevitably be occasions when I cannot do so because I am busy elsewhere in the classroom. For teachers concerned both about motivating students and about minimizing inappropriate behaviors, this is both good news and bad. The good news is that the benefits of my praising students' constructive behavior will be more lasting, because they will not extinguish their constructive behaviors immediately if I fail to support them every single time they happen. The bad news is that students' negative behaviors may take longer to extinguish as well, because those too may have developed through partial reinforcement. A student who clowns around inappropriately in class, for example, may not be “supported” by classmates' laughter every time it happens, but only some of the time. Once the inappropriate behavior is learned, though, it will take somewhat longer to disappear even if everyone—both teacher and classmates—make a concerted effort to ignore (or extinguish) it.

Finally, behavioral psychologists have studied the effects of **cues**. In operant conditioning, a cue is a stimulus that happens just prior to the operant behavior and that signals that performing the behavior may lead to reinforcement. In the original conditioning experiments, Skinner's rats were sometimes cued by the presence or absence of a small electric light in their cage. Reinforcement was associated with pressing a lever when, and only when, the light was on. In classrooms, cues are sometimes provided by the teacher deliberately, and sometimes simply by the established routines of the class. Calling on a student to speak, for example, can be a cue that *if* the student *does* say something at that moment, then he or she *may* be reinforced with praise or acknowledgment. But if that cue does *not* occur—if the student is *not* called on—speaking may *not* be rewarded. In more everyday, non-behaviorist terms, the cue allows the student to learn when it is acceptable to speak, and when it is not.

Constructivism: changes in how students think

Behaviorist models of learning may be helpful in understanding and influencing what students do, but teachers usually also want to know what students are *thinking*, and how to enrich what students are thinking. For this goal of teaching, some of the best help comes from **constructivism**, which is a perspective on learning focused on how students actively create (or “construct”) knowledge out of experiences. Constructivist models of learning differ about how much a learner constructs knowledge independently, compared to how much he or she takes cues from people who may be more of an expert and who help the learner's efforts (Fosnot, 2005; Rockmore, 2005). For convenience these are called **psychological constructivism** and **social constructivism** (or sometimes **sociocultural theory**). As explained in the next section, both focus on individuals' thinking rather than their behavior, but they have distinctly different implications for teaching.

Psychological constructivism: the independent investigator

The main idea of psychological constructivism is that a person learns by mentally organizing and reorganizing new information or experiences. The organization happens partly by relating new experiences to prior knowledge that is already meaningful and well understood. Stated in this general form, individual constructivism is sometimes associated with a well-known educational philosopher of the early twentieth century, **John Dewey** (1938–1998). Although Dewey himself did not use the term constructivism in most of his writing, his point of view amounted to a type of constructivism, and he discussed in detail its implications for educators. He argued, for example, that if students indeed learn primarily by building their own knowledge, then teachers should adjust the curriculum to fit students' prior knowledge and interests as fully as possible. He also argued that a curriculum could only be justified if it related as fully as possible to the activities and responsibilities that students will probably have *later*, after leaving

school. To many educators these days, his ideas may seem merely like good common sense, but they were indeed innovative and progressive at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Another recent example of psychological constructivism is the cognitive theory of **Jean Piaget** (Piaget, 2001; Gruber & Voneche, 1995). Piaget described learning as interplay between two mental activities that he called *assimilation* and *accommodation*. **Assimilation** is the interpretation of new information in terms of pre-existing concepts, information or ideas. A preschool child who already understands the concept of *bird*, for example, might initially label any flying object with this term—even butterflies or mosquitoes. Assimilation is therefore a bit like the idea of *generalization* in operant conditioning, or the idea of *transfer* described at the beginning of this chapter. In Piaget’s viewpoint, though, what is being transferred to a new setting is not simply a behavior (Skinner’s “operant” in operant conditioning), but a mental representation for an object or experience.

Assimilation operates jointly with **accommodation**, which is the revision or modification of pre-existing concepts in terms of new information or experience. The preschooler who initially generalizes the concept of *bird* to include any flying object, for example, eventually revises the concept to include only particular kinds of flying objects, such as robins and sparrows, and not others, like mosquitoes or airplanes. For Piaget, assimilation and accommodation work together to enrich a child’s thinking and to create what Piaget called **cognitive equilibrium**, which is a balance between reliance on prior information and openness to new information. At any given time, cognitive equilibrium consists of an ever-growing repertoire of mental representations for objects and experiences. Piaget called each mental representation a **schema** (all of them together—the plural—were called **schemata**). A schema was not merely a concept, but an elaborated mixture of vocabulary, actions, and experience related to the concept. A child’s schema for *bird*, for example, includes not only the relevant verbal knowledge (like knowing how to define the word “bird”), but also the child’s experiences with birds, pictures of birds, and conversations about birds. As assimilation and accommodation about birds and other flying objects operate together over time, the child does not just revise and add to his vocabulary (such as acquiring a new word, “butterfly”), but also adds and remembers relevant new experiences and actions. From these collective revisions and additions the child gradually constructs whole new schemata about birds, butterflies, and other flying objects. In more everyday (but also less precise) terms, Piaget might then say that “the child has learned more about birds.”

Exhibit 1 diagrams the relationships among the Piagetian version of psychological constructivist learning. Note that the model of learning in the Exhibit is rather “individualistic,” in the sense that it does not say much about how other people involved with the learner might assist in assimilating or accommodating information. Parents and teachers, it would seem, are left lingering on the sidelines, with few significant responsibilities for helping learners to construct knowledge. But the Piagetian picture does nonetheless imply a role for helpful others: someone, after all, has to tell or model the vocabulary needed to talk about and compare birds from airplanes and butterflies! Piaget did recognize the importance of helpful others in his writings and theorizing, calling the process of support or assistance social *transmission*. But he did not emphasize this aspect of constructivism. Piaget was more interested in what children and youth could figure out on their own, so to speak, than in how teachers or parents might be able to help the young figure out (Salkind, 2004). Partly for this reason, his theory is often considered less about learning and more about *development*, or long-term change in a person resulting from multiple experiences that may not be planned deliberately. For the same reason, educators have often found Piaget’s ideas especially helpful for thinking about students’ *readiness* to learn, another one of the lasting educational issues discussed at the beginning of this chapter. We will therefore return to Piaget later to discuss development and its importance for teaching in more detail

Exhibit 1: Learning According to Piaget

Assimilation + Accommodation → Equilibrium → Schemata

Social Constructivism: assisted performance

Unlike Piaget’s orientation to individuals’ thinking in his version of constructivism, some psychologists and educators have explicitly focused on the relationships and interactions between a learner and other individuals who are more knowledgeable or experienced. This framework often is called **social constructivism** or **sociocultural theory**. An early expression of this viewpoint came from the American psychologist **Jerome Bruner** (1960, 1966, 1996), who became convinced that students could usually learn more than had been traditionally expected as long as they were given appropriate guidance and resources. He called such support **instructional scaffolding**—literally meaning a temporary framework like the ones used to construct buildings and that allow a much stronger structure to be built within it. In a comment that has been quoted widely (and sometimes disputed), Bruner

wrote: “We [constructivist educators] begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development.” (1960, p. 33). The reason for such a bold assertion was Bruner’s belief in scaffolding—his belief in the importance of providing guidance in the right way and at the right time. When scaffolding is provided, students seem more competent and “intelligent,” and they learn more.

Similar ideas were independently proposed by the Russian psychologist **Lev Vygotsky** (1978), whose writing focused on how a child’s or novice’s thinking is influenced by relationships with others who are more capable, knowledgeable, or expert than the learner. Vygotsky made the reasonable proposal that when a child (or novice) is learning a new skill or solving a new problem, he or she can perform better if accompanied and helped by an expert than if performing alone—though still not as well as the expert. Someone who has played very little chess, for example, will probably compete against an opponent better if helped by an expert chess player than if competing against the opponent alone. Vygotsky called the difference between solo performance and assisted performance the **zone of proximal development** (or **ZPD** for short)—meaning, figuratively speaking, the place or area of immediate change. From this social constructivist perspective, learning is like *assisted performance* (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991). During learning, knowledge or skill is found initially “in” the expert helper. If the expert is skilled and motivated to help, then the expert arranges experiences that let the novice to practice crucial skills or to construct new knowledge. In this regard the expert is a bit like the coach of an athlete—offering help and suggesting ways of practicing, but never doing the actual athletic work himself or herself. Gradually, by providing continued experiences matched to the novice learner’s emerging competencies, the expert-coach makes it possible for the novice or apprentice to **appropriate** (or make his or her own) the skills or knowledge that originally resided only with the expert. These relationships are diagrammed in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: Learning According to Vygotsky

Novice → Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) ← Expert

In both the psychological and social versions of constructivist learning, the novice is not really “taught” so much as simply allowed to learn. But compared to psychological constructivism, social constructivism highlights a more direct responsibility of the expert for making learning possible. He or she must not only have knowledge and skill, but also know how to arrange experiences that make it easy and safe for learners to gain knowledge and skill themselves. These requirements sound, of course, a lot like the requirements for classroom teaching. In addition to knowing what is to be learned, the expert (i.e. the teacher) also has to organize the content into manageable parts, offer the parts in a sensible sequence, provide for suitable and successful practice, bring the parts back together again at the end, and somehow relate the entire experience to knowledge and skills meaningful to the learner already. But of course, no one said that teaching is easy!

The teacher’s role in Psychological and Social Constructivism

As some of the comments above indicate, psychological and social constructivism have differences that suggest different ways for teachers to teach most effectively. The theoretical differences are related to three ideas in particular: the relationship of learning and long-term development, the role or meaning of generalizations and abstractions during development, and the mechanism by which development occurs.

The relationship of learning and long-term development of the child

In general psychological constructivism such as Piaget emphasize the ways that long-term development determines a child’s ability to learn, rather than the other way around. The earliest stages of a child’s life are thought to be rather self-centered and to be dependent on the child’s sensory and motor interactions with the environment. When acting or reacting to his or her surroundings, the child has relatively little language skill initially. This circumstance limits the child’s ability to learn in the usual, school-like sense of the term. As development proceeds, of course, language skills improve and hence the child becomes progressively more “teachable” and in this sense more able to learn. But whatever the child’s age, ability to learn waits or depends upon the child’s stage of development. From this point of view, therefore, a primary responsibility of teachers is to provide a very rich classroom environment, so that children can interact with it independently and gradually make themselves ready for verbal learning that is increasingly sophisticated.

Social constructivists such as Vygotsky, on the other hand, emphasize the importance of social interaction in stimulating the development of the child. Language and dialogue therefore are primary, and development is seen as happening as a result—the converse of the sequence pictured by Piaget. Obviously a child does not begin life with a lot of initial language skill, but this fact is

why interactions need to be scaffolded with more experienced experts— people capable of creating a zone of proximal development in their conversations and other interactions. In the preschool years the experts are usually parents; after the school years begin, the experts broaden to include teachers. A teacher’s primary responsibility is therefore to provide very rich opportunities for dialogue, both among children and between individual children and the teacher.

The role of generalizations and abstractions during development

Consistent with the ideas above, psychological constructivism tends to see a relatively limited role for abstract or hypothetical reasoning in the life of children—and even in the reasoning of youth and many adults. Such reasoning is regarded as an outgrowth of years of interacting with the environment very concretely. As explained more fully in the next chapter (“Student development”), elementary-age students can reason, but they are thought to reason only about immediate, concrete objects and events. Even older youth are thought to reason in this way much, or even all of the time. From this perspective a teacher should limit the amount of thinking about abstract ideas that she expects from students. The idea of “democracy,” for example, may be experienced simply as an empty concept. At most it might be misconstrued as an oversimplified, overly concrete idea—as “just” about taking votes in class, for instance. Abstract thinking *is* possible, according to psychological constructivism, but it emerges relatively slowly and relatively late in development, after a person accumulates considerable concrete experience.

Social constructivism sees abstract thinking emerging from dialogue between a relative novice (a child or youth) and a more experienced expert (a parent or teacher). From this point of view, the more such dialogue occurs, then the more the child can acquire facility with it. The dialogue must, of course, honor a child’s need for intellectual scaffolding or a zone of proximal development. A teacher’s responsibility can therefore include engaging the child in dialogue that uses potentially abstract reasoning, but without expecting the child to understand the abstractions fully at first. Young children, for example, can not only engage in science experiments like creating a “volcano” out of baking soda and water, but also discuss and speculate about their observations of the experiment. They may not understand the experiment as an adult would, but the discussion can begin moving them toward adult-like understandings.

How development occurs

In psychological constructivism, as explained earlier, development is thought to happen because of the interplay between *assimilation* and *accommodation*—between when a child or youth can already understand or conceive of, and the change required of that understanding by new experiences. Acting together, assimilation and accommodation continually create new states of cognitive *equilibrium*. A teacher can therefore stimulate development by provoking cognitive dissonance deliberately: by confronting a student with sights, actions, or ideas that do not fit with the student’s existing experiences and ideas. In practice the dissonance is often communicated verbally, by posing questions or ideas that are new or that students may have misunderstood in the past. But it can also be provoked through pictures or activities that are unfamiliar to students—by engaging students in a community service project, for example, that brings them in contact with people who they had previously considered “strange” or different from themselves.

In social constructivism, as also explained earlier, development is thought to happen largely because of scaffolded dialogue in a zone of proximal development. Such dialogue is by implication less like “disturbing” students’ thinking than like “stretching” it beyond its former limits. The image of the teacher therefore is more one of collaborating with students’ ideas rather than challenging their ideas or experiences. In practice, however, the actual behavior of teachers and students may be quite similar in both forms of constructivism. Any significant new learning requires setting aside, giving up, or revising former learning, and this step inevitably therefore “disturbs” thinking, if only in the short term and only in a relatively minor way.

Implications of constructivism for teaching

Whether you think of yourself as a psychological constructivist or a social constructivist, there are strategies for helping students help in develop their thinking—in fact the strategies constitute a major portion of this book, and are a major theme throughout the entire preservice teacher education programs. For now, look briefly at just two. One strategy that teachers often find helpful is to organize the content to be learned as systematically as possible, because doing this allows the teacher to select and devise learning activities that are better tailored to students’ cognitive abilities, or that promote better dialogue, or both. One of the most widely used frameworks for organizing content, for example, is a classification scheme proposed by the educator Benjamin Bloom, published with the somewhat imposing title of *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook #1: Cognitive Domain* (Bloom, et

al., 1956; Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). **Bloom’s taxonomy**, as it is usually called, describes six kinds of learning goals that teachers can in principle expect from students, ranging from simple recall of knowledge to complex evaluation of knowledge. (The levels are defined briefly in Error: Reference source not found with examples from Goldilocks and the Three Bears.)

Bloom’s taxonomy makes useful distinctions among possible kinds of knowledge needed by students, and therefore potentially helps in selecting activities that truly target students’ *zones of proximal development* in the sense meant by Vygotsky. A student who knows few terms for the species studied in biology unit (a problem at Bloom’s *knowledge* and *comprehension* levels), for example, may initially need support at remembering and defining the terms before he or she can make useful comparisons among species (Bloom’s *analysis* level). Pinpointing the most appropriate learning activities to accomplish this objective remains the job of the teacher-expert (that’s you), but the learning itself has to be accomplished by the student. Put in more social constructivist terms, the teacher arranges a zone of proximal development that allows the student to compare species successfully, but the student still has to construct or appropriate the comparisons for him or herself.

Category or type of thinking	Definition	Example
Knowledge	Remembering or recalling facts, information, or procedures	List three things Goldilocks did in the three bears’ house.
Comprehension	Understanding facts, interpreting information	Explain why Goldilocks liked the little bear’s chair the best.
Application	Using concepts in new situations, solving particular problems	Predict some of the things that Goldilocks might have used if she had entered your house.
Analysis	Distinguish parts of information, a concept, or a procedure	Select the part of the story where Goldilocks seemed most comfortable.
Synthesis	Combining elements or parts into a new object, idea, or procedure	Tell how the story would have been different if it had been about three fishes.
Evaluation	Assessing and judging the value or ideas, objects, or materials in a particular situation	Decide whether Goldilocks was a bad girl, and justify your position.

A second strategy may be coupled with the first. As students gain experience as students, they become able to think about how they *themselves* learn best, and you (as the teacher) can encourage such self-reflection as one of your goals for their learning. These changes allow you to transfer some of your responsibilities for *arranging* learning to the students themselves. For the biology student mentioned above, for example, you may be able not only to plan activities that support comparing species, but also to devise ways for the student to think about how he or she might learn the same information independently. The resulting self-assessment and self-direction of learning often goes by the name of **metacognition**—an ability to think about and regulate one’s own thinking (Israel, 2005). Metacognition can sometimes be difficult for students to achieve, but it is an important goal for social constructivist learning because it gradually frees learners from dependence on expert teachers to guide their learning. Reflective learners, you might say, become their own expert guides. Like with using Bloom’s taxonomy, though, promoting metacognition and self-directed learning is important enough that I will come back to it later in more detail (in the chapter on “Facilitating complex thinking”).

By assigning a more active role to expert helpers—which by implication includes teachers—than does the psychological constructivism, social constructivism may be more complete as a description of what teachers usually do when actually busy in classrooms, and of what they usually hope students will experience there. As we will see in the next chapter, however, there are more uses for a theory than its description of moment-to-moment interactions between teacher and students. As explained there, some theories can be helpful for planning instruction rather than for doing it. It turns out that this is the case for psychological constructivism, which offers important ideas about the appropriate sequencing of learning and development. This fact makes the

psychological constructivism valuable in its own way, even though it (and a few other learning theories as well) may seem to omit mentioning teachers, parents, or experts in detail. So do not make up your mind about the relative merits of different learning theories yet!

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8.3: 19th Century

Educational Milestones of the 19th Century

LEARNING TARGETS

1. Students should be able to identify the Common School Period and its goals.
2. Students should be able to identify two of the major innovators of education in the 19th century.

INTRODUCTION

The 19th century encompassed many changes in America. One change in particular that influenced our education system was the beginning of the public school system. This movement made education available to the masses. Reformers and education innovators of the time worked tirelessly to make education public instead of private, free, and state maintained. In this article we will review the era of educational history known as the “common school movement, or the “common school period”. We will also discuss two of the major educational innovators that were integral in developing the first public schools, or common schools and their curriculum.

THE COMMON SCHOOL PERIOD

The years 1830 until 1872 are known as the “common school movement” or the “common school period.” During this period in history, great changes were made in public schooling in nearly every state of the union. The goals of the common school movement were to provide a free education for white children, to train and educate teachers, and to establish state control over public schools (Church, 1976). Prior to common schools, the closest thing to public schools were the schools that existed in some of the northern British colonies. They often only lasted for 10 -12 weeks per year, favored boys, and were not free. As a result, race, gender, and family wealth greatly influenced education (Stone, 2001). There were many arguments in defense of the common school. As the immigrant population grew in the northern states during this period, the common school was used to “Americanize” all foreigners (Payne). Yet another argument for common schools was from advocates like Horace Mann. Mann believed that a common education for all meant that society in general would be more productive and prosperous. He once wrote that education “can raise more abundant harvests, and multiply the conveniences of domestic life;...it can build, transport, manufacture, mine, navigate, fortify;...a single new idea is often worth more to an individual than a hundred workmen” (Church, 1976, p.66). A typical day in a common school would begin around 8:45 a.m. and last until 4 p.m. Usually breaks were taken for recess and for lunch. The children learned from textbooks such as *McGuffey Readers* and Webster’s *American Spelling Book*. A teacher might receive \$25 a month as salary and would stay with families in the surrounding areas (Huntington, 2005).

TO VIEW A PICTURE OF A COMMON SCHOOL AND ITS STUDENTS GO

TO:http://www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool/photo_gallery/photo1.html

HORACE MANN

Horace Mann was born in Franklin, Massachusetts in 1796. His education began in a one-room schoolhouse and continued until he reached Brown University. He later studied law and found himself in the political arena. He was soon appointed to the newly formed Massachusetts State Board of Education in the position of Secretary. He served as Secretary from 1837 until 1848 (Sass, 2008). Mann became known as the “Father of the Common School” (Stone, 2001). He believed that education was a universal right for all. Everyone should have the opportunity to attend school no matter what their social class or income may be. Mann also advocated for a longer school year and the funding of schools to be the responsibility of the state instead of the individual. He helped establish laws for compulsory attendance and these laws were in every state by 1918 (Payne). Mann also advocated for a more trained and professional teacher. Training institutions called normal schools were established for teachers. The first public normal school was opened in 1839 (Church, 1976). Mann knew that the key to elevating the standard of learning was to elevate the standards in which the teachers were trained. He sought to make teaching a profession (Stone, 2001).

PROFESSOR WILLIAM HOLMES MCGUFFEY

One of the key problems for educational reformers during the 19th century, was the creation of a curriculum. A small publishing company called Truman and Smith played a vital role in the first textbooks for American children. Truman and Smith wanted to sell textbooks, but first they had to find someone to write these books. Their search ended with William McGuffey (Payne, The McGuffey Readers). McGuffey had already published his first reader in 1841 that introduced children to his ethical code. The book contained fifty-five lessons and the child modeled in this book was prompt, good, kind, honest and truthful (Payne, The McGuffey Readers). The child depicted in the McGuffey Readers was white and Protestant. The second reader appeared almost simultaneously with the first. It had eighty-five lessons, sixteen pictures, and one hundred sixty pages. There were lessons on a multitude of topics. Children learned about history, biology, and even table manners (Payne, The McGuffey Readers). The secular tone of the McGuffey Reader was unlike any of the other Puritan texts from that era (Sass, 2008). Reformers believed that the moral training of children occurred hand in hand with their academic training. The McGuffey Readers provided the necessary lessons in conjunction with a moral undertone. McGuffey Readers were called “eclectic readers” because they were written from a number of sources. They were considered remarkable literary works and had great influence (Payne). The McGuffey Readers have sold over 100 million copies since 1836 (Church, 1976).

TO SEE A PICTURE OF A MCGUFFEY READER GO TO:<http://mcguffeyreaders.com/pics/1stmgreaderhb.jpg>

“The following stanza is copied from page 61 of the edition of 1844 to illustrate the method of presenting words:
I like to see a lit-tle dog, And pat him on the head; So pret-ti-ly he wags his tail When-ev-er he is fed.”

CONCLUSION

The 19th century was a turning point in American education. The beginning of public schools, school reform and state funding were just a few of these changes. Innovators and reformers sought to make education available to the masses and not just to the wealthy and privileged. Innovators and reformers like Horace Mann and William Holmes McGuffey made it possible for common schools to establish themselves as the first public schools in the nation. This era and its innovators paved the way for our public school system as we know it today.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What was the 19th century called in reference to educational reform?
 - a. The Old School Movement
 - b. The New School Movement
 - c. The Common School Movement
 - d. The High School Movement
2. Who was considered the “Father of the Common School”?
 - a. Horace Mann
 - b. William McGuffey
 - c. Thomas Jefferson
 - d. John Joseph Hughes
3. Who wrote one of the first textbooks or readers ever used in public schools?
 - a. George Washington
 - b. Thomas Jefferson
 - c. William McGuffey

- d. Horace Mann
4. Education reformers such as Horace Mann wanted to make school_____.
- a. fun, creative, and worthwhile
 - b. attainable, religious, and moral
 - c. free, public, and state maintained
 - d. expensive, private, and secular
5. One of the three goals of reformers who supported common schools was_____.
- a. to get rich
 - b. to educate teachers
 - c. to be famous
 - d. to make school only for the elite

Answers

1. C, 2. A, 3. C, 4. C, 5. B

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8.4: Teacher Education

History of Teacher Education

by Rebeca Coleman

Learning Targets

Students should be able to understand the beginnings of teacher education, starting in the ancient times.

Students should understand the progression from few requirements to many requirements to teach.

Introduction

Teacher education has changed quite a bit over the last few hundred years. Teachers have gone from scholars to men and women in a schoolroom to trained educators from specific schools. Over time though, the gift of being able to teach stayed true in those teachers.

Before the Seventeenth Century

In earlier times, priests and prophets taught noble and wealthy children skills that were needed to excel in business and politics. Priests were treated well because of their great knowledge. The first private teacher was Confucius in the fifth century BCE. In Ancient Greece, knowledge was considered very sacred and the same ideology passed through the time of Christianity. Education was not very popular among lower classes of people until after the Middle Ages. The Roman Catholic Church took responsibility and created centers of learning, which eventually became the great universities of Europe, including Cambridge (John's 2003).

The Beginnings of Specific Training

“Children are guilty of unpardonable rudeness when they spit in the face of a companion; neither are they excusable who spit from windows or on walls or furniture.” St. John Baptist de la Salle (de la Salle, 1695)

Specific teacher training originated in France in 1685 by St. John Baptist de la Salle (Teacher 2007). The training spread through Europe through the monitorial system, which is the method of education where there are number of students at a bench, a monitor (older student) who is instructed by the teacher and then instructs the younger students, and then the teacher (Teacher 2007). It spread through Europe thanks to August Hermann Francke and Johann Pestalozzi. It came to the United States in the early 1800s through this system (Teacher 2007). Schools could be a student's room in a wealthy household or a one-room schoolhouse for poorer groups of children.

Teacher Education Moves to the United States

Teachers were predominantly male before the early 1800s. Men were taught to read and write from the early days of language, and women were not taught very widely until the nineteenth century. This made it very difficult for them to teach. If a person could read and write, that person was basically qualified to teach. Teachers were chosen based on their moral quality by the local government (John's 2003).

In the 1820s, teacher training became important in the universities and academies in the United States. Women could only be taught in teacher training academies, while men could be taught in universities (History 2007). Samuel Hall created the first private normal after-high school teaching school which taught teachers in 1823. The first government funded normal school was created in Massachusetts in 1837 (John's 2003). Henry Barnard and Horace Mann helped the spread of more normal teacher-education schools (Teacher 2007). More and more universities then began to take note and included teaching schools within them. By the end of the eighteenth century, there were 127 state-supported normal schools and a larger number of private normal schools (Angus 2001 p. 6).

Teachers were starting to be required to be certified in the late nineteenth century (Angus 2001 p. 4). Pennsylvania was the first state in 1834 to require tests to show general knowledge of arithmetic, writing, and reading (Ravitch 2003). And by the middle of the nineteenth century, most other states required this sort of testing. This was a huge development because before this testing came

about on the state level, teachers only had to prove themselves to the cities and counties and that usually rested upon a teacher's morality. By mid-century, the test also started to require history, spelling, grammar, and geography (Ravitch 2003).

Teaching Styles and Schools

There were two different types of teaching styles-eastern and western. Eastern normal schools mainly taught to young women with no prior teaching experience, and aimed at teaching them for elementary education. The western normal schools taught mainly older students, especially more men, and the teaching was aimed at getting young women better jobs and then young men better administrative jobs (Angus 2001). This difference in teaching led to a change from normal schools to teaching schools in the late 1800s. There also became more requirements to attend teaching schools.

The first two graduate schools in education were established at New York University (1887) and then Teachers College, Columbia University (1888), and since then graduate programs have increased exponentially (Teacher 2007). Graduate schools gave the idea to teachers to consider themselves as a profession, which became a very controversial idea in the twentieth century, and continues to remain one today.

The Twentieth Century

By the beginning of the twentieth century, there came about the idea to make teaching more of a profession, with specific standards for certification. At this point, every state had different standards. There also was dispute because, since the creation of graduate programs, teachers wanted to be considered a profession, just like law and medicine, but they were not considered such to the professional world. This was mostly because it was such a new idea for it to be a profession, and also there were no specific standards yet. So the American Council on Education established a National Teacher's Examination in the 1930s (Ravitch 2007). This was very controversial. There was a large setback with this test because of World War II. There was a teacher shortage, and school systems did not have the luxury of caring if a teacher was properly certified or not. After World War II, though, it became more received. The requirements for having the testing became more rigorous (Angus 2001 p. 21).

Arguments

Some people argue that teachers should better themselves and should learn the latest teaching research to stay on top of everything, much like in the medical field with new medical advancements (Ravitch 2007). People like this argue that teaching cannot become a viable profession until such measures are taken to learn from history and continue to learn from research. Some people question the competency of teacher's policy analysis (Martinez 2008).

My Beliefs

"What is nobler than to mold the character of the young? I consider that he who knows how to form the youthful mind is truly greater than all painters, sculptors and all others of that sort." St. John Chrysostom (Chrysostom)

I believe that teaching is a profession in itself. I think it is important along with law and medicine in the professional field. Where would doctors and lawyers be without the teachers who taught them? I believe that teachers should educate themselves and keep up-to-date on current research and ideas. Technology is wonderful and should be integrated into classrooms, especially with younger generations now growing up entirely in a technologically advanced world.

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Questions

1. Who is considered the first private teacher?

- (A) St. John Baptist de la Salle
- (B) Samuel Hall
- (C) David Angus
- (D) Confucius

2. Where was the first graduate school for education established?

- (A) Columbia University
- (B) New York University
- (C) Harvard University
- (D) Carnegie Mellon University

3. What is a reason behind the monitorial system being effective?

- (A) The teacher only had to teach a handful of students and could relax the rest of the time.
- (B) The teacher did not have to try very hard.
- (C) The teacher was able to teach older students and then help younger students understand as necessary.
- (D) It was not effective.

4. What describes the western style of teacher education?

- (A) Only male students, with the intent to get them into administrative positions.
- (B) Only female students, with the intent to get them into administrative positions.
- (C) Mostly older students, but the intent was to get young women into better teaching jobs and young men into administrative positions.
- (D) Mostly younger students, but the intent was to get young women into better administrative positions and young men into better teaching positions.

Answers

1. D, 2. B, 3. C., 4. C

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8.5: Purpose

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF SCHOOL ANYWAY?

BY: Jennifer Scarce

LEARNING TARGETS Reader will recognize the social effects of school on a child's life.

Reader will recognize the intellectual effects of school on a child's life.

Reader will know when the first school came into existence.

BACKGROUND The first public school came into existence in the mid-nineteenth century. Its founders called it the “common” school. Common schools were funded by local property taxes, charged no tuition, open to all white children, governed by local school committees, and subject to a modest amount of state regulation(Tyack,2001). Students often went to the common school from ages six to fourteen, although this could vary widely. The duration of the school year was often dictated by the agricultural needs of particular communities, with children being off when they would be needed on the family farm(Katz, 1987). Typically, with a small amount of state oversight, each district was controlled by an elected local school board. Traditionally a county school superintendent or regional director was elected to supervise day-to-day activities of several common school districts. Since common schools were locally controlled, and the United States was very rural in the nineteenth century, most common schools were small one-room schools(Kaestle, 1983). Common schools had a single teacher (usually female) and all the students were taught together, regardless of age. Common schools typically taught reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, and math. Evaluation of students was very varied (from 0-100 grading to no grades at all), but an end-of-the-year recital was a common way that parents were informed about what their children were learning(Cremin,1980).

THE INTELLECTUAL IMPACT OF SCHOOL What's the purpose of school anyway? This is a question that every child asks at some point in their adolescent years. After all, what is appealing to a child about going to bed early, getting up early, and sitting in a desk for six and a half hours a day? Children don't understand how important going to school really is, but the importance of education is quite clear. Education is the knowledge of putting one's potentials to maximum use. Training of a human mind is not complete without education. It tells one how to think and how to make decisions. The importance of education is that only through the attainment of education, man is enabled to receive information from the external world to acquaint himself with past history and receive all necessary information regarding the present(Katz, 1987). Knowledge of education is built upon a foundation that begins with pre-school, where a lifetime of learning begins. It is vital to have a solid foundation of learning because each year new applications are taught and learning is like building blocks, you continually build on what you were initially given. If you miss a piece of information along the way, you will never be able to reach the top.

GOOD CITIZENSHIP Achieving a good education to further knowledge is not the only purpose of school. Today's schools really focus on teaching good citizenship and good character. I have substituted for the past year and a half and I have to share an example of being a witness of following through with this application. I recently substituted at an elementary school that encourages children to be honest and that no good deed goes unnoticed. To follow through with this concept, each morning during announcements the principle recognizes children for picking up paper towels in the restroom or turning in money found on the floor, even if it is just a penny. The children are so proud of themselves when they are acknowledged and this has really become an epidemic throughout the entire school.

SOCIAL SKILLS At a very young age children are taught to share and to be considerate of other people's feelings. They are also taught a great deal about emotions, behavior, and the consequences of their actions. Being able to interact socially and have healthy relationships is a very important part of life. While in the classroom children are constantly interacting with others and whether they are aware of it or not, they are learning to co-exist in a very diverse world. This socialization helps children build critical thinking skills and develop good communication skills. Schools also provide lots of extracurricular activities that incorporate teamwork, good sportsmanship, and exercise into participation. The elementary school ages are considered to be the fundamental grades and stages of development. With this in mind, it is important that children are taught positive behaviors and habits early in life. By teaching children positive behaviors at a young age, kids are more able to understand and engage in long-term attitudes and

actions that will guide them towards future success. To encourage students, and to teach all kids positive behaviors, elementary schools across the country have implemented positive behavior programs to improve student awareness, knowledge, and development(Wiggins, McTighe, 2008).

CONCLUSION Even before they enter school, young children learn to walk, to talk, and to use their hands to manipulate toys, food, and other objects. They use all of their senses to learn about the sights, sounds, tastes, and smells in their environments. They learn how to interact with their parents, siblings, friends, and other people important to their world. When they enter school, children learn basic academic subjects such as reading, writing, and mathematics. They also continue to learn a great deal outside the classroom. They learn which behaviors are likely to be rewarded and which are likely to be punished. They learn social skills for interacting with other children. After they finish school, people must learn to adapt to the many major changes that affect their lives, such as getting married, raising children, and finding and keeping a job. Because learning continues throughout our lives and affects almost everything we do, the study of learning is important in many different fields. Teachers need to understand the best ways to educate children. Psychologists, social workers, criminologists, and other human-service workers need to understand how certain experiences change people's behaviors. Employers, politicians, and advertisers make use of the principles of learning to influence the behavior of workers, voters, and consumers. The purpose of school is to provide a quality education so that all students have an equal opportunity to develop their full potential(Wiggins, McTighe, 2008).

QUESTIONS

1. What are three purposes for going to school?

A. Socialization, knowledge, and good citizenship skills **B.** Playing games, learning, and meeting new people **C.** Watching movies, taking tests, and sports **D.** Friends, parties, and meeting new people

2. One day Suzie went to school and found a dollar on the play ground. When she turns in the money to the teacher, what is she demonstrating?

A. Communication **B.** Good citizenship **C.** Trust **D.** Courage

3. When did the first public school come into existence?

A. The mid-nineteenth century **B.** The mid-sixteenth century **C.** The mid-eighteenth century **D.** The seventeenth century

4. What is the name of the first public school that came into existence in the mid-nineteenth century?

A. The Schoolhouse **B.** The "Common" School **C.** The First School **D.** The Best School

AnswerS A,B,A,B

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8.6: Cooperation

Cooperative Learning and the Social Nature of Learning

Overview

Learning Targets – Upon completion, the reader should understand the following:

- The definition of cooperative learning and how it differs from other styles of learning.
- Effective application of cooperative learning in today's classroom, such as Jigsaw and Round Robin style learning.
- Advantages to cooperative learning.
- Possible challenges with cooperative learning, such as social anxiety, and possible methods to overcome them.

Our comprehension of our vast universe grows each day. With every new discovery and information gathered from researchers across the globe, we continue to come closer and closer to our understanding of the universe we live in. Not long ago, we believed that the world was flat; however, today we have access to real time pictures taken from satellites orbiting our world to prove its true form. What we teach our children today may be far advanced from what we learned as children ourselves. New discoveries may lead to future generations treating the knowledge of today as obsolete and outdated.

Perhaps equally as important to what we teach our students is also how we teach them to learn the material. As we grow in our understanding of how the human brain operates, we must also use this understanding to help us learn more efficiently. One of the more widely accepted methods of learning that is being applied in today's classroom is that of cooperative learning. This method differs in many ways to that of traditional lecture methods of learning. In this article, we will explore the many ways to effectively apply cooperative learning, the advantages, and the possible challenges of this method.

What Is Cooperative Learning?

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The traditional classroom often consists of classes in which children of similar ability levels are taught together. Nearly all classrooms in the United States are taught by grade level specific to the age of the student rather than his or her ability. Many schools also group students according to their apparent ability levels, but this risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy for each respective group. By placing students into group in this way, we run the risk of those placed in low-level learning groups perceiving themselves as unintelligent or slow-witted. Grouping students together with varying levels of ability and backgrounds can help eliminate this threat. A very popular method of learning in this way is called cooperative learning.

Cooperative learning is the collaboration on a task by a small group of students who resolve differences of opinion, share responsibility, consider one another's ideas, and work toward common goals. (Berk, 2008)

Cooperative learning is defined as “the collaboration on a task by a small group of students who resolve differences of opinion, share responsibility, consider one another's ideas, and work toward common goals.” (Berk, 2008) Unlike traditional methods, cooperative learning lets students enhance the weaknesses of their peers with their own strengths. Students feel a part of a team rather than isolated and students deemed as having low-ability can benefit from those considered higher. In a symbiotic relation, higher level students also tend to do better by teaching the learned material to their peers.

According to Robert E. Slavin of Johns Hopkins University, there are four major perspectives on cooperative learning, which are motivational, social cohesion, cognitive development, and cognitive elaboration (Slavin, 1995). The **motivational perspective** focuses on the reward for the group in achieving their objective, and that the only way for the group to achieve this goal is to learn how to work together. The theory that students want each other to succeed is more in keeping with the **social cohesion perspective**, but is similar to the motivational perspective in that the members of the group are motivated to succeed, but instead of goal oriented, it is more motivated by compassion.

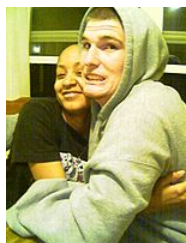
Four major perspectives on cooperative learning:
motivational – group focused on common goal
social cohesion – group wants each other to succeed
cognitive development – the human brain simply learns better in a group environment
cognitive elaboration – the best way to

The **cognitive development** perspective takes a very different approach to cooperative learning in that it contends that the interaction of students with their peers stimulates the mind and increases the ability to learn. Unlike being motivated by a common goal or by compassion for their peers, those who follow the cognitive development perspective feel that the human brain simply learns better in a group environment than on its own.

A variation of this is the fourth theory of **cognitive elaboration**, which contends that the best way to enhance the knowledge already present in the brain is to in turn explain it to ones peers. This slightly differs from cognitive development perspective in that the members of the group must already have some knowledge of the material before entering the group.

What are some Cooperative Learning examples?

For almost a quarter of a century, Dr. Spenser Kagan has been developing teaching structures of learning based on cooperative learning, called Kagan Structures, to help in the classroom as well the business world. (Kagan, 2008)



One of Kagan's most widely used method of cooperative learning is that of **RoundRobin**, purposely spelled as one word to differentiate the term from the standard definition of round robins, a type of athletic tourneyment. In a RoundRobin group, each learner takes a turn orally presenting the material that they have learned, helping them to better organize their thoughts on the material. Kagan says that labeling methods of cooperative learning like RoundRobin are beneficial to the student because "students know exactly what to do" when instructed to use a specified method. According to Kagan, this is also helpful to instructors in that it helps facilitate communication among peers in learning from each other how to teach.

Examples of Cooperative Learning:
RoundRobin (Kagan) – the group takes turns orally presenting the material.
Jigsaw (Aronson) – learners are split up into groups, assigned portions of the material to learn, meet with learners from other groups assigned the same portion, and then return to their groups to teach the material they have learned.

Another method that is fast becoming a popular form of cooperative classroom learning is that of the **Jigsaw** method. Elliot Aronson, Professor Emeritus at the University of California in Santa Cruz, first implemented his Jigsaw method in 1971 initially as a way to deal with the sudden desegregation of schools in Austin, Texas. By placing students into groups with various social and ethnic differences each with the same goal to succeed, the hostility became muted as the students were forced to work together to achieve success.

The Jigsaw method gets its name because each student is a vital piece of the overall puzzle that is the learning task. Students are first divided into groups and assigned various portions of the material to become an expert on. Then, each student meets with students from other group assigned to the same portion of the material and discuss what they have learned. This allows for the

student to share what he or she learned on their own while also hearing other students perspectives. Eventually, these students return to their original groups and in turn teaches the members of their group the material that they learned.

Advantages and Possible Challenges of Cooperative Learning

As mentioned earlier, there are many advantages to cooperative learning supported by empirical evidence. Students who participate in cooperative learning programs have outperformed students in traditional learning programs at the elementary, secondary, and collage levels, as cited in Boling and Robinson's article on how cooperative learning is used in lecture-based distance learning. According to the journal article, students have been shown to increase social skills, perceptions of their own ability, and the relevance of the material they are learning (Boling 1999).

Although cooperative learning can be highly effective, there are also some possible challenges in this style. One of the major criticisms of cooperative learning is that it tends to hold back the learning potential of those students who are naturally gifted. Oftentimes, students who are prone to social anxiety and prefer to work alone may suffer a negative effect of cooperative learning. Instructors must understand that cooperative learning is not for everyone and must compliment or supplement some material to students who thrive in a less socially active environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, cooperative learning is a very different style of learning than how traditional school systems have taught student. There are a number of theories behind why this method tends to be effective; however, there are still a number of unknown variables out there that make cooperative learning hardly the absolute best way to present material. Still, learning methods like Kagan's RoundRobin and Aronson's Jigsaw techniques have proven to be very helpful and have empirical evidence that supports the increase in participants learning ability.

Quiz Time!!!

Think you have the gist of it? Let's put your reading comprehension (and my communication skills) to the test....literally! Please take a moment to run through these 8 multiple choice questions and then compare your answers to the correct ones at the bottom. Good luck and thanks for playing!

Question 1: What is **cooperative learning**?

- A) Collaboration on a task by a small group of students who resolve differences of opinion, share responsibility, consider one another's ideas, and work toward common goals.
- B) A type of social interaction in which children orient toward a common goal, such as act out a make believe theme or working on a project together.
- C) A style of learning that incorporates small groups of like minded students with similar backgrounds and learning styles in order to enhance their learning potential.
- D) A small, diverse group of students goofing off on a project that they were supposed to turn in last week.

Question 2: Which of the following would be the best example of effective **cooperative learning**?

- A) A group of students with similar interests in books forming a reading club to discuss their favorite books, and voting on which will be their club's official favorite each week.
- B) A small group of students of different cultural backgrounds sharing their favorite foods from their native land with each other.
- C) A large, diverse group of students assigned to each write a two page paper on their political party leanings, to be turned in and graded by the instructor.
- D) A small group of students with differing political views tasked with a presentation comparing and contrasting where both Presidential Candidates in this year's election stand on issues related to education.

Question 3: Which of the following is not one of the four major theoretical perspectives of cooperative learning, according to Slavin?

- A) Learners are motivated by a common goal and must work together to achieve this goal.

- B) Learners want their peers to succeed and are fueled by compassion to help them learn.
- C) Learners learn better when they have to repeat or teach the material that they have learned to their peers.
- D) Learners have a higher ability to retain knowledge if they are seen as the leader of a cooperative learning group and assert themselves as such.
- Question 4:** Which of the following could one not use the Jigsaw or Round Robin techniques of learning?
- A) A team of lawyers must find a precedent for their client's situation and convince the judge and jury to issue a verdict of "not guilty" in light of this information.
- B) Students of an economics class must find a newspaper article that relates to their current lesson and present it to the class.
- C) A basketball team faces their rival in the upcoming championship game and they must develop new plays to overcome their opponents notorious offense.
- D) All of the above can take advantage of either Jigsaw or Round Robin techniques.

Answers to the Quiz!!!

Ok, let's see how we did.....

- 1) – A) According to Berk, the definition of cooperative learning is “collaboration on a task by a small group of students who resolve differences of opinion, share responsibility, consider one another’s ideas, and work toward common goals.” (Berk 470)
- 2) – D) The group with the Candidate comparison would be the best choice in that the students are given a task, must resolve differences of opinion, and work toward the common goal of the presentation.
- 3) – D) A cooperative learner taking charge as the leader sometimes can have an adverse effect on the rest of the group and is not one of the four perspectives mentioned by Slavin. The other three responses are motivational, social cohesion, and cognitive elaboration perspective.
- 4) – D) Jigsaw and Round Robin techniques are not exclusive to the classroom and can be used in a variety of circumstances, such as preparing for a legal case, an upcoming championship basketball game, or reading a newspaper article.

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8.7: Intelligence

How Are ALL Children Smart?: Theories of Multiple Intelligences and Emotional Intelligence

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Learning Targets:

After reviewing this article, students will be able to:

- recognize and define Gardner’s ten intelligences
- distinguish traditional views of intelligence (e.g., IQ) from Multiple Intelligences and Emotional Intelligence
- identify which kind of learning is best for them (e.g., visual, kinesthetic, etc.)

What is intelligence?

The traditional view of intelligence has always been that people are born with a fixed amount of intelligence in which that level does not change over a lifetime (Hampton, 2008). Under the traditional view of intelligence, intelligence consists of two abilities—logic and language. Short answer tests, such as the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test and the Scholastic Aptitude Test, are common ways of measuring intelligence.

However, in the past twenty years or so, a more modern view of intelligence has begun to replace existing traditional views. Extensive research has shown that it is, indeed, possible to have more than one intelligence and that the level of intelligence can change over a lifetime. This theory of intelligence is called Multiple Intelligences as created by Howard Gardner, Ph.D., a psychologist and professor of neuroscience from Harvard University.

According to Gardner, “Intelligence is the ability to respond successfully to new situations and the capacity to learn from one’s past experiences” (Hampton, 2008). Gardner believes that, “we all possess at least [seven] unique intelligences through which we are able to learn and teach new information” (Hampton, 2008). He believes that “we can all improve each of the intelligences, though some people will improve more readily in one intelligence area than the others” (Hampton, 2008).

Gardner does not believe in short-answer tests to measure intelligence because “short answer tests do not measure disciplinary mastery or deep understanding, rather they measure rote memorization skills and only one’s ability to do well on short-answer tests” (Hampton, 2008). Assessments that value the process over the final answer, such as the Performance Assessment in Math (PAM) and the Performance Assessment in Language (PAL), are more accurate measures of intelligence in Gardner’s theory than short-answer tests.

Introduction to Multiple Intelligences

In 1983 Howard Gardner proposed his theory of multiple intelligences in the book Frames of the Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. In his book, Gardner proposes that there are seven possible intelligences—linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, visual-spatial intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. Gardner would go on to add three more intelligences to his list—naturalist intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and existential intelligence—in his later book Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligence for the 21st Century (1999).

According to the *Educational Researcher*, to arrive at Gardner’s first seven intelligences Gardner and his colleagues examined literature on the “development of cognitive capacities in normal individuals, the breakdown of cognitive capacities under various kinds of organic pathology, and the existence of abilities in ‘special populations,’ such as prodigies, autistic individuals, idiots savants, and learning disabled children” (Gardner & Hatch, 1989).

Gardner and his colleagues also examined literature on “forms of intellect that exist in different species, forms of intellect valued in different cultures, the evolution of cognition across the millennia, as well as two forms of psychological evidence—the results of factor-analytic studies of human cognitive capacities and the outcome of studies of transfer and generalization” (Gardner & Hatch, 1989).

Intelligences that appeared repeatedly in Gardner's research were added to a provisional list, whilst intelligences only appearing once or twice were discarded. Gardner claimed that, "as a species, human beings have evolved over the millennia to carry out at least these seven forms of thinking" on his provisional list (Gardner & Hatch, 1989).

Multiple Intelligences Defined

GARDNER'S THEORY OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Linguistic Intelligence

Linguistic intelligence is the ability to learn languages and use language to express what is on one's mind and to understand people. Those who have high linguistic intelligence are well-developed in verbal skills and have sensitivity to sounds, meanings and rhythms of words (Hampton, 2008). These kinds of people enjoy reading various kinds of literature, playing word games, making up poetry and stories, and getting into involved discussions with other people (Hampton, 2008).

Examples of people with high linguistic ability include poets, writers, public speakers, TV and radio newscasters, and journalists.

Logical-Mathematical intelligence is the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively, and think logically. Those who are "math smart" have the capacity to analyze problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate scientifically (Smith, 2008). Those with high Logical-Mathematical intelligence are highly capable of thinking conceptually and abstractly (Hampton, 2008). This kind of intelligence is often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking (Hampton, 2008).

Careers that "math smart" people tend to be employed in include computer technicians and programmers, accountants, poll takers, medical professionals, and math teachers (Smith, 2008).

Musical Intelligence is "the capacity to think in music, to be able to hear patterns, recognize them, and manipulate them" (Hampton, 2008). Those who are musically intelligent learn through sounds, rhythms, tones, beats, music produced by other people or present in the environment," according to Gardner (Hampton, 2008). Musically intelligent people also have the ability to perform, compose, and appreciate music and music patterns (Smith, 2008).

Jobs in which musical intelligence is a desired aptitude include advertising, music studio directors and recorders, singers and songwriters, conductors, and music teachers (Hampton, 2008).

Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence is defined as "having the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body to solve problems" (Smith, 2008). Those with high kinesthetic intelligence communicate well through body language and like to be taught through physical activity, hands-on learning, acting out, and role playing (Lane, n.d.). These kinds of people have a keen sense of body awareness and have the ability to use mental abilities to coordinate bodily movements (Smith, 2008).

Gymnasts, physical therapists, mechanics, athletes, builders, dancers, doctors, surgeons, nurses, and crafts persons tend to be highly kinesthetic.

Spatial intelligence "involves the potential to recognize and use patterns of wide space and more confined areas," according to Gardner (Smith, 2008). As well as, "the ability to manipulate and mentally rotate objects," adds Gardner (Thompson, 1999). Graphic artists, architects, and mapmakers tend to be highly spatially intelligent. These people are very aware of their environments.

Interpersonal intelligence is the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations, and desires of other people (Smith, 2008). These kinds of people are "people smart" and work well with others. Examples of people with high interpersonal intelligence include educators, salespeople, and religious and political leaders. Interpersonally intelligent people learn through personal interactions.

"[People with high interpersonal intelligence] probably have a lot of friends, show a great deal of empathy for other people, and exhibit a deep understanding of other people's viewpoints," according to *MI Identified* (Hampton, 2008).

Intrapersonal intelligence is the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations," according to Gardner. "It involves have an effective working model of ourselves, and to be able to use such information to regulate our lives" according to *The Encyclopedia of Informal Education* (Smith, 2008). People who possess high intrapersonal intelligence are "self

smart.” These people know who they are, what they are capable of doing, how to react to things, what to avoid, and what they gravitate to (Hampton, 2008).

Psychologists, philosophers, social workers, and counselors are all examples of “self smart” careers.

Naturalist intelligence is defined as the ability to recognize and categorize plants, animals and other objects in nature (Hampton, 2008). Those with high naturalist intelligence include gardeners, biologists, birdwatchers, florists, horticulturists and more.

According to *EdWeb*, “People who are sensitive to changes in weather patterns or are adept at distinguishing nuances between large numbers of similar objects may be expressing naturalist intelligence abilities” (Carvin, n.d.). Naturalist intelligence is the intelligence that presumably helped our ancestors survive—“to decide what to eat and what to run from” (Holmes, 2002).

Existential Intelligence is defined as the ability to be sensitive to, or having the capacity for, conceptualizing or tackling deeper or larger questions about human existence, such as what is the meaning of life? Why are we born? And why do we die (Wilson, 2005)? Existential intelligence is often called the “wondering smart” or the metaphysical intelligence.

The clearest definition of existential intelligence defined by Gardner is: “individuals who exhibit the proclivity to pose and ponder questions about life, death, and ultimate realities” (Wilson, 2005). However, Gardner has not fully committed himself to this ninth intelligence despite his book [Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligence for the 21st Century](#) in which he first mentions the possible existence of a ninth intelligence.

Spiritual Intelligence according to Dr. Cynthia Davis, clinical and corporate psychologist and emotional intelligence business coach, “is the ultimate intelligence in which we address and solve problems of meaning and value, in which we can place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer, meaning-giving context, and the intelligence with which we can assess that one course of action or one life path is more meaningful than another” (Mindwise Pty Ltd, 2004).

“Spiritual intelligence is the intelligence that which makes us whole, integral and transformative,” according to Danah Zohar, author of [Spiritual Capital: Wealth We Can Live By](#) (Spiritual Intelligence and Spiritual Health, 2008). Spiritual intelligence is not necessarily religious nor is it dependent upon religion as a foundation (Mindwise Pty Ltd, 2004). Characteristics of spiritual intelligence include the capacity to face and use suffering, the capacity to face and transcend pain, the capacity to be flexible, actively and spontaneously adaptive, and high self-awareness (Mindwise Pty Ltd, 2004).

Conclusion to Multiple Intelligences

“The single most important contribution education can make to a child’s development is to help him towards a field where his talents best suit him, where he will be satisfied and competent.”

-Howard Gardner

Since the publication of Gardner’s *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, Gardner’s theory has been put into practice in schools all over the world. Gardner’s theory teaches that teachers should not teach the same material to the entire class rather individualize instruction by identifying students’ strengths and weaknesses.

One way of identifying students’ strengths and weaknesses is to offer a multiple intelligence assessment. Multiple Intelligence assessments typically ask students/test takers to rank statements from 1-5 indicating how well that statement describes them (“5” being the statement describes you exactly, and “1” being the statement does not describe you at all). Statements might look like the ones below from Dr. Terry Armstrong’s online assessment of strengths (Armstrong, n.d.):

- I pride myself on having a large vocabulary.
- Using numbers and numerical symbols is easy for me.
- Music is very important to me in my daily life.
- I always know where I am in relation to my home.
- I consider myself an athlete.
- I feel like people of all ages like me.
- I often look for weaknesses in myself that I see in others.

- The world of plants and animals is important to me.

Teachers can use assessments like Armstrong's to take an inventory of learner's skills so that they can tailor their teaching methods to their learner's strengths.

Introduction to Emotional Intelligence

Emotion can be any number of things. It can be anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment, love, surprise, disgust, or shame (Goleman, 2005, p. 289). Author of Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman, suggests that emotion refers to a "feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states, and range of propensities to act" (Goleman, 2005, p. 289). But, the most fascinating part about emotions is that they are universal. People from cultures around the world all recognize the same basic emotions, even peoples presumably untainted by exposure to cinema or television (Goleman, 2005, p. 290).

There are two basic definitions of emotional intelligence. One is the Mayer-Salovey definition and the other, the Goleman definition. There are numerous other definitions of emotional intelligence floating about, especially on the net. However, none are as academically or scientifically accepted as Goleman's and Mayer and Salovey's.

Emotional Intelligence Defined

Mayer-Salovey Definition

The first two people to suggest that emotional intelligence is a true form of intelligence were Jack Mayer and Peter Salovey. Mayer and Salovey are leading researchers in the field of emotional intelligence. They first published their findings in a 1990 seminal article where they defining emotional intelligence as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions," as well as, "the ability to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Hein, 2007). Mayer and Salovey further described emotional intelligence as, "a set of skills hypothesized to contribute to the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and in others, the effective regulation of emotion in self and others, and the use of feelings to motivate, plan, and achieve in one's life" (Hein, 2007).

Along with their definition of emotional intelligence, Mayer and Salovey proposed that there were four branches of emotional intelligence. Here is a compiled list of details from Mayer and Salovey's 1990 and 1997 articles on the four branches of emotional intelligence:

1. Perception Appraisal and Expression of Emotion

- Ability to identify emotions in faces, music, and stories (1990)
- Ability to identify emotion in one's physical states, feelings, and thoughts (1997)
- Ability to identify emotions in other people, designs, artwork, etc. through language, sound, appearance, and behavior (1997)
- Ability to discriminate between accurate and inaccurate, or honest vs. dishonest expressions of feeling (1997)

2. Emotional Facilitation of Thinking

- Ability to relate emotions to other mental sensations such as taste and color (1990)
- Ability to use emotion in reasoning and problem solving (1990)
- Emotions prioritize thinking by directing attention to important information (1997)
- Emotions are sufficiently vivid and available that they can be generated as aids to judgement and memory concerning feelings (1997)
- Emotional states differentially encourage specific problem-solving approaches such as when happiness facilitates inductive reasoning and creativity (1997)

3. Understanding and Analyzing Emotions; Employing Emotional Knowledge

- Ability to solve emotional problems such as knowing which emotions are similar, or opposites, and what relations that convey (1990)

- Ability to label emotions and recognize relations among the words and the emotions themselves, such as the relation between liking and loving (1997)
- Ability to interpret the meanings that emotions convey regarding relationships, such as that sadness often accompanies a loss (1997)
- Ability to understand complex feelings: simultaneous feelings of love and hate or blends such as awe as a combination of fear and surprise (1997)
- Ability to recognize likely transitions among emotions, such as the transition from anger to satisfaction or from anger to shame (1997)

4. Reflective Regulation of Emotions to Promote Emotional and Intellectual Growth

- Ability to understand the implications of social acts on emotions and the regulation of emotion in self and others (1990)
- Ability to stay open to feelings, both those that are pleasant and those that are unpleasant (1997)
- Ability to reflectively engage or detach from an emotion depending upon its judged informativeness or utility (1997)
- Ability to reflectively monitor emotions in relation to oneself and others, such as recognizing how clear, typical, influential or reasonable they are (1997)

- Ability to manage emotion in oneself and others by moderating negative emotions and enhancing pleasant ones, without repressing or exaggerating information they may convey (1997)

The Self Science Curriculum from Self Science: The Subject is Me by Karen F. Stone (Goleman, 2005, p. 305)

Main Components

Self-awareness:

observing yourself and recognizing your feelings; building a vocabulary for feelings; knowing the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and reactions

Personal Decision-making:

examining your actions and knowing their consequences; knowing if thought or feeling is ruling a decision; applying these insights to issues such as sex and drugs

Managing Feelings:

monitoring “self-talk” to catch negative messages such as internal put-downs; realizing what is behind a feeling (e.g., the hurt that underlies anger); finding ways to handle fears and anxieties, anger and sadness

Handling Stress:

learning the value of exercise, guided imagery, relaxation methods

Empathy:

understanding other people's feelings and concerns and taking their perspective; appreciating the differences in how people feel about things

Communications:

talking about feelings effectively; becoming a good listener and question-asker; distinguishing between what someone does or says and your own reactions or judgements about it; sending “I” messages instead of blame

Self-disclosure:

valuing openness and developing trust in a relationship; knowing when it is safe to risk talking about your private feelings

Insight:

identifying patterns in your emotional life and reactions; recognizing similar patterns in others

Self-acceptance:

feeling pride and seeing yourself in a positive light; recognizing your strengths and weaknesses; being able to laugh at yourself

Personal Responsibility:

taking responsibility; recognizing the consequences of your decisions and actions, accepting your feelings and moods, following through on commitments (e.g., studying)

Assertiveness:

stating your concerns and feelings without anger or passivity

Group dynamics:

cooperation; knowing when and how to lead, when to follow

Conflict resolution:

how to fight fair with other kids, with parents, with teachers; the win/win model for negotiating compromise

Goleman Definition

Daniel Goleman, Ph.D., is another important figure in the field of emotional intelligence. Goleman is the successful author of New York Times bestsellers, Emotional Intelligence and Social Intelligence, as well as an internationally known psychologist. Goleman is currently working as a science journalist and frequently lectures to professional groups, business audiences, and on college campuses (Bio, 2009). Goleman is one of the foremost experts in emotional intelligence. In his book, Emotional Intelligence, Goleman defines emotional intelligence as, “a set of skills, including control of one's impulses, self-motivation, empathy and social competence in interpersonal relationships” (Goleman, 2005).

Goleman, like Mayer and Salovey, divided emotional intelligence into key components; three that pertained to oneself and two that pertained to how one relates to others (Gergen, 1999). Goleman's five key components of emotional intelligence are: Emotional self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships. Goleman, for the most part, agrees with Mayer and Salovey. However, in recent years, Goleman has favored a four component system as opposed to his original five components in 1995.

Five Key Components (Goleman, 2005, p. 43-44):

1. *Knowing one's emotions*

- Self-awareness—recognizing a feeling *as it happens*—is the keystone of emotional intelligence
- The ability to monitor feelings from moment to moment is crucial to psychological insight and self-understanding
- People who know their emotions have a surer sense of how they really feel about personal decisions from whom to marry to what job to take

2. *Managing emotions*

- Handling feelings so they are appropriate is an ability that builds on self-awareness
- People who are poor in this ability are constantly battling feelings of distress, while those who excel in it can bounce back far more quickly from life's setbacks and upsets

3. *Motivating oneself*

- Marshalling emotions in the service of a goal is essential for paying attention, for self-motivation and mastery, and for creativity
- People who have this skill tend to be more highly productive and effective in whatever they undertake

4. *Recognizing emotions in others*

- Empathy is the fundamental people skill
- People who are empathetic are more attuned to the subtle social signals that indicate what others need or want; this makes them better at callings such as caring professions, teaching, sales, and management

5. *Handling relationships*

- Skill in managing emotions in others
- These are the abilities that undergird popularity, leadership, and interpersonal effectiveness
- People who excel in these skills do well at anything that relies on interacting smoothly with others

Conclusion to Emotional Intelligence

In 1998, Goleman developed a set of guidelines for *The Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations* that could be applied in the workplace and in schools. This set of guidelines is divided into four parts: preparation, training, transfer and maintenance, and evaluation. Each phase is equally as important as the last.

Some of the first guidelines pertain to assessment. Teachers should assess the class and individuals and inform them of their strengths and weaknesses. In delivering the assessment the teacher should try to be accurate and clear. They should also allow plenty of time for the student to digest and integrate the information (Cherniss, 1998). The teacher should provide feedback in a safe and supportive environment and avoid making excuses or downplaying the seriousness of the deficiencies (Cherniss, 1998).

Other guidelines include: maximizing learner choice, encouraging people to participate, linking learning goals to personal values, adjusting expectations, and gauging readiness (Cherniss, 1998). Teachers should foster a positive relationship between their students and themselves. They should make change self-directed; tailoring a learning program that meets individual needs and circumstances.

Teachers should also set clear goals and make the steps towards those goals manageable, and not too overly ambitious (Cherniss, 1998). Teachers should provide opportunities to practice the new behaviors they have learned. Then, teachers should provide periodic feedback on the learners' progress (Cherniss, 1998).

Teachers should rely on experiential methods of learning, such as activities that engage all the senses and that are dramatic and powerful, to aid learners in developing social and emotional competencies (Cherniss, 1998). Eventually, learners will develop a greater self-awareness. They should be able to understand how their thoughts, feelings, and behavior affect themselves and others at this point (Cherniss, 1998).

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Who is author of the theory of multiple intelligences?

- (a) Daniel Goleman
- (b) Howard Gardner
- (c) Mayer and Salovey
- (d) Reuven Bar-On

2. Mary loves reading, writing, and telling stories. Her favorite course in school is Language arts. What kind of learning would be best for Mary?

- (a) Interpersonal
- (b) Kinesthetic
- (c) Linguistic
- (d) Spatial

3. According to Mayer and Salovey, emotional facilitation of thinking is the ability to_____.

- (a) Label emotions and recognize relations among the words and the emotions themselves, such as the relation between liking and loving
- (b) Relate emotions to other mental sensations such as taste and color
- (c) Use emotion in reasoning and problem solving
- (d) Both B and C

4. Mr. Conway likes to incorporate lots of hands-on activities into his curriculum. His often asks his students to role-play in class projects. What type of learner is Mr. Conway?

- (a) Interpersonal
- (b) Intrapersonal
- (c) Kinesthetic
- (d) Spatial

5. What might be a traditional view of intelligence?

- (a) Intelligence is fixed at birth
- (b) Standardized tests such as the Stanford-Binet tests accurately measure intelligence
- (c) There is only one way to measure intelligence
- (d) All of the above

AnswerS: 1.**B** 2.**C** 3.**D** 4.**C** 5.**D**

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8.8: Teaching Is Different From In the Past

In the past decade or two teaching has changed significantly, so much in fact that schools may not be what some of us remember from our own childhood. Changes have affected both the opportunities and the challenges of teaching, as well as the attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to prepare for a teaching career. The changes have influenced much of the content of this book.

To see what we mean, look briefly at four new trends in education, at how they have changed what teachers do, and at how you will therefore need to prepare to teach:

- **increased diversity:** there are more differences among students than there used to be. Diversity has made teaching more fulfilling as a career, but also made more challenging in certain respects.
- **increased instructional technology:** classrooms, schools, and students use computers more often today than in the past for research, writing, communicating, and keeping records. Technology has created new ways for students to learn (for example, this textbook would not be possible without Internet technology!). It has also altered how teachers can teach most effectively, and even raised issues about what constitutes “true” teaching and learning.
- **greater accountability in education:** both the public and educators themselves pay more attention than in the past to how to assess (or provide evidence for) learning and good quality teaching. The attention has increased the importance of education to the public (a good thing) and improved education for some students. But it has also created new constraints on what teachers teach and what students learn.
- **increased professionalism of teachers:** Now more than ever, teachers are able to assess the quality of their own work as well as that of colleagues, and to take steps to improve it when necessary. Professionalism improves teaching, but by creating higher standards of practice it also creates greater worries about whether particular teachers and schools are “good enough.”

How do these changes show up in the daily life of classrooms? The answer depends partly on where you teach; circumstances differ among schools, cities, and even whole societies. Some clues about the effects of the trends on classroom life can be found, however, by considering one particular case—the changes happening in North America.

New trend #1: diversity in students

Students have, of course, always been diverse. Whether in the past or in the present day, students learn at unique paces, show unique personalities, and learn in their own ways. In recent decades, though, the forms and extent of diversity have increased. Now more than ever, teachers are likely to serve students from diverse language backgrounds, to serve more individuals with special educational needs, and to teach students either younger and older than in the past.

Language diversity

Take the case of language diversity. In the United States, about 40 million people, or 14 per cent of the population are Hispanic. About 20 per cent of these speak primarily Spanish, and approximately another 50 per cent speak only limited English (United States Census Bureau, 2005). The educators responsible for the children in this group need to accommodate instruction to these students somehow. Part of the solution, of course, is to arrange specialized second-language teachers and classes. But adjustment must also happen in “regular” classrooms of various grade levels and subjects. Classroom teachers must learn to communicate with students whose English language background is limited, at the same time that the students themselves are learning to use English more fluently (Pitt, 2005). Since relatively few teachers are Hispanic or speak fluent Spanish, the adjustments can sometimes be a challenge. Teachers must plan lessons and tasks that students actually understand. At the same time teachers must also keep track of the major learning goals of the curriculum. As you gain experience teaching, you will no doubt find additional strategies and resources (Gebhard, 2006), especially if second-language learners become an important part of your classes.

Diversity of special educational needs

Another factor making classroom increasingly diverse has been the inclusion of students with disabilities into classrooms with non-disabled peers. In the United States the trend began in the 1970s, but accelerated with the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1975, and again when the Act was amended in 2004 (United States Government Printing Office, 2005). In Canada similar legislation was passed in individual provinces during the same general time period. The laws guarantee free, appropriate education for children with disabilities of any kind—whether the impairment is physical, cognitive, emotional, or behavioral. The laws also recognize that such students need special supports in order to learn or function effectively in a classroom

with non-disabled peers, so they provide for special services (for example, teaching assistants) and procedures for making individualized educational plans for students with disabilities.

As a result of these changes, most American and Canadian teachers are likely to have at least a few students with special educational needs, even if they are not trained as special education teachers or have had no prior personal experience with people with disabilities. Classroom teachers are also likely to work as part of a professional team focused on helping these students to learn as well as possible and to participate in the life of the school. The trend toward inclusion is definitely new compared to circumstances just a generation or two ago. It raises new challenges about planning instruction (such as how is a teacher to find time to plan for individuals?), and philosophical questions about the very nature of education (such as what in the curriculum is truly important to learn?).

Lifelong learning

The diversity of modern classrooms is not limited to language or disabilities. Another recent change has been the broadening simply of the age range of individuals who count as “students.” In many nations of the world, half or most of all three- and four-year-olds attend some form of educational program, either part-time preschool or full-time child care (National Institute for Early Education Research, 2006). In North America some public school divisions have moved toward including nursery or preschool programs as a newer “grade level” preceding kindergarten. Others have expanded the hours of kindergarten (itself considered a “new” program early in the 20th century) to span a full-day program.

The obvious differences in maturity between preschoolers and older children lead most teachers of the very young to use flexible, open-ended plans and teaching strategies, and to develop more personal or family-like relationships with their young “students” than typical with older students (Bredenkamp & Copple, 1997). Just as important, though, are the educational and philosophical issues that early childhood education has brought to public attention. Some educational critics ask whether preschool and day care programs risk becoming *inappropriate* substitutes for families. Other educators suggest, in contrast, that teachers of older students can learn from the flexibility and open-ended approach common in early childhood education. For teachers of any grade level, it is a debate that cannot be avoided completely or permanently. In this book, it reappears in Chapter 3, where I discuss students’ development—their major long-term, changes in skills, knowledge, and attitudes.

The other end of the age spectrum has also expanded. Many individuals take courses well into adulthood even if they do not attend formal university or college. *Adult education*, as it is sometimes called, often takes place in workplaces, but it often also happens in public high schools or at local community colleges or universities. Some adult students may be completing high school credentials that they missed earlier in their lives, but often the students have other purposes that are even more focused, such as learning a trade-related skill. The teachers of adult students have to adjust their instructional strategies and relationships with students so as to challenge and respect their special strengths and constraints as adults (Bash, 2005). The students’ maturity often means that they have had life experiences that enhance and motivate their learning. But it may also mean that they have significant personal responsibilities—such as parenting or a full-time job—which compete for study time, and that make them impatient with teaching that is irrelevant to their personal goals or needs. These advantages and constraints also occur to a lesser extent among “regular” high school students. Even secondary school teachers must ask, how they can make sure that instruction does not waste students’ time, and how they can make it truly efficient, effective, and valuable.

New trend #2: using technology to support learning

For most teachers, “technology” means using computers and the Internet as resources for teaching and learning. These tools have greatly increased the amount and range of information available to students, even if their benefits have sometimes been exaggerated in media reports (Cuban, 2001). With the Internet, it is now relatively easy to access up-to-date information on practically any subject imaginable, often with pictures, video clips, and audio to accompany them. It would seem not only that the Internet and its associated technologies have the potential to transform traditional school-based learning, but also that they have in fact begun to do so.

For a variety of reasons, however, technology has not always been integrated into teachers’ practices very thoroughly (Haertel & Means, 2003). One reason is practical: in many societies and regions, classrooms contain only one or two computers at most, and many schools have at best only limited access to the Internet. Waiting for a turn on the computer or arranging to visit a computer lab or school library limits how much students use the Internet, no matter how valuable the Internet may be. In such cases,

furthermore, computers tend to function in relatively traditional ways that do not take full advantage of the Internet: as a word processor (a “fancy typewriter”), for example, or as a reference book similar to an encyclopedia.

Even so, single-computer classrooms create new possibilities and challenges for teachers. A single computer can be used, for example, to present upcoming assignments or supplementary material to students, either one at a time or small groups. In functioning in this way, the computer gives students more flexibility about when to finish old tasks or to begin new ones. A single computer can also enrich the learning of individual students with special interests or motivation and it can provide additional review to students who need extra help. These changes are not dramatic, but they lead to important revisions in teachers’ roles: they move teachers away from simply delivering information to students, and toward facilitating students’ own constructions of knowledge.

A shift from “full-frontal teaching” to “guide on the side” becomes easier as the amount and use of computer and Internet technologies increases. If a school (or better yet, a classroom) has numerous computers with full Internet access, then students’ can in principle direct their own learning more independently than if computers are scarce commodities. With ample technology available, teachers can focus much more on helping individuals in developing and carrying out learning plans, as well as on assisting individuals with special learning problems. In these ways a strong shift to computers and the Internet can change a teacher’s role significantly, and make the teacher more effective.

But technology also brings some challenges, or even creates problems. It costs money to equip classrooms and schools fully: often that money is scarce, and may therefore mean depriving students of other valuable resources, like additional staff or additional books and supplies. Other challenges are less tangible. In using the Internet, for example, students need help in sorting out trustworthy information or websites from the “fluff,” websites that are unreliable or even damaging (Seiter, 2005). Providing this help can sometimes be challenging even for experienced teachers. Some educational activities simply do not lend themselves to computerized learning—sports, for example, driver education, or choral practice. As a new teacher, therefore, you will need not only to assess what technologies are possible in your particular classroom, but also what will actually be assisted by new technologies. Then be prepared for your decisions to affect *how* you teach—the ways you work with students.

New trend #3: accountability in education

In recent years, the public and its leaders have increasingly expected teachers and students to be *accountable* for their work, meaning that schools and teachers are held responsible for implementing particular curricula and goals, and that students are held responsible for learning particular knowledge. The trend toward accountability has increased the legal requirements for becoming and (sometimes) remaining certified as a teacher. In the United States in particular, preservice teachers need more subject-area and education-related courses than in the past. They must also spend more time practice teaching than in the past, and they must pass one or more examinations of knowledge of subject matter and teaching strategies. The specifics of these requirements vary among regions, but the general trend—toward more numerous and “higher” levels of requirements—has occurred broadly throughout the English-speaking world. The changes obviously affect individuals’ experiences of becoming a teacher— especially the speed and cost of doing so.

Public accountability has led to increased use of *high-stakes testing*, which are tests taken by all students in a district or region that have important consequences for students’ further education (Fuhrman & Elmore, 2004). High-stakes tests may influence grades that students receive in courses or determine whether students graduate or continue to the next level of schooling. The tests are often a mixture of essay and structured-response questions (such as multiple-choice items), and raise important issues about what teachers should teach, as well as how (and whether) teachers should help students to pass the examinations. It also raises issues about whether high-stakes testing is fair to all students and consistent with other ideals of public education, such as giving students the best possible start in life instead of disqualifying them from educational opportunities. Furthermore, since the results of high-stakes tests are sometimes also used to evaluate the performance of teachers, schools, or school districts, insuring students’ success on them becomes an obvious concern for teachers—one that affects instructional decisions on a daily basis.

New trend #4: increased professionalism of teachers

Whatever your reactions to the first three trends, it is important to realize that they have contributed to a fourth trend, an increase in *professionalism* of teachers. By most definitions, an occupation (like medicine or law—or in this case teaching) is a profession if its

members take personal responsibility for the quality of their work, hold each other accountable for its quality, and recognize and require special training in order to practice it.

By this definition, teaching has definitely become *more* professional than in the past (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005). Increased expectations of achievement by students mean that teachers have increased responsibility not only for their students' academic success, but also for their own development as teachers. Becoming a new teacher now requires *more* specialized work than in the past, as reflected in the increased requirements for certification and licensing in many societies and regions. The increased requirements are partly a response to the complexities created by the increasing diversity of students and increasing use of technology in classrooms.

Greater professionalism has also been encouraged by initiatives from educators themselves to study and improve their own practice. One way to do so, for example, is through **action research** (sometimes also called **teacher research**), a form of investigation carried out by teachers about their own students or their own teaching. Action research studies lead to concrete decisions that improve teaching and learning in particular educational contexts (Mertler, 2006; Stringer, 2004). The studies can take many forms, but here are a few brief examples:

- How precisely do individual children learn to read? In an action research study, the teacher might observe and track one child's reading progress carefully for an extended time. From the observations she can get clues about how to help not only that particular child to read better, but also other children in her class or even in colleagues' classes.
- Does it really matter if a high school social studies teacher uses more, rather than fewer, open-ended questions? As an action of research study, the teacher might videotape his own lessons, and systematically compare students' responses to his open-ended questions compared to their responses to more closed questions (the ones with more fixed answers). The analysis might suggest when and how much it is indeed desirable to use open-ended questions.
- Can an art teacher actually entice students to take more creative risks with their drawings? As an action research study, the teacher might examine the students' drawings carefully for signs of visual novelty and innovation, and then see if the signs increase if she encourages novelty and innovation explicitly

Steps in action research Project	Example 1: students' use of the Internet	Example 2: a teacher's helpfulness to ESL students
Purpose of the research (as expressed by the teacher doing the research)	"In doing assignments, how successful are my students at finding high-quality, relevant information?"	"Am I responding to my ESL students as fully and helpfully as to my English-speaking students, and why or why not?"
Who is doing the study?	Classroom teacher (elementary level) and school computer specialist teacher	Classroom teacher (senior high level)—studying self; Possibly collaborating with other teachers or with ESL specialist.
How information is gathered and recorded	Assessing students' assignments; Observing students while they search the Internet. Interviewing students about their search experiences	Videotaping of self interacting during class discussions; Journal diary by teacher of experiences with ESL vs other students; Interviews with teacher's ESL students
How information is analyzed	Look for obstacles and "search tips" expressed by several students; Look for common strengths and problems with research cited on assignments.	Look for differences in type and amount of interactions with ESL vs other students; Look for patterns in differences; Try altering the patterns of interaction and observe the result.
How information is reported and communicated	Write a brief report of results for fellow staff; Give a brief oral report to fellow staff about results	Write a summary of the results in teacher's journal diary; Share results with fellow staff; Share results with teacher's students.

Two other, more complete examples of action research are summarized in Table 1. Although these examples, like many action research studies, resemble "especially good teaching practice," they are planned more thoughtfully than usual, carried out and recorded more systematically, and shared with fellow teachers more thoroughly and openly. As such, they yield special benefits to teachers as professionals, though they also take special time and effort. For now, the important point is that use of action research simultaneously reflects the increasing professionalism of teachers, but at the same time creates higher standards for teachers when they teach.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

9: Week 8: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

9.1: Environments

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9.1: Environments

Can We Create a Positive Learning Environment? Positively!

By Karen Jordan

Contents

- 1.Introduction
- 2.Physical Environment
- 3.Behavioral Environment
- 4.Emotional Environment
- 5.Conclusion
- 6.Multiple Choice Quiz
- 6.1 Answers
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Introduction

Why do children in today’s classroom like or dislike school? How can a child have confidence in his ability to learn? What motivates a child to learn? An enthusiastic teacher can create a positive learning environment that will give a child a positive attitude toward school. He will be motivated by interesting learning experiences and strive to meet his potential because there is an enthusiastic teacher that sees the value of his contribution to the classroom family. The teacher is the thermostat that will control the classroom climate. The elements of a well-planned physical structure, effective behavior management and the caring teacher will blend together and create a positive learning environment.

Physical Environment

According to Konza, Grainer & Bradshaw (2001) in their book, *Classroom Management: A Survival Guide* explains that the physical environment within a classroom is an indicator of your expectations as a teacher. Before the school year begins, the foundation for the class must be established by the physical arrangement of the classroom. The first step in establishing conditions for learning and preventing behavior problems is to create an orderly setting. “The physical environment can influence the way teachers and students feel, think and behave.” (Stewart, Evans, and Kacyzynski, Winter 1997, p. 53). A classroom that has an aesthetic appearance and is well organized can have a positive effect on student behavior, allowing for more frequent and quality teacher-student interactions without excessive noise or disruptions. (Stewart, Evans, and Kacyzynski, Winter 1997, p. 53).

The first thought in arranging the classroom is to make sure the teacher’s desk is located with a bird’s eye view of the classroom. The desks should be arranged to promote learning, and consideration should be given to the inclusive classroom. Analyze the specific activities you will incorporate in your lessons and design areas for this purpose, and when possible allow students to help decorate these areas. Designate an area of the classroom to display the student’s work. All age groups like to see their work displayed. (Stewart, Evans, and Kacyzynski, Winter 1997, p. 53). Other options for classroom decor are to creatively post classroom rules, the students assignments and emphasize a new unit or new skills. Bulletin boards are another key area for decoration. They should be should not be cluttered, but attractive, and changed frequently. Plants are another means to make the classroom environment aesthetically pleasing. (Nevin, Knoblock, 2005 p.19).

Behavioral Environment

Chris Johnson has stated that the Chicago Fire Department spends 80% of their budget on the prevention of fires. They spend less than 20% of the remaining budget putting out the fires. Prevention is the key to a controlled classroom environment (Meyers, 2007, p. 22). From the very beginning of school, the teacher needs to establish the leadership roll.(Meadows, Melloy, Yell, 1996, p. 124.). Start by setting up the routines the first month of school. Get to know the students—who they are, their interests, and what kind of learning experiences are motivating to them (Meyers, 2007, p. 22).

From the very beginning, the teacher must establish what she expects from the students. “Rules: This is your opportunity to set yourself up for a year of happiness, or a year of grief-the decision is yours” (Meyers, 2007, p. 22). The rules should be brief and

specific, presented in a positive manner, and limited to five or six important rules (Meadows, Melloy, Yell, 1996,.p. 124). They should not be just listed and recited; instead, create a special assignment for each of the important rules you want to emphasize . Build “student ownership and include students voices and input. Finish the lesson with a follow-up that encourages students to think about, discuss and reflect upon the need for the rule in their classroom (Meyers, 2007, p. 22)”. Once the rules are established and understood, it is crucial that the consequences are enforced consistently (Meadows, Melloy, Yell, 1996,.p. 124).

Classroom behavior is also directly related to the teacher’s structure of the class. Effective classroom managers are aware of what is taking place in the class and maintain student involvement (Meadows, Melloy, Yell, 1996, p. 124). The attention of the students is increased by repeatedly giving clear instructions and keeping the pace of the instruction moving as rapidly as the class is capable. Appropriate assignments, feedback and making smooth transitions between subjects will help the students be more attentive during class. Another element that is crucial to the structure of the classroom is positive reinforcement. Given consistently, students are motivated to choose appropriate behavior. Wise choices for positive reinforcement would be positive notes and phone calls to parents, rewards, extra privileges and meaningful praise (Meadows, Melloy, Yell, 1996,.p. 124). A teacher that is effective in creating a positive learning environment will “act more than react.” Meadows, Melloy, Yell, 1996, p.124).

The student that creates behavior challenges for the teacher can pose problems within a positive environment, since it does not solve all problems. In my own experience, I have had a difficult child that was diagnosed ADHD and oppositionally defiant. This was only the beginning of the student’s symptoms. The child was a first grader and yet could not remain in his seat or sit quietly. It was not unusual for the child to be redirected to his seat 50 times in a single day. I decided to try giving this student freedom to move as he needed by creating a large boxed area with tape and giving him two desks approximately six feet apart within that space. He has freedom to move around as he needs, but he MUST stay within his box. To help with his talking out, his voice must remain in the box as well. I provided the student with his own trash can, water bottle, pencil sharpener, and extra puzzles to occupy him during transitional times in class. This has proven to be highly effective for this student, reducing the number of redirections to his seat to approximately eight times, but what works for one may not work for another. The point is that a teacher needs to be creative in an inclusive classroom.

Emotional Environment

It is the teacher who establishes the climate for the classroom. An enthusiastic teacher can supply motivation for students in a positive learning environment. “Stimulating teaching has been described as entertaining, motivating, interesting, and thought-provoking (Nevin, Knoblock, 2005 p.19).” A teacher’s attitude affects how children perceive school. She should have high expectations of their students and believe they are all capable of learning (Stewart, Evans, and Kaczynski, Winter 1997, p. 53).

Every child has a need for acceptance and therefore the teacher needs to have a good relationship with each of the students. A teacher that focuses on the individual needs of each of the students will enthusiastically adapt the instruction to the various learning styles and at the same time make special provisions for diversity (Stewart, Evans, and Kaczynski, Winter 1997, p. 53).

Conclusion

A positive learning environment in the classroom is possible with an enthusiastic teacher that builds a personal relationship with the students. Preparation must begin before the first day of class. The foundation needs to be laid from the beginning with the establishment of the rules that are consistently enforced throughout the remainder of the year. The teacher must be structured, conscientious and vary the lessons according to interest, learning styles and diversity. The enthusiastic teacher that has created a positive learning environment has a classroom that is motivated to learn.

Quiz

1.The key to a controlled classroom environment is:

- A. An aesthetically appealing classroom
- B. Prevention
- C. Negative Reinforcement

2.The _____ establishes the climate for the classroom.

- A. Principal

B. Students

C. Teachers

3. An effective classroom manager is aware of what is taking place in the classroom and will

A. Maintain student involvement.

B. Have mirrors strategically placed.

C. Place the desk in the front of the classroom.

4. One way to instruct the students of the classroom rules is to:

A. Write the rules 10x each.

B. A group classroom project.

C. Recite the rules daily for a week.

5. A(n) _____ can supply motivation for the students:

A. treasure box

B. enthusiastic teacher

C. firm discipline system

Answers: 1. A, 2. C, 3. C, 4. B, 5. B

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

10: Week 9: EDUCATIONAL LAW

10.1: Brown vs. Board of Education

10.2: 20th Century

10.3: Equity

10.4: Teachers

10.5: Students

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10.1: Brown vs. Board of Education

Brown vs. Board of Education

Watch the following video about “Brown vs. Board of Education.” While you are watching think about how this court case has changed the United States.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <http://pb.libretexts.org/foe/?p=130>

60 Years Since Brown vs. Board of Education

Watch the following video “60 years since Brown vs. Board of Education”. What has changed? What are areas where change is still needed?



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <http://pb.libretexts.org/foe/?p=130>

- Discuss the legal and social outcomes that followed this Supreme Court ruling.

Make sure to return to the discussion board to read and respond to your classmates.

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10.2: 20th Century

Twentieth Century Milestones in Education: Towards a More Inclusive Education for All

Veronica Montalvo

INTRODUCTION AND THE GROWTH OF EDUCATION

In the United States, the start of the twentieth century marked a movement towards the inclusion of more people than ever into the educational system. In 1900, close to six percent of teenagers graduated from high school (Thattai, 2001). States attempted to increase that number by making that goal more accessible through the construction of more high schools in both urban and rural localities (Wolfe, 2001). Laws were passed that made school mandatory for children until elementary school; later it became obligatory until the child became sixteen years old (Thattai, 2001). However, a good and equal education was not yet widely available to all Americans. Marginalized groups hovered at the fringes of the educational system. African-Americans received unequal and inferior educations as compared to that of whites, as did other minorities and students with limited-English-proficiency (LEP). Women were discriminated against, as well as the handicapped, in being fully included in the educational system. Major developments in the twentieth-century education system include various rulings and acts that promoted a fair and equal education for Americans that had been neglected and marginalized.

G.I. BILL of 1944

Established in 1944, the G.I. Bill was designed to provide assistance to veterans returning from World War II. Although the educational provisions within the Bill were originally intended as “another form of unemployment relief,” the educational system experienced a drastic change in its perception by Americans (Clark, 1998, p. 173). Prior to the influx of veterans in colleges and universities, a college education was perceived as being a privilege of the wealthy and a mark of high status. The veterans returning from WWII were viewed as everyday men, and to see and hear about them going to college broke down that perception and made the dream of a college education more of a reality for all Americans (Clark, 1998). According to Hess and McGuinn (2002), “Education gained a new prominence after World War II” (p. 76). More students were graduating from high school and going to college after the G.I. Bill passed (Hess and McGuinn, 2002).

Aside from changing the perception of college education and increasing enrollments, the G.I. Bill led to the growth of community colleges and vocational schools (Wolfe, 2001). The 2.2 million veterans utilizing the educational benefits of the G.I. Bill (Bound and Turner, 2002) demanded a curriculum with classes more similar to what they had been exposed to in the military. Practicality was a vital aspect in their desired education, and schools responded by creating vocational programs to suit their needs (Clark, 1998). The G.I. Bill impacted future generations by making college more accessible to the average citizen and by causing the expansion of the college curriculum.

BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION, 1954

In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The decision marked the beginning of more educational opportunities for African-Americans, but these opportunities were still severely limited. The Supreme Court declared that schools must desegregate, but did not make a deadline or any guidelines as to when it must be complete (Carson, 2004). A decade after the decision, less than 10% of black students were attending an integrated school (Ravitch, 2000). Throughout the ‘60s and ‘70s, the government used funds to force schools to desegregate or risk losing their funding (Carper, 2001), and by 1980, the practice of legal segregation for the most part had ended (Thattai, 2001).

[Hear a student recount reactions to Brown.](#)

Despite the long delay in achieving the goal of desegregation, the message that *Brown* delivered impacted the educational system and future policy in civil rights (Carson, 2004). *Brown* revealed the potential for other minority groups to begin the struggle for equal educational access (Gándara, Moran, and García, 2004). Equal and fair education began to be viewed as “the birthright of a free citizenry” (Hess and McGuinn, 2002, pp. 76-77), and more groups began demanding that right.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 sought to equalize the education opportunities for all children. As the start of federal government grants to states for education (Hess and McGuinn, 2000), the law attempted “to compensate in some sense for disadvantages due to inequities in the social system” (Wolfe, 2001). President Johnson hoped that increasing and equalizing education for all children would one day rid the country of poverty (Easley, 2005). Funds were provided to the states for services for poor and minority students (Baker, 2001) as well as for “school library resources, textbooks, and other instructional materials for school children” (*Digest of Education Statistics*, 2006). In 1967, Title VII authorized grants to be given for programs for LEP students (Baker, 2001). More than giving funds for different programs for the poor and minorities, ESEA along with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 aided in providing funds for the desegregation of southern schools who had refused to do so (Ravitch, 2000), more than a decade after the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. ESEA served to make an equal education more obtainable for all classes and races.

TITLE IX OF 1972

The place of women within the educational system was limited in terms of opportunities and the material being taught. The Civil Rights Movement during the ‘60s and ‘70s led women to protest more and demand equality in education. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 included the requirement that grants be given to the states in order for them to work towards that gender equality in education, and in 1972, Title IX of the Education Amendments was passed (Marshall, 2002). Title IX required that there be gender equality in schools that received money from the government and that “curricula should not stereotype girls’ and boys’ interests and careers” (Marshall, 2002, p. 712). In spite of the worthwhile objectives of Title IX, it was a feeble mandate. No penalties existed for schools that refused to comply, and a way to even supervise them was not set up until a quarter of the century after the passage of Title IX (Marshall, 2002).

In 1974, the Women’s Educational Equity Act (WEEA) was passed. This act provided a financial backbone to Title IX with funds granted to the schools and agencies in order to fulfill the goals of Title IX (*Women’s Educational Equity*). Title IX and WEEA made great strides in opening up more doors to education for women in the twentieth century.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1975

The place of handicapped children in schools improved in the twentieth century. Almost five percent of students have a mental disability (Gunning, 2008), and with the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children’s Act, they are able to receive a better education (Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, and Capper, 1999). The name later changed to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), but the goal of guaranteeing an education to disabled students remained the same (Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, and Capper, 1999). A “free appropriate public education” or FAPE requires that “special education and related services are provided at public expense” (McLaughlin and Thurlow, 2003, p. 436). Disabled children must be placed in the least restrictive environment possible, meaning that their educational environment is as close to that of their nondisabled classmates as possible (Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, and Capper, 1999). Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are used to monitor the learning disabled student’s progress, and in 1997, assessments became mandatory for disabled students in order to make the schools more accountable for the students’ progress (McLaughlin and Thurlow, 2003). If necessary, accommodations in the assessments may be used (Gunning, 2008). Thanks to IDEA, more disabled students are graduating than if IDEA had not been passed (*Special Education and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*).

CONCLUSION

The twentieth century achieved a great deal in terms of including more groups that had been previously excluded or marginalized. A great deal still remains to be done in making education truly equal and accessible to every American, but the foundation has been laid for more work in the twenty-first century. Each American deserves to have equal educational opportunities, and as society progresses and more policies are created, that goal may be achievable.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. In 1956, what type of education might most African Americans in the Deep South like

- a. A separate but equal education to that of whites
- b. A better education but still in segregated schools
- c. An inferior education compared to that of whites
- d. An education that was rapidly improving since 1954

2. After 1975, in what kind of learning environment are handicapped children found?

- a. Separate classrooms where they are taught basic skills
- b. A school day split between a special education class and a regular class
- c. Full integration into regular classrooms with nondisabled students
- d. Separate schools that can accommodate their needs more

3. In 1970, women's education most likely included what class?

- a. Physics
- b. Auto repair
- c. Calculus
- d. Home economics

4. After World War II, which belief supported the passage of the G.I. Bill?

- a. Veterans returning home would be mostly unemployed
- b. Veterans would be eager to further their education while working
- c. There would be a surplus of jobs and veterans could be picky
- d. Veterans would probably not use the benefits anyway

5. What type of classes would most likely appeal to the returning WWII veterans?

- a. Art history
- b. English composition
- c. Mechanics
- d. Psychology

AnswerS:

1. B 2. B 3. D 4. A 5. C

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10.3: Equity

Creating Equity in the Classroom

by: Anthony D. Richardson

INTRODUCTION

There are many avenues we can take toward equity in the school. We will discuss Culture, School Size, Gender, Learning, and Funding. Five important topics needed for equity in the classroom. Before you can fair assessment of anything a person faces, they must try to understand the what, when, why and how. Equity is what every Teacher, Principal, School Super Attendant, and Parent should strive for.

[1]

CULTURE

Year 2004 represented the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954), the Supreme Court decision outlawing racial segregation in schools. *Brown v. Board* has been called the defining legal decision of the 20th century, framing as it did the United States' struggle with issues of race and racial equality. In that decision, the justices clearly state that they were striking down segregation in public schools both to increase educational equity and to eliminate the racial stigma associated with segregation.

Despite a wide range of efforts over the past 50 years, issues of racial and ethnic stigma and its relationship to identity and motivation remain central issues for those interested in creating racially equitable educational settings today. I argue that efforts to improve educational equity can only advance when a corresponding effort is made to reduce racial and ethnic stigma.

In the 50 years since the first *Brown* decision, we have learned a great deal about both the value of diverse learning environments for student development and how to create effective diverse learning environments. Nevertheless, as we come to understand that the racial and ethnic stigma discussed in *Brown* continues to play a central role in modern educational outcomes and inequities, we can direct our reform efforts in productive ways.

- First, teachers much acknowledge how deficit-based notions of diverse students continue to permeate traditional school thinking, practices, and placement, and critique their own thoughts and practices to ensure they do not reinforce prejudiced behavior.
- Second, culturally relevant pedagogy recognizes the explicit connection between culture and learning, and sees students' cultural capital as an asset and not a detriment to their school success.

- **1. What does not create effective diverse learning environments?**

B. Culturally relevant pedagogy recognizes the explicit connection between culture and learning, and sees students' cultural capital as an asset and not a detriment to their school success.

C. Culturally relevant teaching is mindful of how traditional teaching practices reflect middle-class; European-American cultural values, and thus seeks to incorporate a wider range of dynamic and fluid teaching practices outcomes through the amelioration of stigma.

D. Disregard cultural differences and teach a rigid and structured class that focuses on passing the SOL's.

- **2. How does school size does effect the a classroom?**

A. Estimates an appropriate balance point between student learning and school size.

B. Study found favorable effects for larger schools in terms of student learning and teachers' willingness to take responsibility for their students' learning.

C. Study found similar effects for larger schools in terms of student learning and teachers' willingness to take responsibility for their students' learning environment.

D. It does not effect the classroom and learning environment at all.

3. What is the differences between genders?

- A. Girls are competitive and boys are talkative and cooperate.
- B. Boys and girls create very distinct cultures; when they are in same-gender groups they act and play very differently.
- C. Girls are talkative and cooperative, boys are competitive and physical.
- D. The only difference is how they are raised in the home.

4. Why is learning not equal from school to school?

- A. Access to the learning experiences that help people to thrive, though these depend on context, are not equally or equitably available to everyone because?
- B. Everyone does not have the same access.
- C. All the responsibility is on the schools.
- D. Every can go to the public library.

5. What is the annual price tag of inadequately educating our young people?

- A. Inestimable price that we all pay every year.
- B. Whatever the amount of money we get from the lottery.
- C. The annual price tag of inadequately educating our young people is staggering, in the realm of \$250 billion per year in health and welfare costs, criminal justice expenses, and lost tax revenues.
- D. The annual price tag of inadequately educating our young people is only \$500 million per year.

Answer1. (D) 2. (B) 3. (C) 4. (A) 5. (C)

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10.4: Teachers

Child Abuse and Neglect-Teachers' Role

"A good teacher is like a candle-it consumes itself to light the way for others" http://www.indianchild.com/teachers_quotes.htm

Learning Targets

- Students should be able to detect signs of Child abuse and child neglect in a classroom.
- Students will know the proper procedure of reporting suspicions of child abuse or neglect.
- Students will know the 3 types of Child abuse and the statistics on all 3.

Introduction

To a student a teacher can be seen as someone they can tell their deepest darkest secrets too. So what happens when a student tells a teacher some information that might suggest child abuse or neglect? Teachers need to know how to handle child abuse suspicions on the legal and ethical level and how to recognize it. Definitions The lines between child abuse and child neglect can get a little hazy sometimes. The Child Welfare Information Gateway has defined child abuse as "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk or serious harm" (Child Welfare Information Gateway,2008) There are 3 different types of Child abuse; physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. The Child Welfare Information Gateway also defines the three types of abuse

- Physical-"is non- accidental physical injury as a result of punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting, burning, or otherwise harming the child."(Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2008)
- Emotional- "pattern of behavior that impairs a child's development of sense of self-worth" (Child Welfare Information Gateway,2008)
- Sexual-"activities by a parent or caregiver such as fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or production of pornographic material"(Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2008)

Child abuse can be seen as causing immediate harm to the child. While child neglect might not cause immediate harm to the child, overtime child neglect can cause physical and developmental harm. Child Neglect is defined as Child Neglect- "the failure of a parent, guardian or other caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs." (Child Welfare Information Gateway,2008) Those needs can be put into four categories physical,medical,educational, and emotional.

Statistics

A teacher needs to know the statistics of child abuse and neglect, once they know the numbers they will see how dire the situation is and how important it is to know how to respond to child abuse and neglect.The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System is a federal organization that collects data and statistics on child abuse and neglect every year (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008). In the year 2006 there was an estimated 3.3 million cases and of those cases over half of them were reported by professionals, such as teachers (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2008) in the year 2006 the data showed

- 905,000 victims of Child abuse or neglect
- 51.5 % were girls and 48.2% were boys
- 48.8% were white,22.8% were African-America, and 18.4 were Hispanic

The data that was collected also showed the child neglect was more common than child abuse, in years past the NCANDs reported that child abuse was more prevalent than child neglect. In 2006 the data showed

- 64.1% were victims of neglect
- 16% were victims of physical abuse
- 8.8% were victims of sexual abuse
- 6.6% were victims of emotional abuse

Detecting Child Abuse or Neglect

As teachers we spend an average of 7 hours, 5 days a week with our students. So besides their parents, we are the people that the children spend most of their time with, this allows us to create a relationship of trust with our students. The relationship that is created is one that is so strong that a teacher will do anything to protect their students. So by knowing how to detect abuse and neglect teachers are better prepared to protect their students. We also get to know our students' behavioral patterns, and if it changes occur. A dramatic change in behavior can be a warning sign of child abuse or neglect (Coleman). According to Dr. Coleman, a child psychologist, some other warning signs of child abuse or neglect both physical and emotional. They are as follows (Coleman).

- Bruises, lumps, welts
- Repeated broken bones
- Burns
- Shyness around adults
- Is often absent
- Frequent accidents—such as wetting their pants
- Lack of concentration
- Poor academic performance
- High aggression
- Early arrival to school and reluctance to leave
- Unsociable

When it comes to detecting the possibility of child neglect the warning signs can be a lot more apparent and can be easily seen by the outer appearance of the child. Some of the things to look for if a teacher suspects a child is being neglected are as follows (Duncan, 2001)

- Child appears to always be hungry
- Unorganized train of thought
- Child appears to suffer from medical and dental neglect
- Child comes to class in clothes that appear dirty and worn

Reporting Suspicions of Child Abuse or Neglect

When teachers suspect child abuse or neglect they sometimes hesitate to report it, this may be because of a fear that the parents of the child may retaliate against the child, or they feel that even if it is reported nothing will be done. As teachers those we are mandated to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect. This is stated in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) if a teacher fails to report any suspicions they can face disciplinary action up to and including termination and criminal liabilities (Smith, 2007). When a teacher suspects that a child is being abused in most schools the teacher will file a report for the principal once the report is filled it is normally given to the guidance counselor who will be the one to contact the local department of Child Protective Services (CPS) (Citizens Information). The website also states that if a child confides in a teacher that the teacher should record the conversations. The teacher also needs to have the child's basic information such as; name, address, phone number, details about the suspected abuse, and information about the potential perpetrator (Duncan, 2001). The CPS will determine if the information is substantial enough for an investigation. The CPS will normally send the mandated reporter a letter, but a family's right to privacy is still of importance. So a mandated reporter might know that the CPS investigated but may not know the findings or results of the investigation (Duncan, 2001).

Conclusion

So in conclusion teachers have not only a legal responsibility but an ethical responsibility to protect their students. Teachers should pay attention to students' behavior and create strong relationships with their students. If this happens, I feel that we will see a huge drop in numbers of children dying from child abuse and neglect. Every child deserves a happy and safe childhood and as educators we can help ensure that they are happy and healthy.

Test your knowledge Time

1. What percentage of abuse/neglect victims are white

- A. 49.5
- B. 48.8
- C. 30.3
- D. 29.8

2. What percentage of victims of abuse are victims of sexual abuse

- A. 2.3
- B. 45.5
- C. 19.2
- D. 8.8

3. Mrs. Smith has a student that comes into class with dirty clothes and seems to always be hungry. The teacher suspects child neglect. What should the teacher do?

- A. The teacher is just overacting and just forget about it
- B. The teacher should punish the child for coming into her classroom looking dirty
- C. The teacher should go talk to the principle
- D. The teacher should give the child a cracker and tell him/her to stop complaining

4. Henry is 5 and tells his teacher that his bottom hurts and lately Henry has been coming into school with bruises all over his arm. What should the teacher do?

- A. Just forget it, Henry must be telling a story.
- B. Record the conversation and go to the principal.
- C. Go have a talk with Henry's parents.
- D. Go tell the principal.

cheat Sheet

1.B 2.D 3.C 4.B

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10.5: Students

Student's Rights in School: Supreme Court Decisions by Alec Bauserman

Introduction



Over one thousand students in uniform during an assembly at a secondary school in Singapore.



The Supreme Court of the United States of America.

“The vigilant protection of constitutional freedoms is nowhere more vital than in the community of American schools.” Shelton v. Tucker, 364 U.S. 479 (1960)

Lawsuits have become increasingly common in our society and many Americans act and speak out of the fear of being taken to court. In any environment, one must be conscious of how their words and actions will affect others. A thoughtless statement or inappropriate physical contact might land you in court. This is especially true in schools, where daily contact, high emotions and stressful circumstances can all come together at the wrong moment. As such, it is good to understand the rights of students trying to express themselves and the rights of teachers trying to keep a safe, orderly learning environment. Few people know their constitutional rights, and even fewer teachers & students know how their constitutional rights change once they enter the ‘semi-public/semi-private’ classroom.

This paper will examine some of the rights guaranteed to all Americans and how those rights change once they enter school. It will also seek to answer some of the most common questions held by students. What is free speech? Is it protected in school? How safe am I in my possessions? Do I have any expectation of privacy when it comes to my things? A good understanding of students’ rights benefits everyone: the students who exercise them, the teachers who challenge them, and the democratic society which lives by them.

Learning Targets

By the conclusion of this article, readers should be able to:

1. identify and understand the basic philosophy of the courts when determining the extent of student’s rights
2. recognize similarities and differences between Constitutional rights held in school and life out side it.
3. recognize the major court case which set the groundwork for all future Supreme Court cases involving student’s rights
4. make informed decisions in real-life situations based on the knowledge presented here
5. inform colleagues and students of the information contained in this article

Students Rights

The founding fathers deliberated for days on end when writing the first draft of our nation's Constitution and later the Bill of Rights. They agonized over wording; argued over semantics. It is likely they had no idea just how successful this "great experiment in democracy" would turn out to be. Equally likely is this: they never once considered how these rights would pertain to young students in the classroom. The landmark case of *Tinker v. Des Moines School District* clearly defined the benchmark for how rights may be exercised and when they may be curtailed:

"It can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.

... On the other hand, the Court has repeatedly emphasized the need for affirming the comprehensive authority of the States and of school officials, consistent with fundamental constitutional safeguards, to prescribe and control conduct in the schools.

... Our problem lies in the area where students in the exercise of [their] rights collide with the rules of the school authorities."

In other words, one doesn't surrender his or her constitutional rights by attending school. However the courts have recognized that the unique nature of the school environment requires that certain liberties be suppressed in the interest of maintaining a safe, orderly learning environment. According to the doctrine of "in loco parentis" school officials are more than government officials; they are, in a legal sense, the temporary parents of their students. Just what exactly that allows them to do and say is a matter of debate and has led to numerous legal challenges, many involving the Supreme Court. This paper will examine some of those court decisions and explore their impact on student's rights.

Summary – The balancing act between the free expression of rights and the desire to maintain order in school serves as a good example of the struggle faced by our democratic society.

The 1st Amendment

Freedom of Speech, Expression & Religion

Perhaps the most quoted court decision on the subject, *Tinker v. Des Moines* was a battle over students' 1st amendment rights, specifically the right to free speech. High school students John Tinker, 15, and Christopher Eckhardt, 16, decided to show their opposition to the Vietnam War by wearing black armbands to school. Administrators countered by banning armbands and threatened disciplinary actions for any students violating the rule. Tinker and Eckhardt wore their armbands and were suspended, not allowed back until they agreed to stop violating school rules. Tinker's father subsequently sued and lost in District Court. The Appellate Court was unable to reach a decision and the case was passed up to the Supreme Court, who overturned the District Court's decision and ruled in favor of the plaintiffs. The court stated that if the student's actions did not disrupt the learning environment, or advocate or cause harm to themselves or others, it was permissible. This has been the rationale in virtually every other opinion held by the court regarding student's constitutional rights.

While a student's right to free speech is protected, it is not a blanket protection covering any form of protest. A recent example of this is *Morse v. Frederick*, also known as the "Bong Hits 4 Jesus" case. This case is particularly eye-opening in that the offense occurred off school grounds. Frederick, a high school student, displayed a banner at a local parade featuring the phrase "Bong Hits 4 Jesus," a reference to marijuana use. Morse, a school official, noticed the banner and instructed the student to take it down. When Frederick refused, he was suspended by Morse and the decision was upheld by the school board. Frederick sued, claiming protection under his 1st amendment rights. This time the Supreme Court sided with the school board, noting " ... schools may take steps to safeguard those entrusted to their care from speech that can reasonably be regarded as encouraging illegal drug use, [therefore] the school officials in this case did not violate the First Amendment..." This fits with the consistent message of the courts – a student's Constitutional rights will be protected only as long as their exercise does not endanger the health or academic progress of others.

Other cases regarding the Rights of Free Speech & Expression:

West Virginia v. Barnette, 1943 – The court ruled that is unconstitutional to require students to salute the American flag. The 1st amendment not only protects freedom “of” expression but also freedom “from” expression.

Bethel School District v. Fraser, 1986 – Washington high school student Matthew Fraser was suspended for using sexually explicit language in a speech given on school grounds. The court sided with the school, affirming that schools can prohibit “lewd, indecent or plainly offensive” language.

Guiles v. Marineau, 2004 – A 14- year old student in Vermont was suspended for repeatedly wearing a T-shirt depicting President George W Bush as an alcoholic and a cocaine addict. The shirt contained both written and visual depictions of banned substances. The court sided with the student, citing two factors: 1) the shirt did not advocate the use of illegal drugs and 2) the shirt did not cause significant disruptions to the learning environment.

Summary – A student’s exercise of speech or expression is legal and constitutionally protected so long as it doesn’t:

1. endanger the public
2. disrupt the learning environment
3. advocate the use of illegal substances or other violations of the law

4th Amendment

Unreasonable Search & Seizure

The student’s desire for freedom of speech can only be matched by their desire for privacy and for security of their possessions. The right of school officials to search a student’s belongings is a contentious issue, and few teachers know the limits of their authority and few students understand the extent of their rights. Just as *Tinker v. Des Moines* set the standard for the protection of 1st Amendment rights, so did another case set the precedent for search & seizure: *New Jersey v. T. L. O.*, 469 U.S. 325 (1985).

Two female high school students were caught smoking in the restroom and assistant principal Theodore Choplick confronted them. One of the two admitted her wrongdoing but the other student (T.L.O.) denied it. Choplick searched T.L.O.’s purse and discovered cigarettes, drugs and drug paraphernalia, along with a large amount of money. T.L.O. was tried and convicted in court on charges of delinquency. The student countered that the school had violated her 4th amendment rights, depriving her of protection against unreasonable search and seizure (i.e. searching without a warrant) and the evidence should be inadmissible. The Supreme Court disagreed, stating: “a school official may properly conduct a search of a student’s person if the official has a reasonable suspicion that a crime has been or is in the process of being committed, or reasonable cause to believe that the search is necessary to maintain school discipline or enforce school policies.”

This is a departure from the court’s usual position requiring “probable cause” for government officials to search someone without a warrant. This change, although appearing slight, has enormous ramifications. School officials may search someone based solely upon a well-grounded suspicion, not iron-clad evidence of wrongdoing. This is analogous to the difference between “reasonable doubt” and “beyond a shadow of a doubt.” This threshold however applies only to school personnel and NOT to law enforcement officials on school grounds. The court has been careful not to slide down that slippery slope. In the court’s decision, they state that a teacher’s right to protect him- or herself and the safety of their students is on par with the rights of firefighters, EMS, OSHA officials, etc. The right to privacy must be balanced against the public’s right to safety. In a school, the balance is tilted toward protecting safety and maintaining order, even if it is at the expense of student rights.

The issue of locker searches has not come to the Supreme Court. As the locker is school property and therefore “public space” it is not afforded the same protections as a student’s personal possessions.

State of Iowa v. Marzel Jones (2003) – A student whose locker was cleaned out by school personnel. Finding a small amount of marijuana, the student was charged. Marzel claimed 4th amendment protection against unreasonable search & seizure but was denied by the State Supreme Court who “noted that the search occurred on school grounds, ‘where the State is responsible for maintaining discipline, health, and safety.’”(Bd. of Ed. of Indep. Sch. Dist. 92 v. Earls, 536 U.S. 822)”

Another issue of concern has been the constitutionality of drug screenings for student-athletes.

Vernonia School District v. Acton (1995) – 7th grade Oregon student James Acton signed up to play football but refused to take a mandatory urine test. Drug testing was administered to athletes after a recent ‘explosion’ in drug-use and the related discipline problems which arose. Citing public health concerns and noting the prevalence of student-athletes involved in drug-related

incidents, the school board deemed urinalysis a necessary requirement for participation in sports. The Supreme Court agreed and upheld their decision. Once again, the desire to protect public health overrode student's desire for privacy.

Summary – School personnel may search a student and their belongings if the health & welfare of the public is at risk or they have a 'reasonable suspicion' that a crime has been, is being, or will be committed

5th & 14th Amendment

The Right to Due Process

These amendments protect an individual's right to a fair trial and must be considered whenever "a person's good name, reputation, honor, or integrity is at stake because of what the government is doing to him..." (Wisconsin v. Constantineau, 1971). This includes the enforcement of disciplinary actions such as suspension or expulsion. The expectations of a fair trial are very different however, depending on the circumstances. Disciplinary expulsion is treated differently than an 'academic dismissal.' Claire La Roche makes the point by citing Barnard v. Inhabitants of Shelburne: "Misconduct is a very different matter from failure to attain a standard of excellence in studies... A public hearing may be regarded as helpful to the ascertainment of misconduct and useless or harmful in finding out the truth as to scholarship." (emphasis added)

According to La Roche's interpretation of the courts, the following are necessary in the expulsion of a student on disciplinary grounds:

1. a timely & formal hearing
2. a detailed explanation of the charges
3. a strict adherence to the schools stated policy
4. a 'punishment that fits the crime'

She goes on: "To ensure fundamental fairness, decisions must be based on the facts and supported by the evidence. Moreover, punishment should be commensurate with the severity of the offense. Consequently, it is important for schools to establish guidelines and be consistent with sanctions."

How are college students affected by these decisions?

- "Although the closely watched ruling bears on only one state, it reveals the tension between privacy and security in dormitories everywhere. **Residence halls are legally complex spaces**, where crime often creeps in and where residents, perhaps more than ever, expect administrators and police officers to ensure their safety."
Hoover, Eric. (July, 2008). *Police in the Dorms: Student Safety or Privacy Infringement?* Chronicle of Higher Education, v54 n46 pA15. ([link](#))

Other Miscellaneous Cases

The following are other judgements handed down by the Supreme Court:

- **School uniforms** and **dress codes** are intended to stop disruptions to the learning process by banning lewd, obscene or offensive clothing. As such, the courts have ruled them constitutional despite students pleading for "the freedom of expression" and the lesser-known "freedom to see skin."
- **Corporal punishment** (physically disciplining a student) barely passed a constitutional challenge in 1977 with a divided court ruling 5-4 that it is neither "cruel and unusual punishment" nor a denial of due process. (*Ingraham v. Wright*, 430 U.S. 651)
- The **censorship** of school newspapers was upheld with the understanding that the school is not a "forum of public expression." Further, the justices declared that a school "need not tolerate student speech that is inconsistent with its basic educational mission." (*Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier*, 484 U.S. 260 [1988])

Conclusion

The Supreme Court has changed greatly through the years, sometimes leaning left, sometimes right. Throughout it all, it has remained remarkably consistent on the issue of student's constitutional rights in school. In summary, the opinion held by the court might best be summarized by the following: "An ye harm none, do what ye will." If a student's speech or actions do not cause physical, emotional or academic harm to others, they will receive the fullest protection offered by the Constitution. By extending

these rights to students, teachers offer them the greatest benefit of our democracy and in doing so, invite them to become full members of society.

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- Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser, 478 U.S. 675 (1986) – [LINK](#)
- Guiles v. Marineau, 461 F.3d 320, 324-25 (2d. Cir. 2006) – [LINK](#)
- Hazelwood School District et al. v. Kuhlmeier et al., 484 U.S. 260 (1988) – [LINK](#)
- Ingraham v. Wright, 430 U.S. 651 (1977) – [LINK](#)
- Morse v. Frederick, 127 S. Ct. 2618 (2007) – [LINK](#)
- New Jersey v. T. L. O., 469 U.S. 325 (1985) – [LINK](#)
- Shelton v. Tucker, 364 U.S. 479 (1960) – [LINK](#)
- State of Iowa vs. Marzel Jones, Appellee 02-505 (2003) – [LINK](#)
- Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969) – [LINK](#)
- University of Missouri v. Horowitz, 435 U.S. 78 (1978) – <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/horowitz.html>
- Vernonia School District 47J v. Acton, 515 U.S. 646 (1995) – [LINK](#)
- West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624 (1943) – [LINK](#)
- Wisconsin v. Constantineau, 400 U.S. 433 (1971) – [LINK](#)
- http://www.usconstitution.net/consttop_stud.html
- <http://www.wicca.com/celtic/wicca/rede.htm>
- <http://legal-explanations.com/definitions/in-loco-parentis.htm> – in loco parentis
- www.legis.state.ia.us/lisadocs/Legal_Update/2003/LUKBH000.PDF – locker search

Assessment

- 1) Which of these was a landmark case which set the precedent for all Supreme Court decisions regarding student's rights?
 - a) Balboa v. Creed
 - b) Tinker v. Des Moines
 - c) Mothra v. Godzilla
 - d) Good v. Evil
- 2) What is the Latin term referring to teachers status as the 'temporary parents' of their students?
 - a) *vene vidi vici*
 - b) *in vino veritas*
 - c) *in loco parentis*
 - d) *cogito ergo sum*
- 3) Which of these situations is *least* likely to be protected under the Constitution by the Supreme Court?
 - a) A student wears a t-shirt depicting the principal of the school with the words "This is not a cool person" written underneath
 - b) Two students put duct tape over their mouth to protest the unfair treatment of homosexuals
 - c) A group of FFA members release two dozen cows into the hallway during class change
 - d) An athlete turns his back to the flag during the singing of the national anthem
- 4) Which of these government employees may search a student based on a 'reasonable suspicion' of criminal activity?
 - a) a teacher
 - b) a police officer

- c) an FBI agent
- d) all of the above

AnswerS – B, C, C, A

Author Response

Hello! This article was originally going to be written about “Students’ Rights & Responsibilities” but I chose to focus solely on the legal aspect for several reasons, but mainly because its so important. Lawsuits are a real possibility and knowing your rights as teachers, and the students rights as well, can only be a good thing. I think the deserves its own article so more information can be presented on the topic. I certainly learned a lot by writing this. The knowledge I gained has made me more confident in what I can and cannot do in my role as a teacher. While the risk of a lawsuit is still there (and very likely always will be) having a good understanding of teacher’s and student’s rights has made me more relaxed in the hallways where discipline is the number-one concern. I hope you found this article as helpful as I did.

Alec Mbaus002 (talk) 23:23, 6 October 2008 (UTC)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

11: Week 10: POLITICAL INFLUENCES IN EDUCATION

11.1: Roles

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11.1: Roles

Learning Targets:

Be able to differentiate educational roles of each level of the government

Identify legislation and programs offered by the federal government...

Be able to define the major roles the state play in the school system...

Be able to understand the goals of the local government...

GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

Contributions of Federal State and Local Agencies

By: *Melissa Belliares*

Federal

“Emergency Response System” with collaboration for state and local agencies.

The federal government sets up departments, advisory committees and programs (such as the [We the People Program](#)) to ensure the state and local agencies follow the basic human rights for all citizens by implementing civil rights amendments and programs that endorse good citizenship. The departments also serve to allocate funds and ensure a good development of students and curriculum. Originally, the federal government’s main use was land grants for states to develop colleges and universities. As world competition soared after and during the world wars of the 20th century, the U.S. government started to help with education assistance ([wiki's GI Bill website](#)) for returning veterans; and then later, the National Defense department in 1958 set up allocations to help potential students better in all core areas like math and science (click here to find out more about the [National Science Foundation](#)). “In the State of the Union Address on January 31, 2006, United States President George W. Bush announced the American Competitiveness Initiative. Bush proposed the initiative to address shortfalls in federal government support of educational development and progress at all academic levels in the [STEM fields](#)” (STEM 2008).

The federal government also sets up a great resource tool for teachers. The Federal Resource for Educational Excellence ([FREE](#)) allows teachers to utilize the internet for classroom resources for all subjects and levels from the National Science Foundation and other federally funded programs like the Endowment for Humanities, National Park Service, Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, National Institutes of Health, and even the Labor Department among others.

Although the federal government has no constitutional role in education because of the [10th amendment](#), and no mention in the document pertaining to the federal role, in 2003, the Secretary of Education released the revision of the “constitutionally protected prayer” in public schools (originally from the Elementary and Secondary Act) and mandated by the No Child Left behind Act of 2001 (ASCD, 2003) (Findlaw 2008). The voucher system gives parents an option for their child’s education through the faith-based initiatives issued by the white house in 2002 to “create a level playing field for faith and community based organizations to compete for USAID programs” (USAID). The executive branch has implemented National Charter Week for a week in May starting this year, 2008.

Giving options and opportunities to parents and students is the underlying theme in the federal’s role in the educational system. They have the power to make changes and institute ideas that help students benefit more from the national educational system. The federal government’s role in education also plays a socio-economic role on a national level because most of these changes dealt with funding and civil rights and a lot of controversy build awareness for some these issues.

[Historic Roles of the Federal Government PDF](#) [chronologically ordered](#)

[Click here for the U.S. Department of Education](#)

State

Allocations come mostly from the state.

This article will refer to Virginia’s agencies.

Each state's department of education holds the [certification](#) role for teachers on a state level and the [VEA](#) (a non state-funded organization) also help teachers earn national certification. According to "Home Instruction in Virginia," guidelines set by the Department of Education of Virginia, home-school teachers must meet licensure requirement in addition to a high school diploma. Virginia's department of education has a great job resource site for state-certified teachers at Teach Virginia Education Career Center. [Here](#), teachers can find job opportunities in state or out of state.

The following are offices that work under the [Department of Education of Virginia](#) for the improvement of all Virginia's schools.

Division of Student Assessment & School Improvement: reporting of results for the commonwealth's statewide assessment programs, develop the tests that make up the commonwealth's statewide assessment system (like the SOL's), promotes student learning and achievement by assisting schools and school divisions in the implementation of effective instructional strategies and best practices and include school-level and division-level academic reviews, school improvement planning, and innovative programs such as the Partnership for Achieving Successful Schools ([PASS](#)).

Division of Finance: makes payments to school divisions, including entitlement payments and state and federal reimbursement requests; collaborates with the Department of Planning and Budget and the General Assembly for budgets and provides assistance to public education funding to school divisions; oversees federal grant allocations; implements Department of Agriculture programs for lunch and breakfast with training and technical assistance to all schools

Division of Instruction: works with each level to ensure instructional programs adhere to requirements; oversees gifted and physical (among elective others) education; oversees the SOL's; implement early childhood education (i.e. Head Start)

Division of Policy & Communication: oversees public communication between the citizens and the Board of Education; releases news and relays a summary news articles for members; help with members speeches

Division of Special Education & Student Services: over sees the deaf and blind state schools; provides education, strategy and options for special education for parents and teachers; revises state special education requirements

Division of Teacher Education & Licensure: implements state and federal regulations for licensure for preK-12 levels

Division of Technology & Career Education: contains designated adult literacy office; promotes educational technology; calculates and reports state and federal accountability results

[Click here for more Virginia state agencies](#)

Local

Defining and unifying communities.

This article will refer to the Virginia Beach School System

Nobody can bring the school community together more than the collaboration of parents and teachers when it comes to general and special education. According to the guidelines set by the state, the superintendent collects curriculum information from home-school parents as well. Constitutionally, all students should have the same opportunities that can be implemented not only by the federal and state governments, but through local means as well. Together, the parents and the teachers with consideration of the students, can best represent the school's wants and needs. The local agencies have to have their submitted "programs" in order to get funding from either the state or the federal governments (under the ESEA of 1965, all programs must comply with all other programs under the act). There seems to be an overwhelming outcry for alternatives to public education by people who believe the local agencies are not doing enough for their schools; may it be for more home schools or school vouchers. But, the popular trend of privatizing various school programs has some parents wondering if this is a real alternative or just product placement. (Manning, 1999) The [PTA](#) (parent and teacher association) is locally and state funded with cooperation on the national level. It is the PTA that brings communities and schools together to ensure proper development of the student and school is being implemented. A good example of this is the Standards of Learning Test nationally mandated, state funded, locally implemented.

[Click here for Virginia Beach School system website](#)

Multiple Choice

1. Which educational reforms are in chronological order ?

- A. GI Bill, Section 504, Higher Education Act, NCLB
- B. Higher Education Act, National Defense Act, NCLB
- C. NCLB, National Defense Act, Section 504
- D. National Defense Act, Higher Education Act, IDEA

2. How does the National Park Service contribute to the educational system?

- A. A teachers' classroom information tool; part of FREE
- B. A program that help teachers plant a tree in every school yard
- C. A program that builds a playground on every school yard
- D. Names parks after the most appreciated teachers

3. Mary's' mom believes that parents should be involved as much as possible, which state funded organization implemented locally would her mom belong to?

- A. ESEA
- B. PTA
- C. NCLB
- D. VEA

4. Rapheal Carter said "The misconceptions about grammar posted on the 'Net are at least as bad as the misconceptions about evolution, presumably because American public schools do an equally bad job of teaching both." Which of the following statements would he agree with most?

- A. The federal government should mandate evolution be taught public school
- B. School's curriculum should emphasize on grammar in English and fair instructi
- C. Our teachers need better state funded training with the internet
- D. Our local communities should donate more computers

1.D 2.A 3.B 4.B

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11.2: New Visions

New Visions of Education: Magnet and Charter Schools

By: jyaeg001

Learning Targets Students will be able to:

-

Introduction

What is a magnet school?

A magnet school is designed to do just what its name suggests: attract students. Within any student population, there are children with a variety of interests and career aspirations. Magnet schools offer specialized curriculums that appeal to particular student groups, such as young people who want to study in depth such areas as foreign languages, drama, computer technology, or advanced sciences. These schools are under the umbrella of a larger school district and may even be housed in an existing school that also offers a traditional curriculum (Villaverde, 2003). Magnet schools receive at least part of their funding from the sponsoring public school district. In addition, because magnet schools can assist in attracting racially mixed student populations from different socio-economic backgrounds, federal government grants related to desegregation are available to help support the costs of some schools (Villaverde, 2003).

Who is allowed to attend a magnet school?

The student population of magnet schools can be chosen in more than one way. The enrollment process often begins with the parents of an interested student filling out an application. Some districts choose students solely on the basis of a lottery that includes applicants from different income levels, neighborhoods, ethnic backgrounds, gender, and races. Other districts also have application requirements related to minimum academic achievement levels. Parents list their first, second, and third choice for magnet school attendance on their applications. Waiting lists are compiled for those students who do not receive immediate placement. With these restrictions, free choice is more accurately termed controlled choice (Archbald, 2004).

To learn more about the goals of magnet schools, funding, and current legislation affecting magnet schools, visit the site of Magnet Schools of America at www.magnet.edu.

What is a charter school?

A charter school is a “publicly funded school that is typically governed by a group or organization under a contract or charter with the state...In return for funding and autonomy, the charter school must meet accountability standards” (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007, par.2). The charters list the school’s goals, details about the programs offered, specifics about student body selection, and the criteria that will be used for assessment (Buckley and Schneider, 2007). The charters have time constraints that typically range from three to five years. At the end of that time period, the charter-granting overseers, such as state officials, make a continuance decision based on how the terms of the charter have been met. A charter school may be founded by teachers or administrators within a school district, by a group of parents, or even by a private or community organization. Federal grants are available to assist with the initial costs, and funds also come from the school districts whose students are being served by the charter school (Peterson, 2003). Like magnet schools, most charter schools are focused on providing more effective, innovative programs than parents are offered in traditional public schools (Buckley and Schneider, 2007).

Who is allowed to attend a charter school?

Since charter schools receive state and federal funding, they need to meet the same diversity requirements as public schools and “reflect the social/ethnic makeup of their district” (Noll, 2005, p.226). There is an application process that may require meeting certain other criteria, such as passing an audition if the charter school has a curriculum that emphasizes theatrical arts. Many schools have no restrictions and often choose the student population on the basis of lottery outcomes. Using the lottery is a way to fairly decide who gains admittance to these schools with much smaller enrollments than most public schools (Noll, 2005).

For more information about the charter school movement, how to start a charter school, and state requirements, go to www.uscharterschools.org.

What do proponents say about magnet and charter schools?

1. Proponents of magnet and charter schools believe that these schools provide much-desired options for parents who are dissatisfied with the job that public schools are doing. Magnet and charter schools are especially appealing to those parents whose children are

from lower socio-economic backgrounds and have been placed in schools with below average achievement statistics (Peterson 2003).

2. Magnet and charter schools encourage competition and make public schools more aware of and more involved in improving their curriculums, teachers' performance, and administration procedures (Villaverde, 2003).

3. When compared with most traditional public schools, both magnet and charter schools offer better student-teacher ratios and smaller, more personal school environments that help prevent student dropouts and capitalize on students' interests (Noll 2005).

The director of the organization called Friends of Choice in Urban Schools stated about alternative schools that they “provide choices for parents, opportunities for teachers, and better schooling right now to some kids, rather than making them wait for yet another system-wide overhaul” (Buckley and Schneider, 2007, p. 285).

What do critics say about magnet and charter schools?

1. These special schools can drain school districts' budgets and result in districts having less money to meet the needs of a much larger percentage of students (Peterson, 2003).

2. Magnet and charter schools have failed to attract diverse student populations that match the composition of the communities' school districts, and the existing diversity requirements are not being enforced (Archbald, 2004).

3. The average achievement scores of students in magnet and charter schools are not higher than those of traditional public schools (Buckley and Schneider, 2007).

What does the research reveal about magnet and charter schools?

1. **Use of public funds and effects on school districts:** A Western Michigan University study (1998) concluded that “charter schools may not be living up to their promise of educational innovation and more effective use of public money” (Noll, 2005, p. 227). An extensive UCLA study of California charter schools (1998) in ten school districts found “no evidence that charter schools can do more with less” (Noll, 2005, p. 226). Marc Bernstein, a New York school district superintendent, explains that when money is taken from public school districts for the operation of charter and magnet schools, “there are but two choices: raise taxes or reduce programming. Either choice has serious consequences for public education” (Noll, 2005, p. 228).

2. **Diversity of student populations in magnet and charter schools:** A 2003 study of magnet schools across the nation was reported in *Sociology of Education*. The researchers examined the effect of magnet school choice on the socio-economic stratification in school districts with magnet school as compared with the socio-economic stratification in school districts without magnet schools. The study did not find a positive growth in the socio-economic redistribution of students as a result of offering magnet school choices (Archbald, 2004). Similar research findings of charter schools were reported earlier in a Minneapolis study (1997) and a Texas study (2002). The reason for this failure of specialty schools to redistribute students more equitably along socio-economic lines was believed to be due to parents' reluctance to have their children bussed long distances and due to parents' reluctance to “face the prospect of their child being in a small minority...parents were likely to sort themselves along racial/ethnic lines” (Buckley and Schneider, 2007, p. 122). A 2004 study of magnet schools reported in the *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk* found that magnet schools did not significantly affect racial and class segregation because many magnet schools have entrance requirements that can only be met by students from higher income areas (Neild, 2004).

3. **Achievement:** Magnet and charter schools typically attract higher achieving students, so it could be predicted that achievement scores of students attending these schools would be higher than students in traditional public schools. However, a November 2004 report by the National Assessment Governing Board concluded from its testing of elementary students in public school and elementary students in charter schools that the average achievement scores of those students enrolled in charter schools were lower than those students in public schools (National Education Association, 2008). The UCLA study of seventeen California charter schools (1998), mentioned above, also did not find an increase in academic scores (Noll, 2005). Finally, in 2006, the Public Policy Institute of California studied the magnet and charter schools in the city of San Diego and concluded that “on the whole, there was no systematic improvement or deterioration in test scores from participating in a choice program” (Betts and Rice, 2006, p. 184).

Conclusion: What are the considerations for parents and teachers in relation to magnet and charter schools?

There are success stories among the many magnet and charter schools started across the nation, but the overall research findings concerning average achievement levels are not favorable to these school reforms. Parents may want to consider using their influence to encourage school districts to offer innovative educational programs for all students, rather than creating or encouraging separate schools. Teachers may need to voice their concerns about the financial resources that are siphoned from the school districts for these unproven schools that serve a small proportion of the community's children. This outflow of tax dollars affects the curriculums that

public schools can afford. Both parents and teachers should be concerned about the fact that specialty schools can further segregate children along racial, socio-economic, and ethnic lines since school choice can often mean choosing to attend a school with students of the same backgrounds. Rather than creating the diversity that was intended by these school reforms, school choice could actually foster the growth of the very prejudices that a free public education for all was meant to eliminate.

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Questions

- How do magnet and charter schools differ?
 - Charter schools have their own governing documents that specify assessment criteria.
 - Charter schools receive no public funding.
 - Magnet and charter school do not differ.
 - Charter schools always require IQ and achievement scores for admittance while magnet schools are always open to anyone in the district.
- What does the research reveal about the diversity of magnet and charter school student populations?
 - The diversity meets existing stated requirements.
 - There is no diversity
 - The diversity of magnet and charter schools is identical with the school systems in the area.
 - The diversity in many charter and magnet schools does not match the diversity of the school systems in which they are located.
- If you were a parent facing the choice of placing your child in an existing charter school, what question would the research findings lead you to ask the charter school principal in order to safeguard your child?
 - What recreational programs are offered for my child?
 - How many teachers are employed by this school?
 - How do achievement levels of this charter school compare with the achievement levels of the existing public schools?
 - Are the parental monthly payments automatically deducted or is a tuition bill sent?
- If the school district where you were working planned to open a charter school, what question would the research findings lead you to ask at the school board budget meeting?
 - Will the charter school have penalties for uniform dress code violations?
 - What career training will the charter school offer students?
 - How will the district's administrators make sure that the charter school follows all the rules and regulations of the school district?
 - How will the loss of money to this new charter school's operation impact the current school district's programs?

Answers 1.a, 2.d, 3.c, 4.d

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11.3: Vouchers

THE PROS AND CONS OF SCHOOL VOUCHERS

by Lucyna Russell

Learning Targets

1. Readers will learn what school vouchers are.
2. Readers will learn what proponents of school vouchers say.
3. Readers will learn what opponents of school vouchers say.
4. Readers will learn if school vouchers work.



Table of Contents

1. What are school vouchers?
2. Proponents of school vouchers.
3. Opponents of school vouchers.
4. Do school vouchers work?
5. Conclusion
6. Can you answer these questions?
7. Answers
8. References

What are school vouchers?

A school voucher, also called an education voucher, is a certificate issued by the government by which parents can pay for the education of their children at a school of their choice, rather than the public school to which they are assigned (Wikipedia). School vouchers can also be considered scholarships funded by the government, private organizations, or both. These funds are given directly to the family instead of the public schools. Parents then have the choice to choose whatever public or private school they would like their child to attend (Coulson 1998,).

There has been heated controversy on the subject of educational vouchers. There are many variables to be considered. One to be considered is who would receive school vouchers? Is everyone with school aged children eligible or do we target specific groups? There are many plans being proposed as to how to use school vouchers. One being restricting vouchers to private schools that will accept vouchers as full payment and limiting vouchers to low income families, children with disabilities, and those attending substandard schools (McCarthy, 2007).

Proponets of School Vouchers

” Support for vouchers is highest among African Americans and Hispanics. Within these two groups, supporters outnumber opponents by as much as five to one.” (Howell,2008)

One of the arguments for school vouchers is that low income families should have the same opportunity to send their children to any school they desire as do wealthy parents (Messerli 2008).Proponets of school vouchers argue that vouchers targeted to low income families more clearly serve the goal of enhancing equal opportunity (Howell, West, & Peterson, 2008).

Another argument for school vouchers is that through competition public schools will be made better (Matus, 2008).Competition between school will increase, thus forcing public schools to be more efficient and public schools will be compelled to teach values such as hard work, respect, and discipline(Messerli,2008). Milton Friedman, a Nobel Prize winning economist, argued that school quality would improve with free-market competition as the student and their money would go to good schools and leave the bad ones behind(Boyd,2006). Market pressures will improve education for everyone because incompetent schools will be eliminated(McCarthy,2007).

Yet, another argument is that private schools would help improve children’s values and their academics. Private schools have a certain reputation and a proven history of results. Private schools do not have an accountability to the government, but to the parents of their children. If they do not do well, the parents can remove the children. This kind of dynamic forces the private schools to do better(Messerli,2008). Another factor to consider is that private schools are not bound by the same government regulations as public schools are and can therefore have more flexibility in their teaching methods.(Messerli,2008). Statistically, parents of voucher students are more satisfied with their current schooling than non voucher parents. Parents are more satisfied with the overall school performance in discipline, academics, class sizes, and racial mix(Rouse, Burrow,2009).

One more argument for school vouchers is that it would bring more diversity and equality into the schools(Messerli,2008). Howard Fuller, Ph.D, Director of the Institute for the Transformation of Learning at Marquette University in Wisconsin, states that “we should focus vouchers on poor and working class families who do not have the resources to move if they live in communities where schools do not work, nor do they have the resources to put their children in private schools.”(Boyd,2008) It is true that poor and minority students are limited to their educational choices and are forced to go to failing schools(Boyd,2008). African-American students who participated in the voucher program in New York City Schools Choice Scholarship Program stated that they were more satisfied, the classrooms were more diverse, and they received higher scores on their test compared to students in public schools (Boyd,2008).

Opponents of School Vouchers

In the Washington DC Opportunity Scholarship Program the statistics showed that of those who participated:

- (Wolf,Gutman,Puma,etc.,2007)

Another argument against school vouchers is that public schools will lose their fundings. This would be devastating to schools who are already underfunded. As it is, public schools are underfunded and cannot keep up with the rising cost of books, technology, security, and, salary. To take even more money away would be detrimental(Messerli,2008). Arguments for vouchers are that a “an education voucher system should be no more expensive than the current system as the state (or other public entity) would simply send a voucher check to schools for each participating child rather than to the local public school or district. However, if implemented on a large scale, there may be other, less appreciated costs that would depend critically on the design of the program.” (Rouse, Barrow,2009). What else needs to be kept in mind is how the programs are handled. Who would fund the transportation of children, the record keeping, the monitoring of enrollments and, the handling of voucher disputes when amounts are varied. These factors could actually exceed what is being estimated now and would not make school vouchers “cost-neutral”(Rouse, Barow,2009).

Yet, another argument against school vouchers is the right for private schools to discriminate. Unlike public schools, private schools are not required by law to accept everyone. Therefore, they could discriminate between who they can accept or make their standards higher to make it harder for certain families to get in (Messerli,2008).

One more argument against school vouchers is ironically the same as the argument for school vouchers. This is that private schools are not accountable to the government. The argument is that private schools do not have to follow that same rules and regulation and teaching methods proposed by the government. This in turn leaves private schools with no accountability to anyone and their performance cannot be monitored (Messerli,2008).

Do School Vouchers Work?

The jury is still out on whether or not school vouchers improve academics in students. Although there are some reports on successes,the “empirical evidence regarding the impact of vouchers on parent choice, student achievement, and fiscal school management is inconclusive and incomplete” (McCarthy,2007). A report that came out by the Department of Education stated that there were no significant differences in math and reading scores compared with students that were not on a voucher system. This report was focused on the Washington Dc Opportunity Scholarship fund a year later (Wolf, Guttman, etc.,2007). Even the longest running voucher programs in Milwaukee, Wisconsin(1990)and Cleveland, Ohio(1990) showed insignificant results when it came to students academic success (McCarthy,2007).

Conclusion

The school voucher debate has been a controversial topic for many years. Both the proponents and opponents carry equally weighted arguments. As to whether these arguments can be adjudicated through data and research remains unclear. The only data we have received is from small samples and it has been inconclusive. It is impossible to know what the data would show with a larger sample and over an extended period of time. Though, it would be interesting to see!

Can You Answer These Questions?

1. Public School Vouchers are funded by

- a. low income families.
- b. private organizations.
- c. the government.
- d. the government and/or private organizations.

2. All of these are arguments for school vouchers EXCEPT

- a. Funds are taken away from public schools.
- b. Increased competition between schools.
- c. Increased diversity in schools.
- d. More choices for low income families.

3. Chelsea is a disabled student under the school voucher program,

- a. she is eligible to receive school vouchers.
- b. she is not eligible to receive school vouchers.
- c. she needs to have low grades in order to be eligible.
- d. she does not qualify because of her disability.

4. Whether or not school vouchers work depends on

- a. the government
- b. parents
- c. private schools
- d. more data and research with larger samples.

Answers

1. d

2. a
3. a
4. d

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11.4: Home Schooling

The Pros and Cons of Home Schooling

By: Megan Galligan

Introduction

Many believe that home schooling has its roots in the 1960s though the 1970s when educational reform became an issue on the national forefront (Dobson, 2000, paragraph 5). Actually, until 1852, public school attendance was not mandatory. It was only in 1852 that the state of Massachusetts made the first compulsory attendance law and eventually all other states followed suit. (All About Parenting). This issue has become increasingly debated because the number of students enrolled in home school has been increasing 15 to 20% each year for the last fifteen years (Dobson, 2000, paragraph 9). Parents are faced with the option to send their children to public or private schools, or to keep their children at home to educate the children themselves. The parents must consider many aspects of education to make this decision including their educational aptitude as teachers, the possible social effect on the children, the production of good citizens, the attention the children need to learn, and the external pressures of the school systems placed on the children.

Pros of Home Schooling

Home schooled children had many more freedoms than other children in public school settings. They have Educational freedom giving them choices to learn what they want with subjects that interest them. They have physical freedom to have more hands on experiences such as field trips to museums or aquariums. Religious freedoms is one of the largest gains of home schooling for most families. They have the opportunity to incorporate their religious and spiritual beliefs without standards and rules to abide by. According to the *Journal of College Admissions*, home schooling is the fastest growing forms of educating children (Ray, 2004, paragraph 2). It is estimated that there are 1.7 to 2.1 million students in grades k-12 that are enrolled in home school as of 2003 and that number seems to be growing every year (Ray, 2004, paragraph 2). Home schooling began as a way for parents to have more control over the curriculum being taught to their children (Cooper and Sureau, 2007, paragraph 9). There were two major view points considered when deciding to remove a child from public school and continuing the education at home. Parents either believed that public schooling developed topics that conflicted with the religious teachings or believed that they, as parents, could serve as a better educator for their children (Cooper and Sureau, 2007, paragraph 9).

In an article written by Michael Romanowski, a professor at Ohio Northern University, he states that “No other factor in life will have more of an effect on a child’s life than the family, and home schooling enables the family to play its important role more actively”(2001, paragraph 6). Home schooling also allows the parents more of an opportunity to become involved in all aspects of the child’s life because they become the focal point in all aspects of their life. In Romanowski’s article, he also states that the intensified relationship with the parents will extend to other siblings that are also being home schooled. He believes that the since of communication is strengthened which allows a more personal relationship (2001, paragraph 7).

There is also the argument that home schooled individuals grow up to become more well rounded citizens. According to a separate article by Romanowski, 71 percent of people who were home schooled were involved in community service(2007, paragraph 14). Moreover, only 37 percent of individuals who were educated in the public school system were involved in public service activities (Romanowski, 2007, paragraph 14). The percentage variations also exist when examining topics such as young voters aged eighteen to twenty-four, contributions to a political party, and active participation in local politics (Romanowski, 2007, paragraphs 15,16,17, and 18)

Another reason for parents choosing the option of home schooling is for the protection of their children. It seems that reports of violence in schools in the news and media are increasing. For example, weapons being brought into public and private schools; increase in gangs; bullying and fights have become more violent; and acts against students are being video taped and broadcast on the internet. These are a few of the reasons why some parents feel that public as well as private schools are no longer safe. Although news reports of such violence seems to be increasing, the percentage of violent acts occurring in public schools has decreased; yet students’ absence due to fear of violence has increased. According to the National Indictors for Education Statistics, “There is some evidence that student safety has improved. The victimization rate of students ages 12–18 at school declined between 1992 and 2005. However, violence, theft, drugs, and weapons continue to pose problems in schools” (“Indicators of

School Crime and Safety,” 2007). Furthermore, some parents who home school do so as a way of protecting their children from the exposure to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and premarital sex. Parents who home school are able to teach their children about these issues in a way that supports their beliefs. By home schooling their children they believe that they can provide them with a well rounded education in the safety of their own home.

Public education uses a set curriculum to teach all children in a given classroom. The classroom is filled with a variety of learning styles, interests, and abilities. For the parent who has chosen to educate their child at home, the curriculum can be catered to meet each child’s individual needs, interests and learning style. There is also the element of time. More personalized time is given to the child at home and there is not the wasted time standing in line for lunch, recess, others to finish their work, etc. and therefore much of the schoolwork is completed much earlier in the day, leaving time for real life learning experiences. (All About Parenting).

I have also discerned that parents who are teaching their children at home also have the benefit of the one-on-one interaction with the child. The child does not need to pace them self with the other members of the classroom. They have the freedom to spend extra time on a troubling topic or to speed through a trivial part of a subject.

Amos Bronson Alcott, a teacher and writer from the 19th century once said, “A true teacher defends his pupils against his own personal influence”. Is this possible when it is a parent teaching their child?

Cons of Home Schooling

On the other side of the issue there are many downsides of home schooling that need to be accounted for. Parents who home school their children struggle with time constraints for getting all of the work load done by one person. This can consist of creating a schedule, activities, learning, and hands on projects/trips. Aside from time restraints there are many financial restraints as well, having one parent in the working world and one in the teaching world can cause some financial strain. In the article “The Pros and Cons of Homeschooling” Isabel Shaw says, “Surprisingly, most home schooling families believe that the brief loss of income is well worth the satisfaction of watching their kids grow and learn in freedom.” In an article by Susan Orloff, she states that there are certain things learned in the school setting that do not occur in other environments but they “...in the school setting they are happening every day” (Orloff, 2005, paragraph 5). These things include making friends, learning to follow directions, and becoming able to handle deadlines. Orloff also states that she has “All too often... seem home schooling as an escape from school and pressures that structured environment demands” (Orloff, 2005, paragraph 7). However, note that many home schoolers participate in peer groups that allow for some of these things to happen.

Another factor that should be considered in the choice to home school is that added financial burden. Families spend an average of \$400 per child each year to cover costs of curriculum, software, field trips, materials for projects, etc. (All About Parenting)

If the reason behind taking the child out of public school and beginning home school is to decrease the pressures that the public school produces, it could only lead to the future detriment of the child. The child needs to be able to develop coping skills to deal with the trials that life would present. Set backs allow a person to grow and develop the skills to combat similar situations in the future. Taking the child out of public education for this reason only teaches the child to escape their problems, not how to learn from them.

Based on the data provided by the Home School Legal Defense Team, 92% of who parents make the decision to home school their children intend to have the child’s entire education at home, grades K-12 (Ray, 1997). Although the majority intend to complete their education at home, only 26% of students can claim to have over ten years of their schooling at home (Ray, 1997). These statistics seem to imply some type of inconsistency in schooling. On average, of high school graduates who were home schooled can claim 6.9 years of home schooling (Ray, 1997). This seems to require quite an adjustment for the children in school. They are required to go in between home and public school and make the required modifications socially and academically.

In Romanowski’s article, “The Strengths and Limitations of Home Schooling”, he states that “To receive a complete education, students need to engage in discussions, share ideas, compete, and work with other students” (2001, paragraph 19). He believes that in order to strengthen the ideas, a person must get feedback and criticism on those ideas. The original idea seems to change, expand, and grow with the input of others. He also introduces the idea that the parent that becomes the primary educator might not have the proper background to adequately teach the upper level subject to the children (Romanowski, 2001, paragraph 24). He questions whether parents have the ability to teach their children “...higher levels of math, complex biological terms, or an in dept

analysis of American history” (Romanowski, 2001, paragraph 24). A parent may be knowledgeable in some of the subjects required, but it would be astonishing if they were skilled enough to teach in all areas.

Home Schooling and the Federal Government

Once an isolated practice with little support, home schooling “has now reached a level of unprecedented visibility, politicization, and publicization” (Cooper, p. 111). Parents and advocates have gained significant legal, political, and social ground, substantially raising public awareness. Subsequently, the increase in home schooling’s power and popularity has caused state and local educational leaders to adjust some of their policies. This has brought considerable criticism from supporters of the “democratic, public control of education” (Cooper, pg 112). They claim home schooling “denies democratic accountability” (Cooper, pg. 112) and is “detrimental to the common good” (Cooper, pg. 115).

Despite political pressure to conform, homeschool families have become well informed, active, and influential – all qualities that are critical to the public life of society (Cooper, pg. 132).

In light of this fiery opposition, how far legally and constitutionally can the federal government go to regulate home schooling and overturn parents’ rights? Twenty years ago, home schooling was considered a crime, and although many states began legalization in 1999, the court controversies are far from over. The cases range in variety and often address attendance, parent qualifications, supervision, and dual-enrolment in public facilities (Cooper, pg. 123).

In most recent legislation, the Second District Court of Appeals in Los Angeles, CA stated in February of 2008 that “children ages six to 18 may be taught only by credentialed teachers in public or private schools — or at home by Mom and Dad, but only if they have a teaching degree” (Kloberdanz-Modesto). California’s governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, defended parents’ rights for the well-being of their child and guaranteed protest (Kloberdanz-Modesto). This decision is merely another pull by the federal government in the tug-of-war being played with home school advocates.

Conclusion

There seem to be many considerations before deciding which type of schooling is best for a child. What seems to be the overriding factor is that all children are different. It depends of the individual when deciding if home school is a plausible option. There seems to be pros and cons that balance each other. The benefits and the detriments are comparable. The education of children seems to be an extremely important and personal decision that all parents face. Yet, will this decision stay in the parents’ hands? The constant influx of court cases addressing the uses and abuses of homeschooling makes the future of home schooling unpredictable.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. When do most people believe home schooling began?
 - A. 1850s-1860s
 - B. 1990
 - C. 1960s-1970s
 - D. 1760s-1780s
2. The number of students enrolled in home schooling has _____ over the past years.
 - A. Increased
 - B. Decreased
 - C. Stayed the same
 - D. Fluctuated
3. What is not a factor that leads a parent to choose home schooling?
 - A. Religious Factors
 - B. Economic Factors
 - C. Parents believing they could be a better teacher than the system provides

- D. To increase personal attention given to the student
4. What does Professor Romanowski believe is the most important factor in a child's life?
- A. Family
 - B. Friends
 - C. Education
 - D. Physical Activity
5. What is not considered a "Con" of home schooling?
- A. Teaching limitations of the parent
 - B. Limited peer interaction
 - C. Limited productivity in society
 - D. Smaller class sizes

Multiple Choice Answers

- 1. C
- 2. A
- 3. B
- 4. A
- 5. C

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11.5: NCLB

No Child Left Behind: Cure or Curse?

by

Elizabeth (Betsy) Donoghue

Edono002

Learning Objectives:

- The reader will be able to name the components of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).
- The reader will be able to identify why some support NCLB.
- The reader will be able to describe what factors are of concern in NCLB.
- The reader will be able to identify what changes have been made to NCLB.

“No matter what your circumstance, no matter where you live, your school will be the path to promise of America. ... [We are] challenging **the soft bigotry of low expectations**. ... **We will leave no child behind.**” — George W. Bush in his acceptance speech to the Republican National Convention, September 9, 2004 . (“Text of Bush Speech”, 2004)

“We must fix the failures of No Child Left Behind. We must provide the funding we were promised, give our states the resources they need and finally meet our commitment to special education.” — Barack Obama in his speech, “What’s Possible for Our Children,” May 28, 2008 (“Text of Obama Speech”, 2008, para. 17)

Introduction

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 was a major emphasis of the Bush Administration education policy. (“How to Fix”, 2007) The law was meant to **hold schools accountable for student progress**, and, in fact, to expect that **all children will be able to perform at or above grade level in reading and math by the year 2014**. (“Key Policy”, 2002; “How to Fix”, 2007)

Since the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), many educators and politicians have loudly expressed their disagreement with the law and its regulations, while others have lauded the accomplishments of successful schools around the country. The Obama administration is poised to begin implementing its agenda, which has been critical of aspects of the No Child Left Behind legislation. This paper will examine how NCLB hopes to cure America’s schools, what parts of NCLB are considered of concern to the schools and students, and what changes to NCLB some hope will help American students meet their potential.

Standards Set by No Child Left Behind

“The 4 Pillars of No Child Left Behind

- **Schools are Accountable for Students’ Results** In an effort to increase accountability, all states must have state standards for performance and test their students on these standards. Each state develops its own standards and tests. In addition, schools must track the performance of certain groups of students who have not performed as well in the past, (i.e. minority students, students in poverty, students with disabilities) and attempt to “close the achievement gap.” (“Four Pillars”, 2004, para. 1). The Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) towards the goals are monitored, and schools must meet certain improvements within a specific timeframe or major restructuring will be required, including “replacing administration and staff, reopen as a charter school, state takeover” (“Key Policy Letter”, 2002, in Restructuring (Year Four)).

Local Control NCLB allows states and communities to decide how to use federal funds. Funds can be funneled to teacher recruitment or training, or to school safety, for example. (“Four Pillars”, 2004).

Effective Teaching Methods Making instruction effective is the aim of the regulations on using teaching methods which are research-based and proven effective. (“Four Pillars”, 2004)

Alternatives for Families If, after several years, a school is not providing adequate progress under NCLB, parents are able to move their child to a well-performing school in their district. In addition, tutoring and extended educational opportunities will be available to low-income students who do not make adequate progress. (“Four Pillars”, 2004)

Support for NCLB

High Standards, Strict Regulations Making such sweeping change to the education system and holding all schools to such specific and high standards has ignited strong feelings in educators, politicians, and families. Diane Pinche’, the Executive Director of Citizens’ Commission on Civil Rights, and a strong proponent of NCLB, believes that many schools have shown that children can reach these high standards, even when they have a large percentage of children in poverty (Pinche’, 2007). Pinche’ believes that a “no-excuses approach to teaching the children of the poor” (Pinche’, 2007, para. 8) is the model for success. She also believes that removing funding from schools failing to reach their goals is necessary (Pinche’, 2007).

Link to video of successful schools (“Success stories”, n.d.) [1]

Be Persistent: Federal Expectations Will Take Time As a civil rights lawyer, Pinche’ likens educational reform to civil rights reform (Pinche’, 2007). She is adamant that educational excellence for minority and poor children can only come from strict standards on a federal level (Pinche’, 2007). Pinche’ asserts that progress towards the goal is important and that persistence is necessary as it will take more time before the objectives are reached (Pinche’, 2007).

“Since when has leaving it all up to the states helped the poor and minorities achieve equality of opportunity? Not when it came to voting rights. ... Not when it came to desegregating schools in the aftermath of Brown v. Board of Education. And certainly not now, when the achievement gaps based on race and class are as virulent as ever, with only modest signs of abatement.” (Pinche’, 2007, Common Ground section, para. 2)

Progress Made The U.S. Department of Education highlighted the accomplishments under NCLB in December of 2008 (“Progress by our Schools”, 2008). They cited higher test scores, and improvements by children with disabilities and children for whom English is not their native language (“Progress by our Schools”, 2008). They report that the “achievement gap is narrowing” (“Progress by our Schools”, 2008, para. 3) and that accountability testing is occurring in all schools. For example, “average reading scores for 4th-grade students with disabilities improved by 23 points between 2000 and 2007 [and] the achievement gap between white and African-American 8th graders narrowed by three points between 2003 – 2007” (“Progress by our Schools”, 2008, para. 3 & 4).

Link to Table from Virginia Report Card (“Virginia Report Card”, n.d.) [2]

Virginia Report Card Percent Passing

“English Performance subgroup	2005 – 2006	2006 – 2007	2007 – 2008
white students	89	90	91
black students	73	76	78
Hispanic students	76	72	81
students with disabilities	64	62	67
students identified as disadvantaged	73	73	77
Mathematics Performance subgroup	2005 – 2006	2006 – 2007	2007 – 2008
white students	81	85	88
black students	62	66	73
Hispanic students	66	71	75
students with disabilities	53	58	65
students identified as disadvantaged	62	67	73”

(Virginia Report Card, 2008, Percent Passing)

Funding Funding for the changes needed under NCLB has been under discussion. Umstead reports that federal funding for NCLB would cover schools’ expenditures on assessments as long as schools do not choose the most expensive assessment methods (Umpstead, 2008).

Concerns about NCLB

Accountability Critics state that teachers are now teaching to the test, which may allow scores to improve at the cost of decreasing creativity in the classroom (Smyth, 2008). Others are concerned that time spent improving reading and math scores is robbing students of time to study science and the arts (“How to Fix, 2007). In fact, some are concerned that states are setting their test standards so low in order to have a larger percentage of students who pass (How to Fix”, 2007). For example, of Mississippi’s 4th graders, 89% passed the state reading test, but only 18% passed the national test (“How to Fix”, 2007). A national test standard has been proposed to truly bring all states up to par (“How to Fix”, 2007).

Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) Each state can determine what progress towards proficiency the groups in their school must make in order to meet the final NCLB goal of 100% grade level performance in 2014 (“Key Policy,” 2002). AYP measures have come under a great deal of fire. Many educators believe that the AYP system relies too heavily on punishment and that it is too easy to fail (“How to Fix”, 2007). Progress may have been made in some areas, but schools fail if even one measure is not met (“How to Fix, 2007). Many believe that factors outside of the school building, such as poverty and family support, are the cause of some students’ poor performance at school, and that these issues must be addressed if children are to succeed (Wallis, 2008).

Children with Disabilities Children with disabilities provide a unique challenge to school systems. Hardman and Dawson (2008) report that many educators question whether children with disabilities should be instructed and tested with the general school population. They cite individualized instructional methods needed for students with disabilities as being at odds with a standardized test(Hudson and Dawson, 2008). And many fear that it is an impossible goal to ever expect 100% of children to be reading and doing math on grade level (“How to Fix”, 2007).

Rural Schools Rural schools also find it challenging to meet NCLB standards, according to Mitchem, Kossar, and Ludlow (2006). They report that rural schools find it difficult to find staff who meet the NCLB requirements due to low populations and remote areas. Combine this difficulty with the requirements for special education teachers, and rural schools find themselves unable to meet NCLB standards. (Mitchem, Kossar, and Ludlow, 2006).

Funding Funding for the NCLB standards is of grave concern for many school systems. In fact, the National Education Association, along with several states, filed “a federal lawsuit ... charging that the Department of Education has failed to provide dequate funding for the NO Child Left Behind initiative” (Dobbs, 2005, para. 1). Others are concerned about the lack of funding for remediation services to assist troubled schools (Pickert, 2008).

Changes made to NCLB

After several years of data from states, U.S. Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, announced three changes to NCLB to respond to areas of concern:

1. **“The Modified Academic Achievement Standards”**(“Final Regulations”, 2008, title) provide a modified test for students with special needs who will be tested on grade level material, but in a less advanced fashion (“Final Regulations”, 2007).
2. **“The Growth Model”** (“Secretary Spellings”, 2009, title) is a sophisticated statistical model that measures student progress for students who may not be up to grade level yet, but have made progress (“Secretary Spellings”, 2009).
3. **“Differentiated Accountability”** (2008, title) allows schools that are closer to meeting their AYP goals to receive less stringent consequences than schools that are seriously behind (“Differentiated Accountability”, 2008).

What’s Next?

President Barack Obama has been very clear about his agenda for NCLB. He believes in increasing funding for the program, revising assessments, and allowing for more individuation(“Education Agenda” 2008). He also plans to “improve NCLB’s accountability system so that we are supporting schools that need improvement, rather than punishing them” (“Education Agenda”, 2008, para. 5).

“If we really want our children to become the great inventors and problem-solvers of tomorrow, our schools shouldn’t stifle innovation, they should let it thrive ... by using visual arts, drama and music to help students master traditional subjects like English, science and math.” — Barack Obama in his speech, “What’s Possible for Our Children,” May 28, 2008 (“Full Text”, 2008, para. 15)

Conclusion

The No Child Left Behind legislation did target a grave concern about America’s education system. After years of testing, it is of great concern that some groups of students (minorities, low-income, students with disabilities) continue to have consistently lower achievement levels. However, major disagreements remain as to how to raise the achievement levels of these students, and, indeed, whether all students can achieve at grade level.

Early concerns about measuring schools’ success have led to changes in the NCLB regulations. NCLB now allows schools to measure student growth towards the goal, as well as to provide accommodations for students with disabilities. The Obama administration has targeted more funding to help struggling schools and encouraged more creativity in the classroom. Despite strong differences of opinion about the implementation of NCLB, all seem to agree that America’s children should be provided with an effective education which will lead them to be productive citizens in the 21st Century.

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Questions

1. What does the No Child Left Behind Act expect of all students, by the year 2014?
 - o a) Students will perform as well as possible in reading and math.
 - o b) Students will perform at or above grade level in reading and math.
 - o c) Students will perform better than last year in reading and math.
 - o d) Students will perform better than last year’s students in reading and math.
2. Why does the U.S. Department of Education believe that the No Child Left Behind Act is working?
 - o a) All states are testing their students.
 - o b) Students with disabilities are improving their test scores.
 - o c) The scores of minority students are gradually moving closer to the scores of white students.
 - o d) All of the above.
3. The schools in a Virginia city have increased the amount of time that students spend on math and reading each day in order to meet NCLB standards. What concern do parents and educators have about the effect of NCLB on their school?
 - o a) The school system does not have good math teachers.
 - o b) The students will not be as good at math as students around the world.
 - o c) The teachers give too much homework.
 - o d) There is less time to study science and the arts.
4. The teachers in a Virginia county were concerned that their students with disabilities could not pass the state tests. What can the teachers do that will help the students pass the test, that would be allowed by the recent changes to the NCLB laws?
 - o a) Give the students a less advanced grade level test.
 - o b) Give the students a test for a lower grade level.
 - o c) Give the students a test that includes only the material they have studied.
 - o d) Give the students last year’s test.

Answers

1)b; 2)d; 3)d; 4)a

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11.6: Governance

Who is the Boss? How are Individual Schools Governed?

Learning Target

Students will identify the tiers of the hierarchy of public school governing.

Students will identify the responsibilities of each tier.

The Hierarchy of the System

Who is the boss in the school systems? The public school governing system is actually a hierarchy (March, 1978). There are several tiers to this hierarchy beginning with the federal level and ending with the individual teachers. It is a pyramid of administrators doing everything they can to educate today's students.

Federal and State

While some may believe that administration of schools starts with the federal government, the truth is that on the federal level there is very little involvement in education, even in funding (Federal Role, n.d.). The federal government sets some guidelines for education, such as the No Child Left Behind Act, but not specific ones such as curriculum taught. In actuality, the states have most of the power over their own schools and what they teach (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 1999). The states set what the students will learn and what standards they have to meet. This means that if a child is meeting their grade level standard in Tennessee they may or may not be meeting the Virginia standards for that grade level. States try to decide what knowledge is imperative for students to learn before they move on to the next grade or even college (ECS, 1999).

States also choose the standards that the teachers must meet (ECS, 1999). The state wants the teacher to be able to educate the students to achieve the set standards. There are things that every state requires, but each of them has their own variation. Every state requires the teacher to have a college degree and some form of standardized testing to be able to teach in their public school system. There are national tests available, but each state requires different ones. Teachers moving to a different state may be required to complete a new test or even a new course before gaining licensure in that state.

States have the largest financial role in the schools. Very little funding comes from the federal government. Most of the federal funding is applied for by the individual school in the form of a grant for a special purpose (Federal Role, n.d.). The states provide teacher salaries and the money required to run each individual school. Each individual school has a PTA that can help the school gain funds for things like technology (ECS, 1999).

Hierarchy Tiers on a District Level

School Board

Superintendent

Principal

Teacher

District

Each state is broken up into districts (ECS, 1999). Most administration deals on a small level, either within the district, or in the individual school (March, 1978). The districts each have their own school board made of elected members (Office of the Education Ombudsman, n.d.). Those boards decide how their schools will achieve the standards set by the state. They will also decide anything else they believe the schools should be doing to service their district's children. Some of these things include overseeing the curriculum and helping to promote better teaching techniques (Education Administrators, n.d.). The board has to have all schools achieving at a level set by the state, so they use their resources to push the schools to achieve the standards they have set (ECS, 1999).

Superintendent

A superintendent is chosen to oversee the schools in the district (ECS, 1999). Much like a politician, this office is often given to those who have worked their way up from the bottom of the hierarchy (March, 1978). They are in charge of making sure the schools are doing what is required by the school board. They make routine visits to schools to check on how they are doing. They work with the principals and teachers to see that children are getting the most out of each school day.

Principal and Assistant Principal

The district hires principals to oversee each individual school. These principals are there to see that the teachers are doing their job and the children are getting the education they deserve (Office of the Education Ombudsman, n.d.). They are responsible for scheduling, planning the daily activities, and managing the overall activities of the school (Office of the Education Ombudsman, n.d.). Principals make routine visits to classrooms to make sure they are running smoothly and that teachers are making the most of their instructional time. Another difficult duty of the principal is the budget for the school. The principal must decide how to best spend the school's money (Education Administrators, n.d.).

The schools also have assistant principals. These administrators help the principal in the daily activities of the school. They also handle most of the discipline problems leaving the principal available to focus on other duties (Education Administrators, n.d.).

Teacher

Each school is responsible for the hire of their teachers. The principal can decide who to hire as long as they are qualified by the state (ECS, 1999). Teachers apply for a job through the district and might interview at several schools before being hired by one. Each school is different so principals often look for a teacher who will fit into the school.

The teacher is the one with the most direct affect on students. They ultimately decide what happens in the classrooms (ECS, 1999). When the door closes every morning it is up to the teacher to make an effective use of time and get children to those standards set by the state. If children in their classrooms are not performing well, the teacher is held responsible.

Summary

In summary, the federal government makes general regulations for education and contributes very little funding for the schools (Federal Role, n.d.).

The states have most of the power because they are able to set the standards for teachers and students, and they fund the public school system almost completely (ECS, 1999).

The district has the power in the area entrusted to them by the state. Each district has an elected school board that determines how state standards are achieved and anything else they see fit to better the students' education (Office of the Education Ombudsman, n.d.).

The superintendent oversees the schools in the district and makes sure they are following what is set by the states and the district (ECS, 1999).

The principals manage their individual school with assistance from the assistant principal (Office of the Education Ombudsman, n.d.).

The teachers instruct the students in accordance with the standards set before them by all levels of the hierarchy.

Review Questions

1. Which tier of the hierarchy of education is responsible for hiring teachers?

- a. the federal government
- b. the principal
- c. the school board
- d. the state

2. Which is not a responsibility of the principal?

- a. budgeting the individual school's money
- b. hiring teachers
- c. making standards for curriculum
- d. scheduling activities

3. A teacher does not meet the standards set by the state, district, and school. Who will act on correcting the situation?

- a. the board of education
- b. the federal government
- c. the principal
- d. the superintendent

4. When will the state get directly involved in an individual school?

- a. when the an individual teacher is not teaching the curriculum set by the state
- b. when the building needs repair or rebuilding
- c. when the school board sets standards higher than the state's standards
- d. when the school is not meeting state standards repeatedly

Answers

1. B – The principal hires the teachers that they think fit best in the school.
2. C – The principal does not make a standard for the curriculum. The states and districts choose the curriculum that will be taught.
3. C – The principal will deal with the situation because if it is not a matter of the whole school, it is dealt with on a small level.
4. D – The state does not intervene in individual schools unless the school is not meeting state standards and steps have not been taken by the lower tiers of the hierarchy.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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12.1: Partnerships

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12.4: Homework

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12.1: Partnerships

School and Community Partnerships: Communities In Schools

By: Shelby C. Blair

“I could sit in my garage all day long and that doesn’t make me a car. I can sit in class all day and that does’t make me a student. It is what you DO that makes you a student.” Jamie Accashian, Principal

Learning Targets

Students should be able to:

1. Define and give two examples of what a School and Community Partnership is.
2. Have working knowledge of what Communities In Schools is.
3. Name two benefits of School and Community Partnerships.

Introduction

Let’s imagine this scenario. You are a first year freshman English teacher. You have a student who has the potential to be very successful. However, you have noticed recently that he has skipped classes, not turned in assignments, and went from making “B’s” to “D-‘s” and “F”.

You talk to the student and he tells you that he has had to take on two jobs to help support his family. What do you do? How can you help him?

What is School and Community Partnerships

A school-community partnership involves “the connections between schools and community individuals, organizations, and businesses that are forged to promote students’ social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development” (Saunders, 2001).

These organizations can give money or volunteer their time and services. A few ways they can volunteer their time is by mentoring a student, tutoring, or just allowing a student to shadow them.

Why do we need Community Partnerships in our Schools?

Schools are being held accountable for students learning and what they know. However, schools cannot do this alone. This is where school and community partnerships come into play. In these different partnerships students are given the best opportunities to succeed in school because the community can sometimes provide resources that schools cannot really afford to provide. In a personal interview with Mr. Bob Cartwright, he said that, “in tight monetary times, the financial advantages to the school are apparent” (B. Cartwright, personal communication, September 30, 2008).

What is Community In Schools?

Communities In Schools (CIS) is a nationwide organization that helps to prevent students from dropping out of school and being prepared to become active and productive citizens in their communities (Communities in Schools At A Glance). CIS is a place where students can feel safe and feel as though someone actually cares about what happens to them. They are free to learn and not worry about being bullied. For some they are given a second chance at an education. One thing CIS helps to provide is alternative high schools that offer both day and night programs.

The teacher in the above scenario could recommend this to her student. The principal and the faculty would have worked with the student to help him be able to work to help his family and to still get his degree. They could even transpose his work experience into high school credit and work with his job to make sure he is able to attend school. The teachers are caring and go out of their way to help their students. I know all of this because I was lucky enough to experience it. I was that student that wanted to learn but had a hard time functioning in regular high school. The night school program was strict, as with any Community In Schools (CIS)

program. Attendance is mandatory and if you miss so many days of school, you are dismissed from the program until the next semester. (B. Cartwright, personal communication, September 30, 2008).

Communities In Schools are making a difference in students' lives. Click here to read all about them:
<http://www.cisnet.org/about/success.asp>

Interviews

After my sophomore year, I was dealing with more family issues at home and being picked on at school. It got to the point that I really did not want to go to school and begged to be sent to a private school. Private school was not feasible and I had heard about an alternative high school that my best friend attended. It was called Burger King Academy, and the only ties we had to Burger King were that we received generous amounts of monetary funding from them.

We were still a public high school in Chesterfield County, VA. The school is now called Community High School. I actually felt free at school to learn and not be fearful of being picked on because it was simply not tolerated. Our principal was not only a leader for us but also a mentor. The teachers were able to really get to know me there because there were fewer students in my class. I had a relationship bond with them that if something was bothering me I could talk to them about it and I knew they would help me if they could. They were some of the inspirations in why I wanted to go into teaching. I still talk and visit with them today.

Benefits of School and Community Partnerships

There is research out there about the many benefits of community and school partnerships. One benefit is opportunities for students to take what they have learned in the classroom and apply it to a project that is meaningful (Bouillion and Gomez, 2001). One way this is happening is through a program called, Junior Achievement. This program pairs business professionals with students in local schools. I remember being in middle school and participating in Junior Achievement in one of my classes. Our class was broken up into groups and we were to form our own businesses. We had to come up with everything from the product to the price and everything in between.

A second benefit is students are able to build real relationships and networks to prepare them for the “real world”. Through Communities in Schools, as well as other regular high schools, students are given a chance to network with professionals in the business world through cooperative education programs. A student at a CIS school would work during the day and turn in the work to the teacher. The class would be more of an independent study course.

A third benefit is one that affects students' attendance rates. Research done by Sheldon (2007) has shown that the stronger the connection between school and community partnerships, the better school attendance is. Students test scores on achievement test went up when schools partnered with the community (Sheldon, 2003). When schools and communities partner together students graduation rates increase According to Chesterfield County Public Schools website, more than 1,000 students graduated from Chesterfield County Public Schools with the help of CIS.

“As I reflect, I keep remembering the students that could see the light at the end of the tunnel, and who could, quite often, say that they were proud of setting and reaching a goal for the first time in their lives. But they need not say it; it was always apparent in their positive attitudes, and their proud smiles.” ~ Mr. Bob Cartwright

In my personal interview with two people who worked in a Communities in Schools (CIS) High School, I asked them about the benefits of Communities in Schools (CIS). According to Coach Jamie Accashian students benefit both “financially” and through “marketable skills that would lead to direct employment” (J. Accashian, personal communication, September 22, 2008). A teacher at the night school program said, “A hand-picked, and volunteer staff that was more in tune with the needs of, and approaches to, these special situation students” (B. Cartwright, personal communication, September 30, 2008).

Conclusion

School and Community partnerships can provide students today with a better education and help with the demands put on the schools to meet expectations set by federal and state education mandates. The partnerships can provide monetary and non-monetary support. Through Communities in Schools students can have access to resources that can help them succeed in school. The benefits

of community and school partnerships are numerous. In a world that is changing every moment and with more pressure being put on teachers to make sure students meet high standards of excellence, the community can help. In my opinion all we need to do is ask.

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Questions

1. What is not considered to be a development promoted by a school and community partnership?

- A. Cognitive
- B. Emotional
- C. Intellectual
- D. Physical

2. What is Community In School (CIS) actively trying to prevent happening to students?

- A. Absences
- B. Bullying
- C. Dropping Out
- D. Partying

3. What is one way in which you, as a teacher, can make a project meaningful?

- A. Assign the student a book and have them report on what they read.
- B. Get students involved by solving a “real-world” problem by having them participate in a clean-up project at a nearby creek.
- C. Have a party once everyone has completed the project.
- D. Have students individually work on a project and present the class.

4. What is one way in which you, as a teacher, could get the business community involved in your school?
- A. Hold Parent/Teacher conferences
 - B. Hold a Parent Teacher Association Meeting
 - C. Hold a school pep rally
 - D. Write a letter to a particular business asking for sponsorship of an enrichment program for the students

Answers

- 1. A. Cognitive
- 2. C. Dropping Out
- 3. B. Get students involved by solving a “real-world” problem by having them participate in a clean-up project at a nearby creek.
- 4. D. Write a letter to a particular business asking for sponsorship of an enrichment program for the students

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12.3: Home Environment

What are the effects of the home environment on learning?

In a recent population survey, 7.1 million students under the age of 18 lived in a neighborhood with a poverty rate of 30 percent or more [1]. This high incidence of poverty places these children at a higher rate of becoming ill, not having proper health care, becoming parents before finishing school, using illegal drugs, being exposed to or involved in violence, and going to jail before they are even old enough to vote. Children living in below average neighborhoods should be given the same opportunities as children living in average and above average housing.

Disadvantages Faced by Poverty-stricken Students

A major disadvantage to students produced from living in poverty stricken neighborhoods is the possibility of growing up not able to succeed in life because they were not properly trained as children. “They are unable to work, parent, or excel in society. [1]” It is the responsibility of the authoritarians, policymakers, parents, schools, and teachers to make sure each student, despite their living arrangements, is given an equal opportunity to succeed.

Statistics have shown that students who live in poor neighborhoods usually test lower on standardized test. The students also tend to learn less than students in average schools. In the book, “The Good—and the Not-So-Good—News About American Schools,” 13-year-old students were not on the appropriate grade level in math. These students were doing math problem on a 9-year-old’s level.

Many other disadvantages play a part in the lack of success in children who live in low-income neighborhoods. Education is not a key factor that is stressed in the home as evidenced by the low rate of parental involvement. In addition, children living in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods have few role models to show them ways to improve their lives and break the cycle of poverty.

Aspects for Properly Preparing Students Living in Poor Neighborhoods

In order to make sure students living in low income neighborhoods are well prepared for life as adults, certain things are required. Basic aspects include: “greater access to supports that all families need to raise kids successfully—employment opportunities for parents, quality health care, formal and informal networks of adults who can assist in times of crisis, vibrant religious institutions, organized recreation, and safe streets. [1]” Parental opportunities, good health care, religious groups, and fun activities all make for a well rounded student, but these children need a quality education. “Education has been the vehicle for advancing the social and economic status of children and families, compensating for poverty and distressed environments, and, for millions of kids, paving the way to opportunities unavailable to their parents. [1]” Education is the catalyst for success. “Research shows that school completion and academic success increase children’s ability to escape poverty, form strong families, and raise successful kids of their own. [1]” The more education one receives the greater your chances are of getting a higher paying job.

Research from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Money Income in the United States, states that a college graduate earns twice as much money a year compared to an adult with only a high school diploma, and that same college graduate earns about three times as much as a high school dropout. Sadly, students living in these low-income neighborhoods are falling by the wayside. The chances of getting a quality education while living in poverty are very small. “If our nation is to remain prosperous and committed to equality of opportunity, we must create successful schools for poor children. [1]”

Contributing to Successful Students

It is possible for students in poverty stricken neighborhoods to succeed but it requires quite a bit of dedication. “In order to contribute to kids’ success in school and overall development five ideas should be demonstrated. They include: preschool experiences that prepare children to learn, schools that are small enough to engage every child, high standards in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, strong, meaningful family participation, and making education part of a larger community commitment to healthy youth and family development. “High-quality early childhood care and preschool education can stimulate cognitive development, increase school readiness, and advance academic achievement in the early elementary grades. [1]” Smaller classroom sizes promote more one on one between the student and teacher. Students are able to receive more individualized help. The teachers are also able to change the flow of instructional time if necessary; they can do what works best for the class a whole. Higher

success rate also come from having “high learning standards, challenging curricula based on those standards, and instructional practices that keep kids actively engaged in learning. [1]” The definition of the word standard from the Encarta Dictionary is the level of quality or excellence attained by somebody or something. In schools standards are set so the students comprehend the seriousness and the value the school places on academic success. “States like Kentucky, Washington, and Maryland and districts like Milwaukee and Philadelphia have taken significant steps to set standards that are aligned with curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. [1]” Parental involvement and parent-teacher interaction is also a key to the success of the students. Interaction between the teacher and parent can be as simple as a brief email or telephone call. Involvement should include knowing the latest news in the school, participating in any parent orientations and meetings, and helping and being aware of the students’ homework.

Other Factors That May Affect Education

Homelessness

A child’s success may be dependent upon many factors that may take place in the home or the lack thereof. “According to the Year 2000 Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program, there were approximately 928,429 homeless children and youth (Pre K-12) reported in 2000, an increase of 10 percent over the last reporting year of 1997, with 65 percent of these children in Pre K-Grade 6. [3]” Students who are homeless are defined as lacking a stable, long term place to reside. “The students may be: Sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason, Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations, Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings, Living in emergency or transitional shelters, Abandoned in hospitals, Awaiting foster care placement, Have a primary nighttime residence that is not designed for regular sleeping accommodation for humans” [3].

Homeless students are battered psychologically and emotionally and have added pressures once entering the school building. These children are presented with many obstacles to overcome in school ranging from having their homes taken away, living in a shelter, to not knowing when and where their next meal is going to come. Once in the classroom the students have a hard time focusing forcing them to become less motivated about completing school. Homeless students have a higher rate of dropping out of school entering the work force because of lack of enthusiasm and focus. Those students who chose to be homeless, because they have run away from home, experience both sexually and physical abuse. They sometimes become involved with illegal drugs and excessive alcohol use. Other factors that may be a factor that might prohibit a quality education for a homeless child may include: poor nutrition, inadequate sleep, and lack of health care.

Family Composition

An interview with a social worker revealed the impact home and social environment on a child’s education. In this social worker’s school, a school for children with emotional and/or learning disabilities, a number of the students reside in neighborhoods at or below poverty level. They are often times being raised by single parents or grandparents who also care for other children or relatives placing the child’s education low on the caregiver’s list of priorities. Children from these types of environments often display inappropriate behavior that negatively impacts their academic development.

A major difficulty for the teachers and social workers in this school is the lack of parental involvement. The school, according to the social worker, is at least is an hour long bus ride for the parents (most don’t own cars) which keeps many parents from visiting the school and meeting the child’s teachers. The school has often offered to fund the parents’ transportation to and from the school; however the parents face difficulties in getting time off from their jobs. Whether or not the parents’ have an interest in the child’s education, the children do not see a connection between the parent’s and their teachers resulting in lack of academic motivation and no desire to behave appropriately.

There is a fascinating article in *The Elementary School Journal* entitled “Teachers’ Reported Practices of Parent Involvement: Problems and Possibilities,” by Joyce L. Epstein and Henry Jay Becker of John Hopkins University which addresses the family and how the parental involvement affects a child’s educational process. This article is about a study of teachers in Maryland and how they feel about parent involvement. The comments from the 3,700 teachers vary tremendously from teachers who strongly believe that their job can only be performed adequately if they can rely on parental help, and the other opposite thought from teachers who have long given up the hope of parental help. Some of the teachers polled felt that “parents have so little prime time to spend with

their child or children,” (Epstein, 1982) that it is very hard to cultivate a parent-teacher relationship much less a parent-teacher-child relationship.

This study/article also delves into the world of today, and how the working parents have more demands on their time and how helping kids at home becomes a more frustrating task when a parent is tired or has so many jobs to just pay the bills (Epstein, 1982). Teachers seem to be split down the middle when it comes to deciding if it is worth their effort to try to involve parents, but the general synopsis of the study was that in the long run it is well worth the effort for the child’s sake no matter what the family structure entails. Single parents, working parents, grandparents raising their grandchildren, and all family structures should begin with the child’s educational process at home and help the schools and teachers open the doors and windows into the mind of the child. This applies to every socioeconomic structure of family, not just poverty structures.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Abuse

Drugs and alcohol can have a lasting affect on children. The affects can start in fetal development and continue through life development. Having a mother that uses alcohol or drugs while she is pregnant can affect the fetus and have lasting affects on their cognitive and social development. Alcohol can cause mental retardation, slower physical development, severe learning and cognitive disabilities. A mother that uses illegal drugs, like marijuana, cocaine, etc, can also have a severe and lasting effect on the child. They can decrease the cellular oxygen and nutrient supply for the fetus which then affects the parts of the brain responsible for learning, memory, behavior, and cognitive functions. It can also cause language delays and attention problems. (Kaplan, 122)

Drugs and alcohol can also effect more then just the child’s body, it also effects the environment they live in. The drug and alcohol abuse leads to poverty, abuse, and neglect in the home. The parents are too busy with there habits that they have little emotional involvement with the child. (Kaplan, 124-125)

Abuse is also a major problem affecting children in school and in life. Out of the three million children that are reported each year to child protective service agencies for being alleged victims of abuse and neglect, about one-third (about one million) are determined to be legitimate cases that require action (Bullough, 69). There are three types of abuse; physical, sexual, and emotional. Physical neglect is the most common form of child maltreatment. It is responsible for about sixty percent (60%) of all reported cases of abuse (Bullough, 57). They all have major lasting effects on the children. All of them cause psychological problems in the child. Abuse can cause language delays, poor social relationships with peers, lower intelligence scores, and behavioral problems. Studies show that the abused child also is more likely to experience failure in school because of all the problems abuse causes. (Kaplan, 355) At least half of all valid cases of child abuse involve caregivers that are under alcohol or drug abuse.(Bullough, 43)

All of this can cause effects on the child’s learning. The brain development, emotional development causes problems in school and how the child can learn.

Conclusion

A child’s destiny should not be determined by the neighborhood a child lives in, composition of the child’s family, or the child’s circumstances. Each and every child should be given the same equal opportunity to achieve excellence. Teachers should view every child as a child that is capable of learning. The responsibility of instilling the value of learning is placed not only on the parents, but the teachers, administrators, school board officials, and every other adult that has a part of a child’s life.

Multiple Choice Questions

Click to reveal the answer.

Poverty stricken children may grow up with not being able to succeed because _____.

- A. Poor health.
- B. They were not properly trained as children.
- C. Low test scores.
- D. Lack of parental involvement.

B. They were not properly trained as children.

_____ students under the age of 18 lived in a neighborhood with a poverty rate of _____ or more.

- A. 6.3 million, 20%
- B. 10.7 million, 50%
- C. 9.6 million, 10%
- D. 7.1 million, 30%

D. 7.1 million, 30%

Home and social environment can have an impact on a child's education.

- A. True
- B. False

A. True

Out of the number of alleged child abuse cases how many are considered legitimate and require action?

- A. 10%
- B. 30%
- C. 40%
- D. 60%

D. 60%

How many cases of abuse involve caregivers that have an alcohol and/or drug abuse problem?

- A. None
- B. One-third (1/3)
- C. One-half (1/2)
- D. Two-thirds (2/3)

C. One-half (1/2)

How do you think the majority of teachers today feel about involving parents' assistance with extra instruction?

- A. Teachers today believe that it is very helpful to ask for parents' assistance.
- B. Teachers feel it is a waste of their valuable time.
- C. Teachers are too busy teaching to worry about parents and their problems.
- D. Teachers feel parents are a pain.

A. Teachers today believe that it is very helpful to ask for parents' assistance.

What does the term "family structure" mean?

- A. How many members of the family there are.
- B. What the make-up of the family is like: father/mother, single father, single mother, etc.
- C. If the family has any pets.
- D. Where the child is in the family structure.

B. What the make-up of the family is like: father/mother, single father, single mother, etc.

Essay Question

Click to reveal sample responses.

After reading the following article how important do think parental involvement is to a child's success in school? Do you feel that in young men a lack of male influence plays a part in the success of the student? Explain.

Parental involvement is perhaps one of the single most important factors in a child's success in school. As a 7th grade teacher I see students each and every day who are the product of a less than desirable home situation. Unfortunately, these children are unable to leave that baggage at home and they bring it into the classroom. Then when the children misbehave or fail to perform well, teachers contact parents and get little or no support. Often times, these parents don't want to engage, don't want to help, and even blame the teachers for the child's issues in school. Just a little help from a parent really goes a long way. And it doesn't start when they get to school, parents need to be actively involved in their child's education from day one-they are their child's first teachers!

I do feel that in many cases the lack of a male figure in a child's life can negatively impact that child's academic success. There are many reasons for this: many single women may not be as assertive with discipline, many single women may not have advanced knowledge in the subject matters taught in schools these days, many of these children may not have someone at home to make sure they study, and finally many of these children may be too concerned with "survival concerns" at home to focus in school. However, if the male influences in a child's life are not responsible, and don't give added security, they can be equally if not more detrimental to the child. —Brandy Herndon

Parental involvement is key in to a child's success, not only in school but in all areas of life. This can be explained by using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. If a Child is not eating, chances are their need for safety is not being met. Likewise, if their need for safety is not being met then chances are they are lacking love. Finally, if they are not loved, they will not proceed to the next level of self-actualization where learning occurs. If a child does not have parents who support them emotional, physical, and educationally it is very unlikely that they will succeed. Parents are necessary to encourage learning and enforce discipline in the classroom. They hold the road-map to their child's success. If the child does not have any support at home they will feel as if they do not have a chance at success in school. If they have no support at home what do they have to lose if they fail?

I absolutely feel that a lack of a male influence plays a part in the success of a student, both male and female. In our kindergarten class we had a troubled young boy who was constantly acting out. On day he was looking at my family picture which consists of seven children, yes seven, a Mom, a Dad, and a super cool black lab puppy. The person who caught his attention was my husband. He asked, "Is that the Dad?" and "Does he eat dinner with the kids?" That was such a light bulb moment for us. We realized what he was missing. I believe that every child needs a positive male influence in their lives. —Brenda Kilmurray

I feel that parental involvement is extremely important to a child's success in the classroom. Children not only need support and motivation from their teachers but also from their parents or guardians. In a classroom you can definitely tell if a child has support from their home environment or not. From my experiences, often children who do not have a motivating and supporting family at home do not perform well in the classroom and usually are the trouble makers in the classroom. I feel that parent should want to take an active role in their child's education. The more involved a parent is in their child's educational experience the better their child will perform.

I think that the lack of a male figure in a child's life can definitely affect a child's success in the classroom, especially young boys. A male figure can offer many attributes that a woman can not do alone. For instance, a male figure can provide security and encouragement to a young boy that would lead to an overall feeling of achievement that their mother may not be able to provide. There are many things in life that a young boy may feel that he can only look to a male figure for guidance. —Brittany Lester

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12.4: Homework

What is the ideal amount of homework to assign?

A typical school day in the United States is six to six and half hours long. During this time, teachers are required to teach four to five core subjects, including math, English, science, and history. In addition, they must find time to include the fundamental supplementary subjects. These supplementary subjects include, but are not limited to, physical education, health, art, music, and foreign language. In these six hours, lunch and recess must also take place. Because of the large curriculum and the limited time, many teachers assign homework.

What is Homework?

Homework is work assigned to students, by teachers, to be completed outside of the school. “It is used as an instructional supplement to classroom teaching.” (6) Although it is not required, homework is typically counted as part of the students’ grade. “The U.S. is one of the few nations where teachers include homework scores as an element of course grades.” (2) Forms, objectives, and lengths of homework vary. A large debate surrounds the importance of homework and the time restraints it places on today’s students.

History of the Homework Debate

The debate over the importance of homework is not a new one. It has been debated since the late 1800s. Between the late 1800s and the mid 1900s some cities in the United States banned homework on the account that it was affecting the health of children; “many thought (homework) was an overemphasis on at-home drill and memorization”.(2) Children were spending so much time on schoolwork and homework that they were mentally and physically exhausted. However, in the 1950s and ’60s homework loads began to increase. The government felt that the “United States was becoming less economically competitive” (2). A major event that sparked these notions was the Russians’ launch of the Sputnik satellite (7). This increase of homework lasted until the 1970s, in which it once again made a drastic decline. In the 1980s the load once again begins to increase (2). This time it is due to the incompetence on international tests. In 2002, Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act under President George W. Bush. Under this act, teachers and administrators are required to submit their school’s achievements on state standardized test to the federal government. Failure to comply or to reach the goals set forth by the state leads to a range of consequences. The most severe consequence is the replacement of staff in those failing schools. According to the NCLB Act, all students must be proficient in math and reading by 2014 (2).

Types of Homework

Homework is assigned in a multitude of varieties. Some assignments include reading specific content, problems at the end of a chapter, worksheets, research papers, and creative projects. Teachers may assign daily homework in which the assignment is to be completed and turned in on the following school day. Alternatively, teachers may assign long-term assignments; giving the students a week or more to complete the assignment. Homework assignments can be used to reinforce lessons taught in class, or elaborate on briefly introduced material (2). In addition, homework assignments may be used to prepare the students for an upcoming lesson (5).

Purpose of Homework

“Different homework assignments serve different purposes, so it is important to consider the goal of each exercise.” (5) Some valid purposes of homework assignments include knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. (5) Homework assigned to reinforce lessons gives students the opportunity to practice newly acquired skills. They also help teachers assess the students’ understanding and comprehension of the lessons. Homework assigned to elaborate on newly introduced material requires students to take initiative and learn independently. This type of assignments also allows teachers to introduce more material throughout the school year. Homework assignments designed as preparation for upcoming lessons introduces the lesson to the students beforehand and therefore increases their ability to comprehend it. All of these reasons are intended to have a direct effect on students’ learning and academic performances. In addition to these academic lessons, homework results in positive non-academic lessons. Homework teaches the values of responsibility, good work-study habits, time management, initiative, and

motivation. “Perhaps the most important advantage of homework is that it can enhance achievement by extending learning beyond the school day.” (8)

The Effects of Homework

Does the amount of homework assigned have an impact on the academic success of students? Unfortunately, there is no straightforward concrete answer. Research shows that homework affects students differently depending on their age and grade level. The effect of homework on academic success increases as age and grade levels increase. The National Education Association and the National Teacher Association endorse a 10 minute per grade rule of thumb (2). This rule of thumb suggests that first graders should be assigned approximately ten minutes of homework, second graders about twenty, and twelfth graders about two hours.

Elementary School

Although homework has the least effect on elementary aged students, research shows that the homework loads have increased in the elementary schools over the last decade (2). “Research shows little evidence that homework improves learning or school achievement for children in the early grades.” (2) Students at this age have a limited attention span and grasp of study skills. A vast amount of homework may actually inhibit their academic achievement; “it can be counter productive, children will show signs of fatigue and frustration”. (7) Homework, in moderation, is more important at this age level to foster good work-study habits and teach self-motivation and responsibility.

Middle School

Research is inconclusive on regards to the effects of homework on middle school students. However, research does show that middle school is the stage of school that our students began falling behind on an international level; “by middle school U.S. scores begin to fall (on international achievement tests)” (2).

High School

Homework has the most effect on the academic success of high school students. There is a correlation between homework and scores on achievement tests and overall grades. (6) Following the ten-minute rule of thumb, the optimal amount of homework for high school students is approximately two hours. The more the better does not apply after two hours. Each added hour doing homework shows a smaller pay off in achievement (6).

Too Much or Too Little

A major debate surrounds the effect and time restriction that homework has on school-aged children. Should homework be required? How much is too much? Critics against required homework argue that if students are assigned too much homework it leaves no time for family, extra curricular activities, and play. “Research shows (these activities) are more highly correlated with cognitive development and achievement than is homework.”(2) Too much homework can lead to stress, sleep deprivation and even depression. An unreasonable amount of homework dims children’s love of learning and too much may “diminish its effectiveness or become counter productive”. (2) On the other side, critics that are for required homework argue that the schools are not assigning enough homework. “Mastering a subject or skill takes practice, and homework can provide that practice.” (5) Students have the weekends, holidays, and summer to play. The amount of time spent on academics, to include the length of school days and school years as well as time spent on homework, does not compare with other industrialized countries, such as Asia and Europe. (2) Supporters of homework argue that homework adds to study time, and study time is the chief determinant of how much students learn. (2)

Importance of the Type of Homework Assigned

The type of homework that a teacher assigns can have a lot to do with its effectiveness. “Even more important than how much homework is what kind.” (2) If students are required to complete repetitive, long, ill thought out assignments, the knowledge they gain by doing so is minimal (8). For example, if there are 40 math problems assigned focusing on the same material, a student that knows the material may feel that it is repetitive and pointless. On the other hand, a student that is having a hard time with the material may get frustrated and disengaged. An approach taken by many teachers to avoid these issues is to use the five-problem rule recommended by the U.S. Department of Education (2). This rule suggests that teachers should not assign more than five problems of any given content. Five problems are enough to assess weather a student comprehends the material or not.

Furthermore, “if a child who did not get the right idea in class slogs through thirty problems, she is just cementing the wrong method in her brain” (2).

Teachers must carefully plan and assign homework in a way that maximizes the potential for student success (2). Not all students learn the same way. Students may be visual, verbal, or logical learners. Teachers need to be aware of the different learning strengths of their students and vary the types of homework they assign to include all types of learning styles. In addition, assignments must be realistic in length and difficulty (8). First graders should not be expected to learn twenty-five seven-letter words for a spelling test. Teachers need to take in to account their students logical and mental capabilities. Teachers should limit assignments to important and thoughtful ones (2). They should not assign homework just because it is expected by the parents and/or students. Generally, students complete their assignments because of expectations, as opposed to the educational gain they will receive by doing so. Keeping this in mind, teachers should assign homework that will keep the students interested while expanding their knowledge.

Conclusion

Homework is a hot-button topic in education. Some view homework as a needless waste of time and effort, and source of tremendous stress for students; while, others view it as an excellent study and review tool. As a middle school teacher, I see it as a way for my students to hone the information they learned in class and also continually spiral back to retain information learned previously. Also, it can be used as a way to introduce new topics and peak interest in a student. It is a valuable resource one can use to their advantage. However, it should not be a determining factor in a student’s grade point or average, as it is merely a tool and not a fundamental aspect of any course; the heart of the material should be assessed and covered in class. In fact, many teachers refuse to even assign homework as it is understood that students rarely complete it or put great effort into it. Whatever one’s feeling regarding homework, there is a definite ‘best’ method one can employ to reap the full benefits of homework. As pointed out by the National Education Association, “ensuring students’ success is a shared responsibility” (NEA, 2006, p. 2). That is, as parents and educators, we should be utilizing every avenue available to us to assist our students in their journey for academic success. As the achievement gap becomes a gorge the world grows ever more competitive and unforgiving. So, what can we do to make homework work? First, we can be prepared. Secondly, be on the same page as the instructor or teacher—understand their policy. Thirdly, be accessible and willing to model your expectations. Also, utilize all of your resources and stay in touch. Finally, foster learning even outside of school. (NEA, 2006, p. 1-3).

Multiple Choice Questions

Click to reveal the answer.

Homework has the greatest positive effects on...

- A. Elementary students
- B. Middle school students
- C. High school students
- D. All of the above

C. High school students

Which of the following is not a valid purpose of assigning homework?

- A. Knowledge
- B. Punishment
- C. Synthesis
- D. Evaluation

B. Punishment

The effectiveness of homework depends on the type assigned.

- A. True
- B. False

A. True

Which of the following is a value that homework teaches?

- A. Good work-study habits
- B. Time-management
- C. Motivation
- D. All of the above

D. All of the above

Ms. Jackson is a 6th grade teacher. She often gives her students brief assignments for homework that pique their interest and goes back to information in the beginning of the year. This is an example of someone using homework to

- A. Be busy work.
- B. Be a valuable review resource.
- C. Do nothing because no one does it any way.
- D. Fill in the grade book.

B. Be a valuable review resource.

With homework, it is important to

- A. Do it for your child.
- B. Not assign it because they won't do it.
- C. Make it really easy and simple.
- D. Be accessible and willing to model your expectations.

D. Be accessible and willing to model your expectations.

Mr. Anderson is a third grade teacher. For homework he gives each child an old magazine. The students are to circle at least ten proper nouns they come across. They started proper nouns one day earlier. What is one thing we can say about Mr. Anderson's choice of homework?

- A. The assignment will be too hard for the students because it is a new concept.
- B. The assignment is extremely unfair.
- C. The assignment is good practice for the students, but should not be graded because it is such a new concept.
- D. The assignment will take too much time.

C. The assignment is good practice for the students, but should not be graded because it is such a new concept.

Essay Question

Click to reveal sample responses.

If you were a teacher of any grade, what would your homework policies be, and why?

In having the opportunity to teach high school students, I have also had the chance to develop homework policies for my students. Homework is considered a tool to reinforce new and existing material that has been learned within the classroom. My class used computers for 90% of their class assignments. Homework consists of work that can be completed outside of class, without using a computer. By completing the assignments this allows students to become independent learners, as they work on self discipline and prepare themselves for higher academia. Students receive points for completing homework; however, they do not receive a grade for homework. The points that the students receive are incentive points and are translated into extra credit points for taking time to complete assignments outside of class. Students are assigned long-term projects. The long-term projects can be completed outside of class; however, students have enough time within class to complete the assigned project. The purpose for allowing students to complete long-term projects in class is to be able to support the student's questions, concerns and or ideas.

Students who do not take the opportunity to complete assignments outside of class do not receive any points. The points are not averaged into grades; but, by completing homework assignments students will have additional points to add to their original grade. The points that are added to the original grade can make a difference between a B or an A, or a D or a C. Students do not have any other opportunities to receive extra credit; therefore, all students make an effort to complete the homework assignments that are assigned to them.

I plan to teach Kindergarten and I don't think that I will be giving them homework unless it is something that isn't too time consuming such as reading a story to a parent. I feel that students work hard enough at school and they need time to relax and be kids. Students are in school for six or six and a half hours five days a week. That's a lot of time to be learning new things. I think that homework should be different at different grade levels. For example if I was teaching sixth grade then they would definitely have to have homework. Subjects such as math require homework because you need to make sure you understand the material. Some teachers take the homework overboard though, because some teachers forget that the students have other classes and want to give them tons of work to do. When this happens the students are doing homework all night and don't get much of a break; especially if they are involved in extra-curricular activities. That is why I think that homework should only be given if necessary. —Katherine Owen

If I was a teacher for school I would give my students homework but I would not collect it. A lot of teachers give out homework and then they collect it for part of the student's grade. Homework should always be offered but it should not be graded because homework is suppose to help students learn the information better so if a student does not do their homework and gets a bad grade on the test then that would be their fault. Students would then realize that even though homework is not collected you should still do it so you will be able to do well on your test. Another reason why I would not collect it for a grade is so the student can have more time studying for a class that he needs help in, because if a student knows the information and gets homework on that information then its a waste of time and that would take time from him studying for a class maybe he is struggling on. When I was a teacher I hated teachers that gave out a lot of homework and collected it for a grade because it takes all of your time. I feel like a student has been in school for 8 hours of the day, so they should get some free time and enjoy being a kid, not going straight home and cracking down on the books for another couple hours. —Kurt Johnson

I believe that homework is a crucial part of the learning process. It gives children a chance to attempt problems on their own. This allows them to discover their weaknesses and strengths before a test is given. It will also helps the children to learn valuable study skills. In addition, assigning homework gives parents a chance to become involved in what their children are learning. Parents' support is crucial to the education of younger children. When I become a teacher, I definitely plan on assigning homework. However, I will do it in moderation. I believe that the 10 minutes per grade level rule is an excellent amount. Younger children should not be expected to spend as much time as older children on homework.

I would not assign homework over the weekends or during holiday breaks. Everyone needs a break now and then so that they do not become "burned out". Also, with this break and rest from school work, the children will return feeling refreshed and ready to start learning again. I also think that long term assignments are a great learning tool. Children can begin these assignments and work on them little by little as they learn new skills. This would help the children see the progress of their knowledge and help them to realize how their lessons are related. —Kristy Currin

As a future fourth grade teacher, I plan to assign a minimal amount of homework. I intend to allow class time to complete assignments. If the student does not use his or her time wisely, then the work will have to be completed as homework. However, I realize that there will be occasions when assignments will have to be completed at home due to disruptions in the school day, such as assemblies. Also, due to extracurricular activities, many students have to rush to complete homework in order to get to participate in the activity or parents do the work for them just to get it done. If students have to rush through their work, they will not learn the necessary material, which will create problems for the student later. When students do their homework during class, I know whose work I will be grading. Another reason I plan to assign a minimal amount of homework is because I believe children need time to be children. If they have to go home and complete two hour's worth

of homework, when will they have time to play? In addition to getting their exercise, children learn when they are able to play and explore outdoors, which creates a happy, healthy child and a successful student. —Amanda Hughes

I plan on teaching 3rd grade and I think homework is a great opportunity to do some work on their own time. This can also teach the students good time management and how not to procrastinate. I do not plan on assigning a lot of homework but I believe it's an important learning skill. Homework also gives the parents an idea of what their children are learning in class and what their children's learning level is at. I also intend on giving students time in class to do their assignments and if they do not finish them in class they will have to finish at home. This also gives the students the opportunity to ask me questions if they have any. I think that homework is a good idea and I intend on giving some, but maybe not on the weekends. —Diane Berry

I plan to be a third grade teacher. At that age, I think it's important to not give an overload of homework. Some homework is inevitable. It is a great opportunity to see how the students work without the teacher's help, and their parents get to see how and what they are learning in school. However, I think children do enough work during the school day. When they go home at the end of the day, they should be able to play and enjoy their time away from school. Family time is also important for the development of small children. There is plenty of time in the school day for them to complete all their work and stay on track with the students from other classrooms that are given homework every night. If the student doesn't complete the given classwork in school, then it should be completed at home, but as a teacher I would try to my best to not give homework. —Whitney Medeiros

As a future high school or middle school history and government teacher, homework will be an important part of my class. I believe that at those ages, students should be serious about their education and willing to do outside of the classroom work in order to enhance their learning. Teachers do not give homework just to give it. Homework is given to supplement the present lesson or to get students to think about the next lesson they will be going over. I believe that some homework assignments can also help students because some people learn better on their own and it also helps reinforce what they have already learned. In my class, there will most likely be a lot of essay questions, reading and paper writing. I not only want my students to learn about history and government, but also use the tools they have learned in other classes such as English. Most likely I will have my students read a section in the book before we go over it, just so they have a basic understanding of the material. After we cover the material, they will complete worksheets that correspond. Any assignments that are not finished in class will be considered homework. I will also have my students complete long term assignments, such as a term paper. I do not want to assign my class loads of homework each night because I know that there will be some students who will not complete the work, but students who do complete homework assignments will be rewarded. Homework grades will be a small portion of the final grades for students, so they need to take it seriously. —Tara Saylor

I plan to be a kindergarten teacher. I will probably not assign that much homework to them. Children are in school for a long enough period during the day that at such a young age I don't think that it is necessary for them to be assigned work to do at home. I plan on giving them a few activities to complete at home though, but I will make sure it is all things that they would enjoy. By working with young children, I have observed that when they are in kindergarten they actually think it's kind of "cool" to have homework. It makes them feel older and gives them a sense of accomplishment. I also feel that if they have some homework it will give the children a chance to ask their parents questions. By doing so parents (or guardians) and children can have a chance to spend time together and talk about what the child is learning in school. Although I feel that homework can be very essential to students at higher grade levels, I feel that in elementary school homework should be used to reinforce what was learned during the school day and give a chance for parents and children to spend time together at home. I do not believe that children (especially in elementary schools) should have so much work to take home that it makes going home a stressful event. —Marinda Gregory

Some people dislike the idea of homework and they say that it's a waste of time and it is not an effective way to reinforce material. I believe that homework can be a really useful tool in the classroom and I think that it will benefit my students in the long run. I plan to become a Spanish teacher, and learning a language other than one's own can be difficult, so I will give my students homework so they can get a grasp of the concepts presented to them. It is easy for kids to forget what they are taught, especially when a plethora of new ideas are thrown at them over the course of six hours a day, so my homework assignments will help them retain information and practice using the language outside of the classroom. I will not, however, make homework a major part of my student's grades. Homework will only be mandatory if students fail to show mastery of a skill on tests or quizzes. If they maintain at least a "B" and aren't showing any problems, then they do not have to do the assignment if they don't want to. I don't think it is a good idea to make students do homework if it doesn't help them learn anything new. If their grades are not up to par then they will have required homework assignments until their quiz or test grades are adequate. This will keep them on task and then they will be rewarded in the end for making progress. —Lauren Spindle

First and foremost, I am not a big fan of long, drawn out homework assignments. I do not believe they enhance learning or lead to better comprehension of material (in agreement with this article). For my classrooms, I will only assign homework as needed. When we are working on math problems, which require practice, I will assign a few (no more than five) for my students to practice after school. Spelling words or simple papers will be the maximum for my language arts classes. All other topics will have assignments on an as needed basis. I hope to be able to cover all material and reach my students in class, without the need for after school work. The higher grade levels will require more homework, due to the amount of material that must be covered. For example, fifth graders are required to learn many more difficult topics than

first graders, but their attention span and cognitive abilities are also greater. I had many friends who became “burnt out” from large homework loads and will make it a goal of mine to limit the amount of homework I assign. If I were to teach high school, obviously the workload would be higher. These students are preparing for college and must learn how to properly manage time and complete multiple assignments on time. The length of time we are given with our students is adequate, but reinforcement of skills will still be necessary. Therefore, it will be necessary to assign some homework, but it is still my job to teach the material and I intend to do so in class and without the need of learning skills at home. There is no way to get around studying for tests, but if the material is presented properly study time should be minimal. Homework will be solely for reinforcement of skills and practice. —April K. Smith

I would like the opportunity to teach second grade. I would assign homework to my students but only work that is manageable and acceptable. Personally, I believe homework should be a review and work that can be done. Too often homework has been work that takes hours or discourages students. I can remember doing homework in elementary school and feeling hopeless. The homework was overwhelming and took hours, when it should not have. Throughout middle and high school homework was the same. I spent way too long doing it and it became draining. Homework should be a review from that day’s lesson and not teach something new. My policy would be homework would be nightly and work from that day could help with the assignments. I know now, I would ask students to read every night but I would never ask them to read something out of the ordinary knowing they cannot read it. I believe in homework but it should be used when needed and necessary. —Meryl Cox

I am currently teaching twelfth grade honors English at Menchville High School in Newport News. This is my second year teaching this class and, with the help of the other honors English teacher, I have adopted very specific homework policies that I think are very effective. I spent last year perfecting these policies, and this year, I have found it even easier to enforce. My seniors have reading homework almost every night. It usually is not an excessive amount, but at the same time, it is difficult reading that requires a certain degree of effort and hard work. When they complain, I remind them that the point of this class is to prepare them for life after high school. Because it is an honors class, it is expected that the majority of these students will go on to college next year. Those who don’t will be entering the work force or the military, and like in college, they will have certain duties they will be expected to complete. The homework assignments are designed to make them think on their own and prepare them for life after high school. With every reading assignment, they know there is a possibility for a quiz the following class period. Failing several quizzes in a row as a result of not doing homework, will significantly lower a student’s grade. Therefore, they are much more likely to do the reading because they don’t want their grades to drop. —Erin Eudy

I am going to be a music teacher which will not require assigning homework, but I would also like to teach music theory which would. This would be a high school class. This subject is one that is very methodical and can only be learned through working out written examples. While taking music theory in high school about twenty minutes of homework was a sufficient amount for the class to master the material, generally. I would try to assign only that much, especially since I know the core classes would be assigning more and I wouldn’t want my students to get stressed out. However, if I didn’t feel enough material was covered during class, I would assign more. Homework is something to aid in the learning process, in my opinion, and it should not be assigned just for homework’s sake, so I would keep that in mind as well. Also, I would check the homework to see whether or not the students made an attempt and that would determine their grade, not how well they did it. However, I would edit them for mistakes to make sure they understand the material. Homework is a learning experience and the student should not be faulted if they don’t understand something. —Brittany Cannon

As a high school Spanish teacher, I think that it would be necessary to have homework for the students on a regular basis so that they get time to practice the language that they are learning. There is no way they will be able to learn the language if they only ever use it or think about it just in class, so I know that I would have homework for my kids every week. That said, I also think that I would be lenient in the homework that I give. It would follow the ten minute rule for the most part and be a review of the things that we learned in class that day, either some sort of grammar or vocabulary assignment. I would work with the children who were having trouble with the activity and use the homework in class as a review so that they get the opportunity to learn from each other and from me. I would also make sure that I know my kids well and know their backgrounds and stories so that I can work with children who do not have time or maybe a place at home to complete their homework, or have to work to help support their family. I think it is important to be firm in making students do homework as a review, but there will always be exceptions to that rule, there will always be students with special needs that you will have to work with so that they are able to succeed in the class and I think it is important to remember that when assigning homework especially. —Jessie Neumann

I am going to teach math at the high school level. Math is a subject that must be practiced at home to make sure the student can solve a problem on their own. I am also a mother of two children who are both in elementary school. I feel homework is very important for students no matter what the grade. Homework should be a review of what is taught in the class and just a way for students to test their understanding of the daily lessons taught. I do not feel that giving students more tougher homework will help our students to become smarter. The above article talks about how “by middle school U.S. scores begin to fall (on international achievement tests)”. I do not believe more homework will solve this problem. I think the approach to teaching needs to change so students are learning the most up to date information possible. Technology today allows for many new and entertaining ways to teach students. I feel we need to focus more on the what and how we are teaching our kids rather than the amount of homework time. In my opinion too hard of homework or overloaded homework will many times only be completed by the students who have a strong support system at home. Sadly many times students do not have a strong support system at home. Many

students do not have help on the hard homework assignments and become discouraged when they are unable to complete the assignment. Many students live for today and easily become unmotivated when they are given too much homework deciding not to do any of the homework because they feel they were given an unreasonable amount. I also feel that as important as homework is, exercise is just as important. Kids need to have time to go outside for at least an hour so they keep their bodies healthy. Students go to school for about 6 hours five days a week and even though they get holidays and summers off, it is very important that students are happy with as little stress as possible because that is how the brain learns best, according to Dr. Allen's lecture on "The Brain". When I teach I will only use homework as practice to ensure the students understand the material taught. —Victoria Monaghan

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Weeks 5 and 6: LEARNING STYLES, DIFFERENTIATION, AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

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7.1: 21st Century

Teaching the Way Students Learn by: Jim Eason

Teaching Technology: An Introduction

Modern technology is advancing at a blistering pace. New innovations are available to the public so quickly that tech gadgets are obsolete within a year. Today's society is practically run by computers and other technologies. It is very important that we, as educators, prepare students for the real life challenges that lie ahead for them upon graduating high school and even university. New collaborative learning environments must also be incorporated to help them achieve success. Nearly every job on the planet requires technological knowledge. "To be able to compete for these positions, workers must have viable technology skills, and the educational system must prepare students for this work" (Thomas, 2007, p.4). We can't expect students to learn these skills on their own. Educators must instill proper techniques at early ages to make sure they are ready for the workforce.

The Educator's Role

Teacher education programs in the United States are trying to equip tomorrow's teachers with the technology skills needed to impact learning in the classroom. Learning the skills is not enough – teachers must learn how to integrate these skills in the classroom (Graham, Culatta, & Pratt, 2004, p.127).

Modern teaching is much different from the methods used in years past. We must adapt our teaching to the way students learn. As students learn about computers at younger and younger ages, it is important that the educator is competent enough to teach to their level of learning. "Teacher education programs in the United States are trying to equip tomorrow's teachers with the technology skills needed to impact learning in the classroom" (Graham, Culatta, & Pratt, 2004, p.127). This article contends further that learning the skills is not enough- teachers must learn how to integrate these skills in the classroom (Graham *et al.*, p.127). This article is emphasizing that it is our job to learn this technology, and in turn, relay this knowledge to the student.

Every school has some form of technology available for teacher use. These range anywhere from an overhead and a VCR to network connected classrooms with Smart Board technology. There are many strategies to implement technology. Students use the Internet to do research or to expand learning of certain topics. This technology "allows students to have more control over their own learning, to think analytically and critically and to work collaboratively" (Kosakowski, 1998).

Repetition is also an imperative use of this technology. Lessons can be delivered using a variety of sources. Teachers can present material, and then follow up with online games and quizzes. Regular and special education classes benefit from this type of learning. Students usually learn more, and more rapidly (Kosakowski, 1998).

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is another method of teaching considered vital to today's educational environment. Students can be put into small groups to complete certain tasks. "Cooperative learning is beneficial because knowledge is exchanged and converges through social interaction" (Weinberger, Stegmann, & Fischer, 2007, p.416). When the grade of an entire project depends on the group as a whole, students are encouraged to share opinions and knowledge. This offers a less competitive learning environment. Weaker students or those that are less apt to share ideas openly or take part in classroom discussions are encouraged to participate. This helps build self confidence in those students. Computers are a tool that teachers can use to create their cooperative learning classroom. "Students have shown overall positive effects of learning with computer based technology on student achievement, attitudes towards learning, and self concept as compared to traditional instruction (Lou, 2001, p. 452).

Learning with Technology

It is important to note that there is a difference between learning from technology and learning with technology. Learning from technology is simply looking at a machine – whether it is a computer or an overhead projector – and gaining knowledge. Learning with technology puts the problem solving skills in the students' hands. The technology gives them the resources they need to analyze material and draw their own conclusions. This gives them the opportunity to expand on the given lesson. This is vital to life after school. It gives them the chance to solve real world problems by "exploring, analyzing, and interpreting information" (Lou,

p.453). This doesn't suggest that learning from technology should be avoided. Using computers for information is akin to having an expert in the classroom other than the teacher. Other benefits are "decreased instruction time, and an increase in the equity of access to quality instruction" (Lou, p.453). This type of environment will give the teacher one on one time with the weaker students, which will keep them from falling behind in the curriculum.

Teacher Perspectives on Technology

Teachers generally view technology as advantage, but there are problems associated with the desire to use technology. One such problem is availability. Many school systems have limited resources and only purchase a limited supply of technological tools. Often there are several teachers wanting to use the same tools at the same time. Another thought teachers state is that it affects their planning time. Teachers with more experience with technology themselves believe that the lesson planning time is shorter, while those with less experience with the use of technology believe it takes longer to prepare a lesson when incorporating technology. Teachers also express that students are more engaged when forms of technology is used and they gain a greater understanding of the material. The students learn the given material faster. When students have the opportunity to learn from technology, they tend to grasp the content quicker and the teacher is able to cover more material in a shorter amount of time. Technology aids in the reinforcement of content with extra practice with more "drill, practice and hands-on learning (Oncu, Delialioğlu, Brown, 2008).

== The Government's Role ==

The government, in January of 2002, enacted the No Child Left Behind Act. "A major objective of this act is to ensure high quality teachers for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income, because a well prepared teacher is vitally important to a child's education" (No Child Left Behind Act [NCLB]).

Schools are now held accountable for their students' progress. Public schools receiving federal funds are now required to ensure all teachers hired after January 2002 are highly qualified. Each state is mandated to ensure all teachers are highly qualified no later than the end of the 2005-2006 school year. This information is available on the NCLB website section 1111. A "highly qualified" teacher, according to the Department of Education website is one with full certification, a bachelor's degree, and demonstrated competence in subject knowledge and teaching (NCLB).

The benefits of this are profound, especially among minorities. Annual assessments of nine and thirteen year old African American students are at all time highs (NCLB). The No Child Left Behind Act also encourages parental involvement. Parents have more options and resources than ever at their disposal to ensure that their children are getting a quality education. Parents now have a choice to send their children to accredited schools if their own school is not meeting national standards. Students who are performing below standards have access to free tutoring and other academic support services.

A (maybe not so) Fictional Look into the Future

In this section let's throw the research aside and see where all this technology can take us. We already have podcasts of class lectures. How far off will it be before this technology goes into secondary and even middle schools. I'll explain: Some university students can get a degree online – never stepping into a classroom. What about homeschool students? More and more parents are taking their children out of public and private schools and opting to teach their children themselves. What about the mothers that would like the opportunity to homeschool, but lack the knowledge or education to do it themselves? This is where podcasts come in! Parents can download lessons that their child would normally be getting at school. They can follow along with the teacher and make sure their child keeps up with the workload. He or she can take the tests at home and then the parent can submit his or her work for grading. Video conferencing is prevalent in business. It would be a great start if a student can experience this first hand in middle school. He can because, a new program could be implemented so that children from foreign countries can now learn from American schools via a video conference inside a middle school classroom. Students can be put into cooperative learning groups with a student from Russia, one from Kenya, and one in Brazil. They can break down language barriers and even learn multiple languages from communicating across the globe. Simple things like getting homework assignments from your teacher from a text message are not far off in the future if it's not here already. We already live in a global work environment. Is global education far behind? This last question will leave people debating for years to come.

Conclusion

It is imperative, as modern day educators, to adapt teaching styles to the many ways students learn. The days of just standing in front of the class to deliver material are now gone. This practice is no longer adequate. Ever changing technology has given students renewed motivation in the classroom to fill their minds with information. Teachers must also be open to learning. Most students learn early on how to use technology devices. They have access to an unlimited amount of information on the Internet. It is the responsibility of adults, especially teachers, to guide them and help them decipher what information is accurate and pertinent to their studies. Teachers must have the knowledge to be their guide in these endeavors. Students, teachers, parents, administrators, and even state and local governments must work collaboratively to ensure students are getting the quality education they deserve; an education that will prepare them for the world outside of school grounds.

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Questions

1. Is learning technology skills enough for teachers to be successful in the classroom?

- a. yes
- b. no

2. What is a basic technology that almost every school has?

- a. telephone
- b. absentee reporting
- c. overhead projector
- d. walkie talkie

3. What is an advanced technology that only few schools have?

- a. overhead projector
- b. VCR
- c. DVD player
- d. Smart Board

4. Which President enacted the No Child Left Behind Act?

- a. Bill Clinton
- b. George Herbert Walker Bush
- c. George W. Bush
- d. Ronald Reagan

5. Which of the following is NOT an example of learning WITH technology?

- a. Standing in front of the class and watching a Power Point lecture
- b. Researching Abraham Lincoln on the Internet
- c. Making a spreadsheet of recorded data using Excel
- d. Finding out how cds are made

Answers

1. b
2. c
3. d
4. c
5. a

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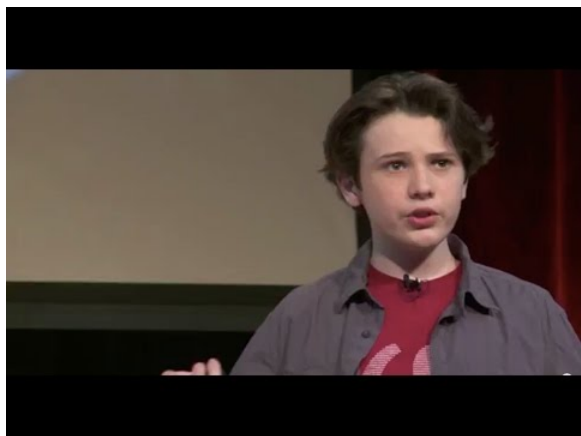
7.2: Diverse Learners in the Classroom

Diverse Learners in the Classroom

Read [High Expectations for All](#) and be prepared to discuss what high expectations mean for students and teachers.

The following file is a list of [Forty ESOL Strategies](#) that you will be able to implement and use in your classroom with students that do not speak English as a first language. As you review the strategies you will soon discover the strategies can be used with all students.

Meet Jacob Barnett a young boy that has an IQ higher than Albert Einstein and is developing his own theory of relativity.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <http://pb.libretexts.org/foe/?p=92>

The following video takes you into the life of Jacob Barnett during a 60 Minute interview.

[Jake: Math Prodigy Proud of His Autism](#)

As you take in all that Jacob is as a person and student how will you be prepared as a classroom teacher to have a student like Jacob in your classroom. How will you meet his learning style? How will you differentiate instruction to meet his needs in order for him to continue learning?

Once you make your post answering these question remember to return to the discussion board to read and respond to your classmates.

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7.3: Inclusion

What is Inclusion?

By Emily Mitchell

“Inclusion is being a part of what everyone else is, being welcomed and embraced as a member who belongs.” (Tomko,1996)

Introduction

After working as a special education aide for a year, I have developed an interest in this topic. Loneliness and fear are something we all feel when we are different from everyone else. When everyone else seems to get along and understand one another, and we are left out, we feel inferior and worthless. We would feel even more worthless if someone told us that we were not good enough to be with everyone else. We cannot talk and play with the other kids because we slow them down. The practice of inclusion attempts to help students with disabilities avoid these feelings of fear, isolation and worthlessness. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), updated in 2004, provides students with disabilities the right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment possible. Inclusion attempts to provide this education for students with disabilities and now many school systems throughout the country practice it. Inclusive education comes with benefits as well as downsides.

Definition

Schools are not required to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom, but are required to provide them with the most appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. Including a student in the general education classroom is the best solution, if possible. This means the student is taught with his non-disabled peers and has full access to the general education curriculum, extracurricular activities and other programs available to non-disabled students. If a student is capable of being successful in this environment, it is difficult for schools to justify isolating him in a special classroom or special school. A team of educators, specialists and parents construct an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to ensure that the student’s educational needs are being met. If the decision is made to keep the student from the general education classroom, this team must have valid reasons why that environment is not appropriate for the student (Stout 2007). In order to allow students to be successful in the least restrictive environment, schools use paraprofessionals or co teaching to help the student integrate into the general education classroom (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & Mcduffie, 2007). The idea of inclusion does not relate to academics alone. Students with disabilities are included in the community of the class and school as well. Inclusion encourages students to be a part of the classroom both academically and socially (Burke & Sutherland, 2004).

What does Inclusion Look Like?

A student who attends an inclusive school spends the majority of his school day in the general education classroom, with other students his age. Depending on the level of his disability, he will have an aide assigned to shadow him throughout the day and help him when necessary. The job of the aide is to help enable the student to be successful, while allowing the student to gain independence and confidence in the process. The aide helps to adapt materials and find resources that will help the child function well in the general education classroom. A school practicing inclusion seeks to adapt the classroom in order to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). A student is not thrown into a classroom and expected to function like everyone else. His teachers must adapt their curriculum and practices to ensure his success. In order for inclusion to be successful, teachers must be comfortable teaching students with disabilities. Many general education teachers do not feel equipped to handle the issues associated with these students. In the article, “Attitudes Toward Inclusion: Knowledge vs. Experience”, authors Burke and Sutherland (2004) explain that many teachers will leave the teaching profession after being exposed to an inclusive classroom they feel unequipped to handle. The authors later stated that teachers who received the most intense training to work with students with disabilities were the most successful in an inclusive classroom. The general classroom teacher must be willing to help include the student, for inclusive education, to work. Authors Griffin, Otis-Wilborn and Winn (2005) in their article, “Beginning Special Educators’ Forays into General Education”, also stress the importance of preparing teachers to be successful in an inclusive setting. They explain that many special education teachers are not prepared for inclusion either. The article states, “many special education teachers are lacking knowledge of general classroom curriculum and pedagogy, skills to accommodate resources effectively for

their students and strategies for clarifying roles and for collaborating with general classroom teachers”. In order for inclusive education to be successful, all members of a student’s educational team must be equipped to deal with that student’s needs.

Inclusion Impacts all Members of the School Community

Many wonder what effect inclusion has on non-disabled students in an inclusive classroom. In the article “Parent Perception of the Impacts of Inclusion on their Nondisabled Child” authors Gallucci, Peck, and Staub (2004) report a study done to find out what impact inclusion has on non-disabled students. The authors cite a study that surveyed eighty-one parents whose children were in elementary classrooms with students with severe disabilities. Eighty percent of these parents reported that they believed their children were gaining positive social and emotional growth. Over ninety percent believed their child’s experience with a classmate with a disability was positive. Not all parents or community members agree with the parents surveyed, however. While working as an aide I had a student with autism who tended to display extremely aggressive behavior. He began the year in the general classroom, but after biting and scratching the same child twice, he was removed. The parent of the child who had been bitten demanded that the child with autism be separated from his child. The decision was made to remove the child with autism from his general education classroom and place him in the special education classroom alone. For the second half of the year, this child spent the majority of his school day being educated by aides and isolated from his classmates. He spent thirty minutes a day with a licensed teacher. Inclusion causes a problem when the student is unable to function successfully in the general classroom, or when the parents of the non-disabled children are unwilling to cooperate with the efforts of the teachers and aides to include that student.

Issues with Inclusion

Authors Griffin et al. (2005) speak to other issues that arise in an inclusive classroom. Some teachers are unwilling to dedicate the extra energy and work necessary to include a student with disabilities in their classroom. In addition, confusion can arise over who is primarily responsible for the student’s education. General classroom teachers do not necessarily take responsibility for the student and the collaboration of all members of a student’s educational team is crucial to that student’s success. Effective communication between general and special education teachers can be another challenge of inclusion. The student may not feel safe or supported in the classroom and will not be as successful as a result. At the beginning of the school year, one of my students with autism communicated to his teacher that he did not want to do his work because he did not think she believed he was smart. The student learned to trust her, and things improved overall. Students with disabilities need to feel wanted in the general education classroom or they will be less successful. If the teachers involved do not communicate, or if the general education teacher refuses to reach out to the student, he will not be successful in an inclusive environment. According to Margaret Hoban a couple of the problems faced by teachers that teach inclusion classes is the little teacher prep time and limited resources and the need for extra professional development dealing with inclusion. As well as, the officials applying more effort to developing the inclusion model and monitor their success more efficiently (<http://escholarship.bc.edu>). The states are now requiring more and more standardized and comprehensive testing. Teachers are already overwhelmed and are sometimes unable to meet the schools and states request for academic accountability and achievement. When teachers have an inclusive classroom, they are put under more pressure and strain. Another problem that is dealt with inclusion is labeling. You hear that a child for instance has ADHD the child is automatically seen as a problem child, and the teacher usually has a low learning expectation of the student. This can and does affect the child’s learning and behavior. According to Deloney and Thompkins, regular students in inclusive classes do not get the full learning time allotted to them. A lot of the time, their education is interrupted because of the students with disabilities. Either the teacher has to stop their teaching process because of behavior problems, outbursts/distractions, or explaining things over and over. You also have the teachers that really do not understand or really want to teach in such an environment could do much to undermine the potentially positive benefits of inclusion.

Those Who Like It

Although, there are parents, teachers and administrators who are not in favor of the inclusive classroom, there are those who think that inclusion has a lot of positive benefits. Socialization is a key factor to this. Many parents, teachers and administrators feel that students with disabilities that are in inclusive classrooms have higher self concept about themselves and achieve at higher levels when with their peers (Deloney, Thompkins). They have “normal” role models and therefore, know what age appropriate behavior is supposed to be. Children learn from each other and will learn how to act and how not to act during certain settings and situations. Scholars also think that the regular students benefit from being in an inclusive class. They will learn to accept differences among people, and become more accepting towards peoples differences as they get older. This acceptance may cause them to have a

diverse set of friends. Having students with disabilities in their class will encourage cooperation and patience. Traits that will be good to have growing up.

Improving the Inclusion Model

Some improvements that can be made on existing models can be made to better the quality of learning for both the special ed and the non special ed students. Such as “increasing, the quality time spent with getting disability children to focus on material through enhanced and stimulating communications”. This can be by using power points. Children are growing up on computers and to just teach via lecture and note taking may not be right for a special needs student. I have found jeopardy websites dealing with topics that I have taught in classes and the students really love these. They are all done via power point. I noticed an increase in test grades dealing with the topics that I have played the jeopardy games with as well as other games. The students really enjoy competing with one another. We have hangman and spelling word whomps with our spelling words every week. This as well has increased the spelling test grades. Teachers can also allow more time for the organization of information just received. It is proven that students with disabilities need more time to organize and apply the information that they just learned. <http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/cise/ose/information/uvald/inclusion.html>

Conclusion

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment be provided to all students with disabilities. As a result, general and special education teachers must work together to provide the best education for their students with disabilities. This process can be rewarding for everyone involved if they are willing to expand their comfort zones and are willing to work at including the student. Inclusion is not an easy process. As with all educational practices, inclusion has strengths and weaknesses. In light of this reality, educators and parents must determine what educational plan will best meet the individual student’s needs and work to successfully implement that plan. Ideally, the student will feel included in the general education classroom both socially and academically and will receive the best education possible.

Questions

1. Which student goes to school in an inclusive setting?

- a. Sally goes to a special school for students with autism
- b. Mark goes to public school with his peers, but he spends his day in a classroom full of other students with autism
- c. Tom has a tutor who comes to his home to educate him
- d. Beth spends her day in the general education classroom with her peer without disabilities

2. Sally spent a successful year in the general education classroom with her peers. She is now isolated because the teacher did not like having a student with a disability in her classroom. What law is Sally’s school violating?

- a. Least Restrictive Environment Act
- b. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- c. Brown vs Board of Education
- d. Fair Treatment of Students Act

3. Which does NOT explain why Sally’s situation is a violation of the law above?

- a. Students with disabilities must not receive individual attention from teachers
- b. Students with disabilities must be educated in the least restrictive environment
- c. Students with disabilities must be given access to the same resources as their peers without disabilities
- d. Students with disabilities must be provided with a free and appropriate education

4. Smith Elementary has decided to include all students with disabilities in their general education classrooms. What are NOT some problems the school community may face when this occurs?

- a. General education teachers who are unwilling or unequipped to relate to the students with disabilities

- b. General and special education teachers who fail to communicate
 - c. Parents of the students without disabilities who refuse to support change
 - d. Students with disabilities who have a different learning style than everyone else
5. **Mark refuses to complete his assignments. Which is NOT a way his teacher can encourage his educational success?**
- a. She can make sure he knows he is accepted and appreciated by his teacher and classmates
 - b. She can adapt Mark's work so that the format is easier for him to understand
 - c. She can state that Mark is not being successful in the general education classroom and have him removed
 - d. She can attend training session and workshops that will educate her on ways to better reach students with autism

Answers

1)D, 2)B, 3)A, 4)D, 5)C

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7.5: ADHD

Help! I have a student with ADHD. What can I do? by Amy B. Williams

Learning Objectives Of Reader

- Be able to recognize symptoms of ADHD.
- Comprehend the need for behavioral modification to be used in the classroom with an ADHD student.
- Be able to differentiate between positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement.
- Understand the important role of the teacher in making a connection with the ADHD student.

Introduction

It is inevitable in a teacher's career that a student diagnosed with ADHD will be present in their classroom. It will most likely be one of the biggest challenges a teacher can face. They can experience frustration and exhaustion, which will then trickle down to the rest of their students in the classroom. Turning the event of having a student with ADHD into a positive experience, incorporating behavioral modifications, and using classroom techniques will result in success. Success for the teacher, the ADHD student and the entire classroom. Behavior modifications and classroom modifications can be the lifeline for a teacher with an ADHD student, but more importantly, they teach the student very valuable skills to exist within the confines of their diagnosis.

<http://www.ed.gov/teachers/needs/speced/adhd/adhd-resource-pt2.pdf>

Teaching Children With Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Instructional Strategies And Practices

Written by the U.S Department of Education and covers everything from how to identify ADHD, great teacher strategies to classroom seating plans. It is 32 pages full of everything a teacher needs to survive in the classroom!

It's Everywhere, It's Everywhere: Statistical Data and Information

Let's begin by briefly looking into the scientific data to allow for a better understanding of ADHD. ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The American Psychiatric Association defines ADHD as a "persistent pattern of inattention or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequently displayed and more severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development" (Diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2000, p. 85). ADD stands for Attention Deficit Disorder and is also a form of ADHD. ADD is not accompanied by hyperactivity (Swanson, 2007). Barkley discusses in his book the staggering toll that ADHD has unleashed on society. He conservatively estimates that 1-2 ADHD students will be present in every classroom in the United States. This breaks down to 2.5 million school-age students that are diagnosed with ADHD or 5-8% of all children attending school (Barkley, 2005). So in every classroom there will most likely be two students diagnosed with ADHD. Teachers are going to have to be proactive by understanding the symptoms of ADHD so let's discuss some a teacher might encounter with an ADHD student.

You're So Smart Now Act Like It: Characteristics of ADHD

Not too uncommon words from a teacher who is frustrated with a student's behavior who they feel is bright and clever, but just can't get to the final stage in a project, sentence or thought. Teachers also witness the impulsive, unorganized, and easily distracted student, along with the fidgety hands, excessive talking, forgetfulness and inability to stay in their seat (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2000). In Charles's book, he discusses a hidden meaning behind the inappropriate behavior of a student with ADHD. The hidden meaning is a cry for help saying "reach me and their desire for a connection with their teacher and to be accepted" (Charles, 2008, p. 167). Teachers can look at the glass half-full or half-empty when dealing with a student with

ADHD. Making a connection with the student and incorporating behavior and classroom modifications will yield a higher success rate.

<http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/learning/teacher.shtml>

Classroom Interventions for Children with ADHD

Outstanding website for teachers to use in the classroom that is full of ideas and strategies. It gives different scenarios with appropriate accommodations that should be made.

Don't enter the classroom without it!

Dr. Pavlov, May I Use A Dog Or Two?: Behavior Modification

Two words can sum up the teacher's approach to the ADHD student in the classroom: behavior modification. It will be their life preserver when dealing with the student by using both positive and negative reinforcement. Let's look closer into just what positive and negative reinforcement consists of:

Positive Reinforcement

- A touch on the shoulder and a smile so the student knows what good behavior is (Barkley, 2005).
- Ask the ADHD student what types of rewards they enjoy within the first few days of school (Rief, 2007.)
- Tape a piece of paper down on the corner of a desk and as you pass by the student place a sticker on it (Barkley, 2005).
- Place smiley posters up randomly throughout the classroom and stand next to one when the student is making good choices (Barkley, 2005).
- Use verbal reinforcement with positive praise (Harwell, 2001). An example might be, "How wonderful you raised your hand instead of just blurting out the answer Hayden." To change the reward system up a bit, allow special privileges like lunch with the teacher, extra time on the computer, and extra recess (Barkley, 2005).
- Use a token system for immediate rewards. In other words, a teacher might want to start with every 2-3 tokens resulting in candy, stickers, special classroom duties or free play (Barkley, 2005).
- Give the ADHD student specific tasks (e.g., turning off/on lights, pencil and paper pusher) that will require movement in the classroom. Students can also be allowed to move around the room quietly after they complete a task (Nowacek and Mamlin, 2007. An example might be, "Hayden, when you are finished with your writing I want you to quietly get up and walk around the classroom for me three times while you are keeping your eyes and hands to yourself."

Negative Reinforcement

- Behavior modification is a useful and positive tool that emphasizes appropriate behavior instead of inappropriate behavior. In addition to behavior modification, there are some other techniques teachers can also incorporate inside the classroom. Let's take a closer look at some of these techniques in the next section.

Tricks Of The Trade: Classroom Modifications

Not only is behavioral modification and reinforcement pivotal in dealing with ADHD students, but just as imperative are classroom modifications. One simply cannot have one without the other. This is really what it is all about: surviving and keeping control of the classroom. Let's take a closer look at the following techniques, which can be used as a cheat sheet for teachers in dealing with ADHD students:

- o It's a great idea to have a copy of these techniques handy, even laminated, to reference them quickly when just beginning to teach a student with ADHD.

http://user.cybrzn.com/kenyonck/add/teaching_tips.html

Teaching Tips For Those Working With ADHD Kids

Dawn Hogan, a 2nd grade teacher from Connecticut, has a fantastic website for teachers. Her first hand experience and knowledge are priceless.

This is a must see!

Final Thoughts

As learned in this article, there is no magic pill or ointment to make the symptoms of ADHD disappear. The teacher needs to be able to face this adversity with a smile, words of support and determination. A deep connection with the ADHD student along with both behavior and classroom modifications are more likely to result in a stimulating and positive educational experience. Teamwork involving teachers, the ADHD student, parents, fellow students and administration is the only way to help combat the diagnosis of ADHD. Students who are ADHD must be taught not just from a book, but they also need to hear they are special and discover that their differences are okay. The success rate for ADHD students depends on the teacher, the teacher's attitude, classroom tips and techniques being used, and their knowledge and comfort level of behavior modification involving *both* positive and negative reinforcements.

Get Out Your Pencils Please: Quiz Time

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. During the first few days of school, it is imperative that the teacher do which of the following:
 - A. Let the student know the teacher rules the classroom with an iron fist.
 - B. Allow the student to choose what rules are best for him or her.
 - C. Make sure the student knows the teacher would like him or her transferred to another classroom.
 - D. Discuss with the student what rewards work best for him or her.
2. What two types of approaches are the most effective for teachers when dealing with an ADHD student:
 - A. Don't be too firm and only give hugs as a reward.
 - B. Behavior modification and classroom modification.
 - C. Corporal punishment and expulsion.
 - D. Discipline *every* misbehavior the student does and not allow any recess.

3. When an ADHD student is completing a task it is best to do the following:

- A. Insist he or she must hurry so the teacher can stay on task.
- B. Have the teacher divide the task into sub-units or chunks so finality is obtainable.
- C. Help the student with the answers because it make the teacher look better to have higher student grades.
- D. Tell the other students in the classroom there will be no recess if the ADHD student does not finish in time.

4. Mrs. Williams is the teacher in a classroom with an ADHD student named Hayden. She is trying a new class behavior program

by flipping of green, yellow, and red cards. Which choice best describes Mrs. Williams?

- A. Ready to retire and fed up.
- B. Utilizing positive reinforcement and appropriate classroom techniques.
- C. She is known as the school's yellor and the staff is afraid of approaching her.
- D. Begging to get rid of the ADHD student so she can enjoy the rest of the year.

5. Mrs. Williams notices that Hayden has not made a connection with the class and she is concerned. How might she ease him

into a group scenario?

- A. Pair him with another ADHD student who might better understand his feelings.
- B. Allow for more time to pass hoping eventually the class will grow to accept him.
- C. Be more flexible with groups and begin to show the class she accepts him and has a connection with him.
- D. Talk about the situation with other teachers in the employee lounge.

Answers

1.D 2.B 3.B 4.B 5.C

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7.6: ELLs

How Should We Teach English Language Learners?

By: Tatiana Torres

Teaching English Language Learners can be a very difficult task without any understanding of the issue. However, with the proper knowledge of successful methods and approaches to the matter, it can be a very successful and rewarding experience. There are many different ideas of how to make an experience of teaching ELLs (English Language Learners) a positive one. The main idea to keep in mind is that every situation is different and different people respond well to different things, so there is no right or wrong way to handle English Language Learners. There are however, a few main ideas that have been popularly used throughout diverse classrooms and have had successful end results.

Helping ELLs Understand the Teacher

It is very commonly said to keep your ELLs in mind when speaking to the class and making special adjustments to the way you speak to make it a little easier on the ELLs to understand basic directions, along with providing additional assistance where it is needed apart from class lecture. The idea is not to single an English Language Learner out from their group of fellow classmates, but rather, allow them to build relationships with the teacher as well as with their classmates by giving them the help that they need on a more personal level. “Diverse children should be part of a learning community where people acknowledge, help, and support one another”.ⁱ Using lots of visual aids when teaching ELLs makes their learning easier because it gets rid of the language barrier. Other helpful strategies include activities that are hands on, giving the students the option of participating when they feel comfortable, and understanding that time is needed to master a new language. ^{vi}

“Use visual cues such as posters, overhead pictures, slide shows, videos, and illustrated books. Use active methods of learning such as games, skits, songs, partner interviews and structured conversation with classmates”.ⁱⁱ

Alienation

When English Language Learners are put into an environment where they are at a disadvantage because of the language barrier along with a serious culture shock with being in a completely different country that has numerous differences in culture norms, ELLs can become very alienated and depressed.ⁱ “Many children are made fun of when they try to speak English and also when they speak their native language; so they end up silent and withdraw from participation. This further interferes with their learning and achievement.”ⁱⁱⁱ This problem can be avoided by making all of the students culturally understanding. Another approach to helping this problem is to seat students with similar backgrounds near each other so they can help each other with instructions and understanding. It is also important to make sure that the English Language Learners culturally understand proper classroom behavior such as when it is appropriate to speak and when it is appropriate to sit and listen. Other cultures may have different norms in this environment and could cause the student to be embarrassed in front of their peers if the difference is not properly understood.

Usage of Translators

The aid of translators can be very useful in a classroom with numerous students that speak the same foreign language. This can be used in communication with non-English speaking parents. In a note going home to the parents, the translator can be used to translate the note into the parents’ language so that foreign parents can also be involved in their children’s school lives and are not less involved because of the language barrier. This is an example where it is also important to remember that parents can also feel alienated and depressed from the same struggles that their children have with a language barrier. However, it is not safe to assume that all of the non-English speaking parents always want to speak in their native language, some parents may be offended by this since they are trying to learn how to speak English and want to practice speaking English as much as they can. It is important to get to know each of the parents and know their preference with speaking and adjust to that in proper manner. If a teacher shows the effort to learn the ELLs native language as well that could be a very flattering and rewarding experience for both the ELL student and their parents. It is easier to have a productive and positive environment in a classroom if everyone is happy and comfortable with the each other; this includes parents of the students.

It is very important for teachers of English Language Learners to remember that their students have a different cultural background than the rest of the class. Good ways to make that factor a positive learning opportunity is to allow the students to do learning activities where they learn about different cultures around the world, including the ones of their classmates.

“Plan assignments that bring student’s cultures, families, languages, and experiences front and center”.ii

Cultural Differences

It is recommended that teachers use questions frequently throughout a lesson. Doing this offers ELLs the chance to use English and a chance for the teacher to assess the English Language Learner’s grasp on the information that is being presented to them. “... Teachers must know the stages of language acquisition and be able to determine what stage each ELL is in...By knowing the stages of language acquisition and stage-appropriate questions, a teacher can engage students at the correct level of discourse”.iv It is important as the teacher to make yourself familiar with the students background. Learning about the students culture will not only make you more aware of the student but will also show the student that you care. Because ELL students feel like outcasts this could help stop that feeling of complete isolation. More importantly, “students whose native culture is valued have a greater sense of self-worth and higher academic achievement”. vi

Things To Remember

There are general standards schools have that can help teachers stay on track of keeping an equal learning environment, which may be forgotten with the challenge of teaching English Language Learners. There must be a supportive, as well as challenging atmosphere in the school. There must be strong instructional leadership in the school. It is necessary to have a special learning environment that tends to the needs of all of the students according to the differences in their needs. There must be a curriculum that balances both basic and higher-order skills. There must be instructional strategies that help understanding of material being learned along with being able to practice those skills. And family involvement to build a strong environment between the home and the school.v

To sum up, teaching English Language Learners is not just a job for ESL (English as a second language) teachers to deal with. Although the aid of ESL teachers and translators can be very helpful when teaching ELLs, a teacher cannot depend on them solely, there are other factors that can and will affect their classroom as well. Therefore, it is key for the teacher to try not just one approach, but several approaches, because each classroom is different as well as each student. What works for most of the classroom may not work for one particular ELL individual, leaving them feeling alienated. Teachers can even get creative and try their own approach they think may work. The idea is to just keep trying until the right one is found and the whole class is happy and able to learn properly.

Questions:

1. Juana, an ELL student in your class, has suddenly become extremely quiet. When spoken to, she avoids responding, and when she does respond, she talks very quietly. However, it is noticed that this behavior is only in school; her family has not seen any change in her behavior. What is the most likely cause for Juana’s change in behavior in the classroom?

- Juana does not like the curriculum and is rebelling.
- Juana doesn’t like the teacher and doesn’t want to talk as a result.
- Juana has misunderstood the culture and thinks that silence is the appropriate behavior in school.
- Juana is being made fun of by her peers when she speaks and is feeling alienated as a result.

2. What is a good way to open students’ minds to other cultures?

- Give them candy each time they ask someone of another culture about their culture.
- Have them do projects on other cultures.
- Tell them to go on vacation to another country.
- Write a letter to their parents asking them to expose them more to other cultures.

3. It is time for parent-teacher night and while half of your class is Hispanic, you don’t know if their parents speak any English. What is the best approach in order to make them comfortable with talking to you, while not offending them by assuming that they

don't know how to speak any English?

a. Hire a translator to translate a letter that is being sent home to the parents asking if any special accommodations need to be made for anyone.

b. Ask the ELL students if their parents speak any English.

c. Tell the ELL students to come with their parents so that they can translate.

d. Just hope that everything goes well.

4. Why are general school standards important to remember when teaching ELLs?

a. It makes learning easier on students coming from different backgrounds.

b. They can keep the teacher on track when a special situation starts taking them in other directions.

c. They keep other teachers on the same level of expertise.

d. They are easy solutions to problems with parents.

5. Why do visual aids help with teaching ELLs?

a. Visuals help with understanding of words they don't know.

b. Just as with regular students, some ELLs are visual learners, so giving them visuals helps them learn better.

c. Visuals give them some distraction from the language that they do not understand.

d. Visuals help get their minds working.

Answers:

1. D 2. B 3. A 4. B 5. A

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7.7: Gifted

Gifted students can take care of themselves, right?

by Candace Grantz

Introduction

If we were TV sets, some of us would only get five channels. Others are wired for cable (the general population) and some of us (the gifted) are hooked up to a satellite dish. That makes these gifted children capable of making connections that others don't even know exist! Teaching those types of voracious minds in a regular classroom without enhancement is like feeding an elephant one blade of grass at a time. You'll starve them. – Elizabeth Meckstroth

When one hears the phrase “special education,” thoughts turn to students with learning disabilities or students who cannot keep up with the pace of the classroom. However, a certain group of special education students is often overlooked. These children are indeed in need of special education but not in the manner to which we are accustomed. These are the gifted students, who, since they do not show traditional signs of academic distress, can be overlooked. Although they are often thought to be relatively self-sustaining in the classroom, gifted students deserve special education to meet their individual needs.

Recognizing Gifted Students in a Classroom

Over the years, as the issue of gifted students in the classroom has earned increased attention, the definition of a gifted student has evolved. As author Sandra Manning investigates, in her article “Recognizing Gifted Students: A Practical Guide for Teachers,” in the past, the definition of a gifted student has focused on everything from a student’s high IQ test scores to a student’s exceptional performance in life situations (Manning, Sandra 2006). Now, the popular use of the title “gifted” is for students with a high academic or intellectual ability (Manning 2006). Although Manning admits that definitions of the word “gifted” carry much ambiguity, she asserts that these gifted students exhibit certain characteristics that can be identified by instructors in the classrooms (Manning 2006).

The first group of characteristics that the author examines is the set of “cognitive characteristics of intellectually gifted children,” characteristics in how the students think and learn (Manning 2006). According to Manning, gifted students often exhibit strengths in reception, processing, and retention of information (Manning 2006). They possess the ability to comprehend materials at higher levels, and their abstract thinking skills are usually more developed than those of their peers (Manning 2006). Gifted students not only possess stronger abilities to take in information, but they also have the desire to pursue studies in specific areas that interest them (Manning 2006). These students can see connections and relationships between ideas and are creative in their ideas and problem-solving techniques (Manning 2006). Gifted students tend to be high-energy learners, who can focus longer and investigate deeper into a project (Manning 2006).

Manning goes on to address a second aspect of recognizing gifted students in a classroom: the “affective characteristics of intellectually gifted children,” behavioral characteristics of the students (Manning 2006). She explains how gifted students often possess a strong desire to share their knowledge with other students (Manning 2006). They tend to be more conscious of the emotions of others, have an unusual sense of humor, and have a stronger sense of self-awareness (Manning 2006). These students also exhibit advanced emotional depth, moral judgment, and ideas of justice (Manning 2006). All of these characteristics are common in gifted students, but that is not to say that every gifted student will exhibit all of these characteristics.

The last group of characteristics that Manning discusses is “characteristics of atypical gifted students”, or students who are gifted but whose talents for some reason have not emerged in the traditional manner (Manning 2006). Characteristics of atypical gifted students include logic skills and an ability to understand and utilize analogies, as well as an easily overlooked ability to manipulate a symbol system (Manning 2006). Atypical gifted students can display their abilities in a broader array of subjects, such as creative arts (Manning 2006). Also, these students tend to be adaptive in their families, be capable of taking on leadership or parenting roles in a troubled family, and possess a strong sense of self-worth and pride (Manning 2006).

Special Needs of Gifted Students

Gifted students may ace the tests and boost up the class average on standardized tests, but are their scores true indicators of their academic success and fulfillment of their learning desires? Although their test scores may be high, gifted students have special needs of their own that possibly cannot be met by the day to day runnings of a classroom. In her article, author Karen B. Rogers introduces five “lessons” about the needs of gifted students (Rogers, Karen B. 2007). First, she explains that in order for gifted students’ talents to flourish and grow, they need to be presented with a daily challenge that will enhance their particular strength (Rogers 2007). With progressively more difficult challenges, the students will grow intellectually in their areas of strength and will learn to connect old and new ideas (Rogers 2007). Rogers goes on to assert that gifted students need opportunities for independent work pursuing their specific areas of interest (Rogers 2007). Opportunities like that are not easy to create in the structure of a traditional classroom, depriving gifted students of that need. Another great need of gifted students is advanced instruction in a subject area in which they are exceeding (Rogers 2007). They need the opportunity to learn at their own levels; how can a fifth grader who is reading on an eleventh grade level be appropriately challenged in her fifth grade class? In addition to academic needs, Rogers explains that gifted students need opportunities to spend time with other students with abilities similar to theirs (Rogers 2007). This gives the students an opportunity to work with their peers and spend time with students who think how they do. Gifted students sometimes feel isolated because they are different from the other students in the classroom; this gives them a chance to work with students who are similar to them. Lastly, gifted students need to learn at their own pace. Just like any other students, in order to be academically challenged, they need to work at a pace that matches their learning styles and abilities (Rogers 2007). Gifted children tend to learn and retain information at a much quicker rate. If they experience too much down time while the rest of the class is reviewing, they will become bored and lose focus. They too need to learn at their own rate in order to maximize their learning abilities (Rogers 2007). School systems have many different ways of dealing with their gifted students. One of the most popular ways is grade skipping. Sometimes parents think this is appropriate because their child is smart enough to be moved up a grade or two. Other times it’s the school system that feels grade skipping will benefit the child but is this true? Davis and Rimm identify the two major concerns for grade skipping in their *Education of the Gifted and Talented* book. The first concern is missing critical basic skills. For example “many teachers feel that if a child is not taught an important math or reading skill, he or she will be at a great disadvantage in later grades”(p.125) The second problem is social adjustment. It is a myth that gifted children are more adjusted socially and emotionally than average students. The truth is gifted students have a harder time adjusting because others do not relate to them.

In the article *Differentiation: Asset or Liability for Gifted Education?*, Sandra N. Kaplan examines what she sees as the ubiquitous classification of differentiated learning. Kaplan suggests that a rather broad definition and assignment of the term differentiation has posed a potential problem for gifted education. The author implies that because the definitive idea of differentiated learning has “lost its vitality,” its significance to gifted instruction has consequently waned.

Kaplan states that gifted education programs, falling under the scope of differentiated learning, require explicit and unique curriculums that distinguish them from general education studies. She claims that constantly shifting educational practices and their overreaching classification and application of “differentiated” have resulted in the failure to adequately define unique instruction that specifically addresses the needs of the gifted learner. Says Kaplan, “When differentiation is used to justify educational practices that alter the ends or goals of learning rather than the means to these ends, it has the potential to become a deterrent rather than a facilitator to the education of gifted students.” Problems arise, as Kaplan views it, when teachers categorically allot set tasks for the whole of an identified group without the flexibility and options of projects that assist the abilities and weaknesses of the individual student

The Effects of NCLB on the Gifted Differentiation is strongly emphasized in the educational system, but the gifted student is often overlooked. These students could be the ones that make that marked invention that changes society and need to be challenged to reach their maximum potential. One problem on the horizon is the No Child Left Behind act. Now teachers are so focused on bringing up scores and differentiating to accommodate the struggling child that the gifted student faces no challenges in his environment. School systems are happy with their scores and feel no need to stretch their abilities further. According to an article by Henley, McBride, Milligan and Nichols, there are three significant problems associated with NCLB and the gifted student. First, the gifted students that had little or no attention before are ignored now; secondly, teachers are being taught that they need to focus on bringing the low end students to proficiency and the average to advanced; therefore, the gifted are not even in the consideration. Thirdly, students that had been receiving gifted services were being retained in the classroom for test preparation and basically eliminating any special services they had been given. It is a great concern for the advanced students to receive little or no formal services due to the emphasis on the lower end child.

Twice Exceptional Students

Some gifted students have additional issues that impede their success. They may be rapid learners who need very little repetition while at the same time they may have a learning disability or physical challenge. These types of learners are known as Twice Exceptional because they sit on both sides of the normal bell curve of students. And it can be a challenge to meet their needs. Educators need to know that these students exist and they must be identified early in order for them to be successful and reach their potential. A young man I know did not learn to read fluently until he was ten years old, in the fourth grade. He said that the letters and words moved around on the page and would not sit still as he tried to read them. He had known all of his letter sounds by the time he entered kindergarten because he was a speech student due to a genetic tongue thrust that caused a mild lisp. Because of this, and the fact that he could remember and recite poems the first time he heard them (a skill that is one of the markers for a reading disability), his learning disability was compensated for by his strengths until he was in the second grade. That was when he was finally identified as having a form of dyslexia, or as stated on his IEP, a nonspecific learning disorder. It is not politically correct to use the term dyslexia on IEPs in the state of California, which is where he was identified. He was and is an excellent listener and could correctly answer all the teacher's questions during group discussions. But he could not read the tests, they had to be read to him by the resource teacher, and he was placed in a pullout program for reading. His IEP has been modified as necessary through the years as his needs have changed. He has progressed from one on one testing assistance to small group testing to full inclusion. He earned a perfect score on his Earth Science SOL as an eighth grade advanced science student. According to Jean Stropp, this young man may be successful because he had support consistently and early in his school career (Stropp, 2002). This young man is now a 16 year old gifted vocalist and musician currently taking 8 high school classes as a dual strand sophomore in a Performing Arts Academy Program in Virginia Beach. Some of his classes are Algebra II/Trig, Chemistry, Academy Orchestra, Comprehensive Musicianship and the advanced academy chorus, Vox Harmonia. According to Stropp, twice exceptional students face many obstacles to success caused by being gifted and having challenges (2002). With early identification, intervention, guidance, and support, these students can become successful and thrive in a high expectations educational environment.

Conclusion

After outlining some of the major concerns regarding educating gifted students, the question arises of how these issues can be addressed. After outlining some of the major concerns regarding educating gifted students, the question arises of how these issues can be addressed. There are some who will suggest that the best solution is advancing the child ahead in grade level, while those who oppose claim that the student will not necessarily be emotionally and developmentally ready for this advance. Others promote grouping students within the grade level by their academic ability, so they will be in classes with their academic peers. The gifted students will be able to cover the standard material more rapidly and have time to further investigate topics of interest to the students. At the same time, the slower learners will be able to take the material at their own pace, avoiding the stress of not keeping up, and students of all levels will have the comfort of a classroom environment with other students at their own levels. Opponents to this idea fear that the slower and average students will feel bad for not being in the gifted class. A third option is to have an extra program in addition to the normal school day for the gifted students. However, this type of program would not be able to meet frequently, being limited to either during the school day, causing the students to miss instructional time, or after school, which eliminates students who do not have transportation. Some schools unfortunately do not offer any type of gifted education program. However, it is doubtful that any school would be permitted to operate without a Special Education program. In conclusion, due to the specific needs of gifted students, it is up to every school system to make proper accommodations for these students to make sure that they, like every other student, reach their full academic and developmental potential.

Mini-Quiz: Can you recognize your gifted students?

Clues that a student in your classroom is gifted can emerge in a variety of ways. Choose whether in the following scenarios the student is displaying cognitive, affective, or atypical characteristics of gifted students.

1. Tommy is in fifth grade. He comes from a broken family, living with his father, who works two jobs, and his three younger sisters. He acts as a second parent in the family, getting his sisters ready for school, making breakfast, and taking care of baths and bedtime. He is a strong leader in the classroom, eager to take on classroom chores, and automatically takes on a leadership role in group projects. Tommy's characteristics are:

A: Cognitive
B: Affective
C: Atypical

2. Michael, a third grader, has a hard time paying attention to his teacher during class. He is rarely disruptive, but he can hardly bring himself to put down his books about outer space. On library days, he heads straight to the science section, and always chooses a book about the planets, stars, or universe, usually well above his grade level. Michael's characteristics are:

A: Cognitive
B: Affective
C: Atypical

3. A first grader named Emily is very sensitive to the feelings of the other students in her class. She has an unusual ability to think about others' feelings before her own, and is understanding and kind to everyone. She has a quirky sense of humor, and displays her emotions in a very mature way. Emily's characteristics are:

A: Cognitive
B: Affective
C: Atypical

4. Rachel is a confident, excited fourth grade student. She always brings her su-do-ku books and logic puzzles to school, solving them rapidly during lunch and recess. She is proud of her work, and confident in her own abilities. Rachel's characteristics are:

A: Cognitive
B: Affective
C: Atypical

5. Suzanne is in fifth grade, but she can understand her eighth grade sister's math homework. She has abstract thinking skills that far surpass those of her classmates. She learns her classroom material as soon as she sees or hears it and absorbs information like a sponge. Suzanne's characteristics are:

A: Cognitive
B: Affective
C: Atypical

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Mini-Quiz Answers

1: C

2: A

3: B

4: C

5: A

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7.8: Helplessness

Learned Helplessness In Our Students And Learning How We HELP!

By Amy Baker (ABake028)

- Contents**
- 1. Learning Targets**
- 2. What is learned helplessness?**
- 3. How does this affect my students?**
- 4. How can I teach these students?**
- 5. Conclusion**
- 6. Multiple Choice Questions**
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Learning Targets

Students should be able to...

1. Understand what learned helplessness means for students
2. Understand the traits related to learned helplessness
3. Implement some strategies to help with learned helplessness in the classroom

What Is Learned Helplessness?

The bell rang and students began pouring into the classroom, slowly they put away their backpacks and began trickling to their desks amongst all the chatter. Now that they were all seated, we were ready for our morning brain warm ups! Math worksheets were handed out and a sea of whining filled the classroom. “I can’t do this,” “These are all hard problems,” “I give up,” “How do you do these? I don’t know how!”

Before students even have a chance to see what they were working on they feel defeated. This is known as learned helplessness or a psychological condition in which a student “has learned to act or behave helpless in a particular situation, even when they have the power to change their unpleasant or even harmful circumstance” (Seligman, 1975).

“Students who are repeatedly exposed to school failure are particularly at risk for the development of learned helplessness” (Sutherland and Singh, 2004, pg. 172).

Learned helplessness “exists when individuals believe that their own behavior has no influence on consequent events” (Seligman, 1975). Seligman believes this phenomenon is comprised of three different parts “(a) an undermining of one’s motivation to respond; (b) a retardation of one’s ability to learn that responding works; and (c) an emotional disturbance, usually depression or anxiety.”

For students this becomes a vicious cycle since one component can directly affect another and rapidly create a snowball pattern. Typically students are depressed about past failures and “begin to doubt their intellectual abilities, and this leads them to doubt that they can do anything to help overcome their difficulties. They then lessen their achievement efforts, particularly when faced with difficult material, and this leads in turn to continued failure” (Sutherland and Singh, 2004, pg. 172). Obviously, students who are wrapped up in this snowball effect get the overwhelming feeling that they will never get problems correct. This becomes a difficult task for students to overcome.

10 Ways to see if your student exhibits learned helplessness behaviors! Does your student....

- 1. Prefer to do easy problems rather than hard ones?**
 - 2. Takes little independent initiative?**
 - 3. Fail one part of a task and is certain to fail at the entire task?**
 - 4. Make negative or degrading comments about his/her ability when s/he performs poorly?**
 - 5. Give up when you correct them?**
 - 6. Stop trying when s/he encounters an obstacle in school work?**
 - 7. Asks for help from aides, other students more than necessary?**
 - 8. Fail a few problems, and continues to do poorly even though the problems are within his/her ability range?**
 - 9. Not respond with enthusiasm and pride when asked how s/he is doing on an academic task?**
 - 10. Attribute their good grade to luck, problems being easy or you were being nice?**
- Student Behavior Checklist (Fincham et al. 1989)**

How does learned helplessness affect my students?

When students are feeling as though they cannot “control” their failure, they do show some symptoms. The most common signs of learned helplessness are those of “shared depression

symptoms such as passivity, interjected hostility, weight loss, appetite loss, and social deficits. In addition to these familiar signs, learned helplessness also has some diagnostic symptoms including depressed mood, feelings of worthlessness, and suicidal ideation” (Wikipedia, 2008). This is a lot for a child to have to deal with in addition to learning the information being presented.

These depression like symptoms affect students in their educational learning. Fincham, Hokoda, Sanders asserts that if a child finds new material particularly difficult he/she falls into a defensive pattern, learned helplessness, which increases obstacles in learning (1989, pg. 138).

This psychological condition can greatly affect academics because of the snowball effect. Academic failures of the past lead to flawed deductive reasoning in children, the conclusion of which is that failure is the norm. This vicious cycle of failure, doubt and failure again can manifest in both academic achievement and social development. Thus learned helplessness is not only an additional learning barrier but also a comforting internal excuse (Wikipedia, 2008).

Once behind in academic skills, students feel hopeless and lose interest in even trying. Since we know this condition can cripple our students’ education, how do we prevent this from entering our classrooms?

Do You Promote Learned Helplessness? [Take This Quiz!](#)

How can I teach these students?

What we do know is that students with learned helplessness exhibit symptoms similar to depression. As teachers we do have tricks up our sleeves to help eliminate learned helplessness behaviors in our classrooms. Sutherland and Singh believe “academic failure may result in students’ receiving little positive reinforcement” (2004, pg.169). The first thing we can attempt with these students is forms of positive reinforcement. When good performance is achieved; perhaps positive verbal feedback, tokens, stickers or some type of reward for a job well done; anything that will give these students a pat on the back and make them feel worthy.

This, over time, will hopefully build the students' confidence and begin to break down those depressive behaviors. Additionally, studies have shown that the teacher-student dynamic is contributing to the development and maintenance of learned helplessness. It is not that teachers actively reinforce learned helplessness behaviors but rather because of student disposition, positive reinforcement occurs so seldom between teachers and students that students are unfamiliar with the positive reinforcement dynamic (Sutherland and Singh, 2004, pg. 171).

For this method to be effective it needs to occur over time and it needs to be consistent so the student learns the connection between the performance and the praise. In addition to the positive praise we give students, we also need to be aware of the type of critical response we give. Criticisms directed towards students like "I'm very disappointed in you" are often received as personal attacks and further reinforce the underlying depressive emotions of learned helplessness that are represented as "I'm no good, I'm a failure." However, process criticism like "Maybe you can think of another way to do it?" leads to a healthier academic attitude. This paradigm is mirrored in the person versus process praise dynamic as well. Person praise such as "I'm very proud of you" leads to student centered outcomes such as "I'm a success, I'm a failure;" whereas process praise like "You must have tried really hard" leads to challenge centered outcomes such as "I can do this" (Sutherland and Singh, 2004, pg. 175).

As teachers we have to be conscious to make our criticisms and praise about the process of the problem not the person so that the failure can be attributed to the actual work not an intelligence factor. Since we know positive reinforcement is helpful over time it is necessary to make process praise a part of our everyday curriculum.

But how can we aide these students with academic performance? Tests of course!! Research shows that with learned helplessness "students who had hard questions before the easy questions would tend to give up on the easy questions due to frustration...the perceived failure alone was sufficient to make students feel helpless and give up on the test" (Firman et al., 2004, pg. 692). What does this mean for us?

To avoid this test anxiety we can alter our tests so that all students can feel successful while

taking them. “For decades, teachers and test developers have been advised to arrange the test items in the ascending order of difficulty so that the test takers would be motivated by the early successful experience and continue the test” (Firman et al., 2004, pg. 692). This method will hopefully motivate your students and build confidence so that over time (and throughout the test) they may begin attributing their success in the beginning questions with intellectual ability rather than external occurrences.

Conclusion

In today’s society, our students have additional pressure for high academic performance from their parents, school systems, and state tests. This additional anxiety often leads to learned helplessness behaviors that we see in the classroom more and more. Although these behaviors are difficult to handle in our classroom management, it is our duty to try different methods to combat this condition.

Evidence shows that “teachers provide less academic instruction to students who exhibit problem behavior” (Sutherland and Singh, 2004, pg. 169). We need to make conscious efforts to give special attention to these students so that they may succeed in their academic career.

In addition to the one on one time, we have to remember to stay positive and model positive behavior in our classroom. For these students a “lack of positive reinforcement leads to a lack of confidence, a developmental increase in the need for external approval, a perception that one has little control over outcomes in one’s life, and ultimately a decrease in motivation” (Sutherland and Singh, 2004, pg. 173). This is often a difficult task to accomplish all year long, but keep it simple: praise, praise, praise on procedure and model the positive behaviors in your classroom.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Students with learned helplessness believe
 - A. Once they have help they can succeed
 - B. Other students can learn to help them
 - C. Teachers are great and always teach great lessons

D. They will continue to fail on future problems

2. Students with learned helplessness may exhibit all of the following EXCEPT:

A. Ask their peers for help

B. Give up when you correct them

C. Prefer easy questions over hard

D. Sit quietly and not respond

3. Telling a student “I really like that you showed your long division work” is an example of

A. Person criticism

B. Person praise

C. Process criticism

D. Process praise

4. To best create a test to avoid learned helplessness behaviors teachers can

A. Create special tests for these students

B. Place factual questions before conceptual questions

C. Read the test out loud

D. Use all multiple choice questions

Answers

1. (D) 2. (D) 3. (D) 4. (B)

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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13.1: Introduction to Standardized Tests

Because education is increasingly influenced by the content and results of standardized tests, understanding such tests has become important for teachers. Not only do teachers need to know what these tests can (and cannot) do, but also they need to be able to help parents and students understand test results. Consider, for example, the following scenarios:

- Vanessa, a newly licensed physical education teacher, is applying for a job at a middle school. During the job interview the principal asks how she would incorporate key sixth grade math skills into her PE and health classes as the sixth grade students in the previous year did not attain Adequate Yearly Progress in mathematics.
- Danielle, a first year science teacher in Ohio, is asked by Mr Volderwell, a recent immigrant from Turkey and the parent of a tenth grade son Marius, to help him understand test results. When Marius first arrived at school he took the Test of Cognitive Skills and scored on the eighty-fifth percentile whereas on the state Science Graduation test he took later in the school year he was classified as “proficient.”
- James, a third year elementary school teacher, attends a class in gifted education over summer as standardized tests from the previous year indicated that while overall his class did well in reading the top 20 per cent of his students did not learn as much as expected.
- Miguel, a 1st grade student, takes two tests in fall and the results indicate that his grade equivalent scores are 3.3 for reading and 3.0 for math. William’s parents want him immediately promoted into the second grade arguing that the test results indicate that he already can read and do math at the 3rd grade level. Greg, a first grade teacher explains to William’s parents that a grade equivalent score of 3.3 does not mean William can do third grade work.

Understanding standardized tests is difficult as they use numerous unfamiliar terms and concepts, and because recent legislative changes in their educational use have increased the complexity of the concepts and issues (United States Government Printing Office, 2002). In this chapter we cannot cover all of the relevant issues; instead we focus on the basic information that beginning teachers need to know, starting with some basic concepts.

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13.2: Basic Concepts

Standardized tests are created by a team—usually test experts from a commercial testing company who consult classroom teachers and university faculty—and are administered in standardized ways. Students not only respond to the same questions they also receive the same directions and have the same time limits. Explicit scoring criteria are used. Standardized tests are designed to be taken by many students within a state, province, or nation, and sometimes across nations. Teachers help administer some standardized tests and test manuals are provided that contain explicit details about the administration and scoring. For example, teachers may have to remove all the posters and charts from the classroom walls, read directions out loud to students using a script, and respond to student questions in a specific manner.

Criterion referenced standardized tests measure student performance against a specific standard or criterion. For example, newly hired firefighters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the United States have to meet physical fitness standards by successfully completing a standardized physical fitness test that includes stair climbing, using a ladder, advancing a hose, and simulating a rescue through a doorway (Human Resources Division, n.d.). Criterion referenced tests currently used in US schools are often tied to state content standards and provide information about what students can and cannot do. For example, one of the content standards for fourth grade reading in Kentucky is “Students will identify and describe the characteristics of fiction, nonfiction, poetry or plays” (Combined Curriculum Document Reading 4.1, 2006) and so a report on an individual student would indicate if the child can accomplish this skill. The report may state that number or percentage of items that were successfully completed (e.g. 15 out of 20, i.e. 75 per cent) or include descriptions such as basic, proficient, or advanced which are based on decisions made about the percent of mastery necessary to be classified into these categories.

Norm referenced standardized tests report students’ performance relative to others. For example, if a student scores on the seventy-second percentile in reading it means she outperforms 72 percent of the students who were included in the test’s norm group. A norm group is a representative sample of students who completed the standardized test while it was being developed. For state tests the norm group is drawn from the state whereas for national tests the sample is drawn from the nation. Information about the norm groups is provided in a technical test manual that is not typically supplied to teachers but should be available from the person in charge of testing in the school district.

Reports from criterion and norm referenced tests provide different information. Imagine a nationalized mathematics test designed to basic test skills in second grade. If this test is norm referenced, and Alisha receives a report indicating that she scored in the eighty-fifth percentile this indicates that she scored better than 85 per cent of the students in the norm group who took the test previously. If this test is criterion-referenced Alisha’s report may state that she mastered 65 per cent of the problems designed for her grade level. The relative percentage reported from the norm-referenced test provides information about Alisha’s performance compared to other students whereas the criterion referenced test attempts to describe what Alisha or any student can or cannot do with respect to whatever the test is designed to measure. When planning instruction classroom teachers need to know what students can and cannot do so criterion referenced tests are typically more useful (Popham, 2004). The current standard-based accountability and NCLB rely predominantly on criterion based tests to assess attainment of content-based standards. Consequently the use of standardized norm referenced tests in schools has diminished and is largely limited to diagnosis and placement of children with specific cognitive disabilities or exceptional abilities (Haertel & Herman, 2005).

Some recent standardized tests can incorporate both criterion-referenced and norm referenced elements in to the same test (Linn & Miller, 2005). That is, the test results not only provide information on mastery of a content standard but also the percentage of students who attained that level of mastery.

Standardized tests can be high stakes i.e. performance on the test has important consequences. These consequences can be for students, e.g. passing a high school graduation test is required in order to obtain a diploma or passing PRAXIS II is a prerequisite to gain a teacher license. These consequences can be for schools, e.g. under NCLB an increasing percentage of students in every school must reach proficiency in math and reading each year. Consequences for schools who fail to achieve these gains include reduced funding and restructuring of the school building. Under NCLB, the consequences are designed to be for the schools not individual students (Popham, 2005) and their test results may not accurately reflect what they know because students may not try hard when the tests have low stakes for them (Wise & DeMars, 2005).

Uses of standardized tests

Standardized tests are used for a variety of reasons and the same test is sometimes used for multiple purposes.

Assessing students' progress in a wider context

Well-designed teacher assessments provide crucial information about each student's achievement in the classroom. However, teachers vary in the types of assessment they use so teacher assessments do not usually provide information on how students' achievement compares to externally established criteria. Consider two eighth grade students, Brian and Joshua, who received As in their middle school math classes. However, on the standardized norm referenced math test Brian scored in the fiftieth percentile whereas Joshua scored in the ninetieth percentile. This information is important to Brian and Joshua, their parents, and the school personnel. Likewise, two third grade students could both receive Cs on their report card in reading but one may pass 25 per cent and the other 65 per cent of the items on the Criterion Referenced State Test.

There are many reasons that students' performance on teacher assessments and standardized assessments may differ. Students may perform lower on the standardized assessment because their teachers have easy grading criteria, or there is poor alignment between the content they were taught and that on the standardized test, or they are unfamiliar with the type of items on the standardized tests, or they have test anxiety, or they were sick on the day of the test. Students may perform higher on the standardized test than on classroom assessments because their teachers have hard grading criteria, or the student does not work consistently in class (e.g. does not turn in homework) but will focus on a standardized test, or the student is adept at the multiple choice items on the standardized tests but not at the variety of constructed response and performance items the teacher uses. We should always be very cautious about drawing inferences from one kind of assessment.

In some states, standardized achievement tests are required for home-schooled students in order to provide parents and state officials information about the students' achievement in a wider context. For example, in New York home-schooled students must take an approved standardized test every other year in grades four through eight and every year in grades nine through twelve. These tests must be administered in a standardized manner and the results filed with the Superintendent of the local school district. If a student does not take the tests or scores below the thirty-third percentile the home schooling program may be placed on probation (New York State Education Department, 2005).

Diagnosing student's strengths and weaknesses

Standardized tests, along with interviews, classroom observations, medical examinations, and school records are used to help diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses. Often the standardized tests used for this purpose are administered individually to determine if the child has a disability. For example, if a kindergarten child is having trouble with oral communication, a standardized language development test could be administered to determine if there are difficulties with understanding the meaning of words or sentence structures, noticing sound differences in similar words, or articulating words correctly (Peirangelo & Guiliani, 2002). It would also be important to determine if the child was a recent immigrant, had a hearing impairment or mental retardation. The diagnosis of learning disabilities typically involves the administration of at least two types of standardized tests—an aptitude test to assess general cognitive functioning and an achievement test to assess knowledge of specific content areas (Peirangelo & Guiliani, 2006). We discuss the difference between aptitude and achievement tests later in this chapter.

Selecting students for specific programs

Standardized tests are often used to select students for specific programs. For example, the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) and ACT (American College Test) are norm referenced tests used to help determine if high school students are admitted to selective colleges. Norm referenced standardized tests are also used, among other criteria, to determine if students are eligible for special education or gifted and talented programs. Criterion referenced tests are used to determine which students are eligible for promotion to the next grade or graduation from high school. Schools that place students in ability groups including high school college preparation, academic, or vocational programs may also use norm referenced or criterion referenced standardized tests. When standardized tests are used as an essential criteria for placement they are obviously high stakes for students.

Assisting teachers' planning

Norm referenced and criterion referenced standardized tests, among other sources of information about students, can help teachers make decisions about their instruction. For example, if a social studies teacher learns that most of the students did very well on a

norm referenced reading test administered early in the school year he may adapt his instruction and use additional primary sources. A reading teacher after reviewing the poor end-of-the-year criterion referenced standardized reading test results may decide that next year she will modify the techniques she uses. A biology teacher may decide that she needs to spend more time on genetics as her students scored poorly on that section of the standardized criterion referenced science test. These are examples of assessment for learning which involves data-based decision making. It can be difficult for beginning teachers to learn to use standardized test information appropriately, understanding that test scores are important information but also remembering that there are multiple reasons for students' performance on a test.

Accountability

Standardized tests results are increasingly used to hold teachers and administrators accountable for students' learning. Prior to 2002, many States required public dissemination of students' progress but under NCLB school districts in all states are required to send report cards to parents and the public that include results of standardized tests for each school. Providing information about students' standardized tests is not new as newspapers began printing summaries of students' test results within school districts in the 1970s and 1980s (Popham, 2005). However, public accountability of schools and teachers has been increasing in the US and many other countries and this increased accountability impacts the public perception and work of all teachers including those teaching in subjects or grade levels not being tested.

For example, Erin, a middle school social studies teacher, said:

As a teacher in a “non-testing” subject area, I spend substantial instructional time supporting the standardized testing requirements. For example, our school has instituted “word of the day,” which encourages teachers to use, define, and incorporate terminology often used in the tests (e.g. “compare,” “oxymoron,” etc.). I use the terms in my class as often as possible and incorporate them into written assignments. I also often use test questions of similar formats to the standardized tests in my own subject assessments (e.g. multiple choice questions with double negatives, short answer and extended response questions) as I believe that practice in the test question formats will help students be more successful in those subjects that are being assessed.

Accountability and standardized testing are two components of Standards Based Reform in Education that was initiated in the USA in 1980s. The two other components are academic content standards and teacher quality.

Types of standardized tests

Achievement tests

Summarizing the past: K-12 achievement tests are designed to assess what students have learned in a specific content area. These tests include those specifically designed by states to assess mastery of state academic content standards as well as general tests such as the California Achievement Tests, The Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Metropolitan Achievement Tests, and the Stanford Achievement Tests. These general tests are designed to be used across the nation and so will not be as closely aligned with state content standards as specifically designed tests. Some states and Canadian Provinces use specifically designed tests to assess attainment of content standards and also a general achievement test to provide normative information.

Standardized achievement tests are designed to be used for students in kindergarten through high school. For young children questions are presented orally, and students may respond by pointing to pictures, and the subtests are often not timed. For example, on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (www.riverpub.com) designed for students as young as kindergarten the vocabulary test assesses listening vocabulary. The teacher reads a word and may also read a sentence containing the word. Students are then asked to choose one of three pictorial response options.

Achievement tests are used as one criterion for obtaining a license in a variety of professions including nursing, physical therapy, and social work, accounting, and law. Their use in teacher education is recent and is part of the increased accountability of public education and most States require that teacher education students take achievement tests in order to obtain a teaching license. For those seeking middle school and high school licensure these are tests in the content area of the major or minor (e.g. mathematics, social studies); for those seeking licenses in early childhood and elementary the tests focus on knowledge needed to teach students of specific grade levels. The most commonly used tests, the PRAXIS series, tests I and II, developed by Educational Testing Service, include three types of tests (www.ets.org):

- Subject Assessments, these test on general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge. They include both multiple-choice and constructed-response test items.
- Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) Tests assess general pedagogical knowledge at four grade levels: Early Childhood, K–6, 5–9, and 7–12. These tests are based on case studies and include constructed-response and multiple-choice items. Much of the content in this textbook is relevant to the PLT tests.
- Teaching Foundations Tests assess pedagogy in five areas: multi-subject (elementary), English, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Science.

These tests include constructed-response and multiple-choice items which tests teacher education students. The scores needed in order to pass each test vary and are determined by each state.

Diagnostic tests

Profiling skills and abilities: Some standardized tests are designed to diagnose strengths and weaknesses in skills, typically reading or mathematics skills. For example, an elementary school child may have difficult in reading and one or more diagnostic tests would provide detailed information about three components: (1) word recognition, which includes phonological awareness (pronunciation), decoding, and spelling; (2) comprehension which includes vocabulary as well as reading and listening comprehension, and (3) fluency (Joshi 2003). Diagnostic tests are often administered individually by school psychologists, following standardized procedures. The examiner typically records not only the results on each question but also observations of the child's behavior such as distractibility or frustration. The results from the diagnostic standardized tests are used in conjunction with classroom observations, school and medical records, as well as interviews with teachers, parents and students to produce a profile of the student's skills and abilities, and where appropriate diagnose a learning disability.

Aptitude tests

Predicting the future: Aptitude tests, like achievement tests, measure what students have learned, but rather than focusing on specific subject matter learned in school (e.g. math, science, English or social studies), the test items focus on verbal, quantitative, problem solving abilities that are learned in school or in the general culture (Linn & Miller, 2005). These tests are typically shorter than achievement tests and can be useful in predicting general school achievement. If the purpose of using a test is to predict success in a specific subject (e.g. language arts) the best prediction is past achievement in language arts and so scores on a language arts achievement test would be useful. However when the predictions are more general (e.g. success in college) aptitude tests are often used. According to the test developers, both the ACT and SAT Reasoning tests, used to predict success in college, assess general educational development and reasoning, analysis and problem solving as well as questions on mathematics, reading and writing (www.collegeboard.com; www.act.org). The SAT Subject Tests that focus on mastery of specific subjects like English, history, mathematics, science, and language are used by some colleges as entrance criteria and are more appropriately classified as achievement tests than aptitude tests even though they are used to predict the future.

Tests designed to assess general learning ability have traditionally been called Intelligence Tests but are now often called learning ability tests, cognitive ability tests, scholastic aptitude tests, or school ability tests. The shift in terminology reflects the extensive controversy over the meaning of the term intelligence and that its traditional use was associated with inherited capacity (Linn & Miller 2005). The more current terms emphasize that tests measure developed ability in learning not innate capacity. The Cognitive Abilities Test assesses K-12 students' abilities to reason with words, quantitative concepts, and nonverbal (spatial) pictures. The Woodcock Johnson III contains cognitive abilities tests as well as achievement tests for ages 2 to 90 years (www.riverpub.com).

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13.3: High-Stakes Testing By States

While many States had standardized testing programs prior to 2000, the number of state-wide tests has grown enormously since then because NCLB required that all states test students in reading and mathematics annually in grades third through eighth and at least once in high school by 2005–06. Twenty-three states expanded their testing programs during 2005–06 and additional tests are being added as testing in science is required by 2007–08. Students with disabilities and English language learners must be included in the testing and provided a variety of accommodations so the majority of staff in school districts are involved in testing in some way (Olson, 2005). In this section we focus on these tests and their implications for teachers and students.

Standards based assessment

Academic content standards

NCLB mandates that states must develop academic content standards that specify what students are expected to know or be able to do at each grade level. These content standards used to be called goals and objectives and it is not clear why the labels have changed (Popham, 2004). Content standards are not easy to develop—if they are too broad and not related to grade level, teachers cannot hope to prepare students to meet the standards.

An example, a broad standard in reading is:

“Students should be able to construct meaning through experiences with literature, cultural events and philosophical discussion” (no grade level indicated). (American Federation of Teachers, 2006, p. 6).

Standards that are too narrow can result in a restricted curriculum. An example of a narrow standard might be:

Students can define, compare and contrast, and provide a variety of examples of synonyms and antonyms.

A stronger standard is:

“Students should apply knowledge of word origins, derivations, synonyms, antonyms, and idioms to determine the meaning of words (grade 4) (American Federation of Teachers, 2006, p. 6).

The American Federation of Teachers conducted a study in 2005-6 and reported that some of the standards in reading, math and science were weak in 32 states. States set the strongest standards in science followed by mathematics. Standards in reading were particularly problematic and with one-fifth of all reading standards redundant across the grade levels, i.e. word-by-word repetition across grade levels at least 50 per cent of the time (American Federation of Teachers, 2006).

Even if the standards are strong, there are often so many of them that it is hard for teachers to address them all in a school year. Content standards are developed by curriculum specialists who believe in the importance of their subject area so they tend to develop large numbers of standards for each subject area and grade level. At first glance, it may appear that there are only several broad standards, but under each standard there are subcategories called goals, benchmarks, indicators or objectives (Popham, 2004). For example, Idaho’s first grade mathematics standard, judged to be of high quality (AFT 2000) contains five broad standards, including 10 goals and a total of 29 objectives (Idaho Department of Education, 2005-6).

Alignment of standards, testing and classroom curriculum

The state tests must be aligned with strong content standards in order to provide useful feedback about student learning. If there is a mismatch between the academic content standards and the content that is assessed then the test results cannot provide information about students’ proficiency on the academic standards. A mismatch not only frustrates the students taking the test, teachers, and administrators it undermines the concept of accountability and the “theory of action” (See box “Deciding for yourself about the research”) that underlies the NCLB. Unfortunately, the 2006 Federation of Teachers study indicated that in only 11 states were all the tests aligned with state standards (American Federation of Teachers, 2006).

State standards and their alignment with state assessments should be widely available—preferably posted on the states websites so they can be accessed by school personnel and the public. A number of states have been slow to do this. Table 1 summarizes which states had strong content standards, tests that were aligned with state standards, and adequate documents on online. Only 11 states were judged to meet all three criteria in 2006.

Table 1: Strong content standards, alignment, and transparency: evaluation for each state in 2006 (Adapted from American Federation of Teachers, 2006).

State	Standards are strong	Test documents match standards	Testing documents are online
Alabama			+
Alaska		+	+
Arizona		+	+
Arkansas		+	
California	+	+	+
Colorado			+
Connecticut		+	
Delaware			
District of Columbia	+	+	
Florida		+	+
Georgia	+		+
Hawaii		+	
Idaho	+		+
Illinois			+
Indiana		+	+
Iowa		+	
Kansas		+	+
Kentucky		+	+
Louisiana	+	+	+
Maine		+	
Maryland		+	
Massachusetts	+	+	
Michigan	+	+	
Minnesota		+	+
Mississippi			+
Missouri			
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	+	+	+
New Hampshire		+	+
New Jersey	+		

Table 1: Strong content standards, alignment, and transparency: evaluation for each state in 2006 (Adapted from American Federation of Teachers, 2006).

New Mexico	+	+	+
New York	+	+	+
North Carolina	+		
North Dakota	+	+	
Ohio	+	+	+
Oklahoma		+	+
Oregon		+	+
Pennsylvania			+
Rhode Island		+	+
South Carolina			
South Dakota	+		+
Tennessee	+	+	+
Texas		+	+
Utah			+

Sampling content

When numerous standards have been developed it is impossible for tests to assess all of the standards every year, so the tests *sample* the content, i.e. measure some but not all the standards every year. Content standards cannot be reliably assessed with only one or two items so the decision to assess one content standard often requires not assessing another. This means if there are too many content standards a significant proportion of them are not measured each year. In this situation, teachers try to guess which content standards will be assessed that year and align their teaching on those specific standards. Of course if these guesses are incorrect students will have studied content not on the test and not studied content that is on the test. Some argue that this is a very serious problem with current state testing and Popham (2004) an expert on testing even said: “What a muddleheaded way to run a testing program” (p. 79).

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Under NCLB three levels of achievement, basic, proficient and advanced, must be specified for each grade level in each content area by each state. States were required to set a time table from 2002 that insured an increasing percentage of students would reach the proficient levels such that by 2013–14, so every child is performing at or the proficient level. Schools and school districts who meet this timetable are said to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP).

Because every child must reach proficiency by 2013–14 greater increases are required for those schools that had larger percentages of initially lower performing students.

Figure 1 illustrates the progress needed in three hypothetical schools. School A, initially the lowest performing school, has to increase the number of students reaching proficiency by an average of 6 per cent each year, the increase is 3 per cent for School B, and the increase is only 1 per cent for School C. Also, the checkpoint targets in the timetables are determined by the lower performing schools. This is illustrated on the figure by the arrow—it is obvious that School A has to make significant improvements by 2007–08 but School C does not have to improve at all by 2007–08. This means that schools that are initially lower performing are much more likely to fail to make AYP during the initial implementation years of NCLB.



Figure 1: Adequate Yearly Progress requires greater student improvement in schools with lower levels of initial proficiency

Schools A, B and C all must reach 10 per cent student proficiency by 2013–14. However the school that initially has the lowest level of performance (A) has to increase the percentage of students proficient at a greater rate than schools with middle (B) or high (C) levels of initial proficiency rates.

Subgroups

For a school to achieve AYP not only must overall percentages of the students reach proficiency but subgroups must also reach proficiency in a process called desegregation. Prior to NCLB state accountability systems typically focused on overall student performance but this did not provide incentives for schools to focus on the neediest students, e.g. those children living below the poverty line (Hess & Petrilli, 2006). Under NCLB the percentages for each racial/ethnic group in the school (white, African American, Latino, Native American etc.), low income students, students with limited English proficiency, and students with disabilities are all calculated if there are enough students in the subgroup. A school may fail AYP if one group, e.g. English language learners do not make adequate progress. This means that it is more difficult for large diverse schools (typically urban schools) that have many subgroups to meet the demands of AYP than smaller schools with homogeneous student body (Novak & Fuller, 2003). Schools can also fail to make AYP if too few students take the exam. The drafters of the law were concerned that some schools might encourage low-performing students to stay home on the days of testing in order to artificially inflate the scores. So on average at least 95 per cent of any subgroup must take the exams each year or the school may fail to make AYP (Hess & Petrilli, 2006).

Sanctions

Schools failing to meet AYP for consecutive years, experience a series of increasing sanctions. If a school fails to make AYP for two years in row it is labeled “in need of improvement” and school personnel must come up with a school improvement plan that is based on “scientifically based research.” In addition, students must be offered the option of transferring to a better performing public school within the district. If the school fails for three consecutive years, free tutoring must be provided to needy students. A fourth year of failure requires “corrective actions” which may include staffing changes, curriculum reforms or extensions of the school day or year. If the school fails to meet AYP for five consecutive years the district must “restructure” which involves major actions such as replacing the majority of the staff, hiring an educational management company, turning the school over to the state.

Growth or value added models

One concern with how AYP is calculated is that it is based on an absolute level of student performance at one point in time and does not measure how much students improve during each year. To illustrate this, Figure 2 shows six students whose science test scores improved from fourth to fifth grade. The circle represents a student’s score in fourth grade and the tip of the arrow the test score in fifth grade. Note that students 1, 2, and 3 all reach the level of proficiency (the horizontal dotted line) but students 4, 5 and 6 do not. However, also notice that students 2, 5 and 6 improved much more than students 1, 3, and 4. The current system of AYP rewards students reaching the proficiency level rather than students’ growth. This is a particular problem for low performing

schools who may be doing an excellent job of improving achievement (students 5 and 6) but do not make the proficiency level. The US Department of Education in 2006 allowed some states to include growth measures into their calculations of AYP. While growth models traditionally tracked the progress of individual students, the term is sometimes used to refer to growth of classes or entire schools (Shaul, 2006).

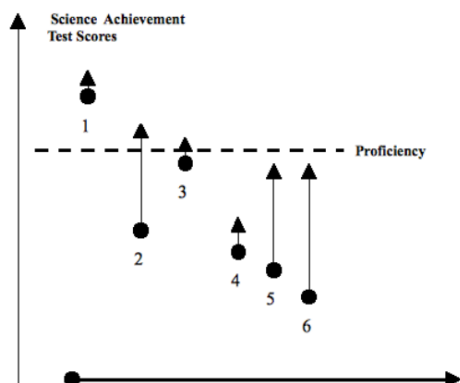


Figure 2: An illustration of value added vs proficiency approach to assessment. Each arrow represents the mathematics achievement results of one student who was tested in the fourth grade (shown by the dot) and also the fifth grade (shown by the tip of the arrow).

Some states include growth information on their report cards. For example, Tennessee (www.k-12.state.tn.us/rptcrd05) provides details on which schools meet the AYP but also whether the students' scores on tests represent average growth, above average, or below average growth within the state. Figure 3 illustrates in a simple way the kind of information that is provided. Students in schools A, B, and C all reached proficiency and AYP but in Schools D, E, and F did not. However, students in schools A and D had low growth, in schools B and E average growth, in schools C and F high growth. Researchers have found that in some schools students have high levels of achievement but do not grow as much as expected (School A), and also that in some schools, the achievement test scores are not high but the students are growing or learning a lot (School F). These are called “school effects” and represent the effect of the school on the learning of the students.

Achievement	School A	School B	School C	Proficiency
	School D	School E	School F	
	Low growth	Average growth	High growth	

Figure 3: Proficiency and growth information

Growth over one year

Schools can vary on overall school achievement (proficiency) as well as the amount of growth in student learning. For example schools A, B, and C all have high achievement levels but only in School C do students have, on average, high growth. Schools D, E, and F all have low levels of proficiency but only in school D do students, on average, have low growth.

Growth models have intuitive appeal to teachers as they focus on how much a student learned during the school year—not what the student knew at the start of the school year. The current research evidence suggests that teachers matter a lot—i.e. students learn much more with some teachers than others. For example, in one study low-achieving fourth grade students in Dallas, Texas were followed for three years and 90 per cent of those who had effective teachers passed the seventh grade math test whereas only 42 per cent of those with ineffective teachers passed (cited in Bracey, 2004). Unfortunately, the same study reported that low achieving students were more likely to be assigned to ineffective teachers for three years in a row than high achieving students. Some policy makers believe that teachers who are highly effective should receive rewards including higher salaries or bonuses and that a primary criterion of effectiveness is assessed by growth models, i.e. how much students learn during a year (Hershberg, 2004). However, using growth data to make decisions about teachers is controversial as there is much more statistical uncertainty when

using growth measures for a small group or students (e.g. one teacher’s students) than larger groups (e.g. all fourth graders in a school district).

Growth models are also used to provide information about the patterns of growth among subgroups of students that may arise from the instructional focus of the teachers. For example, it may be that highest performing students in the classroom gain the most and the lowest performing students gain the least. This suggests that the teacher is focusing on the high achieving students and giving less attention to low achieving students. In contrast, it may be the highest performing students gain the least and the low performing students grow the most suggesting the teacher focuses on the low performing students and paying little attention to the high performing students. If the teacher focuses on the students “in the middle” they may grow the most and the highest and lowest performing students grow the least. Proponents of the value-added or growth models argue that teachers can use this information to help them make informed decisions about their teaching (Hershberg, 2004).

Differing state standards

Under NCLB each state devises their own academic content standards, assessments, and levels of proficiency. Some researchers have suggested that the rules of NCLB have encouraged states to set low levels of proficiency so it is easier to meet AYP each year (Hoff, 2002). Stringency of state levels of proficiency can be examined by comparing state test scores to scores on a national achievement test called the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). NCLB requires that states administer reading and math NAEP tests to a sample of fourth and eighth grade students every other year. The NAEP is designed to assess the progress of students at the state-wide or national level not individual schools or students and is widely respected as a well designed test that uses current best practices in testing. A large percentage of each test includes constructed-response questions and questions that require the use of calculators and other materials (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>).

Figure 4 illustrates that two states, Colorado and Missouri had very different state performance standards for the fourth grade reading/language arts tests in 2003. On the state assessment 67 per cent of the students in Colorado but only 21 per cent of the students in Missouri were classified as proficient. However, on the NAEP tests 34 per cent of Colorado students and 28 per cent of Missouri students were classified as proficient (Linn 2005). These differences demonstrate that there is no common meaning in current definitions of “proficient achievement” established by the states.

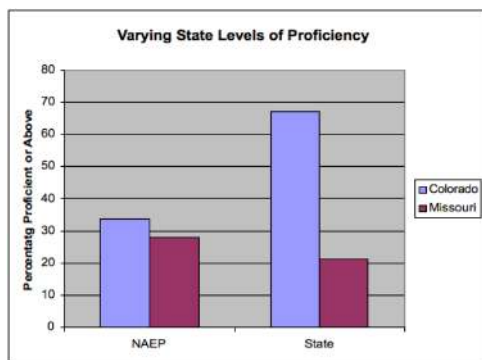


Figure 4: Relationship between state proficiency levels and scores on NAEP (Adapted from Linn 2005)

Implications for beginning teachers

Dr Mucci is the principal of a suburban fourth through sixth grade school in Ohio that continues to meet AYP. We asked her what beginning teachers should know about high stakes testing by the states. She responded as follows:

I want beginning teachers to be familiar with the content standards in Ohio because they clearly define what all students should know and be able to do. Not only does teaching revolve around the standards, I only approve requests for materials or professional development if these are related to the standards. I want beginning teachers to understand the concept of data-based decision making. Every year I meet with all the teachers in each grade level (e.g. fourth grade) to look for trends in the previous year’s test results and consider remedies based on these trends.

I also meet with each teacher in the content areas that are tested and discuss every student’s achievement in his or her class so we can develop an instructional plan for every student. All interventions with students are research based. Every teacher in

the school is responsible for helping to implement these instructional plans, for example the music or art teachers must incorporate some reading and math into their classes.

I also ask all teachers to teach test taking skills, by using similar formats to the state tests, enforcing time limits, making sure students learn to distinguish between questions that required an extended response using complete sentences versus those that only requires one or two words, and ensuring that students answer what is actually being asked. We begin this early in the school year and continue to work on these skills, so by spring, students are familiar with the format, and therefore less anxious about the state test. We do everything possible to set each student up for success.

The impact of testing on classroom teachers does not just occur in Dr Mucci's middle school. A national survey of over 4,000 teachers indicated that the majority of teachers reported that the state mandated tests were compatible with their daily instruction and were based on curriculum frameworks that all teachers should follow. The majority of teachers also reported teaching test taking skills and encouraging students to work hard and prepare. Elementary school teachers reported greater impact of the high stakes tests: 56 per cent reported the tests influenced their teaching daily or a few times a week compared to 46 per cent of middle school teacher and 28 per cent of high school teachers. Even though the teachers had adapted their instruction because of the standardized tests they were skeptical about them with 40 per cent reporting that teachers had found ways to raise test scores without improving student learning and over 70 per cent reporting that the test scores were not an accurate measure of what minority students know and can do (Pedulla, Abrams, Madaus, Russell, Ramos, & Miao; 2003).

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13.4: Issues with Standardized Tests

Many people have very strong views about the role of standardized tests in education. Some believe they provide an unbiased way to determine an individual's cognitive skills as well as the quality of a school or district. Others believe that scores from standardized tests are capricious, do not represent what students know, and are misleading when used for accountability purposes. Many educational psychologists and testing experts have nuanced views and make distinctions between the information standardized tests can provide about students' performances and how the tests results are interpreted and used. In this nuanced view, many of the problems associated with standardized tests arise from their high stakes use such as using the performance on one test to determine selection into a program, graduation, or licensure, or judging a school as high vs low performing.

Are standardized tests biased?

In a multicultural society one crucial question is: Are standardized tests biased against certain social class, racial, or ethnic groups? This question is much more complicated than it seems because bias has a variety of meanings. An everyday meaning of bias often involves the fairness of using standardized test results to predict potential performance of disadvantaged students who have previously had few educational resources. For example, should Dwayne, a high school student who worked hard but had limited educational opportunities because of the poor schools in his neighborhood and few educational resources in his home, be denied graduation from high school because of his score on one test. It was not his fault that he did not have the educational resources and if given a chance with a change his environment (e.g. by going to college) his performance may blossom. In this view, test scores reflect societal inequalities and can punish students who are less privileged, and are often erroneously interpreted as a reflection of a fixed inherited capacity. Researchers typically consider bias in more technical ways and three issues will be discussed: item content and format; accuracy of predictions, and stereotype threat.

Item content and format. Test items may be harder for some groups than others. An example of social class bias in a multiple choice item asked students the meaning of the term *field*. The students were asked to read the initial sentence in italics and then select the response that had the same meaning of field (Popham 2004, p. 24):

1. My dad's *field* is computer graphics.
 1. The pitcher could field his position
 2. We prepared the field by plowing it
 3. The doctor examined my field of vision
 4. What field will you enter after college?

Children of professionals are more likely to understand this meaning of field as doctors, journalists and lawyers have “fields,” whereas cashiers and maintenance workers have jobs so their children are less likely to know this meaning of field. (The correct answer is 4).

Testing companies try to minimize these kinds of content problems by having test developers from a variety of backgrounds review items and by examining statistically if certain groups find some items easier or harder. However, problems do exist and a recent analyses of the verbal SAT tests indicated that whites tend to scores better on *easy* items whereas African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans score better on *hard* items (Freedle, 2002). While these differences are not large, they can influence test scores. Researchers think that the easy items involving words that are used in every day conversation may have subtly different meanings in different subcultures whereas the hard words (e.g. vehemence, sycophant) are not used in every conversation and so do not have these variations in meaning. Test format can also influence test performance. Females typically score better at essay questions and when the SAT recently added an essay component, the females overall SAT verbal scores improved relative to males (Hoover, 2006).

Accuracy of predictions

Standardized tests are used among other criteria to determine who will be admitted to selective colleges. This practice is justified by predictive validity evidence—i.e. that scores on the ACT or SAT are used to predict first year college grades. Recent studies have demonstrated that the predictions for black and Latino students are less accurate than for white students and that predictors for female students are less accurate than male students (Young, 2004). However, perhaps surprisingly the test scores tend to slightly over predict success in college for black and Latino students, i.e. these students are likely to attain *lower* freshman grade point

averages than predicted by their test scores. In contrast, test scores tend to slightly under predict success in college for female students, i.e. these students are likely to attain higher freshman grade point averages than predicted by their test scores. Researchers are not sure why there are differences in how accurately the SAT and ACT test predict freshman grades.

Stereotype threat

Groups that are negatively stereotyped in some area, such as women's performance in mathematics, are in danger of stereotype threat, i.e. concerns that others will view them through the negative or stereotyped lens (Aronson & Steele, 2005). Studies have shown that test performance of stereotyped groups (e.g. African Americans, Latinos, women) declines when it is emphasized to those taking the test that (a) the test is high stakes, measures intelligence or math and (b) they are reminded of their ethnicity, race or gender (e.g. by asking them before the test to complete a brief demographic questionnaire). Even if individuals believe they are competent, stereotype threat can reduce working memory capacity because individuals are trying to suppress the negative stereotypes. Stereotype threat seems particularly strong for those individuals who desire to perform well. Standardized test scores of individuals from stereotyped groups may significantly underestimate actual their competence in low-stakes testing situations.

Do teachers teach to the tests?

There is evidence that schools and teachers adjust the curriculum so it reflects what is on the tests and also prepares students for the format and types of items on the test. Several surveys of elementary school teachers indicated that more time was spent on mathematics and reading and less on social studies and sciences in 2004 than 1990 (Jerald, 2006). Principals in high minority enrollment schools in four states reported in 2003 they had reduced time spent on the arts. Recent research in cognitive science suggests that reading comprehension in a subject (e.g. science or social studies) requires that students understand a lot of vocabulary and background knowledge in that subject (Recht & Leslie, 1988). This means that even if students gain good reading skills they will find learning science and social studies difficult if little time has been spent on these subjects.

Taking a test with an unfamiliar format can be difficult so teachers help students prepare for specific test formats and items (e.g. double negatives in multiple choice items; constructed response). Earlier in this chapter a middle school teacher, Erin, and Principal Dr Mucci described the test preparation emphasis in their schools. There is growing concern that the amount of test preparation that is now occurring in schools is excessive and students are not being educated but trained to do tests (Popham, 2004).

Do students and educators cheat?

It is difficult to obtain good data on how widespread cheating is but we know that students taking tests cheat and others, including test administrators, help them cheat (Cizek, 2003; Popham 2006). Steps to prevent cheating by students include protecting the security of tests, making sure students understand the administration procedures, preventing students from bringing in their notes or unapproved electronic devices as well as looking at each others answers. Some teachers and principals have been caught using unethical test preparation practices such as giving actual test items to students just before the tests, giving students more time than is allowed, answering students' questions about the test items, and actually changing students' answers (Popham, 2006). Concerns in Texas about cheating led to the creation of an independent task force in August 2006 with 15 staff members from the Texas Education Agency assigned investigate test improprieties. (Jacobson, 2006). While the pressure on schools and teachers to have their student perform well is large these practices are clearly unethical and have lead to school personnel being fired from their jobs (Cizek, 2003).

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13.6: Testing

Standardized Testing: What We Need to Know as Future Educators

by Angela Marcotte

By reading this article, future educators should be able to

- distinguish between benefits and downfalls of standardized testing
- know how standardized tests are utilized
- determine who is being held accountable by standardized testing

Introduction

Testing students has been around since the time of Socrates. For instance, in order to better guide a student in his or her learning, the teacher would ask students questions to measure what has been absorbed from his teachings. Since the first World War, standardized tests have been used to “sort, track and stratify individuals and groups... for employment, higher education and the professions.” (Scherer, 2005). More recently, as an admission requirement for colleges and universities, the SAT and ACT standardized tests are claimed to be useful tools in determining college readiness (Giuliano, 2006, 80).

Within the past decade, state and national governments have made annual administration of standardized testing mandatory. The original goal of standardized testing was to help administrators and government officials determine if progress was being made in the education of our youth.

[Click here for a link to a webpage containing tips for preparing yourself and your students for spring testing!](#)

The View of the Supporters

Some believe there are pros to standardized testing. Because many standardized tests consist of true-false or multiple choice questions, the scoring can be done expediently and rather inexpensively. Many of the exams given to students today are scored by computers rather than by people (K12 Academics). Scantron sheets are fed into a machine and read, grading papers in a reasonable time period. Computers can grade multiple tests with minimal errors. It would likely take a teacher longer to grade exams by hand, with an opportunity for errors and bias. Rather than measuring the students’ mastery of the subject, a teacher may take into account his or her personal feelings of the student when grading an essay or free writing. Another example would be human error. If the person grading the exam is distracted, he or she may mark something incorrectly.

Many supporters believe standardized assessments are the best way to guarantee high principles of learning and accountability. It is believed that the tests convey what is expected of students and education professionals. Exams measure levels of progress and where it is being made. The reasoning behind accountability is that educators should be making progress and the improvements should be apparent in the results of the students’ exams(Giuliano, 2006).

The View of the Opposition

Opponents to standardized testing feel that a single test is not an accurate assessment of performance. Some argue that because of the pressure put on accountability testing, children are denied access to a more challenging, diverse curriculum. Others believe that rather than using a more sophisticated thought process, which may call for more of an explanation, students are given test questions that are based on rote memorization. While this form of testing will evaluate knowledge, it does not evaluate how and why the students came to their conclusion.(Popham, 2004).

According to Alfie Kohn, author of *The Case Against Standardized Testing*, the content and format of instruction are affected by standardized testing in that what is tested becomes the focus or curriculum for the school year. Furthermore, Kohn explains that many people feel that standardized testing has caused a “dumbing” down on the American education system (Kohn, 2000, p29).

Due to the pressure put on teachers for their students to succeed, many educators do not spend time on curriculum that is not going to be covered on the standardized tests. A teacher may instead fixate on the test rather than focusing on the meaningful learning of

the tested material. If the students do poorly on the exams, it affects the amount of school funding provided by the government, in addition to affecting the employment of many qualified teachers. (Popham, 2004, p.167-168)

“If instruction focuses on the test, students have few opportunities to display the attributes of higher-order thinking such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and creativity, which are needed for success in school, college and life.” (Neill, 2006).

“While state accountability tests are important, they do not give a full picture of student learning... there are usually some important educational goals that aren’t easily assessed in a large-scale, standardized way” (Jay McTighe, in an interview by Judith Richardson, 2009).

In Summary

There are many conflicting views regarding the validity and necessity of standardized testing. While there is a serious need to measure the progress and capabilities of a school, its teachers, and its students, there are more opportunities available than one year-end test.

Author’s Comments

As a parent and future educator, I have mixed feelings regarding standardized assessments. I believe that all schools, teachers, and students must be evaluated to ensure that proper instruction and an understanding of material is being put forth. However, I feel that one test should not be the final judgment. I am more concerned with the importance placed on a single group of tests than I am with standardized testing in general. There are many options for evaluation and many different factors that affect the way students test.

Quiz Questions

- Standardized tests are used
 - as a measure for college readiness
 - for picking out lunches
 - to measure the efficiency of lab technicians
 - to test animals intelligence.
- Who is held accountable by standardized testing?
 - bus drivers, students, teachers
 - doctors, parents, principals
 - parents, students, teachers
 - students, schools, teachers
- Sarah is a junior in high school, getting ready to apply for colleges. She will need to take at least one standardized test in order to complete her application. Which would be the most appropriate test for Sarah?
 - The ASVAB
 - The GRE
 - The SAT or ACT
 - None of these apply
- Mrs. Manley teaches at a local elementary school. Some of Mrs. Manley’s students did very poorly on standardized exams. Which of the following is NOT a consequence for the low test scores?
 - Mrs. Manley could be demoted or fired.
 - Mrs. Manley could get a promotion.
 - Students could be held back to repeat the grade.

d) The school funding may be revoked.

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Answers to Questions

Question 1 (A)

Question 2 (D)

Question 3 (C)

Question 4 (B)

Aburk017 (talk) 21:44, 7 February 2009 (UTC)

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13.7: Effective Schools Defined

The Importance of Effective Schools and How America Can Make Their Schools More Effective



Learning Targets 1. Students should know the reasons

why effectiveness in education is important.

2. Students should be able to understand the characteristics which make a school effective.

3. Given a list of characteristics, students should be able to identify whether they are effective or ineffective.

Introduction People often talk about the importance of education and how schools need to improve. However, that is usually as far as the idea goes. This is because everyone has different definitions for what an effective school is and how to improve ineffective schools. Just because a student goes to school every day, it does not mean the school is doing the best job they can. There is always room for improvement, even in the best of schools.

Essentially, an effective school is one which is conducted in a safe environment by qualified teachers (Ashley, 2006). Everyone in the education field should have goals and high expectations for the school and its students (Ashley, 2006). Students should not only be taught academics, but also life skills (Ashley, 2006). There are many schools which are not at this level of effectiveness, though. Ineffective schools are most commonly found in high poverty areas (NEA, 2001). They typically are not well funded, do not have enough technology, and do not have highly qualified leaders (NEA, 2001).

Improving ineffective schools should be one of America's top priorities. A good education is the foundation of every qualified professional in this country. There have been many studies done to find out what makes high performing schools effective (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). These studies show that there are six top factors which make a school effective, among other characteristics.

Positive Classroom Environment The classroom environment is a very important aspect of an effective school. If a student does not feel safe or comfortable while in their classroom, they will not be able to focus on what is being taught.

It is essential that students feel safe while in school (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). Even though 98% of teachers and 93% of students say they feel safe in their school, safety is still a topic of debate (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). Making schools safe begins with teaching students respect, for themselves and others (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). Another key step in safety is to identify student problems early, before the student turns to violence to solve them (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006).

Watch this short clip to hear why schools need to be safe and how they can improve safety.

Aside from safety, it is also valuable for students to feel at ease while at school (Ashley, 2006). They should feel able to approach their teacher and other students (Ashley, 2006). The learning environment should also be open, clean, colorful, and inviting (Armstrong, 2002).

Qualified Educational Leaders Having qualified leaders in the field of education is essential for success. These are the people who are around the children for approximately 35 hours each week. They are the people who will teach, inspire, and guide the students and they need to be qualified to do so.

The school leadership begins with the principal. The principal should be open and honest with teachers and staff (Ashley, 2006). They should make themselves approachable so teachers feel comfortable approaching them with new ideas (Ashley, 2006). Principals should allow their teachers to be creative and innovative in the classroom (Ashley, 2006).

[Watch this short clip to hear why effective teachers are necessary and how schools can draw them in.](#)

The other aspect of school leadership is the teachers. Schools should require that all of their teachers are highly qualified and fully certified (NEA, 2001). There also needs to be incentives for teachers who meet these requirements and do their job well (Lockheed, Levin, 1993). Incentives could include mentoring programs to help teachers adjust and loan forgiveness for those who teach in low performing schools (NEA, 2001).

Setting Goals Setting goals for schools and students is an important process. It helps to motivate people when there is something specific to aim for. It is also a good way to show the clear path to success.

The principal should work with the teachers to develop a plan and mission for the school (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). Once they have done this, they should share it with the students (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). Goals should include specific strategies and techniques for improvement and progress (NEA, 2001). Also, everyone should be pushed to work hard in order to achieve the goals and be successful and effective (Ashley, 2006).

High Expectations for Students It is a known fact that people often live up to what is expected of them. If you do not expect much from a person, they often will not give you much. This is why it is crucial for teachers to expect their students to do well so there is a standard for students to uphold.

[Read this article to learn about how valuable high expectations are in education.](#)

Each student should be expected to do their best on each assignment, despite previous performance or social background (Ashley, 2006). There is no reason that any student should be held to a lower standard than any other student (Ashley, 2006). When a teacher holds low expectations for a student, they tend to treat them differently (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). They may even give those students less praise and less communication (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). Once teachers have made their expectations clear to the students, they need to develop objectives that the students can excel in (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006).

Conducting and Implementing Research and Funding It is necessary for schools to conduct research for many reasons. They need to use their research findings in order to find out what works in schools and what does not. Then, schools need to receive funding in order to implement plans that support the research findings.

Research should be conducted in many different ways in order to reach each student (Lockheed, Levin, 1993). Everyone in the field of education should pay close attention to the findings in order to figure out where next to go with the school curriculum (Lockheed, Levin, 1993). If the research shows that something is not working, the subject or technique should be discarded and a new plan should be implemented (Lockheed, Levin, 1993).

One of the biggest problems when it comes to funding in education is the difference of funds spent on students in high poverty areas compared to those in better financed schools (NEA, 2001). Low performing schools need the funding the most due to all of the resources they are already lacking (NEA, 2001). However, all schools need more funding in order to provide everything necessary for each student to get the best education possible (NEA, 2001).

Monitoring Student Progress One of the best ways to see if the school curriculum is effective is by monitoring student progress. If a large majority of students are not progressing, it probably means that there needs to be massive curriculum changes. On the other hand, if only a few students are struggling, it most likely is a sign that they need extra help.

[Read this article to learn about the importance of monitoring student progress.](#)

The best plan to have when monitoring progress is to take a well rounded approach since one test is not a good measure for everyone (NEA, 2001). Progress reports should be made so students can know their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as where they are now and future goals (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). Students should be assessed in comparison to national averages as well as to see if they know the material (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). There have also been studies done which show that doing homework is a good way to monitor progress and raise student achievement scores (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006).

Other Factors *Early Start*

Typically, when a child starts attending school is based on their age. However, a child's age does not have much to do with their ability to learn. Some children may be ready to start learning earlier than the minimum required age. Educational studies have shown that children who attend early start schools receive better grades and have higher IQs as adults (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006).

Extended Learning

It is common sense that more time spent in school means more time spent learning. This extra learning time could help students who are struggling to catch up with their classmates (NEA, 2001). Other methods to extend learning include longer school years, more testing, more graded homework assignments, and more after school programs (NEA, 2001).

Better Behavior

One of the biggest complaints from well behaved students is that their teachers spend too much time disciplining students with behavioral issues (Ashley, 2006). When teachers have to stop their lesson in order to discipline a student, it causes a huge disruption for the rest of the class. Teachers need to be taught how to handle all of these minor interruptions, as well as major disciplinary issues, so that valuable learning time is not lost (Ashley, 2006).

Smaller Classes and Schools

Whenever a student is in the position to receive extra support and attention, they are likely to excel in their schoolwork. Small class size, particularly during elementary school, typically has a positive effect on students because they receive more individual attention (NEA, 2001). Studies have shown that, for older students, being in smaller schools is most beneficial (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006). It has been proven that students who attend small schools are more likely to pass their classes and attend college (Sadker, Zittleman, 2006).

[Look at this chart to see the effect of small class size on graduation rates.](#)

Community Partnerships

The saying, "It takes a village to raise a child," is true when it comes to a child's education, as well. A child will only benefit if teachers, parents, policy makers, and any other community figures are involved in their education (Ashley, 2006). It is also beneficial if all of these people involved share their ideas with each other about how to improve education (Ashley, 2006). It is

extremely important for parents to have chances to be involved with their child's education by opportunities such as skill workshops and volunteer programs (NEA, 2001).

Student Driven Curriculum

There have been studies which have shown that when students have a hand in developing the curriculum, they are more invested in it (Armstrong, 2002). This is also a good way to develop assignments in which all learning styles are addressed (Armstrong, 2002). After all, the students are the ones who know how they learn best. Also, students have said that they learn better when assignments are individualized and engaging (Armstrong, 2002).

Technology

Using technology at schools and for homework can be a great thing for students. Technology can be an excellent motivational tool for students who are otherwise disinterested (NEA, 2001). Schools can also use technology to keep track of student behavior and to monitor progress (NEA, 2001).

Planning for the Future

It is vital that schools help prepare their students for the future. Students should leave school with the knowledge that lifelong learning is the key to success (Armstrong, 2002). Also, students who leave high school to enter the "real world" should have been taught the skills necessary for surviving it (Armstrong, 2002).

Conclusion Education is the key to success in this country. It is vital that we do everything we can in order to ensure that each student gets the best education available. This is important because these students are going to be entering professional fields and, possibly, even teaching the next generation.

Simply attending school does not guarantee a good education. There are many factors which must be used together in order to build the best education possible. It is necessary for schools to have positive, open environments with highly qualified leaders. It is also crucial for schools to research progress in order to see what is or is not working so they are able to build a balanced curriculum.

A school does not just need to offer an education, they need to offer each student the best education they possibly can. By implementing as many of these factors as they can, a school can give each student a well rounded, successful, and effective education.

Questions 1. In what areas are ineffective schools most common?

- A) affluent areas in America
- B) other countries
- C) middle class suburbs
- D) high poverty areas

2. What percentage of students say they feel safe in their school?

- A) 55%
- B) 93%
- C) 25%
- D) 72%

3. A school is described as having minimally qualified teachers, an unsafe environment, and not enough funding. What type of education would this school provide?

- A) ineffective
- B) excellent
- C) effective
- D) well rounded

4. A school wants to become more effective. Which of the following is something they should do to accomplish this?

- A) spend most of the funding on athletics to bring in more money and attention
- B) have the principal develop the curriculum by himself as he sees fit
- C) develop incentives to attract highly qualified teachers
- D) increase class sizes to increase learning

Answers 1. D

2. B

3. A

4. C

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13.8: Feedback Qualitative-Quantitative

When should qualitative or quantitative assessments be used?

“Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts.”

—Albert Einstein

“Test day,” to most students, means studying, reviewing, and perhaps a bit of cramming to remember as much as possible. But to a teacher, a test gathers important information – does the student really get what I’ve been trying to teach him for the past few weeks? Standardized tests, a big issue in modern education, are certainly not the only kind of test teachers use, and tests aren’t the only way teachers can assess what students have learned. But years before No Child Left Behind, educational researchers at the University of Utah predicted that American educators were going to be “increasingly required to provide evidence” that students are learning what they are supposed to learn. Consequently, teachers now and in the future will have to figure out how to measure whether students have learned the material or not – and just how much of it they’ve learned (Worthen, Borg, and White 1993). Out of this challenge have come many ways to study, classify, and apply different kinds of educational assessment.

Quantitative Assessment

Countless books and articles have been written on the subject of educational measurement, but one way in particular to classify methods of assessment is to categorize them as either quantitative or qualitative.

Quantitative assessment, as the name suggests, focuses on numbers, or quantities. Usually, something that is quantitative can be measured and expressed in units (Wikipedia 2007). For instance, a quantitative test might include multiple-choice questions or fill-in-the-blank questions – these types of questions can easily be classified as “right” or “wrong” and the results tallied to produce a grade. Each right or wrong answer is a unit, and the group of units makes a number that is supposed to show whether or not the student knows the material.

For example:

1. Solve $5x + 4 = 24$
2. What is the name of the capital city of France? (Satterly 1984)

Quantitative tests, like multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank, are often seen as merely encouraging rote memorization – and they often do. For instance, asking a student, “Which part of speech is used to describe a noun?” from a list of four choices does not necessarily require the student to fully understand adjectives and how to use them. On the other hand, well-constructed questions can measure learning on a variety of levels on Bloom’s Taxonomy, including application and synthesis, if they ask the student to do high-level thinking in order to come up with the best answer (Satterly 1989). A teacher might give the student a sentence and ask him to choose the word that functions as an adjective – giving him the opportunity to apply what he knows to a new situation (Bloom 1984?).

Qualitative Assessment

Qualitative assessment, on the other hand, is not based on numbers or units, but on observations that often can be subjective. Many kinds of essay questions (those asking for things like the student’s opinion on a controversial issue, an analysis of a situation, or a free-response interpretation of a literary work) are examples of qualitative assessments. Though essay tests are often graded on a scale of points, based on criteria, the teacher still has a lot of leeway in deciding what constitutes an acceptable response.

Uses for both types in the classroom

While either kind of assessment can be used for almost any set of material, in some cases a certain kind of test is especially useful. Some subjects seem to fit a certain kind of test more than others.

In math classes, for instance, quantitative assessments often come in handy to measure whether or not a student knows how to solve an equation. There is one correct answer to the problem, and each student's answer either matches or doesn't. Some teachers give points for each step completed correctly, while others simply mark the answer right or wrong, but each approach produces a quantitative, objective point amount that the student is awarded for that problem. An 80 on a math test shows that the student knew some of the material, or partially understood it, but didn't know or understand all of it.

When testing students on English literature, however, qualitative methods of assessment sometimes work better – to test whether students are able to generate their own ideas about one of the novel's themes, a teacher might give an essay test that asks students to analyze and discuss some aspect of the work at length. A student may earn an A because the teacher believes he has grasped the work at an appropriate level; or he may receive a lower grade if the teacher feels something important was missing. Even though points may be awarded for certain parts, no absolute standard applies in judging the overall quality of the essay.

Gray Areas

In his book *Assessment in Schools*, David Satterly discusses several major types of classroom assessment. For example, two major kinds are recall/completion and essay. There are many ways to construct each type of test, and a virtually limitless amount of questions that can be asked.

Recall/Completion

Recall/completion questions (like “In what city was the Declaration of Independence signed?”) and multiple-choice questions (like “Which number is the radius of the circle in the diagram?”) ask a student to remember a simple fact, and they are usually meant to be completely objective. There is only one “right” or “best” answer – for instance, “Philadelphia” or “4 inches.” This allows the teacher to page through a pile of tests, easily mark whether or not a student wrote the correct answer, and add that right or wrong mark to the tally of scores to produce a quantitative grade. However, few test questions can really remove teacher discretion from the grading process. The teacher may think there is a single “best” answer, but a question that asks where something occurred can, arguably, be answered to the specific city, state, country, or hemisphere. The Declaration of Independence was signed in Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and in North America; but specific questions – asking “what city” instead of “where” – can help make the answer more clear-cut (Satterly 1989).

Essay

More so than any other type of test, essay tests contain both qualitative and quantitative aspects in full array. Most essay questions require the student to connect ideas, apply concepts to new situations, and, in general, utilize more of the higher-level thinking skills at the top of the Bloom's Taxonomy diagram. It is indeed difficult for a student to formulate a viable solution to a current political issue if he does not thoroughly understand the arguments on both sides. Of course, the more a question moves toward the qualitative realm – and away from simple rights and wrongs – the harder it is to grade, simply because there is no absolute standard of correctness for the teacher to measure it against.

Perhaps largely due to this workable balance between the qualitative and the quantitative, a well-constructed essay questions is considered by many an excellent way to assess whether a student has reached a “deep understanding” of the material, and is able to reorganize it and reapply it (Borich and Tombari 2004).

Multiple Choice Questions

Click to reveal the answer.

What kind of test item is the following?

“Students, I'd like you to decide whether this scene from the novel is about the theme of social injustice. Be sure to back up your statement with examples from the text.”

A. Qualitative, because there is no single right answer.

- B. Quantitative, because there is only one answer the teacher will consider correct.
- C. Quantitative, because it is an essay question with no choices.
- D. All of the above.

A. Qualitative, because there is no single right answer.

If a science teacher wants to see how much a student remembers about cell parts and their specific functions, which test method is he/she likely to choose?

- A. A qualitative method in which the student writes an essay analyzing the cell parts and proposing his own interpretation.
- B. A quantitative method in which the student answers multiple-choice questions matching the parts of a cell with their functions.
- C. A qualitative method in which the student picks one cell part to research and draw a picture of.
- D. A quantitative method in which the student writes a report giving facts about the people who discovered cell parts and the background behind each discovery.

B. A quantitative method in which the student answers multiple-choice questions matching the parts of a cell with their functions.

If an English teacher wants to measure a student's ability to understand two selections from different periods of literature, which test method is he/she likely to choose?

- A. A qualitative method in which the student writes an essay comparing and contrasting features in the two selections.
- B. A quantitative method in which the student answers opinion questions in the multiple-choice format.
- C. A qualitative method in which the student chooses one of the two books and writes about its relevance to today.
- D. A quantitative method in which the student matches the works' titles, authors, and historical facts.

A. A qualitative method in which the student writes an essay comparing and contrasting features in the two selections.

Which is the best example of a completion question to which there is one single "right" answer?

- A. Where was George Washington born?
- B. What was the name of George Washington's wife?
- C. What was George Washington's most important achievement?
- D. Who painted George Washington's portrait?

B. What was the name of George Washington's wife?

Which is the best example of a question to which there are many possible "right" answers?

- A. Who wrote *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*?
- B. Who is Huck's friend and traveling companion in the novel?
- C. What is the main difference between Huck and Tom?
- D. What major American river does Huck travel down?

C. What is the main difference between Huck and Tom?

Essay Question

Click to reveal a sample response.

Briefly discuss some assessment needs of the field in which you will be teaching (e.g. elementary, history, P.E., special education) and give examples of test questions you might ask your students that fit these assessment needs.

My subject, secondary English, deals more with qualitative assessment than many other subjects do. An English teacher probably devotes many of her tests to questions that ask students to take ideas from things they have read and apply creative thought to it. For instance, she probably includes essay questions, literary analyses, and oral/written interpretation. But English teachers also use quantitative assessments like multiple-choice and true-false. In my future classroom, I will probably try to use a mixture of qualitative and quantitative assessment: simple right/wrong questions to measure factual knowledge, whether students remember the parts of speech or all the characters' names, and writing assignments to get students to interpret, create ideas, and think on a high cognitive level. For instance, to test students on a novel they have just read, I might use a combination of 1) an oral class discussion of the novel's ideas and themes, 2) simple recall quizzes covering plot, character, setting, etc., 3) a writing assignment asking students to create an interpretation of a passage from the novel, 4) some kind of creative project that takes an idea from the novel and builds on it visually. Any combination of these ideas this would allow students to express their understanding in different ways and on different levels and help them really grasp what I'm trying to teach them.

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13.9: Performance Assessment and Rubrics Pros-Cons

RUBRICS

the pros and cons of using rubrics

By

Megan Varnell

Learning Targets:

→ The reader should be able to define the term “rubric” in relation to education

→ The reader should be able to identify the different types of rubrics

→ The reader should be able to identify several pros and cons associated with using rubrics

Wouldn't it be great if a student could look inside their teacher's head and see exactly what is expected of them in order to get an A+ on a particular assignment or project? Students actually can come quite close to doing this, all thanks to rubrics! Many parents and students have probably heard the term “rubric” before without really knowing what it meant. In this article, not only will this term be defined, but also the pros and cons associated with rubrics will be laid out.

What is a Rubric?

If out of curiosity someone were to look up “rubric” in a source such as Wikipedia, they would find that rubric comes from the Latin word *rubrica*, which means red ochre or red chalk, and also that it has something to do with Medieval illuminated manuscripts. But if one was wondering what is a rubric in today's sense of the word and in relation to education, then that probably is not going to be helping out much. According to Heidi Goodrich, an expert on the subject, a rubric is “a scoring tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work or ‘what counts.’” (What is a Rubric?, 2008) Essentially, a rubric is a checklist that the student can use to make sure they are accomplishing what is expected of them, as well as help teachers grade much more efficiently. Rubrics are typically used as a scoring tool for constructed response items, as well as performance-based tasks. (Scoring Rubrics, 2006) Rubrics can be categorized as holistic or analytic and generic or task-specific, and some even combine aspects from more than one. Holistic rubrics judge the student work as a whole and are less specific. Teachers find these much quicker and easier, but they give less feedback. Analytic rubrics look much closer at specific parts of the students work and are more precise. (Kidd, J. 2008) These rubrics are very helpful to students because they give very specific feedback, but are more time consuming for teachers to produce. Generic rubrics are rubrics that can be applied to a variety of assignments, as long as they fall under the same objective or objectives. (Scoring Rubrics, 2006). They can be very helpful in observing student progress over time and with formative assessment. Task- specific rubrics are designated to certain tasks and have more specific criteria that is to be met by the student. This type of rubric is best with specific knowledge or skill targets that are not going to be assessed regularly. (Kidd, J. 2008)

The Pros of Using Rubrics

Advantages of Rubric•Helps the grading process become more efficient

- Helps faculty grade/score more accurately, fairly and reliably
- Requires faculty to set and define more precisely the criteria used in the grading process
- Supports uniform and standardized grading processes among different faculty members
- Clarifies quality expectations to students about their assignments
- Students are able to self-assess their own work prior to submitting it
- Students can understand better the rationale and the reason for grades
- Helps communicating grade between faculty and students
- Helps improve student performance, because they know what to focus on

(Advantages and Disadvantages of Rubrics, 2005).

Using rubrics have many advantages. Many experts believe that student work is much better when a rubric is made available to them. Students know what is expected of them before hand, so it is easier for them to meet the objectives. Rubrics are also beneficial for teachers. They can make grading much quicker and also much more fair. Teachers can also use a rubric they create on several assignment. A teacher can also refer a student back to the rubric if they are not satisfied with a particular grade so the student can under why that grade was given to them.

The Cons of Using Rubrics

Possible Disadvantages of Rubrics•Development of rubrics can be complex and time-consuming

- Using the correct language to express performance expectation can be difficult
- Defining the correct set of criteria to define performance can be complex
- Rubrics might need to be continuously revised before it can actually be usable in an easy fashion

(Advantages and Disadvantages of Rubrics, 2005).

Rubrics also come with some disadvantages. Rubrics can be very time consuming to create and time is not something that most teachers have an excess of. It also can be difficult for teachers to come up with the appropriate language for the rubric so that the expectations are very clear. Sometimes, rubrics require much revision in order to use them easily.

Conclusion

In conclusion, rubrics come in many forms and can help both teachers and students greatly. For teachers, rubrics can speed up the grading process as well as give them the opportunity to show students what they are expecting of them. For students, rubrics can help clarify what they must achieve in order to get a good grade. Creating rubrics can sometimes be difficult and time consuming, but overall, teachers and students both benefit greatly from them.

Quiz

- 1) The word rubric comes from the Latin word *rubrica*, which means what?
 - a. checklist
 - b. manuscript
 - c. red ochre

- d. teacher-made
- 2) Which is NOT a type of rubric?
- analytic
 - generic
 - holistic
 - illuminated
- 3) Why might Mr. Davis chose to use a analytic rubric for his students' oral presentations?
- Because he wants to judge the presentation as a whole.
 - Because he wants to use a rubric that he can create quickly.
 - To give the students specific feedback.
 - To grade the presentations quickly.
- 4) Why might Mrs. Nicks use generic rubrics for her science labs?
- Because she wants to compare the student's progress over time.
 - Because she wants students grade to be based on all components parts.
 - Because she likes to make completely new rubrics for each assignment.
 - Because she wants students to receive specific feedback.

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Answers:

- c
- d
- c
- a

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Weeks 14 and 15: YOUR FIRST STEPS

14.1: Evaluation

14.2: What Adults Can Learn from Kids

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14.1: Evaluation

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Teacher Evaluation: Who decides if I am successful, and how?

Introduction

The teaching profession is one of the most important, fundamental occupations in today's society. Teachers play a very influential role in the lives of their students, and have a great impact on their future and on society as a whole. Because teachers play such an intricate part in society's well-being, school systems have to make sure teachers have efficient skills and knowledge in their disciplines, and that their methods of teaching are effective. Teachers frequently have to undergo an evaluation process in which school administrators assess the teacher's competence, teaching abilities, effectiveness, and overall success. It is imperative that this assessment be carried out honestly and accurately to ensure the best quality of education for the students.

"By understanding the means by which teachers have attained student learning and growth, assessors can verify that they actually possess the skills, knowledge, and habits necessary to attain consistent, continued student learning and growth," (Johnson & Jones, 1998, p. 1).

The Evaluation Process: Who Evaluates?

The teacher evaluation process is a collaborative project in which members of the School administration take part. The principal, and other administrators in the school system, come together to complete this task. Before the school year begins, the principal, administrators, and teachers meet to discuss specific goals for the school and its classes. The principal explains the supervision process, and reviews the evaluation instrument with the teachers (Spokane, 2002). The teacher must then prepare the lesson plan for the class and think of a way to administer the classroom in an effective manner. The principal usually has scheduled observation dates, and may also have unscheduled and unannounced dates of observation and evaluation. The teacher is assessed based on performance, the validity of the material taught, and overall effectiveness and connectivity with the students.

The Evaluation Process: Support and Criticisms

Each teacher has his or her own individual style and methods of teaching. It is impossible for all teachers to adopt a universal system of teaching because each teacher has a different background, different life experiences, and unique morals and values. These differences must be taken into consideration when creating an evaluation rubric for teachers, and in the actual process of evaluation. Many people believe that most teacher evaluation systems are fair, but a great number of people disagree. They feel that many evaluation instruments used in school systems eliminate individuality in teaching styles and take away the essence of a good education. Teachers and administrators have very different outlooks on the evaluation process. According to Enz & Searfoss (1993), evaluation of teacher performance "only perpetuates the status quo (principals' views) and causes nothing but frustration over missed opportunities (teachers' views)," (p. 7). Enz & Searfoss (1993) found that administrators were reluctant to alter the status quo. Even though the administrators agreed that the evaluation system should be augmented to improve the assessment of holistic, integrated classrooms, they felt change was unnecessary because the effective teachers would "top out" on the evaluation instrument regardless, and their merit pay would not be affected by the change (Enz & Searfoss, 1993, p. 5). The teachers in this study felt that their holistic and integrative teaching philosophy was unappreciated by the principals, who used an evaluation system based on a direct instruction model (Enz & Searfoss, 1993, p. 3). Rather than trying to defend their holistic, integrated beliefs, the teachers prepared a direct instruction lesson for their evaluation in order to please the principals (Enz & Searfoss, 1993, p. 6). These teachers viewed their evaluations as missed opportunities: opportunities in which the principals missed out on discovering the accomplishments of holistic, integrated classrooms (Enz & Searfoss, 1993, p. 6).

The Impact of Evaluation: Teachers, administrators, and students

Teacher evaluations affect everyone in the school system, directly or inadvertently. Teachers' stress levels may increase due to the fear of poor performance or receiving a bad report. Students in the class during an evaluation may feel that they are being evaluated as well and may either become more engaged in the class or may avoid giving input, asking questions, or participating in discussions as much. Administrators, especially those who directly carry out the evaluations, may be stressed by the number of

evaluations or might be concerned with making sure the evaluation is a fair assessment. Teacher evaluations may also create a strange relationship between teachers and administrators, increasing tensions on both sides. The positive impacts of teacher evaluation outweigh the negatives and are much more important for the well-being of the students. Proper evaluation of teachers allows the administration to determine which teachers are beneficial to the students. An extremely significant duty of the administration is to maintain a school wide, productive learning atmosphere for all students. Accurate and honest teacher evaluation is an essential part of maintaining an efficient school system.

What happens after evaluation?

Once the teacher is evaluated by the administrator, decisions regarding the teacher's performance will be made based on the results. The teacher's quality is judged based on his or her own personal performance, and how the students benefited from the teacher. This calls for two main types of assessment, formative and summative (Harris, 2007, p. 2). Formative assessment is on-going throughout the year, which includes the periodic announced and unannounced teacher and classroom evaluations (FCIT, 2007, "Classroom Assessment"). The summative assessment refers to the end-of-the-year compilation of retrieved data to come to a conclusion about the teacher's overall performance and effectiveness (FCIT, 2007). These assessments are also used to monitor the students' progress throughout the year, and how beneficial the teacher's instructional methods were to them. Beginning in 2001, with the passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, schools have shifted toward evaluating the teachers based on the students' results more so than individual performance and characteristics (Harris, 2007, p. 3). Even though the NCLB law has put more focus on holding schools accountable for students' success rather than individual teachers, the pressures were designed to "trickle down" and influence the actions of the teachers (Harris, 2007, p. 4).

Universal Evaluation Practices

The process of teacher evaluation should be somewhat universal in order to provide fair and just treatment of teachers. Teach for America (TFA), a national teacher corps of recent college graduates, developed an evaluation instrument called the Performance Assessment Instrument (PAI) (Johnson & Jones, 1998, p.1). The main ideas that the instrument is based on are the extent to which the teacher has attained the goals established in student learning and growth, and the means by which the teacher has impacted student learning and growth (Johnson & Jones, 1998, p. 1).

Conclusion

Teacher evaluation plays a monumental role in the educational experience of students, in the proficiency of school systems, and in the society as a whole. The school administrations must deliver evaluations that effectively assess the teacher's abilities, interactivity, and the resulting success of the students. Proper teacher evaluations allow successful teachers to teach and lead the students who will become the future of society.

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Multiple-choice questions

- 1.) Which of the following requirements would be the best for teacher evaluations?
 - a. They all must be announced and scheduled.
 - b. They can only be unannounced and unscheduled.

- c. They can be either announced and schedule or unannounced and unscheduled.
 - d. They are all unannounced.
- 2.) Why would school administrators feel that it is unnecessary to change or augment their teacher evaluation system if their effective teachers always did well on evaluations?
- a. Effective teachers would “top out” regardless.
 - b. Too much time and effort.
 - c. Teachers comfortable with existing system.
 - d. Fear of more strict policies and regulations.
- 3.) Why would teachers prepare a direct instruction lesson for their evaluation, even if they’d rather teach more holistically?
- a. Because they support the direct instruction model.
 - b. Simply to please the biased principal and pass the evaluation.
 - c. Because the principal held strong holistic, integrated beliefs.
 - d. Because the students preferred direct instruction.
- 4.) Summative assessment is used as:
- a. Evaluation of growth at the end of the year.
 - b. On-going, periodic evaluation to measure growth.
 - c. A measurement of absences throughout the school year.
 - d. A way to monitor behavioral problems.
- 5.) Formative assessment is used as:
- a. Evaluation of growth at the end of the year.
 - b. On-going, periodic evaluation to measure growth.
 - c. A measurement of absences throughout the school year.
 - d. A way to monitor behavioral problems.

Answer Key

1. C
2. A
3. B
4. A
5. B

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