EDUCATION 30: INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATION

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Education 30: Introduction to Education

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Licensing

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1.1: 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).

Teaching is not a pocket cushining 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 indivdiual 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 perogative 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 stoicly on a wall proclamming an individuals success. For teaching, it is not about what the teachers can achieve, but what they can get their students to aceive, and through their students, reflects a teacher's greatest achievement.

In Conclusion

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 at 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.

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1.2: Why Teachers Leave the Profession

By: Sarah Wolff

Learning Objectives

- 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 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.

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

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 inlcude: 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.

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1.3: Is Teaching A Profession?

By Jessica M. Vasiliou

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

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.

> **Note**
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> “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).

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)"

Note

Schools should...

-Train teachers regularly

-Create Teachers' forums and encourage teaching communities

-Pay teachers adequately

-Treat them with respect

-Maintain schools properly

(Kishore, 2000, paragraph 6)

"Education is the only investment that will have highest return on investment"

(Kishore, 2000, paragraph 6).

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1.4: 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 presentation 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 eight grade teach 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.

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.

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1.5: What do I need to do to become a teacher?

Written by: Jasmine Tucay

Note

"Those who can't do, teach..." - The School of Rock.

Learning Objectives

- The reader will find out what makes a good teacher
- The reader will learn about different types of degrees and the cerficates that are offered
- The reader will learn about the tests that one is required to take prior to becoming a teacher
- The reader will learn about the career opportunities existing after getting licensed

Introduction

"Those who can't do, teach, and those who can't teach...teach gym" (IMDb.com, Inc., 2008). All silliness aside, in the movie "The School of Rock" the career of a teacher, in so many words, chose the main character. Through various realistic, and unrealistic events, he learned to love the profession. However, he lacked the credentials and certification that teachers need to teach.

All right, so life isn't exactly like the movies, but this particular movie does show an important point. There are certain steps that a person has to take before he or she can be a licensed teacher.

In today's career driven society, there are always steps that you have to take to get where you want to go. Becoming a teacher falls in line with this mentality. The first step to becoming a teacher is taking the plunge and deciding that you want to be in the field of education. After this decision, you want to find a university offering a program that will earn you a degree and licensure to teach. While taking various classes, you'll be required to take numerous exams to assess your competency on knowledge regarding your future as an educator. After taking classes and teaching tests, you can receive your degree(s) and find a school to start your career as an educator.

What Makes a Good Teacher?

There are many qualities and characteristics that make up a good teacher. Engaging, caring and innovative are some things that may come to mind. According to Dr. Richard M. Reis, a professor and executive director at Stanford University, the top priority of teachers should be that they want to be good teachers. In his article he states that as teachers "we respect students who really try, even if they do not succeed in everything they do, so they will respect us, even if we are not as good as we want to be" (Reis, 2007). Your future students will know that you want to be a good teacher if you yourself strive to become one. To supplement this point, "among 150 teachers in the first three years of their careers aged under 26 reveals that 85 per cent of this 'Generation Y' probably or definitely want to be working in a school in 20 years, with only two per cent definitely not" (National College for School Leadership). With this being said, teachers with enthusiasm are working in the education field today.

In addition, Reis adds that teachers should be good listeners as well (Reis, 2007). With the varying ages, gender and personalities of your future students, it will benefit you and the students you teach to listen to what works for them, and what to never try again.

There are many opinions on what goes into a good teacher, but only you can implement the characteristics in your own teaching career.

Getting Your Degree

There are many programs that you can pursue on your way to get your degree. First you would choose your specific grade level, then you would go onto to taking your various classes. For example, at Old Dominion University, there are a few different educational tracks that you can pursue including: Pre-K - 3, Pre-K - 6, K - 12, K - 12 with a emphasis on Special Education, and Secondary Education which includes 6 - 12 (Darden College of Education 2008).

After picking a program, you will be required to take different courses such as History and Math, depending on your focus. For example, if you were pursuing a Bachelor of Science Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies Teacher Prep. with a Concentration on Pre-K - 3 Early Childhood Emphasis, you would be taking various general education courses, major content courses and some classes focusing on professional aspects of being a teacher (Old Dominion University Catalog, 2006-2008). Within the profession

education courses, you may be required to observe in the classroom among other things. For example, during my observation period, I saw how a first grade classroom was taught and managed. It was a rewarded experience that I'm glad is required for teachers in the state of Virginia. I learned a lot and got to interact with the children as well. Observing is just half the battle though. After some professional education courses, you will still have other classes to pass.

Once you've graduated with your Bachelor's Degree, you may want to move on to take your Master's Degree. You may be thinking that an extra year of school isn't going to matter. There are two sides to this argument. According to Linda Gorman, a writer for the National Bureau of Economic Research, " Teachers who entered teaching with a master's degree, or who earned it within five years of beginning to teach, were as effective as teachers without a master's degree" (Gorman). You may be one of the people who has what it takes to make it as a teacher with four years of college and an undergraduate degree. Contrary to this opinion, according to The Apple, teachers in the United States with a Master's degree can get paid any where from $2,000 to almost $10,000 more than what they would be getting paid with only a Bachelor's (The Apple, 2008).

Note

According to The Apple, teachers in the United States with a Master's degree can get paid any where from $2,000 to almost $10,000 more than what they would be getting paid with only a Bachelor's - The Apple.

Testing

There are many tests that are required for future educators to take. Two of the most known ones in Virginia, that have many future teachers writhing in fear, are the Praxis 1 and 2. According to the Educational Testing Service, better known as ETS, the Praxis is a test consisting of "rigorous and validated assessments that provides accurate, reliable information for use by state education agencies in making licensing decisions" (ETS, 2008). Within these tests, you will be assessed on basic mathematics, reading and writing skills in the Praxis 1, along with a specialized test that is more focused on the path of education that you chose to go for in the Praxis 2 (ETS, 2008). Preparing for the Praxis tests can be very intimidating, but your university may provide help with prepping for the tests. Along with this, you can also purchase a study guide for the Praxis tests online or your local bookstore. I found that practicing with old praxis tests was very useful for helping me pass my Praxis tests.

After achieving a passing score on the Praxis 1 and 2 tests, you have a couple more tests to pass. The Virgina Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA) and the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA) are two tests that assess your knowledge communicating and literary abilities and how well you can teach reading skills (2008–2009 VCLA and VRA Registration Bulletin, 2008). These tests are required to be taken by future elementary education and special education students that want to teach in Virginia (2008–2009 VCLA and VRA Registration Bulletin, 2008).

Once you achieve passing scores on the tests listed above, you're ready to apply for a teaching license. Applying for licensure is different for every state. For example, in the state of Virginia, "An individual seeking licensure must establish a file in the Department of Education by submitting a complete application packet, which includes official student transcripts " (Virginia Department of Education, 2007). For a general list of what to do to apply for your teaching license, you may want to visit a general website such as Ehow.com (Reynolds, 1999 - 2008) or ask your university for information.

Venturing Into The Real World of Education

Now that you're licensed to teach, you can now start looking into finding a career. According to the Department of Labor, "Job opportunities for teachers over the next 10 years will vary from good to excellent, depending on the locality, grade level, and subject taught" (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007). The reason for the good outlook on jobs is that many teachers may be retiring.

Along with finding a job as a teacher, you may want to further your career to become an administrator to a school, or even a superintendent to a school district. For these job opportunities to work out, you would have to go back to school again. Along with this, you may want to try for your PhD in education.

You may also want to teach classes at a local recreation center, or do volunteer work helping a teacher a school around your neighborhood. Although it may not be a paying job, I believe that every one still has time to learn something no matter what stage they are at in their lives. Along with this, you can gain experience, and give a local teacher a helping hand.

Another career move could be possibly teaching overseas. There are many teaching abroad programs and you could even become a teacher through the Department of Defense or the Department of State (U.S. Department of State, 2008). "During 1995-96, 190 schools received grant assistance and technical support from A/OPR/OS. Because they are private institutions, these schools hire

their own staffs" (U.S. Department of State, 2008) and many of these schools are over seas. Personally, I plan on trying this program sometime in my near future career as an educator.

Conclusion

Although there is a long process in becoming a teacher, I believe that the product from your hard work will be more than rewarding. Through the classes, the credentials, and the tests, you get a license to teach students in a chosen state, or even all around the world if that is where life takes you.

Much like Jack Black's Character in "The School of Rock", if the career of teaching does choose you, or you choose it, what is most important in my eyes is the students that you will be teaching. Whether you become an elementary school teacher, or a gym teacher, the steps all boil down to the deciding that education is in your intended career.

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1.6: 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.

Standards

Note

"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"

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 had a meaningful and potentially influential purpose, but it was not 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.

Note

"Good teaching requires a lifelong commitment to learning."

by Fred Stephenson, "Extraordinary Teachers, The Essence of Learning"

The NCLB was in effect from 2002 - 2015.

A new law called the “Every Student Succeeds Act” was enacted on December 10, 2015. It replaces NCLB and eliminates some of its most controversial provisions.

The Every Student Succeeds Act responds to some of the key criticisms of NCLB. One is that NCLB relied too much on standardized tests. Another is that schools faced harsh penalties when all of their students weren’t on track to reach proficiency on state tests.

At the same time, the new law keeps some aspects of No Child Left Behind. For example, states are still required to report on the progress of traditionally underserved kids. This includes kids in special education.

The new law is over 1,000 pages. But here are some of the most important things to know:

State Authority: Under the new law, the job of holding schools accountable largely shifts from the federal government to the states. But the federal government still provides a broad framework. Each state must set goals for its schools and evaluate how they’re doing. States also have to create a plan for improving schools that are struggling or that have a specific group of students who are underperforming.

Annual Testing: States still have to test students in reading and math once a year in grades 3 through 8, as well as once in high school. Students with IEPs and 504 plans will continue to get accommodations on those tests. And only 1 percent of all students can be given alternate tests.

Accountability: Under the new law, states may now consider more than just student test scores when evaluating schools. In fact, they must come up with at least one other measure. Other measures might include things like school safety and access to advanced coursework. But student performance is still the most important measure under the law.

Reporting: States have to continue to publicly report test results and other measures of student achievement and school success by “subgroups” of students. That includes students in special education, minorities, those in poverty and those learning English.

Proficiency Targets: From now on, states are required to set their own proficiency targets. They will also come up with a system of penalties for not meeting them. But the federal government will no longer require states to bring all kids to the proficient level

on state tests. States also won't have to meet federal targets for raising test scores. These changes will eliminate the harsh federal penalties schools faced under NCLB.

Comprehensive Literacy Center: The new law calls for the creation of a national center that focuses on reading issues for kids with disabilities. That includes dyslexia. The center will be a clearinghouse for information for parents and teachers.

Literacy Education Grant Program: The law authorizes Congress to give up to $160 million in literacy grants to states and schools. The grants will fund instruction on key reading skills, such as phonological awareness and decoding.

Opt-Out: Opt-out is when parents decide not to have their child take a standardized test. The new law doesn't create a federal opt-out option for parents. But it also doesn't stop states from having their own opt-out laws if parents don't want their children to take state tests.

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. Combing these attributions with standards provideded 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.

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1.7: What are some non-traditional educational careers?

Learning Objectives

- Advantages and Disadvantages of non-traditional educators
- Creative Methods and Techniques
- Value of Feedback.

There are many new approaches to recruiting educators in high need subject areas including alternative and expedited routes to teacher licensure and career switching programs in order to gain the expertise of educators with previous professional work experiences. Many people who are considering a career change look to teaching as a way to incorporate and apply their existing knowledge in a content area. Many elementary, middle, and high schools are actively accepting applications for teachers in what the Virginia Department of Education calls the “critical shortage areas such as mathematics, foreign languages, sciences, and technology education” (Education).

However, there is yet another educational career opportunity that is emerging and gaining respect and popularity in the classroom by the students *and* teachers!

What is a *non-traditional* educational career?

Classroom based teachers are taking their students outside of their classroom and visiting science, nature, and history centers seeking more effective learning (Price). These centers employ educational coordinators who deliver information to students through unique and creative methods. These non-traditional educators, sometimes called “field teachers” (Payne), bring a unique edge to the educational experience for students and teachers alike.

Non-traditional educators integrate different learning methods to meet the needs of different types of learners in a real world setting.

They incorporate new knowledge with social interaction by prepare exciting lessons and creative activities for the students such as inside of the classroom or outside during a field trip.

Non-traditional educators work with school teachers to meet the needs of the students and lesson plans as well as work with a school system’s high expectations that the experience will be worthwhile (Payne).

Are they effective?

Non-traditional educators who present information to students through field trips, guest lectures, and other types of class demonstrations are gaining recognition for their effective teaching styles.

Advantages

Non-traditional educators have some advantage over the traditional classroom teachers and lesson plans. “Teachers teach daily. If there is an important message, a different instructor can be a breath of fresh air to the students. If an important message is taught incorrectly, you are sending the wrong message, and in my case, it could be deadly.”(Packett, 2009)

Non-traditional educators are an expert within the subject matter being taught. They generally present the same information to audiences on a regular basis. Packett discussed his advantage of his work history and experience that provided his concentrated knowledge base. It allowed him to "hone in on it and perfect it.”

Although field educators have advantages over a classroom based teacher, a cooperative relationship can be established. Pre-visit and post-visit classroom based lessons can emphasize the learning experience. Also, guest speakers and field educators can give validity to the classroom teacher by repeating terms and lessons that have been introduced in the classroom (Payne).

“we offer things that support and complement” what can be taught in the classroom.

Disadvantages

Non-traditional educators have a limited time to learn the types of students that are present in a classroom or in a class group. This can present as a disadvantage for an instructor. Also acting as a disadvantage is the limited amount of time to present subject material given the distance for travel or time restraints that surround the field trip or classroom period.

Student Benefits

Non-traditional educators recognize that students learn in different ways and there is a responsibility to teachers to present new knowledge in a way for all types of learners to benefit. Some students need to have a reason for learning, some are able to learn new facts without needing a personal connection, while some students benefit most from exploring and learning firsthand (Payne). Non-traditional educators take these differences into consideration and use various teaching techniques to connect to as many individual students in a classroom.

Connection to their world

Students benefit from out-of-the-classroom opportunities that non-traditional educators present for many reasons. The presentations allow students the chance to connect with a new environment outside of the classroom. Also, students are eager to learn if the lessons of the classroom can be applied to their real world (Payne). Teagle further explains, “we are also teaching students the value of working in the field. History is not just in books, but in the artifacts.”

Alternative to Lectures

Some non-traditional educators use constructivist principles and social interactions using small groups as an alternative to lecture methods (Payne). Payne explains, “Telling is not teaching”.

Small, interactive groups

He explained that during field trips, smaller groups led by parent chaperones and teachers allow for easier orchestration of rotating stations, maximizing the amount learning for students and exposure to new material. “When I’m in the classroom, I tend to have larger groups. When groups get large, retention goes down.”

A unique perspective

When students and teachers take field trips and visit farms, museums, and other places, visitors "get the sights and smells and all of the student’s senses are filled" (Packett, 2009). Teagle adds, “we offer a different perspective of the 1700’s and a unique setting to the students. We are teaching kids how to make research and learning a continuous process. We are unearthing new information every day, just as we’ve shown them in the artifacts digging station”(Teagle, 2009).

Who are they?

Non-traditional educators come from a variety of backgrounds to teach a variety of specialty subjects. They are safety educators, museum interpreters and curators, history and environmental site educators, and trainers for advanced educational workshops.

A ndrew Packett, Public Relations Coordinator for Northern Neck Electric Cooperative, has 20 years of experience as a non-traditional educator. Formerly a DARE Drug Abuse Resistance Education officer for drug prevention, he currently teaches electrical safety to elementary school children. Packett says “Who better to go into the classroom to teach electrical safety, but me. It should be an expert in the field.”

After spending several years as an interpreter for Shirley Plantation, Virginia’s historic first plantation, Robert Teagle is the Education Director and Curator for [www.christchurch1735.org/ Historic Christ Church]. His years of experience in interpretation and personal interest in Virginia history offer visitors a unique perspective.

Some historical and environmental site educators use their settings' existing resources as a tool for teaching. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s Port Isobel Island Study Center and Fox Island Study Center offer the perfect setting for their Field Educators to carry out Chesapeake Classrooms courses.

An interesting alternative is the National Park Service’s Teacher to Ranger to Teacher program that draws from all perspectives as a traditional classroom instructor, a Ranger student, and a field instructor (Interpretation and Education).

Note

"Instructors draw upon their expertise as professional scientists, authors, historians, artists, and adventurers" - National Park Service, Institutes and Field Schools

Advice from the experts

Persue it!

Robert Teagle encourages all educators who are considering a non-traditional career to "Persue it!" He has created an impressive workshop for elementary age school children, complete with take home art work and post-visit history fairs where children can win

exciting prizes.

Be Enthusiastic!

Andrew Packett encourages non-traditional educators to incorporate excitement into their presentations. “I come into the classroom very enthusiastic! The level of enthusiasm you must maintain, to capture students’ attention and keep it, can be exhausting!”

Learn the Terms!

Packett also recommends familiarizing yourself with the public school system. Field educators should target the curriculum. "You must address the Virginia SOL’s or you may not get into the classroom." Also, if classroom experience is limited, a field educator "must enter the classroom and observe the grade levels that you will be presenting information to. You need to understand the terminology and acronyms in current public school systems!"

Make it fun!

Teagle and Packett both agree that field experiences and guest speakers into the classroom must include an element of entertainment. Make it fun! Use active learning and hands-on stations.

Value of Feedback

Lastly, field educators place high value on post-visit feedback from classrooms and teachers. Questionnaires can be completed by the students and teachers as well as informal types of feedback such as thank you letters from the schools. Assessments that occur during the educational sessions are also of value. Teagle says "kids provide the best critiques". When performing activities with the children, he critiques his own lesson plans and learns best by doing activities with the children. He concludes that he uses this valuable feedback to help shape the content of future school groups.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: Educational Philosophy

2.1: What are philosophies of education?
2.2: What is the purpose of education?
2.3: How is Plato a philosophical leader in education?
2.4: What is constructivism?
2.5: What is the difference between teacher-centered vs. student-centered philosophies?

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2.1: What are philosophies of education?

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.

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?

Note

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.

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).

> **Note**
>
> 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 ‘Rithmatic. 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?

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 then 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!

Note

[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*

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)**

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2.2: What is the purpose of education?

By: Karen Herndon

Introduction

Have you ever asked yourself what the purpose of education is? It is believed to be a question that is highly thought about but in reality it is not. We tend to focus on the tasks at hand rather than the overall goal. Many will find that when asked specifically what education's purpose is, the answer in return is nothing outside of the course curriculum (Bass, 1997). Well you may be questioning why this is. In order to provide an answer we need to consider both sides of the topic. On one hand the government controls the educational system which enforces the use of mandatory testing to evaluate each student as well as the educational institution. In other words, emphasis is placed on providing students with the skill that they will need to succeed. On the other hand, there is the belief that children should not only be presented with the abilities to learn but they should be able to expand what is given through individual growth and development beyond materials obtained from the classroom. Their inner talents need to be brought out and polished (Minor, 2007).

Note

"Do not then train youth to learn by force and harshness; but direct them to it by what amuses their minds so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each." ~Plato (Minor, 2007)

Government Effects on Education's Purpose

If one looks closely at the government's heavy involvement in what to teach and what not to teach children it's the administering of assessment tests. These tests do not allow a child to form opinions on subjects which in turn impedes social growth and development. The government forces school districts to meet certain minimal requirements so unfortunately the focal point has become mainly to teach material that students will need to know in order to obtain passing scores on standardized tests (Bass, 1997). This is attributed to the government's implementation of laws such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (A Firsthand Look at NCLB, 2006). Students are expected to follow certain guidelines and curriculum; however teachers are pressed for time. In order to ensure they achieve all of the mandated guidelines and curriculum they teach only what they are required to. This leaves little time to introduce material to students that may be beneficial to them in the long run (Bass, 1997). For example the NCLB has received strict criticism for focusing too much on testing and not enough on actually teaching and allowing the student to further their knowledge. It has been brought up that the NCLB's ignorance towards equity has caused problems. For instance one school system may possess funding which would make it easier to obtain the minimum passing score versus a school system that lacked funding. (A Firsthand Look at NCLB, 2006).

Social Development's Role in Education

Education is not only being presented with material to learn but to also expand one's knowledge of themselves and their surroundings. It appears that the growing trend today in school systems is to teach students particular course work with little to no regard to instruction on how this material could relate to life. Since most subjects utilize textbooks they are heavily relied upon and do not allow the student much freedom to think outside the box (Lim, 2005). Children will naturally form opinions from the material that is presented and being able to express these opinions will only help them to grow socially and eventually fit in with the rest of the world. Social growth is very important because when it is time for the child to become independent if they have not developed that part of their life then interaction with other people and situations could be quite daunting. Most parents and parental guardians do want their child to follow a structured curriculum; however, they still want their child to have time for recreation and family. Childhood is an important part of everyone's life. It encourages social interaction and development as well as teaching them to be independent. People that are deprived of their childhood regret it when they grow up which could negatively impact their lives and the lives of others (Lim, 2005).

Note

"The only purpose of education is to teach a student how to live his life-by developing his mind and equipping him to deal with reality. The training he needs is theoretical, i.e., conceptual. He has to be taught to think, to understand, to integrate, to prove. He has to be taught the essentials of the knowledge discovered in the past-and he has to be equipped to acquire further knowledge by his own effort. ~Ayn Rand

> (Yero, 2001-2002. p. 1)

Thomas Jefferson's View

With regard to the purpose of education Thomas Jefferson was one of the biggest advocates of the principle that ignorance and political liberty could not co-exist. Jefferson believed the purpose of education was to properly prepare young minds so they would be able to make educated decisions and uphold the integrity of the country. He insisted on providing four main subjects to elementary school students. Geography, arithmetic along with reading and writing made up these subjects. These subjects were deemed crucial for the proper development of children in order to function later in life. One example of this is that Jefferson believed that children needed to be given proper education in order to become informed voters. He supported free education through taxation as well as equal opportunity education. Jefferson believed the purpose of education was not to segregate but to educate (Jewett, 1997).

Evaluating Student Assessment

Getting back to assessment and student evaluation drives one to consider if whether we are going about education wrong as a country by placing so much importance upon standardized tests. As previously stated, it has been debated whether The No Child Left Behind Act does little to expand the constantly developing minds of our youth (A Firsthand Look at NCLB, 2006). A child's mind can be compared to a sponge, in that they need to soak up information and substance in order for it to expand, otherwise, it dries out. If you observe the examinations and how students are generally evaluated in today's school systems, you will see that the vast majority of them are made up of multiple choice questions. Since there is typically only one correct answer, it is almost impossible for the child to reflect upon the question and develop a view that they can grow from or share with others if they so choose (Yero, 2001-2002).

In Summation

When considering both sides of the purpose of education you may want to reflect on the words of Plato when he said: "Do not then train youth to learn by force and harshness; but direct them to it by what amuses their minds so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each (Minor, 2007)." However, the government's involvement in education has had positive impacts on students since the NCLB has forced teachers and other school officials to focus on all children including those with special needs (A Firsthand Look at NCLB, 2006). No matter what side of the river you are on with regard to your opinion on this topic, it is hard to discredit the fact that one purpose (if not the main purpose) of education is to prepare the youth for their future and ours.

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2.3: How is Plato a philosophical leader in education?

By Laira Stewart

Learning Objectives

- Readers should be able to define the Socratic method
- Readers should be able to give an example of the dialectic method
- Readers should be able to describe Plato's educational thought as outlined in *The Republic*

Overview of Plato

Considered by historians to be one of the most influential minds of Western thought, Plato described the Socratic method of instruction and further developed this dialectic method in his later years. (Smith, 1997). The Socratic method is basically a learning method using a question and answer dialogue between the teacher and student. The idea is that the ensuing debate exposes flaws in reasoning and brings forth a better understanding of the issue. Plato improved on the Socratic method in his later years and developed a philosophy of education as outlined in *The Republic* that became the hallmark of a European liberal arts education.

427 to 347 BC. Plato was born in Athens in 427BC. When his father died, his mother married, Pyrilampes, a friend of Pericles. Plato began to pursue a political career, but became disillusioned with the politics of the time. Evidently, he was good at athletics, poetry and drama. In 409 BC he met Socrates, and according to Plato, he was one of Socrates more outstanding students. Socrates did not follow the then current trend of the Sophist method of teaching which used rhetoric or persuasion to dictate learning to their students. The Sophists asked high fees for their teaching while Socrates charged nothing. Plato, while mistrustful of the Sophists did share their interest in investigating values rather than physical science. In 399 Socrates was brought to trial for corrupting the minds of youth because of his skepticism regarding religious deities. He was convicted and sentenced to death. Socrates committed suicide rather than face execution. Plato wrote about the trial and Socrates decision not to try to escape from prison. After this Plato traveled extensively studying religion, geometry and astronomy. In 387 BC he returned to Athens and founded a university that included philosophy, physical science, astronomy and mathematics. Plato also developed a philosophy of education for prospective rulers requiring them to be philosophers first and rulers second as detailed in *The Republic* He is thought to have died at the age of 80 in 347 BC. (GradeSaver).

Figure 2.3.1: Bust of Plato Read a short biography or read a more detailed one. (CC0, Wikimedia)

Socratic Method

The Socratic method is a dialectic method of teaching, named after the Greek philosopher Socrates, in which the teacher uses questions to get the student to think about what he/she already knows and to realize what they do not know. This question and answer session stimulates the brain, engages the learner, and can bring new ideas to life. As one educator stated, "Think of it as the relentless pursuit of truth through unceasing questions. To engage in dialectic method, establish your goal to clearly understand truth and get on with it." (Kern, 2008).

Today, law schools are trying to find better ways to teach their students the important concepts they will need in the future. The Socratic Method is one of the ways a lot of teachers have found to be most useful. Since the Socratic Method is the basis for which courts handle cases, it seems only fitting to have the students at a law school learn that way. In a court room a series of questions are asked to get the judge and/or jury to see the truth of the situation at hand. The teacher likes using the Socratic Method in their

classes because they believe it helps the students get into the mind set of being a lawyer, plus they believe it helps the students learn and retain the information better. "One of the principle benefits that the Socratic Method confers is to allow large bodies of students to engage in "active learning." "Students learn better when they are actively involved in the learning process" rather than passively taking notes and the teacher dispenses information." (Jackson, 2007).

Note

Here are some Videos on Plato

These links will take you to some very interesting videos about Plato and Socrates.

1. **Watch this clip,**Plato The Encyclopedia Channel. YouTube.
2. **Watch this clip,** Socrates How Stuff Works.
3. **Watch this clip,** Socratic Method in Law school Pacific McGeorge School of Law Faculty. YouTube.

Dialectic Method Example

The benefits of this method are that the student becomes engaged in the learning process and contributes in developing the answers (led by the teacher). This is in contrast to didactic learning in which the teacher tells the student what they need to know.

Begin with a question that has several possible answers or is ambiguous so that you can begin asking the question in different ways until the students reason out the answer you wish them to learn. Then encourage them to ask themselves other responses.

For example: High School class discussion after reading the Noah's Ark story from the Old Testament:

Teacher: What is a covenant?

Possible answer: An agreement.

Teacher: I agree to meet you for lunch, is that a covenant?

Possible answer: Sort of.

Teacher: What was the covenant God made to Noah?

Possible answer: God promised never to destroy the world by a flood.

Teacher: Does a covenant imply something more than an agreement?

Possible answer: A promise

Teacher: Yes, a covenant is an agreement with a promise. I make an agreement to meet you for lunch and I promise to be there no matter what.

Notice in this example the student has come up with the answer. If the teacher had simply told the student the definition of a covenant, chances are the student would simply not care to remember the meaning. In this example, the student is more likely to remember the meaning since he/she was involved in finding the answer.

Note

Go to this link for a specific example that was used in a 3rd grade elementary math class.

Thoughts on the Republic

Plato believed that a teacher must care deeply for the student and have a good understanding of the subject being taught. In *The Republic* Plato outlines a lifelong learning process for rulers that begins with learning to read, write and do mathematics at age six. As the child grows music and sports are added. At age 18 military services are added. At age 30 the ruler should study philosophy and politics. It is not until age 50 that the ruler should rule. This lifelong liberal arts education would ensure that the ruler had experience and wisdom in order to make just decisions. *The Republic* is mostly about defining justice and the different types of justice. Only a philosopher-King can dispense the appropriate justice. This method of instruction became useful during the Middle Ages in the royal classes, and can be seen in the British royal family today. The British males are required to do military service,

attend university, and work in civil service for many years before they take over the role of King. An interesting note is that the current Queen of England, Elizabeth, was reluctant to hand over the reins to Phillip until after he had a wife and family, and has not yet retired. (Jowett)

Figure 2.3.2: Figure 2.3.2: Plato and Aristotle in the School of Athens by Raphael (CC0, Wikimedia)

Note

Here are some other interesting links on Plato

These links will take you to some very interesting videos about Plato and Socrates.

1. **Click this link,** Plato Biography Kraut.
2. **Click this link,** Plato Outline Kemerling.
3. **Click this link,** Socratic Method in Law Schools Jackson.

Summary

Both the Didactic and Dialectic methods are necessary for teaching. There are many times when telling the student what he/she needs to know is the only way to impart information. However, the dialectic method is essential for engaging students in interactive learning, in giving them some ownership of discovery in the learning process. The dialectic method can provide an opportunity for debate of issues, exploration of ideas and use of higher thinking skills. Since the object of learning is to be able to discern and make decisions based on knowledge, the dialectic method is critical for growth of knowledge.

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2.4: What is constructivism?

Todd Douglas Vanderbilt

What is Constructivism?

The root word of *Constructivism* is “construct.” Basically, Constructivism is the theory that knowledge must be constructed by a person, not just transmitted to the person. People construct knowledge by taking new information and integrating it with their own pre-existing knowledge (Cooper, 2007; Woolfolk, 2007). When trying to learn the applications of Constructivism, it is good to know the theory first.

Jean Piaget’s Theory of Constructivism

Jean Piaget was one of the major constructivists in past history. His theory looks at how people construct knowledge cognitively. In Piaget’s theory, everybody has *schemes*. People organize and structure knowledge and information. This organization, or structure, of knowledge and information is known as a scheme. For example, “food” can have a scheme. It can be organized into different food groups such as the following: bread/ pastas, fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, and sweets (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2007).

According to Piaget’s theory, one way people construct knowledge is through *assimilation*. People assimilate when they incorporate new knowledge and information into pre-existing schemes. Here is an example. A child sees a car and learns that it can be called a vehicle. Then the child sees a motorcycle and learns that it can be called a vehicle as well. Then the child sees a truck and calls it a vehicle. Basically, the child developed a scheme for “vehicles” and incorporated trucks into that scheme (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2007).

Another way people construct knowledge, according to Piaget’s theory, is through *accommodation*. People accommodate when they modify or change their pre-existing schemes. Here is an example. A child sees a dog (a furry four-legged animal) and learns that it can be called a pet. Then the child sees a cat (a furry four-legged animal) and learns that it can be called a pet as well. Then the child sees a raccoon (also a furry four-legged animal) and calls it a pet. Afterwards, the child learns from his or her parents that a raccoon is not a pet. At first, the child develops a scheme for “pet” which includes all furry four-legged animals. Then the child learns that not all furry four-legged animals are pets. Because of this, the child needs to accommodate his or her scheme for “pet.” According to Piaget, people learn through a balance of assimilation and accommodation (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2007).

Lev Vygotsky’s Theory of Constructivism

Lev Vygotsky was another major constructivist in past history. While Jean Piaget’s theory is a cognitive perspective, Vygotsky’s theory is a sociocultural perspective. His theory looks at how people construct knowledge by collaborating with others. In Vygotsky’s theory, people learn and construct knowledge within the *Zone of Proximal Development*. People have an independent level of performance where they can do things independently. Likewise, people have an instructional level of performance where they can do things above the independent level with the help and guidance of others. The range, or zone, between these two levels is the Zone of Proximal Development (Cooper, 2007; Kail & Cavanaugh, 2007; Woolfolk, 2007).

In the Zone of Proximal Development, assistance needs to be given by another person. This assistance, help, or guidance is known as *scaffolding*. Because the zone has a range, assistance needs to be given, but not too much. If not enough assistance is given, a person may not be able to learn the task. On the other hand, if too much assistance is given, the person may not be able to fully construct the new acquired information into knowledge. For example, a child needs help doing math homework. With no help, the child may not be able to do it. With too much help, the homework is done for the child, so the child may not fully understand the math homework anyway (Cooper, 2007; Kail & Cavanaugh, 2007; Woolfolk, 2007).

Constructivism in the Classroom

In the classroom, the teacher can use Constructivism to help teach the students. The teacher can base the instruction on the cognitive strategies, experiences, and culture of the students. The teacher can make the instruction interesting by correlating it with real life applications, especially applications within the students’ own communities. Students can work and collaborate together during particular activities. The teacher can provide feedback for the students so they know what they can do independently and know what they need help with. New concepts can be related to the students’ prior knowledge. The teacher can also explain how new concepts can be used in different contexts and subjects. All these ideas are based on Constructivism(Sherman & Kurshan, 2005).

Research shows that constructivistic teaching can be effective. According to research conducted by Jong Suk Kim at Chungnum National University in Korea, constructivistic teaching is more effective than traditional teaching when looking at the students' academic achievement. The research also shows that students have some preference for constructivistic teaching (Kim, 2005). Again, when the theory of Constructivism is actually applied in the classroom, it can be effective for teaching students.

Response from the Author

According to the research, incorporating constructivistic teaching into the classroom is a good idea. Allowing students to work together can be beneficial; however, there may be a problem with time management if the classroom management is not under control. Correlating new concepts to real life applications is a great way to further develop students' schemes. Again, the problem with doing this may be time management. With all the material that needs to be covered throughout the school year due to standardized testing, it is possible that real life applications can become "irrelevant" because they won't be on the standardized tests.

Based on Constructivism, it can be argued that rote memorization is not real learning. Rote memorization requires no assimilation or accommodation. It is like putting information on a solitary island all by itself. Once the information has served its temporary purpose, it will just float away. By assimilating new information into pre-existing schemes, this problem can be avoided.

The last point is that it is not the sole responsibility of the teachers to educate the students. According to Constructivism, students have some responsibilities when learning. A student may be quick to blame the teacher for not understanding the material, but it could be the case that the student it not doing everything he or she could be doing. Because knowledge is constructed, not transmitted, students need to make an effort to assimilate, accommodate, and make sense of information. They also need to make an effort to collaborate with others, especially if they are having a hard time understanding the information.

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2.5: What is the difference between teacher-centered vs. student-centered philosophies?

By: Hope Gibbs

Learning Targets

Readers will be able to understand the differences of teacher-centered philosophies and student-centered philosophies.

Introduction

In today's school, there are essentially two types of teaching philosophies. Both types will be different in their teaching styles; however, both want the best for their students. So what kind of teachers am I talking about? I am talking about teacher-centered and student centered teachers. Their philosophies are different. What type are you? Your ideas and attitudes about education will help shape what kind of teacher you want to be.

Students vs. Teachers

Even though both teacher-centered and student-centered teachers what to help the students learn, they are like night and day in their approaches. Teacher-centered philosophies focus around essentialism and perennialism. Some of the most popular student-centered philosophies include progressivism, social reconstructionism, and existentialism. According to Mary P. Driscoll, "teacher-centered and student-centered views put primacy on the learning of the student, and all other aspects of the learning environment and instruction are planned from that initial standpoint" (1999).

What are Teacher-Centered Philosophies?

Teacher-centered philosophies are the ones you are probably most familiar with. These philosophies focus on what the teacher wants his or her students to learn. There are a lot of factors that determine what kind of teaching philosophies to use. Shawn A. Faulkner and Christopher M. Cook state that "the state tests seem to drive the curriculum and warrant more teacher-focused instructional methods—lecture, worksheets, and whole-class discussion" (2006). We remember this from our own experiences in school. Do you remember when you were in class and the teacher was in front and she lectured to you? Everyone student remembers taking notes off of the blackboard. These are just two examples of teacher-centered practices. Kathy Brown clarifies that "the teacher-centered approach is associated chiefly with the transmission of knowledge" (2003). Getting the knowledge out and to the student is the main focus. The students are accountable for what they have learned and the teachers are also. Teachers are in control and they plan out activities and learning strategies according to specific times during the lesson (Teacher Vision). Teacher-centered philosophies that are mostly used in teaching include essentialism and perennialism. Let us briefly look at these two philosophies.

1. Essentialism in the Classroom

In the excerpt of the book Teachers, Schools, and Society: A Brief Introduction to Education, authors David Miller Sadker, Ph.D and Karen R. Zittleman, Ph.D state how "Essentialism strives to teach students the accumulated knowledge of our civilization through core courses in the traditional academic disciplines" (2007). What this means is that our society has certain viewpoints and practices that schools must pass down to students in a more authoritarian way. According to William Gaudelli, who is an assistant professor of social studies education at the University of Central Florida, "essentialists concern themselves with teaching students how to survive, succeed in their lives, and not be a burden to others" (Gaudelli, 2002). Essentialist teachers believe that what they teach will help their students in real-life situations as they grow older (Gaudelli, 2002). In the classroom, you will most likely see traditional subjects such as math, English, science, and history as the foundations of learning. "Essentialist teachers rely on achievement tests scores to evaluate progress and teachers expect that students will leave school not only with basic skills, but also disciplined, practical minds that are capable of applying lessons taught in school in the real world" (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). In essence, teachers want their students to be able to use what they have learned in school and use it appropriately in the real world.

2. Perennialism in the Classroom

Perennialism and essentialism may sounds somewhat alike, but perennialists are in fact different in their approaches. "Perennialists recommend that students learn directly from the "Great Books"—works by history's finest thinkers and writers, books meaningful today as when they where first written" (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). "Perennialist generally prefer a past orientation, because it tends to be based on historical truth, rather than conjecture about the present and guessing about the future" (Gaudelli, 2002). This

means that perennialists believe that a student can be influence by such heroes in our past like Washington and Lincoln. In a perennialist classroom, the teacher will focus on the importance of reading and will often use the underlying reading lessons to make a moral point (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). These teachers want to teach their students how to be excellent leaders in society just like history portrays.

What are Student-Centered Philosophies?

Student-centered learning is just what is says. It is basically learning by doing. Teachers believe that education should be child-centered. According to Julie K. Brown, she basically says that "student-centered instruction is when the planning, teaching, and assessment revolve around the needs and abilities of the students" (2008). This is quite the opposite from what you have just read. "Regardless of variations in developmental levels, all children are exposed to the same content in the same time period and the teacher's role is to facilitate growth by utilizing the interests and unique needs of students as a guide for meaningful instruction" (Teacher Vision). According to Becky A. Smerdon and David T. Burkam, "students develop analytic skills that can be applied to other problems and situations, rather than accept their teachers' explanation" (1999). This technique gives the students the chance to use their abilities and experiences to solve problems and find new ways of learning. One example of this would be if a math teacher lets his or her students work in groups to solve different problems or let students create their own test. With student centered learning, students and teachers are committed to working together and finding the best achievable way of learning.

1. Progressivism in the Classroom

"Progressivisms build the curriculum around the experiences, interests, and abilities of students, and encourage students to work together cooperatively" (Sadker and Zittleman). The progressivist teacher would use games like Monopoly or Jeopardy to illustrate important points. Unlike Perennialists, Progressivists do not believe in teaching "Great Books," but use "computer simulations, field trips, and interactive websites on the Internet to offer realistic learning challenges for students, and build on students' multiple intelligences" (Sadkier and Zittleman, 2007). Many props are used to expand the students' abilities and to make them think a little differently. Instead of just lecturing to students, teachers try to find more interesting ways to communicate important learning techniques and this "affords students opportunities to explore ideas and construct knowledge based on their own observations and experiences" (Smerdon and Burkam, 1999). Teachers ultimately serve as their students' guide and they want their students to use problem-solving strategies they have learned in class to help manage the challenges of life.

2. Social Reconstructivism in the Classroom

"Social Reconstructionism encourages schools, teachers, and students to focus their studies and energies on alleviating pervasive inequities, and as the name implies, reconstruct into a new and more just social order" (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). Social reform is the key to this type of philosophy and social challenges and problems help guide teachers with their message. A social reconstructionist teacher wants to not only inform their students, but rouse emotions and point out the inequalities that surround them and the world (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). The teacher engages the students to discuss and address problems such as poverty, homelessness, violence and many more issues that create disparity. The teacher's role is to explore social problems, suggest alternate perspectives, and assist students' examinations of these problems (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). For examples in the classroom, "one group of students might analyze news coverage of racial and ethic groups of a community or students might arrest and trial records in order to determine the role race plays in differential application of the law" (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). The main focus of this philosophy is to help students find ways to improve society. The teacher wants the student to value society and realize that there is unfairness in the world and it is important to be aware and act as advocates for those who are being judged.

3. Existentialism in the Classroom

Existentialism is another student-centered philosophy. "Existentialism places the highest degree of importance on student perceptions, decisions, and actions" and individuals are responsible for determining for themselves what is true or false, right or wrong, beautiful or ugly (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). To sum it up, students make choices and then take the time to evaluate those choices. "The teacher's role is to help students define their own essence by exposing them to various paths they may take in life and by creating an environment in which they can freely choose their way" (Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). This philosophy means that students think for themselves and are aware of responsibilities assigned to them. Existentialism philosophies say no to tradition and focuses on the students' unique talents. The teacher views each student as an individual and students learn how to achieve their full potential by trying new concepts.

Conclusion

There are many philosophies that come along with teacher and student-centered teaching. Which one is the best? It depends on the content being taught. Research indicates that teachers' personal and professional characteristics are related to how they teach (Smerdon and Berkam, 1999). The way a teacher feels comfortable with the subject matter may influence him or her on how the subject will be taught. The most important goal is to teach the students and help them prepare for life after school. Both teacher-centered and student-centered philosophies can achieve that for the student.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3: History of Education

3.1: What are the educational milestones of the 17th and 18th centuries?
3.2: What are the educational milestones of the 19th century?
3.3: What are the educational milestones of the 20th century?
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3.1: What are the educational milestones of the 17th and 18th centuries?

by Kim Rodriguez

Education in the 17th and 18th centuries was influenced primarily by theologians, philosophers, and government which included the pedagogies of Sir Francis Bacon of England, Wolfgang Ratke of Germany, René Descartes of France, Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Switzerland, John Comenius (a.k.a. Komensky) of Moravia, and John Locke of England. There were other groups of teachers that impacted education reform during this period such as the Jesuits, the Oratorians, and the Puritan reformers; however, discussion for this text will focus on the individuals who have made an impact on education during this Age of Enlightenment. Ideologies and methodologies were set forth and established as a result of these influences, many of which are in practice today. For example, Comenius's ideas for separating students into three levels of schooling based on age is popularly structured in today's school systems. We have elementary, middle, and high school, as well as higher learning in colleges. The milestones that were made have changed the way education is perceived and the way in which teaching is conducted with great thought aimed towards what is best for the student to become a contributing member of society.

Sir Francis Bacon (1561–1626)

> **Note**
>
> Knowledge is power.—Nam et ipsa scientia potestas est - Sir Francis Bacon

Bacon observed that the educators of his time were close-minded and ineffective because they presented themselves as orators of empty rhetoric rather than teachers of factual scientific information based on proven theory. His approach to teaching included a method he called empiricism, "the doctrine that knowledge derives from experience" (Merriam-Webster). Bacon argued that pupils need to be prepared for life through proper schooling so that they would be better able to function within, and contribute to, their society. He believed that the science of life and the use of inductive reasoning would best prepare a person for nearly all aspects of living. One form of inductive reasoning and the empirical method that we use today is the Scientific Method, based largely on Bacon's philosophies of observing, studying, and analyzing factual data rather than relying on the ideas and guesswork of our own or others. The Scientific Method was originally named for him and is sometimes referred to as the Baconian Method (Encyclopædia Britannica).

Rene Descartes (1596-1650)

> **Note**
>
> I think- therefore, I am (cogito ergo sum) - Rene Descartes

Descartes had a different approach in mind for teaching and learning than Sir Francis Bacon's empiricist ideas. Unlike the analytically structured approach, he believed that the basis for learning originates from human reasoning which must be the foundation for all critical thinking and analytical practices. Arguably, one of his greatest achievements is his work, *La géométrie*. Descartes *La géométrie* explains how to apply algebraic computations to geometry, also known as Cartesian geometry today (O'Connor, Robertson). His work focuses on these major points:

1. First step towards a theory of invarients
2. Algebra makes it possible ro recognize problems in geometry
3. Algebra imports into geometry the principles of division and hierarchy method
4. Geometrical solvability is not possible without algebra

(O'Connor, Robertson)

René Descartes also the invented the way we plot points on a graph. This method is called the Cartesian Coordinate System, which is used the same way all over the world for purposes of mapping and graphing by plotting points (plot points horizontally first, vertically second). Although Descartes might be best known as a great philosopher, his most notable achievements are in the field of mathematics and much of his math theory (as shown in the table above) is in use today.

Note

Descartes awakened late at 11:00 each morning for most of his life due to an undetermined illness; however, during his stay with Queen Christina of Sweden he was requested to draw tangents each morning at 5:00. After a few months in this environment, cold and early morning awakenings, he died of pneumonia (O'Connor, Robertson).

John Comenius (Jan Komensky) (1592-1670)

Note

...the whole of the human race may become educated, men of all ages, all conditions, both sexes and all nations. - Comenius

The above quote comes from Comenius's work *Pampaedia*, in which he emphasized the belief that everyone should be educated to fulfill their lives, an ideal he called *Pansophism* meaning universal wisdom. Comenius, once a bishop of the Moravian Church, developed this philosophy shortly after escaping "religious persecution by taking refuge in Poland, Hungary, Sweden, and The Netherlands" (Gutek). Comenius was a leading philosopher of education during this period. He proposed the segregation of schools according to age and grade levels. At seven to 12, pupils would enter a "vernacular school" (Gutek) where there would be six different classes, one for each age. During this time the pupil would learn "religion, ethics, diction, reading, writing, math, music, economy, civics, history, geography, and handicraft" (Encyclopædia Britannica). In these lower levels, the pupil would hone his/her imaginative and memorization skills. At 13-18, pupils would learn Latin, i.e. grammar. Courses involving language arts and the sciences would be further studied. At 19-24, the pupil would continue on to higher education at a university which Comenius believed each province should establish. In 1657, Comenius's methods were incorporated into The Great Didactic which emphasizes two schools of thought: the Arts and the Sciences. Additional publications by Comenius were *The Gate of Tongues Unlocked* (1631), which was used to teach pupils Latin from their native language; also *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1658), which was a picture book for young readers. Comenius believed that children learned best through sensory perceptions and pictures that identified with labeled objects. Today, classes that are grouped by age, two primary schools of thought (arts and sciences), and the use of illustrated children's books to promote literacy is a nearly universal ideal.

John Locke (1632-1704)

Note

Let us then suppose the Mind to be, as we say, white Paper, void of all Characters, without any Ideas; How comes it to be furnished...? To this I answer, in one word, From Experience: In that, all our Knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives it self. - John Locke

The above quote comes from Locke's *An Essay of Understanding*. His main idea was that humans are born with minds that are "blank slates - *tabula rasa*, and empty of ideas" (Gutek). Locke believed that the human mind should entertain initial thoughts that should progress and yield to complicated thoughts and ideas. Locke believed that a person must experience what he/she learns from life situations. His writings were very important during the Age of Enlightenment because his thoughts focused not only on education during that era, but also government. State education was a major concern for philosophers during that period and Locke's influence in politics may have helped pave the way for his philosophies to take root in government planning for education.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

Note

I hate books; they only teach us to talk about things we know nothing about. - Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Rousseau helped bring about an educational revolution in France with his work "Emile". In this book Rousseau talks about how children should be allowed to be outside in the sunlight playing; this is where they learn the best. He also states that children have stages of development as they grow and education should coincide with them. Before age 12 a child is limited in the complex thought so they should be taught simply. Between ages 12 and 16 reason starts to develop and by age 16 children become young adults; young adults should be taught a trade such as masonry or carpentry. A child that grows up in this fashion will have the best possibility to develop to his full potential. Rousseau also says that education begins at home and parents should not preach but lead by example. For the most part Rousseau believes that children should make their own decisions and their educators should be there for support.

Educating the Masses during the Age of Enlightenment

During this era, philosophers and educators believed that deductive and inductive reasoning was paramount in the teacher and learning process. Though most of the 17th and 18th century pedagogies originate in Europe, these ideas made a great impact on influential Americans such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, who both saw the importance of scientific, critical, and exploratory thought, as well as "a civic education" (Gutek). So given all of these ideologies, many of which are closely aligned to one another in some way, how did some leaders of nations comply? Below are some examples of attempts that were made at that time.

In Prussia: Mandatory schooling for all children ages 5–14 was implemented under the regime of Frederick the Great of Prussia. His minister was Freiherr von Zedlitz who "supported the founding of new schools and the centralization of school administration under an Oberschulkollegium, or national board of education (1787)" (Encyclopædia Britannica).

In Russia: Catherine II of Russia attempted to nationalize education. She issued an education act in 1786 which called for two years of study in district schools followed by five years of study in provincial schools. Religious instruction was absent from these schools. Unfortunately, only half of the towns had the schools (approximately 250 towns). Alexander I implemented a system of education that was free and controlled by the state, which led all the way through the university level. However, years later these reforms came under re-consideration by conservatives.

In America: Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, well-known Francophiles and ambassadors to France, embraced and incorporated the new ideas which were implemented in the European countries as much as possible and helped influence a strong foundation for education in America. Compulsory education became paramount in early America. Although most school instruction was initially deeply based on religious modules from Puritanical influences, the later political separation of church and state (***First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States - Article [1] -*** [1]) removed religious instruction from state supported schools.

We take for granted that compulsory schooling in our world today is the norm; however, evidence indicates that nearly 50% of all children in the world (ages 6-18) do not attend school (Gutek). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) strives to help all children in the world to attend school and eradicate illiteracy. While much success has been achieved by such organizations, there is still much to be done.

Note

Thomas Jefferson declared that John Locke, Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton were the "three greatest men the world had ever produced" (Peterson, 1236).

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3.2: What are the educational milestones of the 19th century?

by Amber Showalter

Learning Objectives

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).

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).

Note

"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."

(Vail, 1911, p. 6)

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.

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3.3: What are the educational milestones of the 20th century?

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).

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.

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3.4: What are the educational milestones of the 21st century?

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

Note

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 Perspecitves 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, Delialioglu, Brown, 2008).

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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3.5: What is the history of teacher education?

by Rebeca Coleman

Learning Objectives

- 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

Note

"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

Note

> "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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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

4: Educational Reform

4.1: What are the effects of educational reform in the classroom?
4.2: How do magnet and charter schools represent new visions of public education?
4.3: What is the case for and against vouchers?
4.4: What are the benefits and drawbacks of home schooling?
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4.1: What are the effects of educational reform in the classroom?

By Sharon Manana

Introduction

Now more than ever, students have become progressively more infused with the use of technological advances both in the home and at school. In fact, a study by the Kaiser Foundation found that the typical 8-18 year-old lives in a home with 3.6 CD or tape players, 3.5 TVs, 3.3 radios, 2.9 VCRs/DVD players, 2.1 video game consoles, and 1.5 computers (Rideout, Roberts, & Ulla, 2005). As teachers, we can integrate technology in our curriculums and utilize these devices as a source for learning. Podcasting is commonly used as one such medium since educators use them to convey complex information for material that would be less interesting if it appeared in print (Villano, 2008, p. 2). With each passing day, teachers are changing their teaching methods as technology advances beyond the use of chalk and into the era of Power points. This benefits the students because technology integration has popularized itself as an innovative way to learn while keeping the students actively engaged. Furthermore, student interaction and discussion groups are other non-traditional approaches to teaching. The following sections will cover the various ways of teaching in the classroom with the help of technology integration, student interaction, and discussion groups.

Facts

The Kaiser Foundation also conducted several studies about how much media the majority of U.S. teenagers use. The results were as follows:

The Youth and Media	Statistics
Uses the Internet	87%
Hours a day playing video games	6.5
Uses the Internet at school	78%
Downloads music from the Internet	64%
Uses Instant Messaging	66%
Have a cell phone	39%
Have created a personal Web Site or Web Page	32%
Have an MP3 player	18%
Have a hand held device that connects to the Internet	13%

(Rideout, Roberts, & Ulla, 2005).

These are not surprising results considering the average student listens to their iPod while text messaging, navigating the Internet, watching television, and doing homework(Rideout, Roberts, & Ulla, 2005). Although technology used in this sense has been characterized as distractions by some, it can also be a means for us as teachers to stay connected with our students, while helping them learn.

Out with the Chalk, In with the... Technology?

For many years, teachers have had rows of students, chalkboards, and red apples on their nicely organized desks. Times have changed and instead of the student asking the teacher where Samoa is located, the student can easily navigate the Internet to find its geographical setting, governmental structure, history, and population capacity. Some teachers are adamant about not changing the way they teach primarily because students are relying more on technology and less on teachers (Teacher, 2005). For this reason, manufacturers like Apple and Microsoft are working with educators to make technology advantageous for everyone. Power points, iPods, and podcasts are some of the technological aids teachers use to help their students learn (Hitlin, Lenhart, & Madden, 2005). Teachers are slowly straying away from primitive methods of teaching and have turned to alternative techniques. For example, instead of passing out handouts in classrooms, teachers save paper by posting the handouts on Blackboard, even making it accessible for the students who missed class. Even teachers who are not accustomed to using Blackboard as a teaching tool, have

agreed that it is convenient (Teacher, 2005). As the world vastly advances in the Digital Age, it is our job as teachers to keep up with the times by erasing the chalk marks and using the laser pointers.

The "T" Word

> **Note**
>
> "It's much more important to give teachers a
>
> sense of the range of possible uses of technology and where any given technology activity may lie in
>
> that continuum" (Bledsoe, 2008).

Technology integration in schools has become a common phenomenon. It means, "Using computers effectively and efficiently in the general content areas to allow students to learn how to apply computer skills in meaningful ways."(Holland, 2005). Teachers are now using iPods for testing, podcasts for lectures, and Text Messaging for quizzes (Carstairs, M., 2007). A couple of years ago, these devices would be the reason teachers said, "Power Down," as students walked into classrooms but as of late, those two words are losing their significance. Research indicates that technology integration is a ground-breaking and exciting way to teach especially since students have become increasingly involved in their learning process(Holland, 2005). Also, technology integration has made learning a global enterprise for both counterparts, the student and teacher. A student in Japan can communicate with their teacher in Hawaii via Instant Messaging, a webcam, or even a cell phone. This is one of the remarkable ways students and teachers can stay connected. Technology integration has molded teaching into a simplified process and made learning an experience for academic success. Despite the praise it receives from both the student and the teacher, technology integration has confounded with the recipients of the Digital Age(The Children's Partnership, 2000).

The Downside to Technology

Unlike students, adapting to technology is not an innate trait for most teachers. In fact, some teachers are required to take courses to familiarize themselves with technological terms, the use of computers—software and hardware, the World Wide Web, Microsoft Word, Excel, Power point, etc. (Holland, 2005). The Digital Divide doesn't just apply to low-income households, foreign-born people, and the under-educated; it also encompasses the wide gap between student and teacher (The Children's Partnership, 2000). Because of this partition, many teachers have become oblivious to the ways in which students "beat the system." A prime example of this stupor is cheating. It has always been education's malignancy and every teacher's worst nightmare. For centuries, students have come up with multiple ways to double-cross the educational system and the use of technology has made cheating even easier. Rebecca Boone wrote a compelling article about one of the ways in which students use technology to cheat; iPods. Teachers who confiscated iPods have found answers to tests embedded in song lyrics, while others were recorded as part of the songs. The growing number of students' cheating caused some schools to ban the devices first in classrooms, then on school grounds (Boone,2007). "With ESL English, some astute students use cell phones for 'dictionaries', and the situation does occur when a student says 'dictionary' when seen texting" (Carstairs, 2007). In incidents like this, the student texts to get the answer to a question and since the teacher is unaware of how manipulative some technology is, they wont know that the student is cheating. It is equally imperative for teachers as well as students to familiarize themselves with technologies' capabilities so that any exploitation in the educational system can straightforwardly be avoided.

Remain Mundane Or Divert to the Digital Age?

Incorporating technology in one's curriculum is not mandatory for teachers but it is unquestionably beneficial for students. It is our job as teachers to prepare students for the future and real life experiences. Technology is an immense part for both aspects and for us to shun away from the idea is fundamentally unwise. Some teachers find technology undeniably difficult to use and that is understandable (Teacher, 2005). It is not by any means an easy task to grasp every part of technology but even the diminutive steps count toward a greater feat. Most teachers today have practiced the use of Power point in lectures as opposed to having their backs to the classroom as they fervently write on the chalkboard (Holland, 2005). For the most part, technology can make teaching pleasurable for both the student and the teacher but it is up to the teacher to make the first move; they can remain mundane in their teaching tactics or divert to the digital age. Ultimately, the goal is to teach the student in a way that is efficient, effective, and advantageous.

Supplementary Ways to Teach

The use of technology is certainly a great way to teach but other methods have proven to be just as superior. Research shows that student interaction and group discussions are other resourceful ways for students to learn (Picciano, 2002). This may be because of the peer-to-peer understanding students have with each other that they would not otherwise have with their teacher. Levels of competence, assessments, and difficulty are readily shared between students moreso than with their teachers. For this reason, when students learn from each other and discuss their findings, teachers are no longer confined to the traditional way of teaching but broaden the students' potential in terms of what they can contribute to the classrooms' learning experience (Hitlin, Lenhart, & Madden, 2005). In-person discussion boards or the ones found on Blackboard.com encompass the notion of student interaction on a couple of levels. For one, they encourage students to talk amongst themselves and rarely involve the teacher's input. They also promote social skills required in most real-life situations thus preparing the student for life after school(Picciano, 2002).

Summary

The amount of time students spend with the media and technology has grown immensely over the years (Rideout, Roberts, & Ulla, 2005). Teachers are no longer limited to one way of teaching their students and can simply incorporate the use of technology in their everyday learning. Also, student interaction and discussion groups are two different ways students can learn without necessarily following the traditional guidelines of what a typical classroom would look like; this refers to a teacher lecturing for a long period of time without any student input (Picciano, 2002). The use of all three teaching techniques make learning an efficient, effective, and advantageous way for students to learn. On the other hand, the use of technology in classrooms can be an arduous and time-consuming task but the benefits are well worth the efforts (Holland, 2005). Teachers are not required to use any alternative teaching methods in their current curriculums but students would appreciate new and creative ways to learn in order to be successful both in and out of school.

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4.2: How do magnet and charter schools represent new visions of public education?

By: jyaeg001

Learning Objectives

- Define the terms "magnet school" and "charter school."
- Explain how the school populations of magnet and charter schools are chosen.
- List the pros and cons of magnet and charter schools.
- Summarize what the research about these two forms of education reveals.
- Explain the concerns that teachers and parents should have about magnet and charter schools.

Introduction

In the early 1980s, the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued a report card for the public schools of the United States that showed a sharp decline in students' achievement scores (Noll, 2005). As a response to the news that the United States was no longer a leading country in preparing its youth for the future, educational reforms were initiated in many public school districts. Magnet schools and charter schools were two approaches that stirred excitement among parents and many educators. Exactly what are these alternative forms of education termed magnet and charter schools? Who is allowed to attend magnet and charter schools? What do proponents and critics say about magnet and charter schools? According to the research, how to magnet and charter schools compare with traditional public schools and what are the implications of the research findings for parents and teachers?

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).

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).

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).

Note

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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4.3: What is the case for and against vouchers?

by Lucyna Russell

Learning Objectives

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.

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

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). Proponents of school vouchers argue that vouchers targeted to low income families more clearly serve the goal of enhancing equal opportunity (Howell, West, & Peterson, 2008).

Note

" 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)

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

One of the arguments against school vouchers is that they violate the 1st Amendment which is the separation of church and state. Most private schools are religious and the majority of school vouchers go to religious schools, therefore, government funding to religious schools violates the 1st Amendment.(Messerli,2008). There have been many court decisions opposing and supporting the inclusion of religious schools. "The central question concerning the legality of state-supported school voucher plans under the U.S. Constitution is whether the inclusion of religious schools violates the First Amendment's establishment clause by allowing government funds to flow to religious institutions. Claims have also been made that free exercise and equal protection rights are abridged if religious schools are excluded from voucher programs that allow nonsectarian private schools to participate." (McCarthy,2007) The Supreme Court answered that question in 2002 when it upheld the decision in, *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*.The Supreme Court decided that the Cleveland Scholarship Program which allowed public funds for private education was neutral in providing choices to families and answered the establishment clause question in 2002(McCarthy,2007). In other words, it was not unconstitutional to provide public funding for religious education if it is the parents choice. However, a state is not required to include secular schools if other private schools are participating (McCarthy,2007).

Note

In the Washington DC Opportunity Scholarship Program the statistics showed that of those who participated:

- 65% went to Roman Catholic schools
- 17% went to other religious schools
- 18% went to non-sectarian schools

(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!

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4.4: What are the benefits and drawbacks 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). 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.

Currently 3%-4% of the US school-going population is homeschooled. 51% of homeschooled students are female while 49% are male. White students make up the bulk of homeschooled students at 68%. Hispanics make up about 15%; Black students account for 8%; Asian students make up about 4%. Until 2019, the number of homeschooled students had been growing by 2% to 8% each year. From 2019 to the fall of 2020, the percentage of homeschooled students changed from 3.4% to 9%.

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 and 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; bulling 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 waisted time standing in line for lunch, recess, others to finish their work, etc. and therefor 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.

Note

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 homes 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, softwar, 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 they 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 inconsistence 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).

> **Note**
>
> 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 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.

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4.5: Every Student Succeeds Act (replacing NCLB)

by Elizabeth Donoghue

Note

"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)

After the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), many educators and politicians loudly expressed their disagreement with the law and its regulations, while others lauded the accomplishments of successful schools around the country. The Obama administration began implementing its agenda, which was critical of aspects of the No Child Left Behind legislation. In 2015 President Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to replace NCLB.

The Pros and Cons of NCLB

List of the Pros of No Child Left Behind

1. It added structure to educational programs nationwide.
Although the standards were set by the states, No Child Left Behind became one of the first concentrated efforts to improve the standing of US students compared to the rest of the world. By creating standardized testing results, students could be compared via performance to identify learning gaps. That allowed more students to receive an individualized plan to improve their learning opportunities.

2. It held teachers and administrators accountable for student performance.
Before No Child Left Behind, it was easy to write off some kids as being "bad learners" or "troublemakers." With standardized testing requirements applying to everyone, the goal was to provide each student with a learning opportunity that suited them. If teachers or administrators could not provide that opportunity, the legislation offered remedies that would benefit students.

3. Socioeconomic gaps had less influence with this legislation.
The overall goal of No Child Left Behind was to provide students in disadvantaged areas an equal opportunity to learn compared to other students in the US. Children with special needs could receive detailed IEPs. Low-income families received resources without a large budget commitment. Bilingual teachers were brought into communities where English wasn't the first language.

4. Teacher qualifications were emphasized during NCLB.
In past generations, the only thing required to become a teacher was experience and perhaps a license. After No Child Left Behind, there were incentives in place to encourage teachers to pursue higher-level credentials. Teachers with a better education, in theory, can teach their own students in a better way. The goal of these improvements was pretty basic: to get the best-possible teachers in front of students in every community.

5. Resource identification became easier.
No Child Left Behind also made it possible for schools to be incentivized to find students who required extra help with their education. It wasn't just about losing money if test scores didn't "make the grade." Free supplemental help gives a child a better foundation for life without requiring a family or household to find extra financial resources. Extra teaching assistants and other classroom assets could be directed toward these students as well, ensuring the best possible school experience.

6. It gave parents a better understanding of their schooling options.
Many parents have their public school assigned to them based on their current address. With No Child Left Behind, families realized that they had more options than the assigned school. They could transfer students in-district to the best schools if there was room. They could go to a charter school if their district was consistently bad. In some areas, students could even go to a different school district to receive a better education. This process allowed parents to make better decisions because they had more information.

7. Minority students could provide an equal contribution.
Even in school culture, there is a majority vs minority culture in place. By providing minorities with an equal learning experience, students could learn more about one another. They could get to know different cultures and ethnicities in the safety of the classroom. That learning support even included information about different religions. It was a process that allowed every student to feel like they were contributing to the learning process.

8. It improved student test scores.
For the United States as a whole, No Child Left Behind brought about a general improvement in test scores since it was fully implemented in 2002. The test scores for minority students have shown some of the highest levels of growth since its first implementation. Although test score improvements have been happening since the 1980s and some may argue NCLB had no influence on this trend, it hasn't hurt test scores either.

9. Schools were required to report their data.
NCLB required schools, at the end of the 2002-2003 school year, to begin supplying an annual report card with a wide range of data. Student achievement information was required to be reported by sub-group demographics. Each school district had to break down the information on a school-by-school basis. In return, a $1 billion grant program was initiated to help states and school districts offer reading programs in K-3.

List of the Cons of No Child Left Behind

1. Many schools tied student performance to teacher salaries.
If students didn't perform well, then teachers received poor marks on their annual review. That offered the potential of losing a raise or even a job because students were under-performing. Since teachers have no real control over who is assigned to their classroom, many felt like this process kept them from teaching. They felt forced to "teach to the test" just so they could protect their own livelihood. It became a process that was intended to help students, but wound up hurting many learning opportunities instead.

2. The best students in a classroom were often ignored.
If a student could pass the standardized testing requirements and didn't need much help understanding the school work, then teachers and administrators often "passed the buck" on these achievers. Parents were given homework and instructions in some instances so that the teachers could focus on getting the grades of the other students up to an acceptable level.

3. The students with the worst grades in a classroom were often discarded.
Teachers and administrators would also pay little attention to the students with the poorest grades. The idea was that the best students would already pass and the students with the worst grades would never make it anyway. That meant many classrooms focused on teaching a core group of students that could potentially make the grade, leaving all other students to their own devices.

4. It created teacher shortages in many communities.
In a large urban area, strict teaching requirements are not much of an issue. There is a large enough population base to find the necessary instructors. In small, rural communities, teacher shortage areas became a real problem. It is an issue that is still plaguing many districts today. Specific subject areas are seeing shortages as well. For the 2016-2017 school year, the State of Washington listed 18 specific subject areas where there is a shortage of teachers, based on reporting from the USDE Office of Postsecondary Education.

5. Smart children do not always perform well on standardized tests.
Testing is not an accurate reflection of a child's ability to perform. Some children know the material, but the structure of the test is confusing to them. Audio portions of a standardized test may be affected by the quality of the equipment being used. Something as simple as a malfunctioning set of headphones can be enough to change a student's scores. Children with learning disabilities or special education needs were not excluded from the data either in many states.

6. It changed the goal of learning.
In the past, a grasp of the material being learned was the most important part of the school day. After No Child Left Behind became law, the emphasis shifted to teaching students how to properly take a standardized test. This created a limited range of knowledge for an entire generation of students. They know enough to pass a test, but do not really understand the subject matter that they tested successfully on. It's like knowing how to cook on paper, but not understanding how to turn the stovetop on when trying to make something in real life.

7. The structure of NCLB was more about money than student learning.
Some schools just didn't bother to care about what No Child Left Behind mandated. Since the only pull was Federal money, there were some districts that chose not to take the money so they wouldn't be liable for the outcomes. In a December 2003 report by the New York Times, school districts in 3 Connecticut towns turned away a total of $133,000 to avoid what one superintendent called a "bureaucratic nightmare."

8. Teachers could be involuntarily transferred.
Districts that had schools which were poorly performing had the option to replace their teachers. In 2007, an addition to No Child Left Behind allowed school districts to go around existing contracts to involuntarily transfer teachers from their preferred school to one that was performing poorly. In larger cities, the new schools could be more than an hour away and the teachers would be responsible for the added commuting costs. This issue created many rifts between teachers and administrators and many households saw that rift as an argument about money and nothing more.

9. It never really addressed the core issues behind poor student learning.
The No Child Left Behind legislation made three core assumptions about how students were failing to meet expectations: 1) that the curriculum was at fault; 2) that teachers and administrators were not performing as expected; and 3) that students were not spending enough time in a classroom environment. Factors such as large classroom size, poor building condition, or even hunger were not part of the legislation.

10. School funding was driven into test-related subjects.
Students in schools that were struggling to reach NCLB score mandates funneled money away from creative subjects. Instead of funding art or music, private tutoring and after-school programs that worked on homework with students was funded.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015, and represents good news for our nation's schools. This bipartisan measure reauthorized the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the nation's national education law and longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students.

The new law builds on key areas of progress in recent years, made possible by the efforts of educators, communities, parents, and students across the country.

For example, today, high school graduation rates are at all-time highs. Dropout rates are at historic lows. And more students are going to college than ever before. These achievements provide a firm foundation for further work to expand educational opportunity and improve student outcomes under ESSA.

The previous version of the law, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, was enacted in 2002. NCLB represented a significant step forward for our nation's children in many respects, particularly as it shined a light on where students were making progress and where they needed additional support, regardless of race, income, zip code, disability, home language, or background. The law was scheduled for revision in 2007, and, over time, NCLB's prescriptive requirements became increasingly unworkable for schools and educators. Recognizing this fact, in 2010, the Obama administration joined a call from educators and families to create a better law that focused on the clear goal of fully preparing all students for success in college and careers.

ESSA Highlights

President Obama signs the Every Student Succeeds Act into law on December 10, 2015.

ESSA includes provisions that will help to ensure success for students and schools. Below are just a few. The law:

- Advances equity by upholding critical protections for America's disadvantaged and high-need students.

- Requires—for the first time—that all students in America be taught to high academic standards that will prepare them to succeed in college and careers.
- Ensures that vital information is provided to educators, families, students, and communities through annual statewide assessments that measure students' progress toward those high standards.
- Helps to support and grow local innovations—including evidence-based and place-based interventions developed by local leaders and educators—consistent with our Investing in Innovation and Promise Neighborhoods
- Sustains and expands this administration's historic investments in increasing access to high-quality preschool.
- Maintains an expectation that there will be accountability and action to effect positive change in our lowest-performing schools, where groups of students are not making progress, and where graduation rates are low over extended periods of time.

The Pros and Cons of NCLB

List of the Pros of the Every Student Succeeds Act

1. It continues to advance equity within the K-12 public school population.
Before the 1960s, the best education went to students who had connections, money, or both. After the U.S. government made every child a priority, the goal was to provide equal access to the systems that could help the next generation be able to read and right. The Every Student Succeeds Act works to uphold the critical protections that are in place for students who come from disadvantaged families. There are also supports in place to provide assistance for high-need students who may struggle in the traditional classroom environment.

2. The ESSA requires all students to be taught to high academic standards.
Before the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act, individual planning for students meant that they would receive an education based on their evaluated capabilities. If you had a child in special education classes, then their requirements to graduate might be entirely different than a student in the school's gifted program. This legislation mandated for the first time in the United States that all students in the country were to be taught to the same high academic standards. The goal of this process is to prepare more K-12 students for their upcoming career or time in college.

3. It provides a vehicle for better communication between schools and parents.
The implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act meant that the vital information that students produce in the classroom are distributed to families, communities, and educators so that everyone knows where a student's progress is at any given moment. The K-12 student receives updates about their progress as well. Although this has caused teachers, administrators, and parents to talk more often, the real benefit here are the annual statewide assessments that measure the progress of each child with the high standards that are in place for their future success.

4. This legislation helps to promote local innovative methods.
Different communities must approach education in a way that best suits the needs of their district and the families they serve. The goal of the initial laws passed in the 1960s were to create more equality through civil rights legislation. It provided grants to districts that provided services to low-income students, including money for library books, textbooks, and educational centers.

Now the money goes toward place-based and evidence-based interventions that local teachers, administrators, and leaders create to encourage more educational opportunities. This benefit is consistent with the Promise Neighborhoods and Investing in Innovation programs that support public schools across the United States.

5. It expands the investments made into preschools in the United States.
The historic investments made into the country's preschools over the past decade are formalized in the Every Student Succeeds Act. This option is a fantastic solution for many families because it introduces young children to a consistent routine and structure. Most of the supported programs teach kids a variety of social, emotional, and cognitive skills. They also get to practice language learning in a safe environment, giving families an opportunity to start getting ready for kindergarten.

The Every Student Succeeds Act provides over $250 million in allocations for preschool grants. Although critics suggest that this amount is not enough to cover all of the needs for students in the birth-to-4 demographic, this figure is still significantly better than what was previously available.

6. The ESSA maintains the same emphasis on accountability.
One of the primary reasons why the United States continues to fall with regards to the quality of education that a child receives is because there was a lack of accountability in the system. No Child Left Behind took meaningful steps to correct this issue, but there

were also unreasonable standards in place that sometimes required 100% achievement rates – a near impossibility for some schools.

The Every Student Succeeds Act works to maintain the expectation that schools must be held accountable for the quality of the education they offer. This process works to create positive changes in the lowest-performing schools where students struggle to make progress. The expected outcome is to increase graduation rates over an extended period of time.

7. The federal government can still participate through grant stipulations.
Although states have the option to create their own solutions in the ESSA, the federal government still controls the purse strings of the grants. Updates to the template for grant approval went through in 2017 to encourage specific results. One of the most important changes made in the most recent update was to encourage the hiring of effective, in-field, experienced teachers whenever possible. Research finds that the best teachers typically look for employment opportunities away from the schools that underperform according to the local standards. This update encourages more funding to the districts who can encourage good teachers to come to the schools that need the most help.

8. It discourages the use of test results as a criterium for teacher performance.
Under No Child Left Behind, teachers were often graded based on the results that their students could achieve on the standardized tests. This issue caused many educations to teach subject information to the expected tests instead of providing a well-rounded approach that encouraged advanced learning outcomes. The Every Student Succeeds Act works to move away from the idea that a teacher should get a raise or not based on the fact that a random set of students could or could not meet particular expectations.

List of the Cons of the Every Student Succeeds Act

1. It maintains the status quo in many areas where previous attempts already underperform.
Even though the ESSA does improve the accountability concept in education across the United States, the 1,061-page bill, which is about 400 pages longer than the previous legislation addressing these issue, does not radically vary from earlier efforts to improve outcomes. This law relies on testing to create accountability outcomes, which can be an unreliable way to measure the success or failure of a student. The only primary change in this area is that it shifts the responsibility of implementation from the federal government to the states.

2. There is no effort made to address the root causes of inequality.
Because the Every Student Succeeds Act emphasis accountability in the K-12 system by looking at testing scores and classroom environment, the root issues that cause inequality don't get fixed yet again. When economic disadvantages are tied directly to the performance of a student, then the problems in public schools can only be fixed when there are ways to improve the standard of living in each community.

Although the ESSA is better because it takes a critical aim at the test and punish strategies that many schools were using under No Child Left Behind, a few valuable programs won't counter the adverse impacts that poverty has on many communities.

3. It removed the stipulation for adequate yearly progress.
Supporters of the Every Student Succeeds Act celebrate the fact that it provides more flexibility on the testing requirements placed on public schools. It also eliminates one of the vital areas of accountability that were used to ensure compliance with the expectations of No Child Left Behind. Under the ESSA, there is no longer the requirement to report adequate yearly progress on the test score gains from the student body.

There are some exciting changes that could support a better classroom environment in the future. The preschool development grants for low-income families is one of the strongest components of the measure. It even includes an arts education fund. When the states are given the requirement to hold their schools accountable, then who holds the overseers accountable as well?

4. There are more ways to mask inequalities in the ESSA.
Poor families and their communities show high levels of resilience, but that is not enough to help them achieve better results. All of the schools that received an F rating in North Carolina had a student population that was more than 50% low-income children. In 2013, the U.S. saw low-income children, defined as living in a household earning no more than 185% of the poverty threshold, became the majority of students in the public school system.

States will be testing 95% of children and intervening in the lowest-performing schools. Classrooms can then select the students who they believe will perform the best on the required tests, masking the results that the under-performing students achieve. Those who must take the test then feel like they are being given more work, so it encourages K-12 students with defiant personalities to tank the test on purpose.

5. It does not stop the process of school closures in some communities.
The testing mandates found in the Every Student Succeeds Act continue to make a retreat from the anti-poverty focus included in the original legislation from the 1960s. The Johnson administration said that poverty was the greatest barrier to educational opportunities. In cities like Newark, NJ, accountability doesn't mean taking the Title I approach that was in the original spirit of the law. It involves more testing, additional school closures, and potential long-term trauma to the kids because they receive the blame for the outcomes instead of the adults.

6. When schools close because of the ESSA, it hurts vulnerable students the most.
The communities and neighborhoods that see school closures most often are the ones that need this resource available to them. When the city of Chicago closed almost 50 elementary schools because of issues involving performance, African-American students were the majority population in 90% of the districts. What is even more disturbing is that about 60% of the impacted schools had a high concentration of special needs schools.

The answer from the ESSA is to replace the underperforming schools with charters. This educational approach offers mixed results through a preference for autonomy. Children with disabilities and those with English language barriers tend to struggle the most in this environment.

7. It keeps the federal government on the sidelines.
The obligation to education all children, no matter what their economic circumstances may be, gets weakened when the federal government decides to sit on the bench. The Every Student Succeeds Act creates a patchwork system where each state, territory, and district can potentially use a different system of accountability. This inconsistency creates the potential for unequal practices, which means the government has no way to intervene if there is resistance to certain kinds of reforms.

Note

"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)

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4.6: What is the purpose of school?

BY: Jennifer Scarce

Learning Objectives

- 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.

WHAT IS SCHOOL?

1. an institution where instruction is given, esp. to persons under college age: The children are at school.

2. an institution for instruction in a particular skill or field.

3. a college or university.

4. a regular course of meetings of a teacher or teachers and students for instruction; program of instruction: summer school.

5. a session of such a course: no school today; to be kept after school.

6. the activity or process of learning under instruction, esp. at a school for the young: As a child, I never liked school.

7. one's formal education: They plan to be married when he finishes school.

8. a building housing a school.

9. the body of students, or students and teachers, belonging to an educational institution: The entire school rose when the principal entered the auditorium.

10. a building, room, etc., in a university, set apart for the use of one of the faculties or for some particular purpose: the school of agriculture

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).

Note

"The central job of schools is to maximize the capacity of each student." ~Carol Ann Tomlinson

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4.7: Are we really a nation at risk?

By Ed Farinholt

Learning Objectives

- Identify specific risks outlined in the 1983 "Nation At Risk" document.
- Relate various means that the Public Education system has used to deal with the identified risks
- Name at least one method available to address the qualification risks faced by U.S. Public education teachers
- Identify some choices for increasing teacher motivation from a list of options

Introduction

Having been in school during the Ronal Reagan presidency and coming from a conservative political background these years were exciting to say the least. My friends and family were excited to hear that Dr. William Bennett had been named Secretary of Education and would be investigating the state of education systems in the United States. This article examines several of the risks identified by the National Commission on Excellence in Education headed by Dr. Bennett and assesses their relative merit vis-a-vie the advancements made in the United States public education systems.

Identified Risks

In 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education enumerated the following risks faced by the public education systems at that time in an "Open Letter to the American Public" entitled "A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform." (Gardner, 1983) The impetus for this commission, and ultimately this report (hereafter referred to as NAR), was the precipitous decline of the competitive advantage the United States enjoyed in the realm of education compared to that of other countries. (Segal, 2004) While students abroad have long sought advanced degrees from many of the United States noted medical and legal engineering and technological degree programs there has been a noted decrease in the number of Unites States-born students in these schools.

The NAR attempted to grasp for an ultimate direction the United States needed to take to insure the general increase in academic standards for both teachers and students. The directives of this article will focus on the recommendations made toward the public education system since they account for over eighty-seven percent of all United States students. (Hanushek, 1997) While the report from the Commission covers a wide berth of issues pertinent to the state of education, this article will deal with the risks identified in dealing with teachers.

1. Teacher qualifications
2. Teacher preparation weighted toward methods, vice subject matter expertise
3. Salaries are not condusive to attract highly qualified and experienced individuals to the field
4. Shortage of teachers qualified to teach such courses as mathematics, science, languages, as well as courses for gifted and talented or special needs students
5. Compared to other countries, there are severe deficiencies in the relative competency of both teachers and students in the areas of math and science

Considerations

Note

All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informal judgement needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. (Gardner, 1983)

While many erstwhile pundits have severely criticized the Commissions findings on the state of education, we will for purposes of this exercise address the ways these identified risks have been addressed to date. In truth, many of these deficiencies have been directly addressed in many of the High School programs throughout the country. We must also remember that public school education monies are largely dependent on local property tax dollars and heavy state and federal subsidies. It could be argued that local business investment in local schools may have a direct impact on supply of qualified graduates.

In practice high schools are designed to prepare students for both degree-oriented academics or vocational careers. In terms of financials, “expenditure outside of instructional staff salaries, going from one-fifth of total current expenditure in 1890 to one-third in 1940 and to more than one-half in 1990. “ (Hanushek, p. 5). School budgets must now cover everything from teachers but extended administrative personnel and counselors with extended social and even psychological skills. During some of my own experience during teacher observation I learned that public schools are now in a situation that all applicants must be accepted and accommodated. In addition, the introduction of technical resources such as computers and sophisticated measurement technologies into the public school classrooms has further extended expenses. When you add the fact that these computers require software, licenses and extensive support resources the price tag for maintenance magnifies each passing year.

Many regard the subsequent reforms imposed upon the education system as "laid down" and often missing the mark with regard to root problems faced by teachers. Teachers must now be equipped to handle a wide array of potential issues in their classrooms, especially with the onslaught of such conditions (properly or improperly diagnosed) as Attention Deficit Hyperac DisorderAcute Hyperactivity Disorder and those of students with English as a second language. While no one ever regarded the costs of providing and maintaining a public education system was ever going to be inexpensive, the jury is still out concerning the return on investment when the public schools attempt to effectively teach under such circumstances. No doubt this is why such programs as Standards of Learning (SOL) and demands for certification of all teachers has been promoted at both the state and federal levels.

Assessments

The publication of the NAR has resulted in numerous studies and controversies attempting to address some of the risks identified. Among those dealing with teacher qualifications, references were made to increased expenditures for both staff and non-staff resources. Schools today are equipped with technical devices such as cable television networks, local area networks, and sophisticated computer software in order to offer students access to the global world of educational opportunities. These in turn require staff who are well versed in these technologies, their maintenance and current uses of them in the global marketplace. The implications of this trend are staggering in terms of the support structure that will be necessary to keep students on an equitable if not a more advanced standing compared to students in other countries.

Teachers are obtaining advanced degrees and in many states must obtain certification from state mandated programs in order to teach. While these have been requirements for a number of years the breadth and extent to which these qualifications cover subject areas pertinent to modern classrooms has significant bearing. Skills such as assessment, familiarity with current technology and multimedia are bearing fruit in terms of involving students and enhancing educator's means of communication and lesson planning.

Tuition tax credits have resulted from the long and bitter battle for vouchers for parents seeking some relief from the taxation burden when in fact they chose to send their children to private schools. Whether for spiritual, advanced placement or special needs, the public school system did not always offer students a suitable environment to excel.

Standards of Learning (SOL) requirements have applied to children in public schools to gage their progress but unfortunately have caused the negative effect of pressure upon teachers to instruct toward specific test goals rather than tailor classes according to the more laudable intrinsic and formative form of pedagogy. The summative aspect of SOLs provide only a benchmark but have treated the objective of learning as the proverbial black box. (Black and William, 1998) Mr. Black and Mr. William contend the focus ought to be on the process of education and the use of formative assessment to insure students are on target with learning objectives and assisted as needed should they fall behind.

Charter, private and home schools have increased in number during the last ten years and bear witness to the increased participation of parents into the educational welfare of their children. Studies have shown that Charter schools have both increased the aptitude of both students who excel in public schools and minority students who would not otherwise have means or access to the advanced technologies or skilled teachers these institutions employ. (Hoxby, 2004) Home schooling have burgeoned and while their effectiveness has largely been at the primary school level, the author's experience is that the issues of limited socialization and technological opportunities faced by home schooled children are more than compensated by innovative parents pooling their collective resources to meet these needs. With this population of students growing yearly it would behoove the public education systems to study their methods.

Another consideration maybe that the problems with education today lay squarely in the laps of parents and guardian involvement in their children's learning. Given that the composition of students throughout the United States has become multicultural, the fact of cultural variances with regard to expectation of parents in regard to their children's knowledge levels brings to bear a much broader element of adaptability by teachers than even ten years ago. The rate of growth of Hispanic full-time teachers increased 2.7

percent to 5 percent between 1998 and 2003. (Weinberg, p. 10) Arguments have been made for bi-lingual education and in many states such as California, Florida and Texas.

Arguments have been made for bi-lingual education and in many area of this country such as Southern California and much of Texas and Florida this may in fact be a necessity. Following an original supposition of this article one could forcefully contend that if answers to educational reform should be indicative of the local community than in fact what happened in the Salinas high school district provides an excellent example of parental activism with regard to not just what their children ought to be taught but how it should be taught. (Arriaza, p. 14) This argument as been argued at a more universal level by Mr. Author Combs who notes that "educational reforms which do not have whole-hearted support of those who must carry them out are a waste of time, effort and taxpayer's money." (Combs, p. 4)

Another risk which was not broached by NAR was that of morals. When I was in elementary school I remember seeing videos about family planning produced by Planned Parenthool and videos discouraging from drug use like the plague. As an adult, I am offended that I only received part of the story with regard to these ethics while the Christian point of view was not even considered. Today school teachers and administrators cannot even provide an aspirin to a child without a release from the parent or doctor. Yet this same student can receive counseling about such moral decisions as birth control or abuse prevention with no consultation of the child's guardian. (FCPS, 2008)

Conclusion

School reforms ought to be a continual process. Unless public schools are constantly questioning their direction, their curriculum, and their motivations the changing world will continue to force their obsolescence. So in answer to the title of this article, the author proposes a resounding "YES." Risks are a part of life as everyone can attest. In fact it is the human condition to not only contend with but to face and conquer risks each day. While the right to education by all is firmly upheld in these United States there are many troubles introduced and even some ethical considerations which are inadvertently compromised. The degree to which our nation's educational systems, whether public or private, contend with the ever changing educational requirements will effect the competitiveness and even the moral fortitude of today's students. The ability to effectively teach our young the skills required to think, judge and choose properly, based on sound learning principles, will ultimately decide the degree of success our future leaders will have facing the challenges of the world.

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4.8: Are for-profit schools and corporate sponsorships viable?

by Myanc004

Can you imagine a school sponsored by NIKE or maybe Levi Straus? Would you be apprehensive about sending your son or daughter to a school that promotes specific products? What if that same school had the highest test scores in the state and the highest percentage of graduates going on to college? The very idea that our children could be subjected to commercial product endorsement as early as kindergarten may be of concern, but so too is the idea that our children are failing to rise academically in the global arena (Zeiger, 2004) (KJ, 2008).

Learning Objectives

- understand the motivations behind for-profit and corporate sponsorship of schools.
- know the concerns, advantages, and disadvantages of for-profit and corporate sponsored schools.
- recognize a for-profit and corporate sponsored school.

Introduction

For-profit schools claim they can better manage the school system and are more equipped to run the financial side of educating our youth. Those who agree with this premise believe it is the combination of forces in business, competition and profit, which will produce the exceptional education that people in the U.S. desire (Symonds, Palmer, Lindorff, McCann, "For-Profit", 2000).

In today's economic times, many people are concerned about the future. With the collapse of mortgage companies, banks, and insurance giants; coupled with rising fuel prices that make basic operating costs of schools difficult, many are struggling to obtain funding for the public school system (KJ, 2008).

This financial question has caused many public school systems to search for means of change from a seemingly unlikely source: the corporate world. Whether it is handing management of the schools over to a corporations, or merely seeking sponsored products and supplies, schools are looking to the business world (Keen, 2006).

In a search for a solution to this growing problems of public education; states, cites, and parents have considered many alternative answers, from school vouchers, charter schools, magnet schools, etc. This search has yielded a myriad of possibilities that are being attempted throughout the country today. Within these options is the alternative of outsourcing public schools to varying degrees to private businesses that may open up a wide array of educational choices. This alternative of corporate involvement was used by the city of Philadelphia, when in 2002, they turned over management of forty-two of their schools in an attempt to improve their school system (Steinberg, 2002).

Figure 4.8.14.8.1: Old classroom at Torf- and Siedlungsmuseum Wiesmoor (GFDL, Simplicius, Wikimedia)

For-Profit Schools

A simple explanation of a for-profit school is any school that operates in terms of making money.

Every decade seems to have its push for reform, and beginning in the early 1990s the idea of privately run public schools come to the forefront. This outsource of management of public schools to the private business sector are the educational management

organizations (EMOs) (Molnar, Miron, Urschel, 2008). These EMOs began in the early 1990s with the likes of the Edison Schools. An EMO, as defined by Molner, Miron, and Urschel in their report on for-profit schools, is, “an organization or firm that manages schools that receive public funds, including district and charter public schools. A contract details the terms under which executive authority to run one or more schools is given to an EMO in return for a commitment to produce measurable outcomes within a given time frame” (2008, p. 3).

The premise behind these for-profit schools is varied. Some feel that these schools are better able to respond to change and have the finances to provide it. Some also believe that the for-profit schools offer an opportunity to increase competition in both teaching approach and curriculum (Lips, 2000). Yet others believe that it is a natural expansion of the free market system and a “competitive market is the most effective and efficient way to make schools accountable and to determine the success or failure of a school” (Lips, 2000, p. 8).

In a typical EMO, the corporation is initially burdened by large start-up costs and entrenched teacher’ unions, but they are also free of some regulations that allow greater latitude for designing the school and its curriculum (Lips, 2000).

When considering for-profit schools, one has to also look at those operating in the college and trade school market venues. These include the likes of DeVry, ITT, and University of Phoenix to name but a few. These for-profit institutions have attempted to fill a niche for career training and have been able, in the past to create considerable profit for their investors with a 460% stock increase during the years of 2000-2003 (Brown, 2004).

For-Profit Schools	
"Innovations	**Obstacles**
New or varied curriculums designed to improve student performance	Huge capital costs: Unlike public schools, must pay for their own buildings
Longer school days and school years	Political opposition from the education Establishment
Most don't have teachers' unions, but offer merit pay and stock options	Far fewer *frills*, such as extracurricular activities
Less spending on administrative and central-office expenses	Fewer programs for severely disabled/special-education students
More parental involvement	More difficulty attracting experienced teachers
Freedom from traditional school bureaucracy	Huge startup costs mean most companies are losing money" (Symonds, Palmer, Lindorff, McCann, "Primer", 2008)

Corporate Sponsorship of Schools

Corporate sponsorship, on the other hand, takes many forms in the school system. Corporations are involved in the full management of schools (EMOs), but also involve themselves in many other lesser forms. These involvements are seen in schools selling naming rights to locker rooms as in the case in Sheboygan, Wisconsin (Keen, 2006). In order to increase their revenue and be able to better afford the costs of educating children, they renamed their gym for the sum of $45,000 (Keen, 2006).

Other schools have followed suit and done similar things.

- In Newburyport, Massachusetts the school collected from $5,000-$100,000 for the renaming of several buildings (Keen, 2006).
- An insurance company paid $650,000 for the ability to name two athletic field houses after their company (Keen, 2006).

Corporation sponsorship also takes the form of materials used in the classrooms, such as, pamphlets and books that are funded by businesses. Businesses further sponsor school activities by providing uniforms for sporting activities, backing the “Book-it” program, and the program Channel One that is offered to schools ("Corporate-Sponsored", 1998).

In the case of the Channel One program, viewing participation of schools allots them the benefit of free visual media players ("Corporate-Sponsored", 1998).

In some school lunchrooms, corporations aid schools by providing students the availability to purchase Subway, Pizza Hut, or Arby’s for lunch at their own school ("Corporate-Sponsored", 1998).

Pros	Cons
Increased revenue	Commercialism
Longer school days and school years	Students subjected to advertising campaigns
Larger budgets for school activities	Objectivity clouded
Still maintain public school status	

Results

Of the six largest for-profit organizations operating in 2000, none of them were making a profit, (Symonds, Palmer, Lindorff, McCann, "The Business", 2000).

Harvard study found that between 2002 and 2006, Philadelphia EMOs had a 10-8 percentage point increase over the other public and district run schools operating in the same area. (Garland, 2007)

Many for-profit schools remain unregulated and in the state of California, it is the responsibility of the student to assure accreditation, until full disclosure laws become enacted (Fensterwald, 2008).

A slight yearly increase in the number of EMOs, approximately 2 additional EMOs in 2007, and student enrollment, approximately 25,000 students, has been seen. (Molnar, 2008, p. 7-10)

Suggestions

The debate over the extent or even involvement of private corporations in the school system stems from a concern over influence and goals. Since corporations are by nature indebted to their stockholders, where do their loyalties lie when running a school? This is the concern that motivated the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 1999) to advise a focus on these eight steps to maintain the integrity of education where corporations are involved:

- • "Corporate involvement shall not require students to observe, listen to, or read commercial advertising.
- • Selling or providing access to a captive audience in the classroom for commercial purposes is exploitation and a violation of the public trust.
- • Since school property and time are publicly funded, selling or providing free access to advertising on school property involves ethical and legal issues that must be addressed.
- • Corporate involvement must support the goal and objectives of the schools. Curriculum and instruction are within the purview of educators.
- • Programs of corporate involvement must be structured to meet an identified education need, not a commercial motive, and must be evaluated for educational effectiveness by the school district on an ongoing basis.
- • Schools and educators should hold sponsored and donated materials to the same standards used for the selection and purchase of curriculum materials.
- • Corporate involvement programs should not limit the discretion of schools and teachers in the use of sponsored materials.
- • Sponsor recognition and corporate logos should be for identification rather than commercial purposes."(NCSS, 1999)

Conclusion

We all want the ability to have and offer the best possible education for our youth and ourselves. Though there may be debate as to how to achieve this, for-profit schools and corporate sponsorship of schools is an option to attempt to achieve our full potential as an educated country.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

5: Diversity - Classroom Practices and Law

5.1: What is Inclusion?
5.2: What can be done to handle students with ADHD in the classroom?
5.3: How can we teach English language learners?
5.4: How can we be culturally responsive in our teaching?
5.5: How can we be sensitive to gender issues?
5.6: How does code-switching come into play in the classroom?
5.7: What issues do lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students face in the classroom?
5.8: Gifted students can take care of themselves, right?

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5.1: What is Inclusion?

By Emily Mitchell

Note

"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 teacers 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 yo 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 thngs 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, Thonpkins). 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.

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.

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5.2: What can be done to handle students with ADHD in the classroom?

by Amy B. Williams

Learning Objectives

- 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.

Note

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.

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:

Note

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!

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

- Ignoring mild inappropriate behavior (Nowacek and Mamlin, 2007). An example might be, "Alright, I see all but two of my students sitting in

  their chairs and getting ready to go to lunch." This is purposely ignoring the inappropriate behavior, while rewarding the students with
  appropriate behavior.

- Putting a hand on the student's shoulder to remind him or her their behavior is escalating ("Advice for schools..., 2005).
- If the student is destructive or disruptive, the teacher can incorporate a time out system where the student is immediately asked to put away

  their work and place their head on their desk (Barkley, 2005).

- Use a timer that is started when bad behavior is occurring, which is then taken off recess time for the ADHD student (Barkley, 2005).
- Start each day by giving the student 15 minutes of free time to use in the classroom. From that time, the teacher can deduct a minute of free

  time for every instance the student was seen not working or acting inappropriately (Barkley, 2005).

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:

- Provide structure at all times in the classroom and remain calm (Charles, 2008).
- Get eye contact before giving instructions or asking questions (Rief, 2005).
- Stand close to the student to allow for less distraction (Charles, 2008).
- State directions in a logical and ordered sequence (e.g., first, next, last). The teacher should aim for educating the student on how to

  follow rules as quickly as possible without repeating them (Charles, 2008).

- Have the student repeat verbal instructions to ensure he or she clearly understands what is being said (Rief, 2007).
- Provide advanced warning when a change is about to take place (e.g., in five minutes we are going to put away our math work and begin our

  reading). This reduces anxiety and frustration (Rief, 2007).

- Use webbing techniques for writing and graphic organizers, which helps with visual-spatial skills (Harwell, 2007).
- Take five minutes with the student each day to make sure he or she is using a planner for organization (Harwell, 2007).
- Charts and outlines are useful in maintaining attention and understanding concepts (Harwell, 2007).
- Divide tasks into chunks to help decrease frustration and make tasks obtainable (Swanson, 2007). An example might be, "Hayden, we

  will do 15 minutes of writing and 5 minutes of computer."

- Consider shortening assignments if they are too long and overwhelming to the student (Nowacek and Mamlin, 2007).
- Utilize the computer as much as possible with an ADHD student as it will give them immediate feedback (Amen, 2001).
- Give the student encouraging and positive feedback to increase his or her motivation and attention (Rief, 2005).
- Consider how desks are arranged in the classroom and be sure ADHD students are grouped with other non-diagnosed students. Frequently switch

groups of two students so the ADHD student builds relationships with other students in the classroom. An ADHD student wants nothing more than

to be accepted by others (Nowacek and Mamlin, 2007).

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.

Note

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.

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5.3: How can 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.

Note

> “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”.

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 then 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.

> **Note**
>
> "Plan assignments that bring student's cultures, families, languages, and experiences front and center".

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.

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5.4: How can we be culturally responsive in our teaching?

by Jenny Pennington

Learning Objectives

- 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.

Note

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, Greendfield, 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.

Note

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.

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5.5: How can we be sensitive to gender issues?

Learning Objectives

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 an 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 earn 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.

Figure 5.5.1: The teacher is new this year. She boards for $7.50 a week, receives an annual salary of $800. Most such teachers don't stay on since if they are well qualified, they can get better paying jobs elsewhere. (Public Domain, USDA, Wikimedia)

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.

Figure 5.5.2: Japanese school girls (CC-BY, l'interdit, flickr)

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.

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5.6: How does code-switching come into play in the classroom?

Written By: Trenice Durio

Learning Objectives

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?

Note

Definitions of Code-Switching

“consciously modifying speech to slip from one culture to another.”

(Haddock, 2008)

“change from lexical register to another”

(McCoy, 2006, p. 24)

“Shift in language that is guided by a shift in context”

(Knestrict & Schoensteadt, 2005, p. 177)

“use of complete sentences, phrases, and borrowed words from another language”

(Hughes, Shaunessy, and Brice, 2006, p. 8)

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.

Note

Types of Code-Switching

Borrowing: Saying "Bueno bye" (Spanish and English) instead of "Goodbye" (English) or "Buenos dias" (Spanish)

Calque: Saying "El lote deparquear" (Improper Spanish Translation) instead of "Parking lot" (English) or "Campo de estacionamiento" (Proper Spanish Translation)

> **Intersentential**: Saying "Sientense, students" (Spanish and English) instead of "Sit down, students" (English) or "Sientense estudiantes" (Spanish)

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.

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5.7: What issues do lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students face in the classroom?

By Jocelyn Carter

Learning Objectives

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?

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 & Hershbeger, 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).

Note

"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

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 upmost importance that these students are treated with respect and equality.

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5.8: Gifted students can take care of themselves, right?

by Candace Grantz

Introduction

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.

> **Note**
>
> 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 time. You'll starve them. – Elizabeth Meckstroth

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.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

6: School Organization

6.1: Are all schools created equal?
6.2: How are individual schools governed?
6.3: What are the roles of local, state and federal agencies in education?
6.4: Should I join a union or professional organization?
6.5: Who decides if I am successful, and how?

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6.1: Are all schools created equal?

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6.2: How are individual schools governed?

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6.3: What are the roles of local, state and federal agencies in education?

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6.4: Should I join a union or professional organization?

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6.5: Who decides if I am successful, and how?

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

7: Curriculum

7.1: Is it still the "three Rs"?
7.2: Is there a "hidden curriculum"? Where is it hiding?
7.3: Who decides what is taught?
7.4: Are we moving toward a national curriculum?
7.5: How can we prepare all students for life after high school?
7.6: What are the effects of standardized testing on school curricula?

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7.1: Is it still the "three Rs"?

Krista Olah

Learning Objectives

- recognize and understand the concepts of the original R's
- grasp the basic concepts of writing
- understand the differences between phonics and whole language
- decide if a piece of work is plagiarized

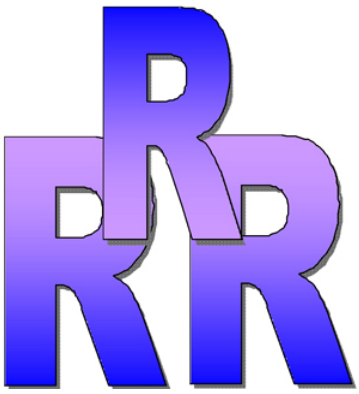

Figure \(\PageIndex{1}\): The three Rs (CC-BY-SA, Kolah001 Wikimedia)

Introduction

Back in the 1800's, Sir William Curtis an alderman later dubbed Lord Mayor of London made a toast to the Board of Education(Sir William) about "reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic"(American Heritage). It is unknown if he pronounced the words inaccurately on purpose due to illiteracy or if he was trying to be ironic. Either way, the phrase was found intriguing and used by others. However, there are more subjects in today's schools, more and different jobs that involve technology and other medias than there was in the 1800's, so it's smart to say that the 'Three R's' have changed or expanded from just reading, writing, and arithmetic. Because of this teaching has changed as a whole, instead of focusing on teaching the original 'Three R's' we are now teaching multiple subjects.

Original Three R's

When Sir William Curtis introduced the 'Three R's', it was from then on assumed that reading, writing, and arithmetic would be the basis of education. One had to master these three subjects before he, and sometimes she, could move on in life and be successful. From there he could go into a profession and learn other subjects such as science, history, literature, etc. In modern times we are taught first how to count, recite the alphabet and recognize it. Afterwards, we expand to applying this knowledge into reading literature, studying history, investigating science, and others. From there we choose different electives to study more in depth leading us to our chosen careers.

Students should be able to absorb the 'Three R's' knowledge and use it. Basically being able to recite, recognize, and write letters' then form them into words. Finally, these words can become sentences, paragraphs, papers. Students also need to know how to count and calculate. From there they can solve mathematical problems that can help with medical, scientific, and technological breakthroughs. However there are certain rules and steps they need to follow in order to do these things properly.

Reading

The ongoing debate on how to teach to read is whether to use phonics, pronouncing the word by each syllable, or whole language, emphasizing the use and recognition of words in everyday context (whole language). The debate is whether to stress technique and mastery, phonics, or meaning and context, whole language (Roy). There are three sides to this, those supporting phonics, those in favor of whole language, and some who believe that reading should involve both ideas. "Research evidence also shows that a balanced approach works better for children learning to read" (Early).

Writing

Writing follows precise rules such as grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Grammar includes:

- Person, Place or Thing
- Subject, verbs and their agreement
  - Fluffy and Babydoll are my pets.
- Pronouns
  - I, You, He, She, It, We, They
- Adjectives
  - Describe Nouns
    - "sweet apple"; "ugly color"
- Adverbs
  - revise any word except for nouns and pronouns
  - answers how, when, where
    - "swam quickly"

Punctuation includes:

- Periods, Quotation Marks, Question Marks, Exclamation Points
- Colons, Parenthesis
- And many more

Along with the writing rules, there is also a **legal** rule. Plagiarism, the use of one's words or ideas as your own without crediting them, in education betrays trust in the student and teacher, creates liars and dishonest people. Plagiarism is also theft, if caught you could face charges from failing the paper being arrested, having a record, and paying a fine. However, some may not realize that they are plagiarizing. Here are some tips on how to avoid it, always give credit when (Overview):

- another person's ideas, opinions, or theories are used
- facts, statistics, graphics, drawings, music, etc.,is used and did not come from the government
- quoting
- paraphrasing
- giving a fact that is not common knowledge

Arithmetic

Math is important because we use it in everyday routines, such as(Importance):

- Problem solving
- Budgeting money
- Time management
- Calculating tips and tax
- Memorizing phone numbers and locker combinations
- Estimating distances or weight

Figure \(\PageIndex{2}\): A clock icon (BSD, Vadim Plessky, Wikimedia)

Fourth R and Beyond

In today's classrooms reading, writing, and arithmetic are still the basis for learning everyday subjects such as math, literature, history and science. However, knowledge in the classroom does not stop there but continues on into saving the environment, forming relationships, and expanding the creative side of your brain. If you were to go out into the world today and ask people what they thought the "Three R's' were you might be told multiple different things such as Relief, Recovery and Reform from the Great Depression; or Revenue, cost Reduction, and Regulations from a businessman (Three Rs). Although, these 'Three R's' do not relate to education another set does and that is reduce, recycle and reuse (Waste Hierarchy).

Reduce, Recycle, Reuse

It may not seem to be a part of education; however, teachers are always trying to teach their students to conserve and be a part of repairing the environment. Some schools, such as Southeastern Elementary in Chesapeake, Virginia, will have each grade level plant at least one tree every year. The students are being taught how to use scissors correctly and are praised when they waste as little paper as necessary. Teachers even come up with art ideas such as using old scraps of paper to form a collage.

Relationship

Teachers today want their students not only to be successful in technology and knowledge, but to be able to go out in the world and form a relationship with friends, family, boss, co-workers, future children, and future husband/wife.

Rhythm

Music is a part of everyday life. People listen to it in their car, at home, in movies, while trying to relax, at concerts, and much more. Music is a stress reliever and helps increase energy. Music cannot be made without rhythm. As a fourth R, Rhythm can also be used to help memorize a poem, or make a story interesting like in the movie "Renaissance Man".

Art

Art, Fine Art, is important because it brings knowledge to your brain, senses, and emotions, basically educating your soul. Art teaches many things such as observing reality, making judgments,understanding the human conditions, expressing values, training the mind, and uniting reason and emotion(Fourth R).

Some educators believe that one or more of the above should be added on to the 'Three R's'.

To Answer the Question

In my opinion, the basics of learning reside in the original "Three R's", however as time goes on we expand our knowledge. Since we are expanding our knowledge there are more lessons being taught. Some of these lessons have SOL's, Standards of Learning tests (state of Virginia)such as a being able to read the amount of liquid in a tube whereas others do not such as Recycle, Reduce and Reuse. Just like in the debate of phonic and whole language, it is the combination of all these things and more that make up education.

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7.2: Is there a "hidden curriculum"? Where is it hiding?

by Aubrey W. Bibbs, Jr.

Learning Objectives

1. Reader should be able to recognize various types of hidden curriculum/character education.

2. Reader will be able to identify reasons for implementing a hidden curriculum/character education into an existing curriculum.

3. Readers are expected to distinguish the differences between the goals associated with hidden curriculum/character education from those of a traditional/formal curriculum

Introduction

The Random House College Dictionary (1988) defines curriculum as: “the aggregate of courses of study given in a school, college, etc” (p. 328). The term “hidden curriculum” comes from the concept that such an aggregate of courses is comprised of a curriculum which is both formal and informal, also known as written or directed curriculum and unwritten or undirected curriculum respectively. Formal curriculum is traditionally an explicit lesson plan, either produced by the individual teacher or created by the school/school district intended to address intellect and/or vocation, and teach lessons in areas of study such as: mathematics, science, reading, writing and art. Informal curriculum, commonly referred to as hidden curriculum, due to its implicit nature, addresses behavioral and character aspects of life which include, but are not limited to: social responsibility, personal relationships, competition, respect for authority and time management. These aspects are taught by such methods, techniques and procedures as class bells, restroom passes, dress codes, classroom etiquette, class rank charts, etc.

The general consensus is that hidden curriculum has the potential to teach, stimulate and foster good or bad lessons, behavioral pattern and character traits respectively. Some educators feel that hidden curriculum is creating more negative repercussions for students and society, than it is positive results. John Taylor Gatto (1992) expressed his concern during a speech by stating, “…these are the things you pay me to teach. 1. CONFUSION…2. CLASS POSITION…3. INDIFFERENCE…4. EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY…5. INTELLECTUAL DEPENDENCY…6. PROVISIONAL SELF-ESTEEM…7. ONE CAN’T HIDE…” (p. 2-12). His main argument was that hidden curriculum was “dumbing us down” (Gatto). This was a popular sentiment echoed throughout school systems and communities in the U.S. over the past thirty to forty years.

Teaching Character

Recently, in the past ten to fifteen years, there has been a collective effort by parents, educators and politicians alike for schools to look into placing more focus on areas of hidden curriculum such as, character education; also referred to as value education or moral education intended to help students “to acquire certain character strengths: sound judgment, a sense of responsibility, personal courage, and self-mastery” (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 207), and realize both the individual benefit and the benefit to the greater good of society when they “internalize these lifelong habits” (p. 207). This movement was brought on by obvious indications that our nation's youth was lacking sufficient moral fiber as demonstrated through “frightening statistics about youth homicides and suicides and by soaring numbers of teen pregnancies“ (p. xiii), staggering high school drop out rates and gang affiliation. As a result of the movement to create formal programs which propagate positive outcomes by focusing on the potential that hidden curriculum has to influence character development, the term “hidden curriculum” has become synonymous with character education. Another point presented by advocates for character education is that a value/moral driven curriculum was deemed a necessity by our nation’s founding fathers, such a Thomas Jefferson, who believed that formally teaching virtue early on was integral to the ultimate success of our nation and its established structure (Lickona, 1991).

Note

“To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society” (Lickona, 1991, p. 3).

Criticism

One would be hard pressed to find a teaching philosophy, idea or technique that was introduced without some form of criticism, skepticism or opposition. So, despite concerns from educators in regards to the countless challenges that students face beyond the scope of academics, an air of skepticism still lingers among many. Taking into consideration the enormous pressures placed on

educators to create and implement lesson plans in accordance with No Child Left Behind legislation, consequently forcing many teachers to make drastic adjustments to their preexisting curricula and teaching styles; many educators find it unfeasible to introduce and implement a character driven curriculum while simultaneously maintaining a traditional academic driven curriculum (Allred, 2008, November). Another source of pessimism stem from claims that character education "amounts to imposing particular values or personality traits on young people or crude manipulations of children by dominant powers in their lives" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 140). Simply put, some educators feel that character education is nothing short of "brainwashing" (Ryan & Bohlin, p. 140) children. Aside from fear of a decline in academic standing, failing to meet academic benchmarks or indoctrination, educators are open to and optimistic about employing a curriculum that encompasses both academic advancement and character development.

Character Education Programs

There are dozens of character education programs in practice today, making it unfeasible to discuss each one individually. Instead, an overview of some of the key overlapping points from the numerous character education programs currently in use is a more practical approach. Most programs adopt a curriculum centered on a structure that promotes a synergy among the individual student, community and society. Essentially, these programs expect to teach students to make positive decisions not just for self benefit, but for the well being of others. Due to the nature of such programs and their goals, they are often divided into components or levels. Some programs consist of more components than others (components within components), but essentially share three similar components: the school, the family and the community. Additionally, these programs rely heavily on a philosophy that encourages students to use a three division cycle of self-reflection in order to develop good character habits. This cycle is comprised of a continuum of moral knowing/thoughts/thought, moral feeling/feelings/emotion, moral actions/actions/response. Supplemental lessons/techniques common to character education programs include: leading by example, moral literature, storytelling, and cooperative learning to name a few.

Positive Action, a character education program which has been widely used in the state of California for over five years is an example of a program that has successfully incorporated a synergistic structure in its lesson format combined with a self-reflecting philosophy in efforts to build good character traits and behavior while maintaining, and in many cases improving academic standards. In fact, "it was recognized as the only program in the nation to simultaneously improve academics and behavior in character education" (Allred, 2008, November, p. 27) by the U.S. Department of Education What Works Clearinghouse.

Note

"Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of a master… Nothing is of more importance for the public weal, than to form and train up youth in wisdom and virtue" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 220).

Conclusion

Hidden curriculum, more specifically, character education has been revered by many as an essential educational element since the birth of our nation and the development of our nation's educational system. Despite mild criticism, character education has an abundance of benefits on an individual, communal and societal level having both immediate and long term pay outs. Additionally, taking inventory of the moral issues associated with our nation's teenage demographic couple with evidence that character education has the ability to simultaneously instill strong morals and values, creating good character and improve academic performance is proof positive that there is an ever present need for a curriculum that incorporates character education into traditional academic driven education.

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7.3: Who decides what is taught?

Note

"Good schools, like good societies and good families, celebrate and cherish diversity." —Deborah Meier

Food For Thought

A school's core curriculum should not be shaped without forethought. What do our students need to know today? What will they need to know tomorrow? What about their unique and individual lives determines what they need to know? Finally, wrapping all of these issues into the question at hand, who decides what is taught?

- Consider the following questions, and develop your own opinion.

Must a student's socioeconomic-driven factors and personal needs be considered in order to form a proper educational plan? Must each of us learn the same content nationwide in order to reach a proper level of education?

Local, or National?

Throughout the history of American education, a student's need for the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic has been obvious and a concentration of the accepted curriculum. But, our national curriculum was not always nationally shaped. In the past, before America's school system operated under national oversight, teachers traveled from town to town and worked on a freelance basis for a few weeks. Without oversight, the teacher taught as he/she saw fit.

Modern strides in science have made staples of classes focused on branches of biology, computer science and advanced mathematics, especially for students thinking of attending a university and going into fields requiring further academically-advanced skill sets. Elective studies, often geared towards the arts, have a tendency to receive funding based on availability, rather than out of necessity. "Funding for the visual arts, music, theater and dance are losing ground across the country due to a ballooning deficit and legislation that caters to standardized testing...Compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act, which makes teaching to standardized testing regulatory, is being cited by some in the education field as the main reason why arts funding is on the chopping block as the first sacrifice to be made (Harbaugh)." So, we recognize nationally that there are basic classes needing to be taught, and that others are not always necessary in order to lead a successful life. These cut classes have been classified as optional when funding runs low, and when well-intentioned acts, such as No Child Left Behind, place emphasis on instilling the fundamentals of modern education. In turn, national philosophies are not able to always satisfy local and personal needs, therefore curriculum should be drafted with some insight.

One study determined that nationally-controlled educational systems have teachers who are "more likely to teach the same mathematics curriculum as teachers in educational systems with local control (Stevenson/Baker, 1)." This, as we've examined, means that we seem to have a national understanding regarding the importance of core education. The study goes on to show a disparity, stating that, "when the control of curricular issues is at the national level, the amount of the mathematics curriculum that is taught is generally not related to the characteristics of the teachers of the students, whereas in educational systems with local control, it is related to teachers' and students' characteristics (Stevenson/Baker, 1)." Locally controlled bodies draft culturally-influenced curricula, while still teaching alongside national regulations. This is an important factor when considering the amount of authority that should be placed on national boards, versus local decision making boards.

Is it better to have a broad-reaching math (or any other field of study) education plan, or is it better to have a plan geared towards the needs of particular communities and states? A state that makes much of its money off of nuclear engineering, or the manufacturing of battleships, could require a workforce with higher math skills than a part of the country graduating future farmers.

That said, Even if higher levels of math (as an example) weren't required in all states, or areas of a state, every level of math education should still be made available to any student desiring the content. This can be provided through distance-education means, like internet broadcasts. A national board may not have the foresight to dedicate particular classes to areas of the country with varying educational needs, and certain districts may simply not have the funds to hire teachers for less-than-popular class choices; today's ever-cheaper communication advances can help fill in any gaps.

Who determines content?

Who decides what is taught? "In the U.S., each state, with the individual school districts, establishes the curricula taught. Each state, however, builds its curriculum with great participation of national academic subject groups selected by the United States Department of Education (Wikipedia)." It's a team effort, but the debate involves determining which body should have the heaviest hand in the final decision making process, regarding what should be offered.

In one experiment of ways to govern a school system (the Denver Curriculum Program), teachers were given the duty of helping to recreate the school system's curriculum. The outcome was that "Teacher participation resulted in a teaching staff increasingly alert to its problems. The program of curriculum revision had stimulated and motivated professional study and had been most effective in creating the desire for the assistance of constructive supervision. Teacher participation had also resulted in the emergence of leadership. It placed a premium on the initiative of the individual teacher (Peltier, 215)." Teachers were able to step up and take the reigns of their schools. This might not be possible everywhere, depending on the collective ambitions of individual teaching staffs, but here is an example of how local decision making works, and can benefit an area. As a bonus, the teachers' involvement boosted the confidence of the local school structure in its own capabilities.

Another part of the debate should mention the creation of textbooks. Regardless of the decisions as to what is taught, and where, eventually the curriculum will revolve around the content that is held in textbooks. Textbooks are not written by high-school teachers, for high-school teachers. Textbooks are penned by "college professors, many of whom have never spent a day as a teacher in the schools for which they are attempting to write texts (Borgeson, 181)." This isn't to say that college professors should not be writing the textbooks, since many high-school teachers likely don't have adequate training to complete the process of creating a textbook. This issue is simply brought up to point out a gap between those who decide what content is available, and those actually teaching and learning in a live classroom setting. It wouldn't be possible for each school district to write its own text books, but that doesn't nullify the disparity.

School: a Social Evolution Context

The American educational system continuously evolves, and is composed of variously influenced tentacles. Historically, as the leading groups within society adapted the curriculum to meet their group-related needs, "similar social groups continued to benefit and, likewise, other social groups were disadvantaged (Goodson, 74)." Only by adapting naturally-evolving curricular needs, based upon what is right for societal and local needs, will America's system of education benefit the many and help the needy rise to individual potential. With the world evolving in so many ways, so must education. The economy of America is changing everyday. The international trade market affects the country in many ways. Trade is very important to the growth of the country, representing 25 percent of the country's gross domestic product. (Source)Trade in services once was a large export but for the past seven years service imports have grown faster then service exports (source). Most industries face international competition causing for companies to look for the lowest-cost work they can work to cut cost. With all these things going on in the economy in America, the government must take a look into evolving educations. For most students and schools this means that high school is not the end of education like it was over 30 years ago. Times are changing and thirty years ago you could get a job without any education after high school. With the job competition on the rise it will be more important for students to go to college in turn changing the outlook on high school across the nation. So what high school students were doing 30 years ago, will that be good for the economy? Should it stay the same?

This is possible on a national level, on a local level, or through a combination of both. Which would you prefer? Who should decide what is taught, to whom?

Independence in thought - COMMENTARY

Schools are created for society, by selected members of society. The simple fact that the decision making bodies are "selected" is reason enough to require that their decisions are grounded in objectivity, while allowing for classes relevant to particular areas of the country with unique needs. Hopefully those in the position of decision makers are world wise and understanding that cultures can change so much from one area of a city and state to the next.

It comes to light that curricula should not be set in stone. As culture and society changes, changes in curricula are necessary. America may be a unified jigsaw, but each citizen doesn't necessarily need, or want, to learn the same as every other. Students should certainly receive and learn non-optional core material, but students nationwide will not benefit by learning through an educational plan drafted entirely as though all people are exactly the same, everywhere. We are all people, true enough, but it's

known that culture plays a powerful role in shaping what people value, and don't, in education. We should allow for cultural and personal variation as much as we can afford to, while continuing to reinforce universal education needs.

It seems an obvious step that each district should be self-motivated and granted the right to determine its own curriculum, at least in part. How can a man in a California computer-science funded locality determine what is best learned by a man in a West Virginian mining community? The answer is that he really can't. He may be able to set a theoretical basis for what all people need know, but he'll never be able to properly dictate what is entirely appropriate for outliers determined by cultural and socioeconomic variation. We may share a larger national border, but we shouldn't expect that a national educational edict be followed, unless it also considers personal and local-based social requirements.

Note

"The fact that an opinion has been widely held is no evidence that it is not utterly absurd." —Bertrand Russell

ESSAY TOPIC: Working from your readings and personal experiences, write a short essay explaining how you think curricula should be drafted. Should national boards draft a country-wide curriculum that is based on nationally-accepted norms considering the content students are taught, or should local education bodies have the option of drafting culture-specific curricula, operating in conjunction with core subjects?

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7.4: Are we moving toward a national curriculum?

by Ken Gauss

National standards play a critical role in today's educational community. These standards shape what is taught to students, and more importantly, how teachers teach. National standards have a profound impact not just on the regular education classroom, but also the advanced programs including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate.

National Standards

In education, there has always been a debate over what to teach our students. In addition, it is important to remember that how something is taught is as valuable as what is being taught. The top programs in today's American school system are the Advanced Placement program and the International Baccalaureate program. When creating national standards, these programs must be held in high regard. The brightest students along with the best teachers participate in these programs. National standards should be developed that can challenge not only students but teachers as well.

International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate Organization states that educational standards are a key part in the development of sound students and teachers (IBO.org). The IB student completes a rigorous program and is challenged on a daily basis. While the students work their way through the program they are forced to meet objectives. Within the IB program, students reach above and beyond what is typically expected of them. IB students must understand how the learning system is not compiled of separate parts, but is the sum of all parts together. National standards can unify students and objectives together as one.

"The International Baccalaureate Theory of Knowledge program provides students a complete view of education" (High Performance). Students have the chance to examine each area of education. Students begin to realize that while learning is different for each area, the basic methods used are the same. In this way students are pushed to understand how each content area interacts. Within each way of knowing is an intermittent part of the others. Each area in and of itself directly affects the others. Once students understand the standards they achieve a better understanding of their learning experience. These standards which can be transferred directly to the national system enhance the learning experience. In this portion of the program students begin to breakdown the walls that divide learning, and view the educational instrument as a whole. Through this portion of the International Baccalaureate program, students understand that each standard directly affects the others.

Advanced Placement

Advanced Placement program also provides students with an opportunity to challenge themselves at a higher level. In the Advanced Placement program students are given college level work, and upon completion, they are given the chance to receive college credit for their efforts. Since these advanced students are learning on a college level they are exposed to college-level material. Being that national standards must push the envelope in the world of education, it is pivotal for advanced placement to play a role in the creation of these standards. As students study in the AP program, they are constantly forced to look outside the box, and approach problems full circle. This skill proves to be vital in the forming of any type of national standard. If they are allowed to only approach problems from the most obvious viewpoint they are denied the experience of seeing problems through. Also they do not gain the chance to observe these from different angles, and achieve solutions which shy away from the norm. More often than not educational problems can't be solved with the most obvious solution. By taking the Advanced Placement outlook students see problems in different way, and thus find more complete solutions.

Standards are a vital part of education. In every educational community standards can vary, and students are taught differently. This leads to varying educational levels across the country. In recognizing this problem, it is easily understood that national standards need to be established in order to form a more complete educational plan. With both the International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement programs, students are challenged to bring out their fullest potential. With this in mind, we can see that national standards should be shaped around these programs. Not all students are capable of performing in advanced programs, but all students should be challenged to their maximum potentials. When standards are made that require students to reach inside themselves, the ultimate result is students that are better than before. These standards create students who not only solve problems, but understand the issues surrounding the problems.

Conclusion

In the creation of national standards, teachers and students must understand that these advanced programs provide an excellent base to build an educational program. Students who are taught within these standards develop as complete packages in the world's eye. Teachers who teach with these standards not only better students, but better themselves. In teaching on a higher level, teachers inspire students and provide a much needed advancement in the national educational standard. Students pushed to be better themselves ultimately become people who push for a better tomorrow. In establishing a national standard largely influenced by advanced programs there can only be an improvement in education as a whole. With teachers and students constantly pushed to better themselves the entire nation will improve.

Note

"It is better to solve one problems five ways than five problems one way" - George Polya

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7.5: How can we prepare all students for life after high school?

By: Cassaundra Lewis

I. Introduction

Every year thousands of students graduate from high school and go on to college. Every year hundreds are not as successful. What can be done to assure that more high school students go on to college? What can we do to prepare students for life after high school? The United States has been debating these questions not only on state levels, but national as well. In this article I will discuss some of the benefits, hindrances, advances, and the content of vocational education and college preparation courses.

II. College Prep vs. Vocational Education

First we should define college preparation and vocational education. College preparation is a course or series of courses that help students adjust to many college-level requirements. William Tierney writes, “Important objectives of most programs are the smoothing of the transition from school to college, improvement of study habits, increase of general academic readiness, and expansion of academic options” (Increasing Access to College, 2002, pg 3). Vocational education is a course or series of courses that give students work related experience to express the nature of careers and help them learn skills that will assist towards careers in the future. According to Unger, “the basic purpose of vocational education is to get a job” (But What If…, 2006, pg 33). “In no other area has greater emphasis been placed upon the development of curricula that are relevant in terms of student and community needs and substantive outcomes.” (Curriculum Development, 1999, pg 3).

Note

Did You Know…?

Did you know…

Education for work began 4,000 years ago? According to Finch, “(the) earliest type of vocational education took the form of apprenticeship” (Curriculum Development, 1999, pg 4).

III. Main Targets of College Prep and Vocational Education

One of the main targets of college preparation courses are low-income students and minorities, who make up a very small percentage of students attending both two and four year colleges directly after high school (Preparing for College, 2005, pg 3). “Educational institutions, state and federal governments, and local communities have committed significant resources to the development of a wide array of outreach activities designed to identify and assist underrepresented students in their pathways to college” (Preparing for College, 2005, pg 1). Vocational education targets those who are even less likely to attend college immediately after high school. “Millions of students all over the world are not suited for and have no interest in traditional academic schooling—which is why alternative career education was developed: to teach students the skills they need to get a good job” (But What If…, 2006, pg 4). Both college prep and vocational education attempt to enlighten students about career choices and assist them with the transition from high school into the adult world.

IV. Positives and Negatives in College Preparation

According to Anne Lewis, of the Education Digest, “more students are taking upper-level math and science classes and more are enrolled in Advanced Placement classes” (College Prep, 2004, paragraph 1). By this, she means that more students are enrolled in classes to help them prepare for college. She goes on to state, unfortunately, “the likelihood of ninth-graders completing high school and enrolling in college by age 19 (…, having graduated from high school within four years and directly entered a higher education institution) has declined”(paragraph 2). Another major negative in college preparation is that the population targeted is not always the one assisted. Tierney writes, “Programs such as MESA, Upward Bound, AVID, (etc.)… are well intentioned, (but) minority students remain underrepresented on college campuses”(Preparing for College, 2005, pg 1).

Note

Did You Know…?

Did you know…

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education grades each state, on a scale of A to F, on ability to effectively prepare students for college? Seven states received an “A,” Connecticut, Colorado, Massachusetts (who scored the highest), Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Utah. Louisiana and New Mexico were the only states to receive a “F”(College Prep, 2004, paragraph 7).

V. Positives and Negatives in Vocational Education

There are many benefits of vocational education. According to Unger, “Employers generally respect the credentials of graduates from vo-tech schools, which usually have strong job placement services and close ties with employers. Vo-tech students emerge stronger in academics as well, because students learn English, math, science, and other subjects in conjunction with their vocational education and, therefore, find these areas more interesting”(But What If…?, 2006, pg 20). Two negatives associated with vocational education are that, “Unfortunately, there are only about 325 vo-tech schools across the United States” and there is a rising inability to keep students interested (But What If…?, 2006, pg 20).

Note

Did You Know…?

Did you know…

“It’s easy to get into college, but not easy to finish and graduate? More than 40% of students who enroll in American colleges and universities quit without graduating” (But What If…, 2006, pg 3).

VI. Curriculum Content

What all is included in the curriculum for college preparation and vocational education? What factors help in considering whether or not a program should be added or subtracted? “Curriculum materials are resources that, if used properly, can assist an instructor in bringing about an intended desirable behavior change in individual students” (Curriculum Development, 1999, pg 208). Unfortunately, there is no fool proof way of being able to tell what is going to help and what isn’t. There are many things to take into consideration when choosing what programs to keep and eliminate (Increasing Access to College, 2002, pg 3). As far as college preparation is concerned, a lot of the learning occurs in advanced classes. Many different approaches are used, such as computer-based assessment and writing assessment. With vocational education, you must determine: What will the student want to study? What does the community need as far as work experience? What will motivate the students toward life after high school (Curriculum Development, 1999, pg 92)?

VII. My Personal Experience with College Preparation and Vocational Education

While I was in high school, I was fortunate enough to experience both college preparation and vocational education. In my opinion, college preparation did very much to help me familiarize myself with what college would actually be like. I attended all honors classes and college preparation meetings. During my time as a vocational education student, I had hands on job training and was able to get my license as a cosmetologist when I graduated from high school. Vocational education did just as much for me on an overall level as college preparation. I do understand that not everyone was as fortunate as I and may not have had the same type of support that I received. One contributing factor, that is very often overlooked, is the influence of home life on attending college directly after high school.

VIII. Conclusion

In conclusion, college preparation courses and vocational education courses are both designed to promote success in the community but use different avenues. College preparation is focused on getting students to college. Vocational education is focused on providing an alternative to a college education for those who might not be as interested capable. When used properly and effectively, these means of education can provide options after high school for all students.

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7.6: What are the effects of standardized testing on school curricula?

by Angela Marcotte

Learning Objectives

- 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.

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)

Note

"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).

Note

"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.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

8: Effective Schools

8.1: What makes a school effective?
8.2: How can mentoring support new teachers?
8.3: Is pre-kindergarten the solution to early intervention?
8.4: What are the benefits of school and community partnerships?
8.5: How can we create positive learning environments?

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8.1: What makes a school effective?

By: Amy West

Learning Objectives

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.

Figure 8.1.1: A normal classroom (CC-BY-SA Darklanlan, Wikimedia)

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).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). 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.

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.

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 exra 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).

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.

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8.2: How can mentoring support new teachers?

By: Nancy Currence

Note

"In the mentoring process, reflection enables us to slow down, rest, and observe our journey and the process of self-knowledge that is so important along the way." - Huang and Lynch, 1995

Introduction

Unlike many professions which allow a recent graduate to work side by side with an experienced professional, the teaching profession requires the new professional to be alone in a classroom gaining experience without the benefit of a seasoned professional watching over them. This isolation may lead to discouragement and high anxiety among novice teachers resulting in high attrition and low retention rates. A solution to this problem is implementing an effective mentoring program.

Imagine you're the teacher in a high school classroom when a verbal argument begins between two young men. This is your first year of teaching and you are not much older than your students and have never been involved in a conflict like this. You are trying to remember what your textbook taught you to do in this situation, but things are escalating faster than you can think. You know you cannot leave the room in search of help nearby, but something must be done immediately. Before you can place a call for help, the argument escalates into a physical confrontation. By the time help arrives, the situation is way out of hand. Or, imagine you are sitting quietly grading papers when one of your students knocks on your door. She is obviously upset and crying and asks if she can speak to you. She tells you she is pregnant and her boyfriend wants her to have an abortion. Looking at this young girl you realize she not much younger than you are, and she has entrusted her future to you. You realize that not only is her future at stake but also the life of another human being. You feel overwhelmed with the burden of responsibility. Has your formal education really prepared you for this non-textbook experience? If your school has an effective mentoring program then you know where to go for assistance in resolving these issues or you may have already had a discussion about these issues with your mentor. At least you know you are not alone!

What is mentoring?

As defined by Webster's Third New International Dictionary, mentor means "a close, trusted, and experienced counselor or guide." Among many professions, such as physicians, engineers, architects, and lawyers, direct supervision by a licensed professional is required in order to obtain professional licensure. A mentor who can communicate hope and optimism is needed to assist a novice teacher with the transition into the profession of teaching. There are many different types of induction (or mentor) programs, but this one aims at under-girding novice teachers.

What is the role of a mentor?

A mentor can provide for the novice teacher direction and guidance in how to set up behavioral management plans for the classroom, how to be flexible when problems arise, knowledgeable information about the characteristics of students they will be teaching, information about the community and local activities available for the student, how to organize and manage their classroom, the school procedures and policies, and how to interact with the administration.

The agenda of the mentoring program is to pair a veteran teacher and novice teacher in a mutually satisfying relationship. Steve Metz, a veteran science teacher was happy to mentor Lisa a first year teacher, and expressed that "the hidden secret—now revealed—is that I received by far the better part of the bargain." Lisa offered enthusiasm for teaching, which was infectious and stimulated Steve's imagination again allowing him not only to help Lisa experience personal professional development but also rekindled his desire for continued professional growth.

Note

"My advisor kind of walked me through the year. She was always there to listen to my ideas, my reflections. I never felt alone, even when she wasn't in the room…" - Moir, 2003

Why the need for a mentor program?

According to “School’s Out: The Crisis in Teacher Retention” approximately thirty percent of new teachers leave the teaching profession within three years; and associated with this is the estimated $2.6 billion annual cost due to this turnover (Alliance for excellent Education, 2004) which has brought about an increased awareness for the need of additional support for novice teachers. The mentoring program has been in the forefront of discussions as a method of retaining new teachers. First year teachers are known to show high levels of stress due to their lack of practical skills in the profession. They have difficulty balancing their work load of lectures, class interaction, resolving classroom issues, grading, administrative duties, and assuring that their lesson plan is addressing the standards of learning which is necessary for their evaluation as an effective teacher. It is evident that there is a need to retain new teachers and mentoring is one viable way to address this situation.

Note

> “Mentors who assume the mentor role without adequately preparing themselves or their relationship are often disappointed and dissatisfied.” - Zachary, 2000

How to ensure a successful mentoring program

In order for the mentoring program to be successful, training is necessary for the mentor. Workshops can help the mentor become aware of issues that they will need to address with novice teachers. A detailed job description is also needed so the mentor is aware of the objectives of the program (Rowley, 1999). The program should be supervised and evaluated for effectiveness.

- A mentor should be a veteran teacher who demonstrate the ability to assist in the professional growth of a novice teacher
- A mentor should have a strong belief in the teaching profession
- A mentor should believe that all children can learn
- A mentor should be skilled in a wide range of teaching strategies
- A mentor should communicate well (verbal and written)
- A mentor should be sensitive and capable of maintaining confidentiality
- A mentor should be proficient in planning and organizing.

E-Mentoring

One problem that has been associated with the mentoring program is efficiently matching up mentors and mentees in their appropriate fields. This especially occurs in the area of special education. East Carolina University has come up with a successful option to this situation. They have established an e-mentoring program. The program is web based, using Moodle " (http://moodle.org), a free, open course management system." (Williams, J., Warren, S., 2007). The mentors are matched with new teachers in their field, usually in a distant school district from the mentor with similar grade levels and classroom situations. They are required to maintain weekly contact with their mentors and "participate in one learning module per semester. Modules address specific topics and needs expressed by new teachers" (Willialms, Warren, 2007). such as inclusion, managing classroom behavior, etc. These topics often lead to forums which groups can participate in and is moderated by a university facilitator. The teachers/mentors can share personal success stories, resourses and gain comradery through this method. This is a potential option for those districts that have distant schools where mentors are in short supply or there are special needs teachers with little or no menotrs available as well. (Williams, Warren, 2007).

Reflection Summary

As I embark on completing my formal education to become an educator I look forward to entering my profession yet I also feel great apprehension when realizing that without guidance I could be doomed to failure at what has been the dream of my life. However with the thought of a supportive mentoring program available for me I realize that the uncertainty of the first few years of teaching can be rewarding. I would look forward to working side by side with a veteran mentor who has been trained and is qualified to assist me in my new endeavor with optimism and hope of becoming an effective educator.

I had the opportunity to interview Leigh R. Quick, School Board, District 3, New Kent County who was instrumental in creating a mentoring program for New Kent County. I asked what goal she set when preparing the mentoring program and she replied, “to make new teachers feel welcome, give them resources (a mentor, as well as a written guide), and help prepare them as much as possible. I knew their success would translate into good instruction for our students and, hopefully, they would decide to stay a long time.”

I believe that the mentoring program is a great opportunity for novice teachers and will dispel many of the fears and trepidations facing someone new to the profession. While research indicates that the mentors greatly benefit from this experience and grows professionally while interacting with novice teachers. This interaction appears to counter the inevitable stagnation and complacency that may occur when a teacher has been teaching the same thing the same way for many years. Many experienced teachers express a renewed interest in the profession as a result of being a mentor. Mentoring can be a win-win situation for both the mentor and the novice teacher.

Note

"The real-life classroom presents questions that only real-life experience can answer." - Zachary, 2000

Essay

How do you view the role of a mentor?

Essay Response

I believe a mentor is someone who enjoys their profession and wants to share their knowledge and experience with others. A mentor is someone that familiarizes you with the school and the community where you will be teaching. They will give you advice about daily classroom management, they will inform you of successful behavioral management plans for the classroom, explore first day strategies for the upcoming school year, help with individual problems as they arise and offer positive reinforcement. They will be your sounding board and bridge the gap from formal education to real-life classroom experiences. But most of all a mentor is someone who cares.

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The "Benefits of Mentoring" is a good article because in the article the author writes about how the mentors need to be trained for the mentoring program to be effective. The novice teachers will learn more form the teachers that have been trained to mentor new teachers. In the article the author also writes about how the mentor teachers help the new teachers. The mentors help the new teachers by teaching them how to write lesson plans and observe there classes so the mentors can provide feedback on how the new teachers can improve. Even though the author of the article that I am editing included that the mentors need to me trained, I feel that "The Benefits of Mentoring" will expand on the subject of training mentor teachers.

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8.3: Is pre-kindergarten the solution to early intervention?

Note

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

Learning Objectives

- 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

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.

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 research 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.

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8.4: What are the benefits of school and community partnerships?

By: Shelby C. Blair

Note

"I could sit in my garage all day long and that doesn't'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 Objectives

- Define and give two examples of what a School and Community Partnership is.
- Have working knowledge of what Communities In Schools is.
- 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 makings "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 dimissed from the program until the next semester. (B. Cartwright, personal communication, September 30, 2008).

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. 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).

Note

"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

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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8.5: How can we create positive learning environments?

By Karen Jordan

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 Kacyzynski, Winter 1997, p. 53).

Note

Enthusiastically Create a Positive Learning Environment and Build a Positive Relationship with Students (Nevin and Knoblock, 2005, p. 18)

Smile, laugh, show emotion, and a passion for learning. Greet students personally. Engage students in activities will ask them to share their personal experiences. Switch tasks to frequently and encourage more experiential styles of learning in class. Acknowledge positive behavior and use language that is positive. Avoid embarrassing the students. Keep good eye contact and use humor. .

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 Kacyzynski, 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.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

9: Effective Teaching

9.1: Are teachers born or made?
9.2: What are the differences between direct instruction and discovery learning?
9.3: How can we teach to meet all students' needs?
9.4: What are the theories of multiple intelligences and emotional intelligence?
9.5: What is the nature of cooperative learning?
9.6: What is the effect of having high expectations for students?
9.7: How can teachers continue to learn throughout life?

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9.1: Are teachers born or made?

By Brittany Bowman

Learning Objectives

1. Understand that some people are born with certain qualities that make them better suited for the job.
2. Understand the benefits of proper training and experience.
3. Understand that the teaching profession demands more than just training ensure success.

Introduction

While good teachers are essential, great teaches are invaluable. We always remember our greatest teachers. They are the ones that not only educated us, but the ones that motivated and pushed us to our greatest potential. They were driven by the passion of intellectual aspiration. They are the ones that we looked up to as role models, giving us inspiration to one day repay their dedication and teach our future students with as much passion as when they taught us. They are the individuals we go back to visit to reaffirm how great they once were and how great they still are. These are the teachers that we are so fortunate to have had in our lives. But what makes up a great teacher? Some say it is in the genetic make-up of individuals who are born with distinct, innate qualities and characteristics that makes them better equipped for working in the classroom. Others say that taking courses and reading through textbooks makes a teacher better suited for the job. But who is to say that it can not be somewhere in the middle. Taking into consideration the ideas behind both sides, maybe the answer to the question 'are teachers born or made?' is simply both?

Note

"It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference." -Tom Brokaw (Brokaw 2009)

It's in the Genes

Some believe that genetics and the structured DNA sequence that makes up an individual plays a significant role in how that individual can excel within the classroom as a teacher. A person's genetic sequence can enable them to inherit certain characteristics and qualities that enables their nurturing and teaching side to emerge. These innate characteristics and personality traits can not necessarily be taught, and by tapping into inner talents, the full potential of the teacher can be discovered.

"By nature, some people possess a combination of personality characteristics that are conducive to effective teaching" (Malikow, 2006 1). Having a caring, patient, encouraging, and joyous personality really makes a 'born' teacher stand out compared to a 'made' teacher. These innate characteristics along with many others can not be learned or acquired from reading a textbook or by taking education courses; you either have them or you don't. For a teacher from Framingham, Massachusetts, he had all these qualities and much more. Everyone always remembered Charles Sposato as a natural-born teacher, he went above and beyond expectations. Mr. Sposato was known to be full of spirit and have high amounts of energy that he brought in the classroom to ensure that his students would always be surrounded by a positive environment (Spitz 2007). He even helped a student's family buy needed clothing when money was scarce (Spitz 2007). All the little things really do add up. Based on Mr. Sposato's actions, he was more than a teacher to his students, and he didn't learn that by reading through any textbook.

Note

"Teaching is the only major occupation of man for which we have not yet developed tools that make an average person capable of competence and performance. In teaching we rely on the "naturals," the ones who somehow know how to teach." -Peter Drucker

(Drucker 2007)

Along with many other professions, teaching is primarily based on leadership and communication (Vilhanova 2008). Teachers must have the ability to lead and guide their classroom in a way that promotes controlled and free thinking. It is very important for teachers to be able to communicate effectively, not only to the students but to the parents as well. Communicating to the students is so important to the learning process. If a teacher can not get his/her point across, then it is very possible for the students to not understand the lesson being taught. Communication must be present among, both the teacher and the student. This is where the

student can begin to gain trust from the teacher, and vice versa, where the teacher can gain trust from the student (Vilhanova 2008). Gaining each other's trust is very valuable because they are able to rely on each other.

All these aspects and characteristics can only be obtained if it is present in the individuals genes. They can not be taught or learned and that is why, those who possess these innate traits must use them productively or else they would just go to waste.

It's in the Books

To some individuals, an excellent education and a comprehensive training creates the best foundation in the classroom setting and that natural talent helps but it can't provide for the necessities that makes up an adequate and positive teaching environment. Being good or great at something does not always mean that there will always be passion. People who may not possess a natural talent for teaching, but are determined to still become a teacher, may have more passion that those born with the gift. These individuals would have to work harder for their reward, which shows how driven and committed they truly are.

Note

"...even the most brilliant scientists may not know how to communicate their knowledge to children." -Jay Mathews (Mathews 2002)

The main point for teacher education and training programs is to inform teachers about effective instruction methods that can be very beneficial to improve and make the overall classroom experiences more desirable and more successful (Malikow, 2006 2). Once the teacher training and education is completed, the teachers become higher quality because it allowed teachers to gain more practice and experience. In essence, teachers really do 'make themselves' (Moore, 2004 6).

Teachers' work reflects on the students' work. Studies have shown that teachers, with no means of education training or certification, have a negative influence on students in the classroom. Teachers without this proper training, have a higher percentage of students in their class that scored lower on standardized tests (Mathews 2002). Other studies have revealed that the individuals who received a five-year degree from a teacher education program, tend to stay teaching longer that those who graduated with a four-year degree; also, the individuals with four-year degrees stay teaching longer than those with little or no training at all (Mathews 2002).

According to Education Secretary, Roderick P. Paige, and his teacher quality report, he states that "we now have concrete evidence that smart teachers with solid content knowledge have the greatest effect on student achievement" (Mathews 2002). Well isn't that exactly what teachers strive to accomplish? They want their students to be able to reach their greatest or maximum potential and to get the most out of their education. There is an old saying that parents want what is best for their children. Can't teachers want what is best for their students? The answer is of course, and by spending more time taking extra classes or going through additional educational training, this really underlines how the average teacher can be 'made' into a great teacher.

It's Both

To the others who fall in the middle, including myself, we believe that great teachers are a combination between the two. Having the qualities, characteristics, and drive in becoming a good teacher is one thing, but taking classes to better educate yourself on how to better your students really takes it over the edge into becoming a great teacher. Who is to say that teachers who seem to be born with this raw, natural talent, couldn't benefit from some type of educational training to reemphasize their strengths and build on their weaknesses.

Teachers are a lot like athletes and artists. All three were born with talents, and those talents will be refined because of the training and performance that comes along with each career (Malikow 1). Even the people that were born with all the traits that would make them an excellent teaching candidate, they still might be missing something. If they do not have the desire, drive, or passion to become a teacher, then these innate traits can be thrown out the window. Proper training and experience will help give advise on different techniques and methods that can be utilized. After teaching for quit some time, the teacher will be able to throw out the methods and techniques that did not work or fix the methods to better suit or accommodate the students. Practice makes perfect!

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9.2: What are the differences between direct instruction and discovery learning?

By: Megan Heath

Learning Objectives

- 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.

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.

Note

“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

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.

Note

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

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9.3: How can we teach to meet all students' needs?

By Honorina Maristela

Learning Objectives

- Define differentiated instruction and understand the use of this approach in the classroom.
- Identify the teacher's role in differentiated instruction.

Introduction

In a traditional classroom setting, the teachers talk while the students listen. Nowadays, traditional settings have completely changed in the field of education. The way the classroom are set-up, the teaching and learning style, the accommodation of individual students and application of small group instruction made the school and teaching challenging both for teachers and students.In addition to these changes, differentiated instruction has been emphasized.

The district and state and federal governments have established our standards and have handed our curriculum down to us. These standards make up goals established for all students. How we reach the goals may require different paths. The core of differentiated instruction is flexibility in content, process, and product based on students' strengths, needs and learning styles. (Levy, 2008 cited in The Clearing House, 2008)

What is Differentiated Instruction?

At the most basic level, differentiating instruction means "shaking up" what goes on in the classroom. Students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas and expressing what they learn. (Tomlinson, 2001) In other words, differentiated instructing is catering to student's needs and interests so they can acquire learning efficiently..

The State of Virginia encourages the school districts to apply differentiated instruction in the classrooms. In 2004, the Superintendent of Public Instruction conducted a Professional Development to all School Heads, member of Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals, Assistant Principals and Lead teachers to participate in the conference entitled " Differentiated Instruction: Meeting the Needs of All Children" the highlight for this conference included the special needs students and at-risk students.

Why differentiate?

Individual students are different in many ways. The use of differentiated instruction will gives the students the opportunity to meet their needs in an intensive step that will expedite the learning skill of the individual student. We as teachers give the support and the careful planning of the instruction to make sure that the activities will be in the students' instructional level and interest.

Differentitate Why: addresses the teachers' reason for modifying the leaning experience. Teachers believe modification is important for many reasons. Three key reasons include access to learning, motivation to learn and efficiency of learning. Any or all of these three reasons for differentiating instruction can be tied to students readiness, interest, and learning profile. (Tomlinson, 1999)

In differentiated classroom, teachers begin at the level of the students, not the front of a curriculum guide. They accept and build upon the premise that learners differ in important ways. Thus, they also accept and act on the premise that teachers must be ready to engage students in instruction though different learning modalities, by appealing to differing interest and by using varied rates of instruction along with varied degrees of complexity. In differentiated classrooms, teachers ensure that a student competes agains himself or herself as he or she grows and develops more than he or she competes against other students. (Tomlinson, 1999)

Though differentiated instruction and activities, students take a greater responsibility and ownership of their own learning, activities that are primarily focused on students' multiple intelligences, higher order thinking, and learning styles. With this in mind, differentiated instruction is an effective tool to implement in the classroom in order to meet students' learning style and strengthen multiple intelligences and encourage them to use high order thinking. (Bailey and Williams-Black, p. 134)

How to Differentiate?

It has been a big question for teachers how to differentiate instruction in the classroom. It is indeed a challenging task to put into use this approach. I myself can relate to this for it took me five years to attain the effectiveness of this approach and I am still

learning until now. The preparation and designed activities should target the individual needs of the students.

Being in an inclusion is a tough job, having four groups of students with individual needs ranging from high, average, low level and special needs students with IEP (Individualized Education Program) and 504 plans. It is a team work of the teacher, special education teacher and the students in carrying out the activities in the classroom.

Use formal and informal assessments in making decision with small group instruction. Most schools are required certain formal assessments such as TPRI(Texas Primary Reading Assessment, DIBLE(Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skill, DRA(Developmental Reading Assessment) and/or QRI(Qualitative Reading Inventory. (Diller, 2007)

These assessments are useful tools for teachers for figuring out how to start with their small groups. Once the teacher determined the level of the individual students she may begin applying the differentiated instruction in the classroom. The teacher can design her own activities that are according to the instructional level of the students. One great example is in reading. Using leveled books that are color coded are useful in targeting the instructional level of the students and work towards it to improve to the fullest. The idea of using the flexible grouping of Debbie Diller is useful for teachers to differentiate. As Diller stated, to create flexible group folders for thinking about small groups as well as in whole group. Once the student show progress he/she can be moved into different group. (Diller, 2007,p. 24)

Flexible groupings were defined by Radencich and McKay (1995) as" grouping that is not static, where members of the group change frequently. This emerged as a practice to address concerns. It acknowledges that all grouping patterns- large groups, small groups, teams and individuals have value because they all offer the reader slightly different experiences with different outcomes. Students may work with a partner, in a small cooperative or teacher-led group, or with the whole class. The basis for this may be students' interest or needs. (Ford, 2005 cited in Radencich and McKay, 1995)

In planning flexible grouping teachers should consider the strengths and weaknesses of each grouping approach and then put them together to allow the teacher to best meet the needs of the classroom. The groups are formed and dissolved as needs changes to allow for maximum flexibility, avoiding the static nature of the grouping patterns of the past. (Ford, 2005 cited in Radencich and McKay, 1995)

Note

Key Principles of a Differentiated Instruction

- The teacher is clear about what matters in subject matter.
- The teacher understands, appreciates, and builds upon student differences.
- Assessment and instruction are inseparable.
- The teacher adjusts content, process and product in response to student readiness, interest, and learning profile.
- All students participate in respectful work.
- Students and teachers are collaborators in learning.
- Goals of a differentiated classroom are maximum growth and individual success.
- Flexibility is the hallmark of a differentiated classroom.(Tomlinson, 1999)

Teachers Role

Mixed-ability classrooms that offer differentiated instruction make good sense for teachers, as well a student. For many teachers, offering differentiated instruction first requires a paradigm shift. (Tomlinson, 2001)

Teachers who become comfortable with differentiated classroom would probably say their role differs in some significant ways from that of a traditional teacher. When teacher differentiate instruction, they move away from being themselves as keepers and dispensers of knowledge and move toward seeing themselves as organizers of learning opportunities. (Tomlnison, 2001)

Teachers who differentiate instruction focus on their role as coach or mentor(Tomlinson, 2001). We serve as a guide and facilitator for the students in doing their responsibilities in completing their task. We organize the activities for them to discover, explore and share acquired knowledge. ..

Note

A teacher is a compass that activates the magnets of curiosity, knowledge, and wisdom in the pupils. ~Ever Garrison

Conclusion

When applying differentiated instruction time is required in order for it to work. It is not an overnight activity to see the effectiveness of this approach. It takes time and dedication to help the learners be successful.

For most teachers, the classroom is the place where we spend our career. The classroom is the place where we give the better part of our lifetime trying to make a difference. It is a curiosity of teaching that no two days are the alike. We must remember that we have every opportunity to transform ourselves and our practice, just as we have every opportunity to stagnate, remain much the same teacher we were when we began. (Tomlinson, 1999)

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9.4: What are the theories of multiple intelligences and emotional intelligence?

By Meagan Keith

Learning Objectives

- 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 root 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

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 Indentified* (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 Spirtual 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).

Note

GARDNER'S THEORY OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Linguistic Intelligence

"Word Smart"

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

"Number/Reasoning smart"

Spatial Intelligence

"Picture Smart"

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence

"Body Smart"

Musical Intelligence

"Music Smart"

Interpersonal Intelligence

"People Smart"

Intrapersonal Intelligence

"Self Smart"

Naturalist Intelligence

"Nature Smart"

Existential Intelligence

"Wondering Smart"

Spiritual Intelligence

"Spiritual Smart"

Conclusion to Multiple Intelligences

Note

"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)

Goleman Defintion

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).

Note

The Self Science Curriculum

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

Main Components

Self-awareness:

obeserving 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 a 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:

understandign other peoples' 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:

identifing 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

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9.5: What is the nature of cooperative learning?

by Aaron Burdon

Learning Objectives

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

Overview

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?

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 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.

Note

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)

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.

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.

Note

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

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)

Scotty n CeCe1.jpg

Figure 9.5.1: Image 1

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.

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.

Note

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.

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.

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9.6: What is the effect of having high expectations for students?

by Kathleen Crossin

Introduction

Most of us are guilty of forming opinions of people based on our first impressions. What happens when a teacher forms an opinion of a student based on first impressions, cognitive abilities, economic status, ethnicity, gender, or perceived achievement level? Are the teacher's expectations of the student likely to have an effect on student performance?

Pygmalion Effect and Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

Researchers Rosenthal and Jacobson published a study of the effects of teacher expectations. The Pygmalion effect, also known as the "teacher expectancy effect" ("Pygmalion effect," 2008, para.1) explains that students will meet the expectations they feel the teacher has for them. If the student feels that the teacher expects them to do well, they will meet those expectations. Conversely, if a teacher has low expectations for a student, the teacher's behavior toward that student will ensure that the expectation was accurate (Tauber, 1998, para. 5). The Pygmalion effect is closely associated with the self-fulfilling prophecy ("Self-fulfilling prophecy, 2008). Robert Merton is credited with this term (Tauber, 1998). He explained the five points involved:

- "The teacher forms expectations."
- "Based upon these expectations, the teacher acts in a different manner."
- "The teacher's treatment tells each student (loud and clear) what behavior and what achievement the teacher expects."
- "If this treatment is consistent, it will tend to shape the student's behavior and achievement."
- "With time, the student's behavior and achievement will conform more and more closely to that expected of him or her." (Tauber, 1998, para. 8)

Note

“Whatever we expect with confidence becomes our own self-fulfilling prophecy”--- Brian Tracy

How Perceptive are Children to a Teacher's Expectations?

According to research studies (Rubie-Davies, 2006, para. 3), students are very attuned to the differences in which teachers teach and interact with students according to the teacher's expectations (Rubie-Davies, 2006). In a study (Rubie-Davies, 2006) fourth graders were asked how they knew if the teacher labeled them as smart. The students were able to discern this information from the type of instruction the teacher used, the teacher's style of assessment, and the teacher's use of non-verbal actions (Rubie-Davies, 2006, para. 3). A further research experiment (Rubie-Davies, 2006, para. 3) illustrated that fourth graders were able to merely watch a teacher's non-verbal cues and determine if the teacher was speaking to high or low expectation students (Rubie-Davies, 2006, para. 4). As we can see from these studies, children are very conscious of a teacher's expectations.

Is it Possible to Have High Expectations for all Students?

Note

"Treat a man as he is, he will remain so. Treat a man the way he can be and ought to be, and he will become as he can be and should be".---Goethe

Students with Cognitive Disabilities

So crucial is the need for high expectations that there are two laws that deal with ensuring high expectations for all children (Quenemoen & Thurlow, 2007). No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) both "require that all children count in school accountability measures so high expectations will result in high achievement for every child" (Quenemoen & Thurlow, 2007, para. 4). In a national survey (McGrew & Evans, 2003, para. 13), 84% of teachers questioned did not believe that children with special needs should be required to achieve the same goals as other students (McGrew & Evans, 2003, para. 13). These low expectations are communicated to students by the labels they receive in school. Labeling puts an emphasis on the student's shortcomings (McGrew & Evans, 2003, para. 50). While it may not be possible to meet the same standards as other children, a teacher with high expectations for students with cognitive disabilities can help establish an environment that is not conducive to further inhibiting a student's achievements (McGrew & Evans, 2003, para. 88).

Income and Racial Diversity

Do teachers have low expectations of students from low-income families? Do minority students face bias due to stereotypes? Alfinio Flores (2007) studied this topic in reference to the differences in math scores between low-income minority students and White students (Flores, 2007, para. 1). Flores (2007) states that the percentage of White teachers is 88%, while the minority students make up 33% of the student population (Flores, 2007, para. 15). Flores feels that many factors account for the differences in test scores. Teachers, who have low expectations of these minority students and as a result do not teach students more advanced math, are one of the problems (Flores, 2007, para. 16). Research (Flores, 2007) has shown that the achievement gap in poor and minority students is due to a lack of opportunity, not a lack of intelligence (Flores, 2007, para. 40). He concludes that “there is nothing intrinsic to the students’ backgrounds or cultures that would prevent them from achievement” (Flores, 2007, para. 28). Researcher, Richard Elmore, a researcher who studies schools with racial diversity and high poverty levels, found that schools that were successful, were schools in which teachers and administrators had high expectations for students (Elmore, 2006, para. 4). In a study (Brown & Medway, 2007) of a school (with 10 years of unsatisfactory student progress) with a high percentage of low-income students, 70% population of African-American students, and 34% of students in special education classes, a plan that focused on high expectations brought about national awards for their subsequent accomplishments(Brown & Medway, 2007, para. 9).

Gender

Are male and female students afforded the same opportunities for academic achievement? Society has clearly shown us that we expect different behaviors from males and females (Lindley & Keithley, 1991, para. 1). In the classroom, males benefit from high expectations and are encouraged to achieve their goals. Conversely, females are encouraged to be model students (Lindley & Keithley, 1991, para. 7, 8). Evidence of this bias is shown by males out-scoring females on college entrance standardized tests (Lindley & Keithley, 1991, para. 9). In an effort to address this inequality, the GESA (Gender/Ethnic/Racial Expectations and Student Achievement) Program was developed (Lindley & Keithley, 1991, para. 1). Results from this program showed an increase in classroom opportunities for females, increases in math and reading scores, and the teachers felt that the program was beneficial in raising their cognizance of the issues addressed (Lindley & Keithley, 1991, para. 20).

"Average" Students

Does the "average" student get left out? So much attention is paid to special needs students, but what about the average student (Gonder, 1993, para. 1)? A variety of methods have been successfully used to engage these students (Gonder, 1993, para. 3). One of the methods involves increasing expectations by changing the curriculum focus from basic recall to a curriculum focused on analysis and concepts. (Gonder, 1993, para. 13). This curriculum change lets the student know that you expect more from them and you feel them capable of succeeding (Gonder, 1993, para. 13). Another way some high schools are delivering the message of high expectations is through personalized attention (Gonder, 1993, para. 11). In these schools, once a semester "the adviser, student, and parent meet to discusss the student's educational goals and develop a plan to meet them" (Gonder, 1993, para. 11).

Gifted Students

Underachieving gifted students sounds like an oxymoron, when compared to the stereotypical views of gifted children (Kolb & Jussim, 1994, para. 18). For many teachers, the label of "gifted" means that the student is motivated to excel(Kolb & Jussim, 1994, para. 18). For some students, the lack of challenging work, causes them to behave poorly in class causing the teacher to lower their expectations of that student (Kolb & Jussim, 1994, para. 20). Some gifted children rise to the challenge of changing the teacher's new perception, but others may "fall victim to self-fulfilling prophecies" (Kolb & Jussim, 1994, para. 21). To prevent this cycle of low expectations leading to a negative self-fulfilling prophecy, teachers need to be aware of the ways in which gifted students react to boredom in the classroom (Kolb & Jussim, 1994, para. 28). If teachers realize these reactions for what they are, they will not lower their expectations (Kolb & Jussim, 1994, para. 21).

Do All Students Fall Victim to Low Expectations?

As a parent, I feel strongly that all teachers should hold high expectations for their students. I know that my children look up to their teachers and are influenced by what happens in the classroom. I cannot imagine a better feeling than someone telling you that you are full of potential and ability. As we have seen from various research experiments, teachers can convey these thoughts merely in the manner in which they teach. I also feel that it is my responsibility as a parent to help my child develop a strong sense of self efficacy. As we go through life, we are going to be faced with people who do not have high expectations of us. Should we fall victim to the self-fulfilling prophecy each time we meet someone who does not hold us in high regard? Fortunately, not everyone is

susceptible to the expectancy effects (EE). Kolb & Jussim (1994) state that "it is important to realize that some vulnerable or 'at risk' students, nevertheless, are more resilient than others and seem impervious to the deleterious impact of negative EE" (Kolb & Jussim, 1994, para. 43).

Conclusion

While not all students are negatively impacted by low expectations, research (Mavi & Sharpe, 2000) clearly shows that students benefit from high expectations (Mavi & Sharpe, 2000, para. 15). We are all individuals with our own unique abilities. I will never be an impressive artist, but I can make progress to the best of my ability. Authors Hasan and Sharpe (2000) sum it up nicely, "Clearly defining success in terms of individual progress is one means to avoiding inappropriately placed standards; standards which may act to drive low expectancies placed on some students" (Hasan & Sharpe, 2000, para. 15). Having high expectations for all students does not mean that we expect all students to accomplish the same goals. We expect students to reach their own potential. Teachers can help students obtain their goals by maintaining high expectations for all.

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This reference includes all of the information give in Kathleen's article, but one topic that should be explained is teacher efficacy. It is important for teachers to have expectations for their own performance as well as the expectations of the students. One of the difficulties that teachers run into is the number of goals they want to accomplish with such little time that they have. To overcome that issue, teachers simplify their efforts on the goals that they feel is the most important. This issue leads to important differences in the student's achievement. This topic contributes to Kathleen's article because it is important to know that teacher's expectations

also rely on the expectations of their students and their performance in the classroom. “Intellectual and professional potential of teachers has been drastically underestimated by the education community as a result of the same mindset that has caused teachers to underestimate the intellectual potential of their students” (Hilliard, A. (1991). Do we have the will to educate all children?, Educational Leadership, 49(1), 31-36).

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9.7: How can teachers continue to learn throughout life?

by Christa Portlock

"Give a man a fish, feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish; feed him for a lifetime." The founder of Taoism, Lao Tzu, spoke these words over 2000 years ago. (Smith, xi) Education is similar to this principle. For centuries students were "fed" information and taught to memorize facts, in the hope they would retain a portion of what was taught. Today it isn't enough just to feed information to students. Our world is changing so fast that new information becomes available faster than it can be taught. If a nation wants to keep pace with this ever-changing world, then learning can't stop at graduation. Students as well as teachers must learn "how to fish" for knowledge by becoming life long learners. Teachers can become life-long learners by realizing and acknowledging that life long-learning is a necessity; by learning to keep up with changes through personal and professional development; and by teaching with passion, inspiring young minds to see learning as something wonderful.

Buddy fishing (crop).jpg

Figure 9.7.1: Image 1, Students as well as teachers must learn "how to fish" for knowledge by becoming life long learners

Life-long Learning is a Necessity

The last century has brought about an explosion of inventions, new technologies and new information about our world and universe. Teachers have had to keep up with all the new information and knowledge. What would it be like if they hadn't? Picture a classroom somewhere in America. The teacher has been teaching for many years; she might be in her 50's. That means she started teaching during the 1970s. Think back about 30 years. What were American schools like then? What kind of things would you have found in her first classroom? Classrooms in those days had chalkboards and pull-down maps. Some schools had TVs, film- and overhead projectors that were shared between classes and could be rolled into the room. Calculators existed but were generally not used in the classroom. Now imagine for a minute what it would be like if this teacher had not adapted to change. What would it be like if she had buried herself in her classroom, not furthered her learning, not embraced all the new technologies, events and discoveries? If she had not been a life-long learner, what would she have missed? What would she not have learned, embraced, and passed on to students? Think of the things that have happened in the past 35 years. She would have missed, among other things, the hostage crisis in the late 70's, Presidents coming and going, this country at war more than once, the attack of 9/11. She would not have seen the Soviet Union collapse, would not have heard of Aids or global warming. She would not have known much, if anything, about DNA. She wouldn't know how to use a personal computer, the internet or cell phones. It is easy to see that if we stand still the world will pass us by. We live in a global society that is changing at breathtaking speed. We need to adapt and change. Life-long learning is a necessity for everyone.

Personal and Professional Development

In order to keep up with our changing environment and to stay informed, teachers make a conscious effort to continue learning. They will take part in professional training through the school district or through classes taken at universities. Most teachers read books and professional journals to keep up with the newest information about child development. They read magazines, newspapers, watch the news and surf the internet to keep up with changes that happen around the world. Teachers attend workshops to keep up with technology, the newest teaching strategies, and classroom management techniques. They are eager to take in new information about our world and look for ways to improve their teaching practices in the classroom. Another way a teacher can improve and move forward is to learn more about him or herself. In the book Those Who can, Teach by Ryan Cooper, a teacher is likened to a sculptor who "begins with a vision of what he or she wants to be and then sets to work transforming the vision into a reality… The process requires an understanding of … self … it takes long hours of chipping away and then smoothing the surfaces… To be a teacher, particularly a teacher who is continuously moving forward, is a lifelong commitment …" (Cooper, 473) A sculptor needs time, patience and the ability to see beyond what is easily visible on the surface to create his work of art. A teacher uses those same qualities, just like a sculptor, to patiently reflect and look deep within him- or herself to see where changes could be made. At the end of a day it is helpful for a teacher to think deeply about the events of that day, to analyze him- or herself and therefore better understand and react to situations in the future. It is good to take time to remember happy events, a chance to feel content about good things that may have happened. Reflection can help a person to learn and adjust to his or her environment. As previously discussed, teachers have to become life-long learners and have to adjust to keep up with our ever-changing world through personal and professional development. They are however, not the only ones who need to keep pace with new information and technology. One of the reasons it is so important for teachers to stay informed, is so they can pass this new knowledge and information on to students.

Teaching with Passion

> **Note**
>
> If we can have “students see our passions – it gives them proof that we enjoy learning.” (Thomas, 2007)

Children have a sense of wonder when they are young. “Keeping the joy in learning should be a priority of every school and every teacher.” (Warner, 2006)If children can keep their sense of excitement about the world, they will love to learn and that original excitement and love of learning will most likely stay with them for life. To help keep the excitement alive, teachers aim to inspire young minds. They want their students to see how much fun learning can be. In the article “A Return to Community: Inquiry in Action” Ann H. MacKenzie wrote: “Life-long learning implies a buy-in curiosity about life... an insatiable desire to be alive in ‘the now, the future,’ and immersed in the teeming life surrounding us every moment.” (Thomas, 2007) If we can have “students see our passions – it gives them proof that we enjoy learning.” (Thomas, 2007) It is wonderful to see the sparks when students understand a concept and take off excited with their new-found knowledge. “We must model that inquisitiveness in the classrooms. Our students must see us involved in our own life-long learning… Watch us passionately immerse ourselves in our own curiosities.” (MacKenzie)

When teachers model excitement about learning, students will see learning as something positive to be imitated. In turn they will hopefully become life-long learners themselves. Rafe Esquinth wrote an inspiring book entitled Teach Like Your Hair’s on Fire. He teaches in a “rough” Los Angeles neighborhood and found a way to inspire his students to learn, imagine, and eventually succeed in school. Esquinth relates a story about a day that didn’t start out well. In the course of that day he became so involved in teaching that unbeknownst to him, his hair caught on fire during an experiment. He was so involved in teaching, he didn’t even notice. That day he realized that the key to teaching was to become absorbed and excited about learning. He was determined from then on to make his goal to “teach like his hair is on fire”. (Esquinth, xii) If we can convey to students excitement about a subject, about learning, and about life we will teach as if our “hair is on fire”. That kind of excitement will inspire children to become life-long learners.

> **Note**
>
> “We must model that inquisitiveness in the classrooms. Our students must see us involved in our own life-long learning… Watch us passionately immerse ourselves in our own curiosities.” (MacKenzie)

Conclusion

As individuals and as citizens of a global economy we have to keep pace with our world. We must continue to learn and then pass our knowledge and love of learning on to the next generation. We have to inspire the next generation to find joy in continuous learning so that, even after leaving school, students will be prepared for this ever-changing world, ready to embrace a world filled with new, exciting things, ready to investigate and ready to keep learning, never giving up on their quest for knowledge. A fish is only one meal… we want to teach students to be excited about learning, excited about fishing for information; we want to give them the tools to become life-long fishermen for knowledge.

Reaction Paper

My Thoughts About Life-long Learning

by Christa Portlock

Investigating life-long learning and what it means made me think about what it means to me as a student and as a prospective future teacher. To me the world has always been a very interesting, exciting, and beautiful place to investigate and to learn about. I can’t imagine what my life would be like without that wonder and appreciation about learning new things. Life is so much more stimulating, rich and pleasurable when we engage our minds, use our imagination and fill our hearts with the beauty that surrounds us. I would love to pass that excitement on to someone else. It would be exciting to spark the imagination of children and watch them find the same joy that I have always felt when learning something new. I know I have much to learn to be able to know how to best pass on knowledge, as well as excitement about learning. I am on a learning quest right now. I want to learn how to become that teacher who can create those sparks that light up a child’s eyes and light his or her path through life with inquisitiveness and excitement. I will spend the next few years in school learning all I can. I have spent much time in classrooms in the past, but from this time on I will be spending time in the classroom watching with different eyes. I will have chances to observe experienced teachers. I will spend time reading about teachers that were able to make sparks and even small miracles happen, like Helen Keller.

I know, however, that this is just the beginning of my journey. Most of my learning about teaching will come through the time spent in the classroom. I want to venture and say that many of my most profound lessons will be taught to me by my future students without them even knowing they've been teaching me. I am looking forward to those lessons and am excited about what is to come. As a teacher I will continue to learn. I will take advantage of the training opportunities offered to me and learn individually as well. I hope I will have the opportunity to work with a mentor, learning through observation. I am excited about all the new things to learn and embrace. Life-long learning goes beyond the time spent at school; it goes beyond the classroom and beyond the teaching years. Life-long learning is an adventurous journey through life. Keeping the mind active has enormous health benefits, physically, mentally and spiritually. Life-long learning has the ability to shape, influence, and determine the future. It has the ability to influence mankind's achievements, technologies, and ultimately our destination through individuals who never stand still and make life-long learning their quest that fuels their investigations. Who knows what sparks will fly when the imagination soars in our future classrooms? I am determined to find out!

Essay Question

How can a teacher be likened to a sculptor?

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

10: Classroom Management

10.1: What is the importance of keeping students engaged in learning?
10.2: Is positive discipline all about being nice?
10.3: How can brain research help teachers understand their students?
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10.1: What is the importance of keeping students engaged in learning?

By Carol Halligan

Introduction

How did you learn in school? If your learning experience was like mine, the teacher lectured and I took notes. I didn't look at or study my notes until the night before my test. My goal was to memorize, not learn. What could have been done differently to make my learning experience more effective? Confucius said "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand" (Stalheim-Smith, 1998, p. 3). Emphasizing "I do and I understand," educational research writers Chickering and Gamson write, "Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves" (Chickering & Gameson, 1987, paragraph 14).

What Chickering and Gamson are referring to is "active learning." Active learning means "hands on" working on things, and "minds on" reflecting upon the work which engages the student in learning.

As future teachers, we owe it to our students to go beyond traditional methods of teaching which is lecturing and taking notes to more active learning methods that help students become involved in their own education.

Figure 10.1.1: Bronze statue of Confucius (Public Domain, Bibliothek des allgemeinen und praktischen Wissens. Bd. 5" (1905), Abriß der Weltliteratur, Seite 23)

Note

Confucius said "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand."

To add more insight to Confucius' wisdom, Lynn Schultz, Old Dominion University Educational Instructor writes, "We learn... (taken from an old proverb) 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, 50% of what we both see and hear, 70% of what we discuss with others, 80% of what we experience personally, and 95% of what we teach to someone else" (Schultz, n.d.).

Active Learning Strategies

In this article, we are going to look at the benefits of moving teachers away from lecturing which is “teacher-centered instruction” to facilitating or coaching which is “student-centered learning” (All, n.d., table). Below are six strategies to aid in this process.

Short Lecture, Class Exercise, and Review

In traditional learning, teachers often lecture for long periods of time and students take notes. Research has shown that students will learn more when lectures are broken down into small segments, followed by a class exercise. Class exercises help you as the teacher to know if the student understands what you have just taught them, and also fosters questions. Following the class exercise, provide a summary of what was learned (Calegari & Moulthrop, n.d.). For example, if the subject you are teaching is math, provide math problems to test the student’s understanding. If the subject is history or literature, have the students write what they learned from your discussion (University, 2001). After the students have completed the class exercise, review their answers as a group to ensure their understanding of the lesson, followed by a summation of what they learned highlighting important ideas and concepts. This strategy of a short lecture, class exercise, and review is a more active way of learning than the traditional method of long lecturers and note taking.

Peer Teaching

To make learning even more active, research indicates peer teaching (students teaching students) is a very effective way to learn. Lynn Schultz, Old Dominion University Educational Instructor writes, "We learn...(taken from an old proverb)...95% of what we teach to someone else" (Schultz, n.d.). From my own teaching experience, I think that this statement is very true. It is human nature to want to be prepared when speaking in front of a group of people. You create a lesson plan that you feel comfortable with, and become an expert in the process. You dive into the content of the material preparing for any type of question that may come your way. Peer teaching not only teaches content material, but communication skills as well. Peer teaching doesn’t have to be teaching to an entire class, but can be applied to small groups, or groups that include only two students (University, 2001). Publications written at the Center for Teaching and Learning indicate “Students are more willing to share their views in small groups and often develop deeper insights about the material than they would be working alone” (University, 2001, paragraph 3). Peer teaching can be applied in many content areas. It can be used to teach a complex problem, or as simple as teaching student’s spelling words, vocabulary, or math facts allowing each student to be the teacher as well as the student.

Cooperative Learning Groups, and Debate Teams

Another active learning strategy is Cooperative Learning. Cooperative Learning means grouping students together to learn from one another to achieve an educational goal. Success which is reaching the educational goal is based on how well the members work together and help each other. Failure from one of the members will have a negative impact on the group's success (Chapter, 2004). A good example of Cooperative Learning is this Wikibooks project we are working on. Each student explores a topic that falls under the umbrella of Foundations of Education and Instructional Assessment. The students are active in researching their topic, reflecting upon it, and writing about what they have learned. After the articles are written, peers review articles providing information on ways to improve an article’s content. After reviewing articles, the class as a whole will study all topics researched by the group. The entire Wikibooks project is a cooperative effort that engages the student in learning.

In addition to Cooperative Learning groups, another effective way to learn is to group students into teams that take different positions on a topic and debate them. Again this style of learning is cooperative and engaging as members of a group explore a topic to debate. In addition, there is an element of stress involved in a debate competition that can only put some pressure on the group to fully understand what they are debating.

Role Playing, Case Studies, and Simulations

To add real life experiences to a student's learning, role playing, case studies, and simulations are effective strategies to use. For example, role playing allows the student to put themselves in the shoes of another person, teaching them empathy and understanding of people’s differences or situations. Role playing can also be used to teach a process where the student goes through steps to learn a concept (Active, 1993).

Case studies also deal with real life. They are based on research of real life problems. Case studies examine a problem and leave out “analysis” and “conclusions” forcing the student to be the “decision maker” using his or her “analytical and problem solving skills” to come up with a solution to the problem (Active, 1993, page 2).

Simulations are another way to imitate real life. They are very similar to case studies where they put the student in the decision maker role. The student learns to problem solve using a simplified version of the real world problems. These simulations are a great way to bridge in-class examples with real life (Florida, 2008). There are many software applications on the web today that can be downloaded to educate the student in real life events. In addition, you can take these simulation examples and apply it to role playing, or case study activities.

Games

Games, another active learning strategy, are always a fun way to engage a student in learning. You can find many game ideas on the web to incorporate in your curriculum. For example, play the baseball game by splitting the class into two teams. Ask batters a question, and if he or she gets the answer right advance a base, but if answered wrong it's an out. Play the game as if you are playing baseball and have students mark outs and runs on the chalkboard (Harrison, n.d.). Another fun game is classroom Jeopardy which is a lot like the television version of Jeopardy. This a good review game where the teacher provides the answer to a question and the student must write down the question. For example, if the teacher was reviewing multiplication math facts, the techer might say 27 and students who wrote 3X9 would win points. The student with the most points at the end of the game would win a prize like being the first student in the lunch line or the first student out at the playground for recess (Whiteboard, 2002).

Journals and Portfolios

Other active learning strategies include journals and portfolios. Journals and portfolios aid the student in tracking their learning progress (Florida, 2008). Journals and portfolios can be a compilation of the student's work over time, perhaps in nine-week increments, or for the entire school year. It is a great way for tracking what a student came to the class knowing, how they progressed in their learning, and a reflection on what they have learned.

Traditional Learning versus Active Learning

Based on research it appears that applying active learning methods can really engage a student in learning so that more knowledge is retained and understood. But, one major concern of active learning is that it may be too time intensive and because of this, SOL requirements that test a vast amount of knowledge might not be met. Is it possible to implement active learning strategies and cover all necessary SOL material? I suppose the best way to answer this question, is to look at research. At Newsome Park Elementary School in Newport News Virginia, the school changed from a traditional learning program to an active learning program and their SOL test scores rose. Based on the schools statistics, "...between 1997 and 2000, the percentage of fifth graders passing the Virginia Standards of Learning test increased from 35 percent to 65 percent in math, 52 percent to 79 percent in science, and 53 percent to 65 percent in English" after active learning practices were implemented (Curtis, 2001, paragraph 15). To view a multimedia video on the active learning successes that took place at Newsome Park Elementary School go to http://www.edutopia.org/more-fun-barrel-worms.

Another concern of active learning is that it appears ideal only in small classrooms of fewer than 20 students, but when you get into teaching larger classes of greater than 20 students it may be impractical to use active learning strategies. There may be too much noise and confusion in large classes using active learning strategies. The traditional method of teaching would provide order. According to educators from North Carolina State University, they disagree and feel "the larger the class, the more essential it is to use active learning" (Felder & Brent, 1999, paragraph 9). They suggest that large classes be divided into small groups of 2 or 3 students. After a specific amount time has lapsed, stop the group's activity, and direct a question to one member of the group. Asking questions directed to one of the group's members will ensure everyone is on their toes, because any member can be asked at random to answer a question for the team (Felder & Brent, 1999).

Conclusion

Active learning is a change from the traditional education method of lecturing, taking notes, and testing. It enables the student to become an active participant in their learning process which makes a student's quest for knowledge a more enlightening experience. As Confucius said, "I do and I understand."

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10.2: Is positive discipline all about being nice?

by Mary Parker

Introduction

How should teachers, parents, and babysitters deal with children? Should they work as a team or should adults be on an entirely different level than their students? All children respond to authority in a unique way. Naturally, kids like to push their limits, test their boundaries, and see what they can and can not get away with. Discipline can be separated into two different categories: positive discipline or negative discipline. I have had a lot of experience working in classroom settings, not only as a student, but also as a volunteer, camp counselor, and as a teaching assistant. I have been exposed to many different personalities of teachers such as calm, stressed, easy-going, aggressive, and even frustrated teachers. Throughout my education, I was mainly taught using negative means of discipline. It is easy to recall students who, no matter how many times they had been sent to the principal's office, never seemed to correct their behavior. Could there be a better relationship between the adult and child that could have led to fewer trips to the office and better performance in the classroom? I am an avid believer in positive discipline because I have seen a classroom where it has been successful. Yet, I have also been exposed to classrooms where students get their work done because the teacher is strict and did not tolerate misbehavior. What is the solution? Should children constantly be praised for their good behavior or reprimanded when they act out? Are teachers required to punish in order to maintain respect as an authority figure. It is important to understand:

1. What positive discipline is, and how it compares to negative discipline.

2. How to apply positive reinforcement in the classroom.

3. Understand how Positive Reinforcement can work.

What is Positive Discipline?

Jane Nelson, who according to Alice Yand a publication manager for the Northeartern Foundation for Children, has written a very inspirational book on Positive Discipline and illustrates to her readers how to implicate it in and out of the classroom. Nelson states that, "Positive Discipline is based on the understanding that discipline must be taught and that discipline teaches" (Positive Discipline Associates). There are several different components that combine to define positive discipline. A few of these factors include: mutual respect between teacher and student, understanding the drive behind bad behavior, efficient correspondence, discipline that allows learning, focusing on improvement rather than reprimand, and encouragement (Positive Discipline Associates). Along with these aspects of guidance through positive reinforcement, consistency is also crucial in this method of teaching. When teachers use this type of reinforcement, children are acknowledged for the things they are doing right, rather than receiving attention for what they have done wrong.

What is Negative Discipline?

According to Dictionary.com, Negative Discipline can be described as punishment that denounces a child's behavior. Often, reprimands are given to the kids that act up and the child is punished in front of the class. Children crave attention, whether it is positive or negative, and will take extreme measures to be noticed by the adults in their lives. When a child is corrected in front of the other children, sent to the office, or even yelled at, they are receiving attention that they crave. Should students try and lash out to obtain negative attention from their teachers? The Institution of Educational Statistics states that some people believe that being stern is the way to get children to be corporative and respect authority. Also, it is understood that if there is a strong sense of power in the classroom, students will not test their limits. If children gain the understanding that they will not be chastised for their bad behavior, they may not comply with the rules. Negative Discipline has been in classrooms for decades, children have been exposed to referrals, suspension, time-out, and even spanking. There have been many schools that base their education on negative discipline and the results have been successful. Why is there a need to change now?

Note

Positive Discipline Phrases:

"Do the right thing."

"Gentle Hands."

> "I'm sorry he knocked you down."
>
> "Do you think that was a good choice?"
>
> "Thank you for doing the right thing."

There is a new method of teaching called Positive Discipline. What components are involved in this new teaching method? S. Doescher and L. Burt of Oregon University, explain that there are many ways to incorporate positive reinforcement into the teaching curriculum. Some ways to apply this method of partnership include:

1. Making positive comments. When students do something desirable, instead of ignoring it. It is crucial for the instructor to address the good behavior. If children realize that others are being praised for their behavior, they may also try to receive encouraging feedback from his or her teacher.

2. Ask for children's input. Everyones opinion matters and even adults tend to pay attention to topics that they are interested in. When teachers inquire students' opinion, they are more likely to be entertained and participate.

3. Body language is essential. Even young people can sense approval through accepting gestures such as eye contact and smiling.

4. Getting on their level. Positive Discipline is defined as a partnership, therefore; children should feel as though they are an important part of the relationship. Some teachers feel as though, "bending, kneeling, or sitting at a children's level" (Doescher and Burt), makes a child feel involved and important.

5. Encourage children to redirect their negative behavior to a positive one. Children learn new things everyday, if students are made aware of positive behaviors they are more likely to want to try new things. An example of redirected a child's attention could be if he or she is trying to take someone else's toy, an instructor can present the idea of a different toy to play with.

6. Ignore actions that are not desirable. When children are performing inappropriate manners, adults should act like they do not see them behaving bad, therefore; they may loose interest in the behavior and do something positive to gain the teacher's attention.

7. Consistency is essential. If a teacher chooses to use Positive Discipline in his or her classroom, they must not change. Children crave structure and fluctuating between methods of discipline will only lead to confusion and frustration, two unhealthy attitudes to have in a classroom.

A Success Story and Conclusion

Katharine Kersey, a professor of Early Childhood Education at Old Dominion University, wrote a book dealing with the idea of Positive Discipline. It is titled *The 101s: A Guide to Positive Discipline*. In this book, Kersey addresses how to present children with a vigorous classroom experience by highlighting positive behaviors rather than negative. I have experienced many classroom environments as both a student and as an adult. Not only have I been in classrooms where Negative Discipline was the teaching approach being used, but also I have worked in Old Dominion's Early Childhood Development Center and the Old Dominion Day Care. Both centers are avid believers in the use of Positive Discipline. After viewing it first hand, it is obvious that some education institutes can succeed using Positive Reinforcement.

No matter what teaching method is going to be used in a classroom, the instructor must remain consistent and understanding. It is important to understand kids and how to deal with them appropriately. People have different opinions on what works and what does not work for them. Through personal experience, I have seen success stories on both sides of the spectrum. Finally, it all comes down to the idea that although Positive Discipline is a somewhat new teaching tactic, it can work. Whether or not one discipline method is better than the other depends on the teacher and the students. As a teacher, one must find what works for them and try to make their classroom the best environment for his or her students.

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10.3: How can brain research help teachers understand their students?

by Valerie R. Singleton

Learning Objectives

1. The reader will be able to discuss the two main arguments for and against brain base education.
2. The reader will be able to understand recommended educational approaches from brain research and its effects on learning.
3. The reader will gain a base knowledge of how to apply lessons from brain-based learning research to classroom settings.

Introduction

The world of education is becoming more and more complex. Oftentimes the array of educational research and teaching models can be a bit daunting for the novice teacher. How can a new teacher be sure which strategies are the most effective when most teaching strategies have been backed by years and years of research? Most education models seem legitimate and useful and this can be overwhelming. With dropping graduation rates, poor test performance, stretched budgets and the stress of accountability teachers are hard pressed to keep classroom instruction interesting, meaningful and fun. Teachers are now more than ever being challenged with the task of keeping students engaged. There has been a paradigm shift to students becoming active learners and teachers taking on the role of guides to knowledge and learning independence. (Erlauer, 2003) Brain research and its effects on learning is definitely not a new area of research. In the past there have been a variety of theories ranging from right brain vs. left brain learners, gender studies, and many other theories in between. (Willingham, 2006) This article will review the core principles of brain based education, the implications for best teaching practices, and the twelve classroom design principles based on the mainstream research.

What is Brain Based Learning?

Brain-based learning is an instructional-design model based on the idea that learning activities are more effective if they occur in an atmosphere that is compatible with the way the brain learns. Brain based education centers around the principle that learning is more productive if the learner is in a natural, challenging, yet non-threatening environment. Learning is a natural condition of humans. However, humans do not learn to be more effective on the job, or to be more gifted with numbers than words. Humans learn to survive. The main tenet of brain based learning is that if the environment is conducive to natural learning then learning will not only take place, but flourish.

Brain Based Learning: Fact or Fiction

Most researchers of brain-based education would be the first to admit that many of the findings of brain-based learning research are still in the early stages. Two of the pioneer researchers in brain based learning, Renate Nummela Caine and Geoffrey Caine have published several books and articles on brain based research and have brought focus to the subject. The Caines came up with 12 principles based on brain based research which outlines its implications in the classroom. The 12 principles will be discussed in detail later in the article. But first, it is important to point out that there are some scientists who believe that although neuroscience has made great strides in finding out how the brain works, it is a bit premature to try and use those findings in the classroom. Neuroscience is a vast discipline filled with mystery, and only in the past 15 years have scientist been able to uncover some of those mysteries through use of MRI (Magnetic resonance imaging) and PET scan (Positron Emission Tomography). (Erlauer, 2003) Other scientist have cautioned educators from getting drawn in by all the research because many of the findings used to support classroom instructional models is not brain based at all. Most of the research is based mainly on already existing psychological theories based on cognitive research. (Bruer, 1999) Neuroscience and psychology are very similar. The main difference is that neuroscience is the science of the brain and how it functions, and psychology is the science of the mind and human behavior. (Bruer, 1999) Psychology has been considered to be a soft-science for many years. Neuroscience is a hard science. Hard sciences are generally grounded in rigorous methodology and hypothesis formation. Soft sciences are usually not as rigid and there is much room for speculation. John T. Bruer explores this dichotomy in a *Phi Deltan Kappan* journal article, In Search of…Brain Based Education. Bruer contends that most of the evidence available against traditional models of education can be supported by 30 years of research in constructivism and cognitive development not brain research. (Bruer, 1999) As mentioned previously some scientists will agree that brain research has accomplished much in the last decade. Daniel Willingham, a renowned cognitive

scientist and professor, cautions educators to be aware of the different levels of analysis present when trying to bridge neuroscience and effective classroom practices.

Nonetheless despite skepticism many scientists have found enough validity in the research to press forward in changing the face of the American classroom. Eric Jensen, Renate Nummela Caine, Geoffrey Caine and Laura Erlauer have designed educational models which integrate brain based research into the classroom. The next section will survey some of the principles and implications their research has had on education.

Integrating Brain Based learning into the Classroom

With all the information out in the world about brain based learning how does a teacher successfully integrate the best teaching practices into their classroom. It is important for a teacher to know that they don't have to reinvent the wheel. Whenever trying to implement a new strategy into the classroom it is always best to start small. When I first began teaching my aunt, who is also a teacher, told me to never stop learning. She advised me to attend conferences regularly, and pick two good strategies to incorporate into my classroom. I intend to incorporate some of the strategies I have read about in my research with caution. Renate Nummela Caine and Geoffrey Caine created the 12 mind/brain principles for integrating brain based research into the classroom. According to Renate Caine, " These principles are not meant to represent the final word on learning. Collectively, they do, however, result in a fundamentally new, integrated view of the learning process and the learner. They move us away from seeing the learner as a blank slate and toward an appreciation of the fact that body, brain, and mind are a dynamic unity." Following is the complete list of the twelve brain/mind learning principles, as defined by Caine and Caine:

Note

1. The brain is a complex adaptive system.
2. The brain is a social brain.
3. The search for meaning is innate.
4. The search for meaning occurs through patterning.
5. Emotions are critical to patterning.
6. Every brain simultaneously perceives and creates parts and wholes.
7. Learning involves both focused attention and peripheral attention.
8. Learning always involves conscious and unconscious processes.
9. We have at least two ways of organizing memory.
10. Learning is developmental.
11. Complex learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat.
12. Every brain is uniquely organized. (Caine and Caine 1997)

Each of these principles has specific implications for the classroom which are fully illustrated in their book *Education on the Edge of Possibility*. Eric Jensen took the principles base on the Caine research and developed a teaching model which breaks down teaching preparation to three distinct phases. The first phase is the preparation and planning stage, next phase focuses on the learning process and then finally the last stage is for reflection and processing of information. (Jensen, 2005) If a teacher uses Jensen's teaching model and integrates the following three interactive elements Renate Caine writes about in her book Making Connections then setting up a classroom which takes a brain based approach would be a less challenging process.

• Teachers must immerse learners in complex, interactive experiences that are both rich and real. One excellent example is immersing students in a foreign culture to teach them a second language. Educators must take advantage of the brain's ability to parallel process.

• Students must have a personally meaningful challenge. Such challenges stimulate a student's mind to the desired state of alertness.

• In order for a student to gain insight about a problem, there must be intensive analysis of the different ways to approach it, and about learning in general. This is what's known as the "active processing of experience." (Caine, 1991)

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10.4: When should students be rewarded or punished?

By Wendy Belgrave

Learning Objectives

- To understand what positive reinforcement means
- Understand there can be drawbacks to any method
- To learn alternative ways of punishment

Introduction

"Great job on figuring out that problem! Way to analyze the data Sarah. And you Nathan! I want you to write me a 500 word essay on why it is important to pay attention and be quiet while class is in session. I'm tired of having to talk to you about this!" Does this seem fair to you? In an ideal world the students would walk into a classroom, and their soft murmurs would come to a halt once the bell rang. They would all take out their paper and pencils, take notes, raise their hand if they had a question or answer, and smile during the entire class period. But this is not fantasy land and we have children coming into our classrooms with all sorts of personalities and issues. A teacher might find it easy to praise their students when they do something good, but what if the students are having a “bad day”? Can you really catch more flies with honey than with vinegar?

Reinforcing A Desired Behavior

Note

“You can win people to your side more easily by gentle persuasion and flattery, than by hostile confrontation (Hirch 1988 p. 49),"

Growing up, receiving a sticker on a gold star at the end of the day was the ultimate feeling for me. The sticker meant a job well done throughout the day. I didn’t know it at the time but that was positive reinforcement at its best. The concept definition of positive reinforcement, according to the *Centre of Psychology*, occurs when 3 conditions have been met (Grant 1996).

- A consequence is presented dependent on a behavior.
- The behavior becomes more likely to occur.
- The behavior becomes more likely to occur because and only because the consequence is presented dependent on the behavior.

In my observations I have witnessed teachers praise their students. You do not hear the student say how this makes them feel, but you will see their demeanor change when a student is given accolades in front of his or her peers. This provokes a willingness to chime in more often regardless of right or wrong answers. A student named Lee Ray was recognized for his risk taking. His teacher wrote a summary of him saying, "He answers all the questions, correct or not (Lashaway-Bokina 2000 p. 225)." Positive feedback and recognition build self esteem and confidence.

Giving a student a “good job” for a correct answer is always good, but the learning of subject matter is not the only thing that deserves recognition. Rewarding desired behavior is easier than you may think. For instance, you are doing a class project that requires cutting pieces of paper, at the end of the project you notice a student picking up pieces of paper that fell off the desk and throwing them in the trash. This is a perfect opportunity to acknowledge a thoughtful gesture. This in turn tells the other students to do the same without you having to request it. This is much more effective than reminding the students that you are not their parent and won’t pick up after them. Acknowledging good attendance, a pat on the back for team work, and even recognizing special achievements even if they are not related to the class are great ways to build self esteem. Just as important, the recognition of improved behavior or grades is also a great confidence builder. Sending a post card home to the child’s parents is a great way to reinforce positive behavior.

Note

“You must systematically strengthen the behavior you want while systematically weakening the competing behaviors that you do not want. A discipline program, for example, should not only eliminate problem behavior, but it should also systematically build the positive behaviors that you want to replace the problems (Fred Jones).

When Rewarding By Incentives Goes Bad

Some teachers choose to pass out candy or give special privileges for good behavior or for doing certain tasks, but what if there is not an actual reward other than a “thank you”? *Student Awards, Rewards, and Recognition* says that you mustn’t use rewards as incentives because it sends this message, “if you do this, then you get this.” This may seem too much like bribing. Bloggers on *An Unschooling Life*, are not fans of the rewards for learning. They believe that the reward for studying is learning. One of the bloggers who is a homeschooling parent said, “If someone had to bribe me to do something, my first thought would be "It must be unpleasant if you have to bribe me to do it." She continued on to say that her daughter would only read if she was given candy while in school.

Peter Callaghan, a writer for *The News Tribune*, agrees with the home schooling parent about the damage that incentives create. He mentions a school in Washington that was giving a five week course to better scores on reading, writing, and mathematics for an upcoming standardized test. A $79 free IPod Shuffle was offered to every student that signed up. Only 80 failing students had signed up for the test before the incentive was given. The incentive was enough to fill 270 additional slots. “Kids who goof off shouldn’t receive gifts while kids who try hard get nothing extra. Kids shouldn’t be bribed to try to learn something (Callaghan 207).”

Punishment As An Incentive

It would be easier to teach a classroom full of children if there were no children misbehaving. According to *Student Teacher Advocate*, one third of new teachers leave the teaching field within the first 3 years. The teachers questioned said that they spend an overwhelming amount of time doing other tasks (disciplining included), beyond actual instruction. Forty percent of those teachers surveyed said that they spend more time than expected on disciplining (Miller, Higgins).

Teachers sometimes find punishment to be effective as a classroom behavior management tool, especially as a short term solution. Because punishment tends to rapidly stop problem behaviors, the teacher in turn is positively reinforced for using it (What Every Teacher Should Know About Punishment 2008). Teachers may be tempted to use this technique over and over because of its quick response, but this very sort of punishment can have side effects. Students who are generally punished in this way can overtime develop negative attitudes toward school, can develop an uncomfortable relationship with their teachers, and perhaps feel apprehensive about participating in class activities (What Every Teacher Should Know About Punishment 2008). Discipline and punishment are important parts of rearing children not only at home but in school settings as well.

When people use the word “punish”, it is usually used to describe a negative consequences for a violation. In some schools around the United States punishment can mean physical punishment. Corporal punishment is still allowed in 21 out of 50 states, but is only practiced in 4 of those states; Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee (Farrell). According to C. Farrell, a writer for *School Corporal Punishment*, paddlings were given in the classroom or right outside the door, but then only the principle had to do the paddling or it was done in front of his or her presence in a private room. Some of the people I spoke to remember being paddled or being hit on the palms with a ruler for horse playing. Educators must be careful and administer punishment with care, especially if it comes in the form of corporal punishment. "Punishments are an expression of violence of the more powerful adult against the weaker child (Cerney 2008 p.51)."

Note

> “According to estimates from the federal Department of Education (Office of Civil Rights), there were about 272,000 paddlings of students in the 2004-05 school year -- down from 457,754 only eight years previously. This shows that the rapid decline of the 1980s and early 1990s, which had leveled off by the middle of the 1990s, has now resumed. Total paddlings were equivalent to only 0.6% of the total US school population (Farrell)."

Alternative Ways Of Punishment

Punishment can take on many forms; it can be a reprimand, or a type of punishment known as response cost. Response cost means that a student can have rewards, or privileges taken away when he or she demonstrates problem behavior even if it is only momentarily (What Every Teacher Should Know About Punishment 2008). An example would be that a student on time-out would not be able to join his or her classmates when it is time for playtime until their time-out was over.

Disciplining does not necessarily mean having the child sit in the corner with a dunce hat on, getting paddled, whacked on the hands, or writing sentences. Experienced teachers will say that remaining calm can diffuse an angry disposition more effectively than responding in an equal tone. One of the teachers that I interviewed, Kristin Gorsuch, a high school math teacher from Isle of

Wight County, said that when she has a continually disruptive student, she simply asks them to step outside for a minute until she can go outside and discuss in private what she expects. The point is not to intimidate or belittle them in front of their peers. Disciplining does not have to be an aggressive act is what she believes.

You will see and hear what other teachers believe is a good way of "punishing" a student without it being demeaning or embarrassing. Visit this web site for the videos under "What Would You Do?" www.nea.org/classmanagement/discipline.html

Conclusion

Time changes everything. The material taught in schools, the thoughts on child creativity, and classroom management have all been revised over time. The question as to what is a better way to develop productive adults has perplexed people for ages. Should we pat our children on the back for a mediocre job and hope that next time they do better, or should we whoop them into shape, tell them what we expect and show no mercy since the "real world" won't show them any? As educators we need to build up our children and young adults, evaluate what the problem really is, if any and make a decision based on each child. There is no cookie cutter solution.

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10.5: Should students be praised?

By Pam Kennedy

Learning Objectives

The student will understand:

a.) the concept of reinforcement techniques.

b.) the locus of control.

The student will be able to:

a.) determine whether a reinforcer is positive or negative.

b.) apply knowledge of the control locus to situations to determine the motivating factor's origin.

Note

"An issue of prime concern to educators is how to use rewards...to promote

learning without disrupting students' intrinsic interest."—Cameron & Pierce, 1996, p. 40

Introduction

We have all heard that there can be too much of a good thing. In fact, we have most likely all experienced this type of good. For example, I love pizza! I do not eat it very often, because without a doubt, no matter when I last ate pizza, I will eat so much that I am absolutely miserable. Can the same thing be said about things that are less tangible? Specifically, can we offer someone, especially a child, so much praise that we negate the good?

Note

What is Praise?

Merriam-Webster defines praise as both a noun and a verb.

Noun: "An expression of approval. Verb: To offer a favorable judgement."—Merriam-Webster Online, 2005, n.p.

Traditional Behaviorism: A Reinforcement Theory

B. F. Skinner's (1904-1990) operant conditioning theory tells us that a behavior can be increased or decreased through reinforcers (Berk, 18). Reinforcers change the rate of a behavior's occurrence. Steve Booth-Butterfield (1996) expands on this by saying that positive reinforcers, rewards, increase the desired behavior, while negative reinforcers, punishers, are those that decrease the occurrence of an action. Additionally, he tells us to offer no attention at all in order to do away with something entirely (Booth-Butterfield, n.p.).

The Locus of Control

The Journal of Applied Social Psychology (2006) publishes, Icek Ajzen's (2002) concept that control over an individual's behavior depends both on internal and external factors that might change the intended or expected outcome. He theorizes that it is the individual's self-efficacy that determines the roll of external motivators (p. 678). In other words, external stimuli play only a small part when individuals strongly believe in their own inherent ability. However, people with low self-esteem feel they lack the ability to control their own lives, which, in turn, allows external factors to have greater influence over their actions.

The Debate

Controversy exists, not so much with the idea that reinforcement changes behavior, but instead, in how it changes it and for how long. Debate has also arisen over whether or not we inhibit an individual’s natural desire to achieve by offering a reward. Cameron and Pierce’s (1994) meta-analytical study reviewed twenty years of research into this debate. They concluded that rewards, such as praise and positive feedback, were successful motivators as long as performance *quality* was the basis for the reward (p. 391-395). In this scenario, it is not sufficient to complete a task; the job must be done well.

Critics of this study point out that even Cameron and Pierce's own data verifies that intrinsic motivation decreases over time when incentives are used (Kohn, 3). For example, in his rebuttal, *By All Available Means*, Kohn (1996) tells us that only purely informational feedback is effective if one hopes to avoid adverse consequences to an individual's internal motivation (p. 3). In other words, keep your opinion, good or bad, out of it.

Still others, such as Judge, Erez, Bono, and Thoresen (2002), believe that self-esteem, in conjunction with locus of control, self-efficacy, and neuroticism, is the key factor controlling whether or not extrinsic stimuli effect intrinsic behavior (p. 706-708). For example, praise will have little effect on the end result for a person with high self-esteem, largely, because the level of output produced by this individual is NOT dependent on your opinion, but rather on his/her own level of neuroticism. On the other side, someone who lacks confidence may work diligently for the sole purpose of seeking even some small amount of recognition.

Note

"What's going on is this: Reinforcement theory is a functional theory. That means all of its components are defined by their function (how they work) rather than by their structure (how they look). Thus, there is no Consequences Cookbook where a teacher can look in the chapter, "Rewards for Fifth Grade Boys," and find a long list of things to use as rewarding consequences. Think about this a minute."

-- Steve Booth-Bloomfied, 1996, n.p.

Limitations

The limiting factor, or the variable, is that all people are different. As such, a particular reinforcer may serve as a reward or a punishment depending on the individual. For example, a mom sends her two children to their rooms as a negative consequence for cutting down her rosebush. The punishment works well with one child who shows appropriate remorse for her actions, while the other child is delighted with the opportunity to play indoors. Anthony Chelte (1998) argues that the reinforcement theory completely ignores an individual's internal motivation. The implication is that people require the external stimuli. In his view, people seek to accomplish a set task, or reach a predetermined goal, simply because it feels good to know that a job has been done and done well (p.10). In other words, reaching the goal is the reward.

Conclusion

Behavioral scientists concur that reinforcement effects behavior. The above controversy is over *proper application*. In the educational setting the reinforcement theory's effectiveness has been weakened by an inability to use it properly. In his article entitled *Reinforcement Theory*, Steve Booth-Bloomfield (n.d.) tells us that punishment can be a truly effective tool when it is "immediate, intense, and unavoidable." (Booth-Bloomfield, n.p.) He goes on to say that while this tool "has been taken away from the teacher…some teachers persist in using weakened forms of punishment, often with unsuccessful and frustrating effects." (Booth-Bloomfield, n.p.). It is my opinion that the absence of a good negative consequence not only reduces the lesson's value, but also takes away from the positive effectiveness of reward. It is simply a matter of expectations! Furthermore, I believe, that actions foster outcomes. As the adult, we *must* show respect. By respect, I refer to authoritative child rearing principles: We show children (truthfully, all people) a "high level of acceptance" (Berk, 2007, p. 279). This must be offered in conjunction with "firm, reasonable, control" (Berk, 2007, p. 279) that is reduced based on age-appropriate maturity and responsible behavior.

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10.6: How can students be motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically?

by Christine Stanton

Learning Objectives

- Define, understand and give examples of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- Understand opposing theories on motivation
- Describe Self Determinaton Theory and provide examples of how to meet students' needs

Defining Motivation: What makes you move?

mo•ti•va•tion*: the act or process of motivating b: the condition of being motivated: a motivating force, stimulus, or influence : INCENTIVE , DRIVE (Merriam Webster, 2008)*

The subject of motivation has been researched and analyzed by countless scholars in various fields such as psychology, philosophy and education. What makes people behave in certain ways? What makes them “move”? In the 1940's, a pioneer of motivation theory, Abraham Maslow, described his own theory on human motivation. He proposed that people have a hierarchy of needs that motivate them to do all things (Maslow, 1946). These basic needs must be met in order of precedence, meaning that the needs at the bottom of the hierarchy must be met before the needs at the top of the list can be (Maslow, 1946).

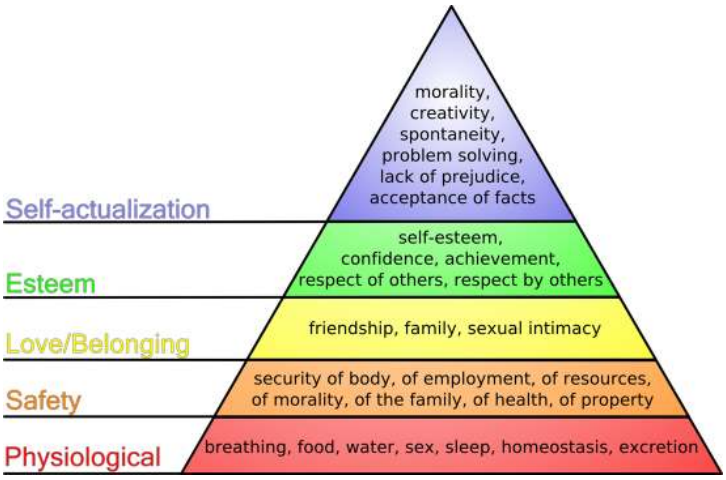

Figure 10.6.1: Image 1, Motivational Hierarchy (GFDL, J. Finkelstein, Wikimedia)

In this model, certain needs must be met in order for a person to be motivated to learn. Later research expands on this idea, as noted in the following sections. In Educational Psychology, it is a common belief that teachers can “motivate” their students by providing an environment or situation that may enhance learning. Researchers have been studying motivation for several decades, attempting to understand how to use motivation to specifically benefit the learning process. Motivation has been classified into two generally accepted forms:

- **Intrinsic motivation** is motivation that comes from within the student (e.g. contentment, enjoyment, pride, sense of accomplishment, responsibility)
- **Extrinsic motivation** is motivation that comes from an external source (e.g. tangible rewards, trophies, stickers, gifts, applause, praise)

Instrinsic versus Extrinsic?

So, which is better for use in the classroom? Is one more effective than the other? Or can both be used?

On one hand, some could say that extrinsic rewards are more effective and reflective of the "real world" - people aren't motivated to work without paychecks. So does extrinsic motivation prepare students for the "real world"? Or are we just bribing them?

Because intrinsic motivation comes from within, it is considered by many to be the more effective of the two when it comes to learning. Intrinsic motivation can foster life long excitement for learning, resulting in students who are eager to learn new things. Their experience is more meaningful and they go deeper in their learning to fully understand it. It helps develop a student's attitude towards education and ensures more lasting success. Of course, we all want our children to want to go to school and learn because they enjoy learning. But what about subjects that just don't interest them or that are difficult for them to master? Is it possibly to be intrinsically motivated for all things?

We're back at our question.....which works better? Intrinsic or Extrinsic Rewards? Let's look a little closer at each...

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation can take the form of anything that doesn't come from within a person. Examples range from a smiley face on a paper or a "great job" sticker to a hefty pay raise or bonus for an adult. It can be getting the approval of a teacher or being accepted by peers. Extrinsic motivation can also be negative in the form of punishment or taking rewards away.

Extrinsic motivation may be more effective when a student has a less-desirable task ahead of them. For example, the student who dislikes math, might be more motivated to do well on the math test to get a good grade. Many argue, however, that once the reward is gone, the student will not continue to be motivated (Vockell, 2008). The predominance of researchers seem to agree that intrinsic motivation is more desirable, encouraging a more lasting desire to learn; however, extrinsic motivation is sometimes more popular when the task is not as appealing or if the technique seems to be more effective for the task at hand and for certain types of learners. For example, if Susan hates her math homework and is simply not interested in doing it, it might give her incentive to do her homework if she knows she will get a good grade, a reward or praise from her teacher.

Intrinsic Rewards & Self Determination Theory

Many believe that motivation is the most powerful when it comes from within, rather than from outside forces. Some go farther to describe one or more factors that can promote intrinsic motivation. Some of these factors are challenge, curiosity, control, fantasy, competition, cooperation, or recognition (Vockell, 2008).

Self Determination Theory (SDT) started evolving over 30 years ago with the research of Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. The basis of their theory is that people have three basic needs: the need for a sense of autonomy, the need for relatedness (or belonging), and the need for competence (Deci & Ryan. 1991). Many theories on teaching motivation have centered on meeting these three needs:

1. Sense of *Autonomy* - Students need to feel a sense of control and self-determination

2. Sense of *Belonging* – Students need to feel accepted by peers and teachers

3. Sense of *Competence* – Students need to feel capable of succeeding

SDT proposes that all individuals have a "seed" for learning and with the right nutrients or environment, they can be encouraged to be self motivated (or intrinsically motivated) (Deci & Ryan, 1991). This implies that if all these basic needs are met for our students, then their natural curiosity and thirst for learning can shine through.

Note

To be self determined is to endorse one's actions at the highest level of reflection. When self determined people experience a sense of freedom to do what is interesting, personally important, and vitalizing. - Edward L. Deci & Richard M. Ryan

Deci & Ryan went even further to claim that extrinsic motivation can undermine intrinsic motivation (Deci et al. 2001). In 1994, Cameron & Pierce challenged this theory saying that the effect of extrinsic rewards was "minimal and inconsequential." Deci and Ryan countered this claim with newer research in 1995 which proved that "tangible rewards do indeed have a substantial undermining effect" (Deci et al. 2001).

Figure 10.6.2: Image 2, (Adapted from Anderman & Leake, 2005)

An Argument Against Motivation Theories

On the opposite end of the educational motivation research field are some that believe that motivation theories are not valid, such as Steven Reiss. Reiss, a professor of pscyology at Ohio State University, claims that Deci & Ryan and other similarly minded researchers are "taking many diverse human needs and motivations, putting them into just two categories, and then saying one type of motivation is better than another. But there is no real evidence that intrinsic motivation even exists" (Reiss, 2008). Reiss believes that different people can be motivated in different ways and there is no right or wrong way to motivate. "Individuals differ enormously in what makes them happy - for some competition, winning and wealth are the greatest sources of happiness, but for others, feeling competent or socializing may be more satisfying. The point is that you can't say some motivations, like money (or other tangible rewards), are inherently inferior." While some children are "inherently curious", other children are not as much so, for which extrinsic rewards may be more effective. Reiss further argues that extrinsic rewards may encourage students to pursue activities that they would normally have shyed away from.

OVERVIEW

Your third grade class is very active today. The energy level is high as the kids get ready for an end-of-the-day holiday party. But before they can go, they need to finish an important history lesson which they will be quizzed on. You know getting their attention will be hard. What do you do? Do you offer them all a "homework-free" night as a reward for paying attention? You still have a bag of lollipops in your desk for halloween - would that be a good idea? Or if you make it a fun, interactive game will they all jump in and get the job done because they'll be enjoying themselves? Or perhaps giving them the choice of giving up some of their recess in order to spend more time on the history lesson would encourage them to make good choices?

People can be motivated differently for a variety of reasons, from age to culture to special needs. As teachers, we will each have various scenarious where one might work better than another or a combination of the two is a better approach. While many of our actions are motivated extrinsically, intrinsic motivation must be there as well to encourage long term interest and learning. Being aware of different theories (such as intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, self-determination theory) and being flexibile in our methods will be important in order to be the most effective teachers we can be.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

11: Ethics and Law

11.1: How can we create equity in the classroom?
11.2: What are teachers' rights and responsibilities?
11.3: What are students' rights and responsibilities?
11.4: What does it mean to be an ethical teacher?
11.5: How should teachers teach ethics?

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11.1: How can we create 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.

CULTURE

Year 2024 will represent the 70th 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 60 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 60 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.
- Third, 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

> **Note**
>
> Culture ... impacts our lives by determining what is important and what is not,what makes sense and what does not. The culture then makes these constructions available to the young and to new initiates for appropriation and use in transforming their participation in that culture. Learning, then, becomes a matter of changes in one's relation to the culture(s) to which one is connected.

SCHOOL SIZE

A large-scale quantitative study using nationally representative and longitudinal data attempted to identify the ideal size of a high school, based on student learning. The study explored these issues for about 10,000 students in 800 public and private schools in the United States. Although most research on this topic has been framed within a "bigger versus smaller" mode, the objective here was to estimate an appropriate balance point between student learning and school size. Achievement gains in mathematics and reading over the course of high school were found to be largest in middle-sized high schools (600-900 students). Schools of this size were also favored in terms of social equity, in that they had weaker relationships between student socioeconomic status (SES) and achievement. Lee and Smith also found that even though the same "ideal size" was consistent across schools identified by their average SES and minority concentrations, school size was a more important factor in determining learning in schools enrolling more disadvantaged students.

Investigating the effects of school size in Chicago's (K-8) elementary schools, another study also found favorable effects for smaller schools in terms of student learning and teachers' willingness to take responsibility for their students' learning. Although

without exception, teachers and students reported that social relations were more personal in the smaller high schools; this was not always seen as a benefit. A few students in the smaller high schools reported that they were unable to "live down" the negative reputations of their older siblings or even parents. Some teachers in such schools had to work hard to keep a modicum of privacy.

Sociological theory suggests that human interactions and ties become more formal as organizations grow. Organizational growth generates new bureaucratic structures, as connections between individuals become less personal. These structures can inhibit communal organization. This general theory has been confirmed in research identifying the organizational characteristics of effective schools. In school climate studies, for example, size operates as an ecological feature of the social structure, part of the physical environment that influences the nature of social interactions. In general, the sociological evidence about high schools suggests that social relations are generally more positive in smaller schools.

GENDER

As young people move into adolescence, they begin to explore gender roles. Finding their way through this potential minefield is complicated and challenging for middle school students. The process of determining the variations in masculinity and femininity is largely a social function, not a biological one. What it means to be a man, and what it means to be a woman, is communicated to children by all the adults in a child's life, including teachers.

Boys and girls create very distinct cultures; when they are in same-gender groups they act and play very differently. Teachers need to understand these differences and be purposeful in the treatment of each so as to send the healthiest messages to adolescents.

In 1992 the American Association of University Women (AALUW) published a groundbreaking study about how schools were not meeting the needs of young girls. Their schools shortchanged girls in many ways: when questioned in class, girls were less likely to receive a prompt to clarify thinking if they answered incorrectly; boys were more regularly called on, and if not, they were just as likely to shout out an answer, leaving girls to sit quietly; and girls were not encouraged to take advanced math and science classes (AAUW 1992). Perhaps not surprisingly, then, in their middle school years, girls stopped being successful in math and science.

So what do we do? The first thing is to become aware of the differences between genders. Once these differences are explained and accepted, educators must be proactive in the way boys and girls are treated in schools. Indeed, there are distinct advantages to educating boys and girls together appropriately, for in doing so, each gender will begin to see how the other thinks, feels, responds, and reacts. Such understanding is in itself a major goal for gender-friendly classrooms.

We should also consider the nature of the differences between boys and girls. Creating a gender-friendly classroom does not mean that you create gender-specific activities, divide your classroom, or even insist on single-sex classes. Students should at some times have an opportunity to work in a gender-matched activity, while at other times they should learn to function in a more typical gender-mismatched one. This allows students to experience instructional times that are more comfortable for students when the activities are matched to their nature. But they also learn to function outside that comfort area when they are in a mismatched situation, and thus strengthen weaker areas.

For teachers the imperative is to learn about the differences in gender. Teachers need to accept that learning occurs differently for each gender, and to measure out activities and experiences that favor one some of the time, and the other some of the time. Keep in mind that although some girls may be more linguistically advanced than boys, some boys are just as advanced. Although some boys manipulate objects well and see patterns better than girls, some girls are headed toward engineering schools. When boys see girls appropriately modeling relationship behaviors, the boys learn how to be more sensitive and open. Likewise, when girls see the appropriate use of assertiveness that boys learn early, the girls see that this can be used to their advantage as well.

LEARNING

Human beings, in our conscious hours at least, are always learning. We cannot do otherwise; learning is an involuntary human activity. What varies among us is what we learn, how our learning is put to use and reinforced, and what learning is valued by a particular group of people at a particular time—our education. The result is that, while everyone learns, some learn to survive and some learn to thrive.

Unfortunately, access to the learning experiences that help people to thrive, though these depend on context, are not equally or equitably available to everyone. And although there may be value in all types of learning experiences, a deep understanding in the field of education of the range of learning experiences available to people who thrive is the first step toward ensuring adequate access to these experiences for all.

Schools, then, are only one of society's educative institutions. Although schools may be the most widely recognized of such institutions, a theory of education must encompass not just a theory of schooling but also a theory of the relation of various educative interactions and institutions with one another and to the members of the society at large. And a vision of educational equity must become a vision of providing access not just to schooling but also to these other resources.

Holistic approach to learning

- High quality early childhood education programs
- Rigorous and challenging curricula for all students
- High quality teaching
- Effective, sustained educational leadership
- Appropriate class sizes
- Mental and physical health care services
- Appropriate academic support for English language learners
- Appropriate academic support for special education students
- Appropriate academic support for children in areas of highly concentrated poverty
- Effective after-school, community, and summer programs
- Effective parental involvement and family support
- Policies that foster racially and economically diverse schools

FUNDING

Throughout the United States, wide performance gaps exist between poor and minority students and their peers in other groups. The inequities that result in those performance gaps carry enormous costs, not only for the children and families involved, but for the nation as a whole. 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. The heavy toll on the social and civic fabric of the nation is an additional, inestimable price that we all pay every year.

If we are to meet the global economic challenges of an increasingly "flat world," if we are to prepare our students to be capable civic participants in our democratic society, and if we are to fulfill the moral imperative of ensuring that a child's racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, or family background no longer predicts that child's educational attainment or level of achievement, we need a comprehensive approach to educational equity that attends to the full array of factors that affect educational opportunity.

Since late in the 20th century, there has been a burgeoning of initiatives, programs, projects, and activities that fall under the umbrella of what we are calling "comprehensive educational equity" by seeking to integrate education and supports and services in other areas that enhance students' abilities to succeed.

A wide range of institutions, from federal and state governments to national and local foundations, to individual schools, carries out some type of "comprehensive educational equity" effort. The delivery models employed include community, full-service, and extended schools; comprehensive early childhood programs; school-linked services projects; school-community partnerships; private interagency commissions; family support and education programs; integrated-services initiatives; comprehensive community initiatives; and state programs and broad national legislation.

Within these models, individual efforts have varying goals, rationales, methodologies, scopes, participants, scales, and time frames. The proliferation of these efforts provides a rich and complex field of study for potential models, best practices, and policy direction on which to build. Their many variations point to challenges for study, evaluation, and replication.

CONCLUSION

Equity in the class room is not an easy task, but a necessity. As we continue to create equity in our classrooms were contributing and enhancing peoples lives. We are better equipping students, parents, communities, America, and the World. We must recognize what is going on with our students by communicating with them in order to make the right assessment. We as educators must think outside the box. Times are changing so the way we educate must change as well.

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11.2: What are teachers' rights and responsibilities?

By Hillary Childress

Note

" A good teacher is like a candle-it consumes itself to light the way for others" http://www.indianchild.com/teachers_quotes.htm

Learning Objectives

- 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 nelgect.
- 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 bee 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 it 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 catergories 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 dyer 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 an 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 that 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 and 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 can 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 school 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 depart of Child Protective Services(CPS)(Citizens Information). The website also states that if a child confides in a child 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 in 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.

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Quote Provided by: http://www.indianchild.com/teachers_quotes.htm

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11.3: What are students' rights and responsibilities?

by Alec Bauserman

Note

"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)*

Figure 11.3.1: Over one thousand students in uniform during an assembly at a secondary school in Singapore. (GFDL Mailer Diablo, Wikimedia)

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.

Figure 11.3.2: The Supreme Court of the United States of America. (Public Domain, Jeff Kubina, Wikimedia)

Learning Objectives

- identify and understand the basic philosophy of the courts when determining the extent of student's rights
- recognize similarities and differences between Constitutional rights held in school and life out side it.
- recognize the major court case which set the groundwork for all future Supreme Court cases involving student's rights
- make informed decisions in real-life situations based on the knowledge presented here
- 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:

Note

"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 publics 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.”

This matter has come before the Supreme Court as well, who ruled that the rights of due process vary depending on the reason for expulsion. An academic dismissal does not have the same requirements as the stricter guidelines set down for a disciplinary expulsion. This is illustrated by the case of University of Missouri v. Horowitz (1977). A student was expelled for poor academics and lack of good hygiene after being notified in writing and in person. The student countered with the fact that she had never been given a hearing to dispute the charges. The Supreme Court denied her appeal. As La Roche reiterates, “Ultimately, the Supreme Court of the United States held that procedural due process did not require a formal hearing when the school dismisses a student for academic reasons.”

Summary – students are guaranteed the right to a fair trial and due process, although their rights are dependent upon the nature of their dismissal.

Note

How are college students affected by these decisions?

- "Since 1970, officers on the Seattle campus have regularly patrolled the hallways of dormitories of the University of Washington."
- "[T]he state's Court of Appeals ruled that students have the same right to privacy in dormitory hallways as they do in their rooms."
- "Therefore ... campus police officers lack the legal authority to randomly patrol residence halls."

"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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- Wisconsin v. Constantineau, 400 U.S. 433 (1971) - LINK
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- http://legal-explanations.com/definitions/in-loco-parentis.htm - in loco parentis
- www.legis.state.ia.us/lsadocs/Legal_Update/2003/LUKBH000.PDF - locker search

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.

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11.4: 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 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 educatior accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards." -The National Education Association's preamble for its code of ethics.*

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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11.5: How should teachers teach ethics?

by J. Kovalcik

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to define ethics and character education.
- Students will be able to identify the various ways ethics are integrated into schools and classrooms, and various ways of teaching ethics in the classroom.
- Students will be able to identify how parents can participate in their children's learning of ethics in school.

Note

Ethics: "the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation" (Merriam-Webster, 2008).

Introduction

While parents are their children's first and most important teachers, as children enter school, teachers join in the process of shaping children's minds, attitudes, and behaviors (Brannon, 2008). Children, after all, spend a huge chunk of time in school, away from their parents and guardians and in close proximity of their teachers and fellow students. Shouldn't it seem obvious then that teachers have a role in contributing to the ethical teaching of today's students? In this article I will explain the different thoughts and ideas of incorporating ethics education in classrooms, and programs that are happening now to teach ethics in schools.

Character Education…A new term for ethics?

What does ethics education mean? In a survey, when asked this question, the majority of teachers said, "character education" (Zubay, 2007). So, what is character education? The results of Zubay's surveys show that character education and ethics education are used interchangeably in the context of solving social conflicts over issues such as bullying, diversity, and sexuality (Zubay, 2007).

Note

"Throughout history and in cultures around the world, education rightly conceived has had two great goals: helping students become smart and helping them become good. They need character for both" (Davidson, M., Lickona, T., Khmelkov, V., 2007, p. 30).

When exploring character education it should be noted which personal qualities are involved. The "six pillars of character" are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship (Zubay, 2007). Character education doesn't just produce an honest and kind child; it can also produce a child who wants to work hard and do his or her best (Davidson, M. *et al.*, 2007).The "six pillars" are qualities that teachers can exhibit themselves and incorporate in their curriculum as well. Teaching itself is considered a moral responsibility and thus can have a direct impact on the attitudes, behaviors, and achievements of students (Falkenberg, 2007).

Approaches to Teaching Ethics/Character Education

In the school setting, teachers have the most influence on a student's ethical learning (Zubay, 2007). It is teachers who are around the student during most of the day and have to deal with issues that come up with the students and among the students, thus lending them to more opportunities to teach ethics. How schools are incorporating ethics in their curriculums can be broken down into two categories: informal and formal programs. Informal programs include no formal statement as to how ethics education should be implemented; it is left up to the individual teachers to fit ethics education into the curriculum, whereas a formal program would include a definitive, age-appropriate curriculum with a mission statement, and would include such programs as honor code seminars, monthly ethics themes, or student/faculty ethics committees (Zubay, 2007). In Zubay's surveys, most of the schools fell into the "informal" category.

Incorporating Ethics/Character Education in the Classroom

The two most popular strategies for teaching students about character are modeling and taking advantage of teachable moments (Brannon, 2008). We've all heard the expression, "treat others the way you would want to be treated." This is exactly what modeling is all about. It is well known that children learn from watching others. They learn from one another and they learn from adults. This is why it is so important for teachers to set good examples for their students and to point out good examples when they are seen (Brannon, 2008).

When volunteering in a kindergarten class at a nearby elementary school one day, I noticed that a child (with the help of his mother) had brought in an aquarium of tadpoles. The tadpoles had nothing to do with the teacher's current unit, but she took advantage of this new and unexpected teaching tool and turned it into a lesson about caring for animals. The children watched the tadpoles grow and took care of them until they became frogs.

Other ways to incorporate ethics in the classroom include getting students to help write class rules, role playing, songs, and projects. According to Thomas Lickona (1997), teachers can also create a classroom that provides a supportive moral community, use discipline as a way to teach about moral reasoning, encourage democracy in the classroom, teach character across the curriculum, utilize cooperative learning when teaching, provide opportunities for moral reflection, teach students abut conflict resolution, and encourage students to take pride in their work (as cited in Brannon, 2008).

In my six year old son's first grade class, the students are expected like in all schools, to follow the rules. The first week of school, his teacher asked the class to come up with the classroom rules. In doing this, she made it their responsibility to think of what good behavior encompasses. She then organized the rules and gave each rule a color. Whenever a student breaks one of these rules, he or she has to take the appropriate colored card and place it in his or her rule folder. At the end of the week, every student with less than five cards gets to participate in "good citizenship day". This involves a special activity which the children normally are not allowed to do, like climbing on the rock climbing wall on the playground. Those children who received five or more cards get a note sent home and do not get to participate in the activity. In addition to the rule cards, his teacher hands out "good behavior" tickets whenever she sees a student performing a good act. Once a child has seven red tickets, he or she may trade them in for a prize from the treasure box. It doesn't matter how many rule cards the child may have; he or she will still be recognized when doing something good.

Caring

Baron (2007) stated, "Developing and maintaining concern for the welfare of those who are less fortunate is achieved through the development of the habit of using one's heart well" (p. 51). How do teachers show students they care and why is this important in teaching ethics in the classroom? When middle school students were asked how they know when a teacher cares about them, the response was when the teacher teaches well and the teacher treats them well (Davidson, M. *et al.*, 2007). A survey of teachers, teacher candidates, and college faculty showed that the top seven qualities of caring teachers are: offering help, showing compassion, showing interest, caring about the individual, giving time, listening, and getting to know students (McBee, 2007). When children feel that their thoughts and ideas are heard and matter, they are more inclined to participate and behave better. In her article, Robin McBee (2007) states, "To care deeply and to demonstrate that care, teachers must know their students' needs and interests" (p. 34). A teacher that is sensitive to the individual needs of his or her students will be considered more caring than one who is not. By showing care the teacher not only boosts the child's self-confidence and drive, he or she models a behavior worthy of the child repeating.

Parental Involvement

Studies show that many teachers think ethics education is a joint responsibility between parents and teachers (Brannon, 2008). While parents have their own ways of teaching ethics to their children outside of school, there are ways to be involved in their ethics teachings at school as well. Some ideas on how to include parents in character education programs are:

- family participation with homework assignments specifically about character education
- sharing class information in newsletters to parents
- informing parents of class rules and consequences
- inviting parents to volunteer in the classroom
- planning events related to character education (Brannon, 2008).

Roots of Empathy

Roots of Empathy is a nonprofit group who brings ethics education to the classroom in a unique way. According to an article in the Wall Street Journal, it is "a decade-old program designed to reduce bullying by exposing classrooms to "empathy babies" for a whole school year" (Wingfield, 2008). In the program, founded by Mary Gordon, the babies are brought into the classrooms to help children, grades K – eighth grade, learn by observing the emotional connection between the babies and their parents and it is designed to boost the "emotional literacy" of children by getting them to recognize and talk about their feelings instead of acting out aggressively (Wingfield, 2008). According to the article, studies have shown that there has been a drop in aggressive behavior among students who were in classrooms with empathy babies, while there were increases in aggressiveness in groups that did not experience the empathy babies (Wingfield, 2008).

Making Ethics/Character Education a School-Wide Effort

While teachers can incorporate teaching ethics in their classrooms, it doesn't have to be just a classroom occurrence. Schools as a whole can support their teachers by implementing plans and ideas for teaching ethics. In a recent study, Brannon (2008) interviewed teachers who came up with five elements schools can use to positively influence students:

- Reach out to the community. (i.e. Hold parent education nights.)
- Provide materials to help teachers teach character education.
- Allow time each day or at least several days a week, for character education to be addressed.
- Set consistent school-wide expectations regarding character and values.
- Value character education as important as other academics and test scores (p. 64).

Problems with Teaching Ethics

Teachers in schools that do not have ethics-based curriculums stand to face problems with some parents and even administrators. While most people would agree that ethics/character education should be taught in schools, some parents are uncomfortable with teachers doing this. They don't like the idea of teachers using their roles as authority figures to influence their children's character development (Brannon, 2008). Likewise, some administrators have a problem with teachers incorporating ethics in their curriculum as they feel it may take away from core subject areas (Brannon, 2008). While teachers may encounter this type of opposition, it should not discourage them. Author Dinana Brannon conducted a survey (Brannon, 2008) in which most teachers said they faced problems with time, materials, parents, and the curriculum, but they all felt that character education is important and helpful to their students and society.

Conclusion

In my opinion, no matter how a teacher decides to do it, ethics education should be incorporated in the classroom for those children who do not get it at home and to reinforce it to those who do get it at home. I feel that regardless of whether they get support from their school or whether or not their school has an ethics education program implemented, teachers should always, at least, incorporate it in the classroom by setting good examples and be caring and nurturing.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

12: Technology

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12.3: What are disadvantages to technology in the classroom?
12.4: What have we learned about virtual learning?
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12.1: Is technology in education a help or hindrance?

By: Lisa-Marie Marconi

Learning Objectives

- Readers will be able to identify different types of technology that are used in classrooms today.
- Readers will understand the advantages and disadvantages of classroom technology for both students and teachers.

Introduction

When a person used to picture a typical classroom he or she would think of a black or green chalkboard that comes with different colored chalk. Within the last two decades or so, chalk has turned into a keyboard and chalkboards have turned into drop-down screens known as “SMART boards.” Pencils have been replaced with stylus, paper with Ipads, Ipods, laptops, and tablets. Today technology is in classrooms everywhere; the traditional classroom setting that we have come to know has become obsolete. However the question is: Are the new state-of-the-art classrooms really beneficial for teachers and students, or are they obstructing lessons?

Many of today’s high-demand jobs were created in the last decade, according to the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). As advances in technology drive globalization and digital transformation, teachers can help students acquire the necessary skills to succeed in the careers of the future.

How important is technology in education? The COVID-19 pandemic is quickly demonstrating why online education should be a vital part of teaching and learning. By integrating technology into existing curricula, as opposed to using it solely as a crisis-management tool, teachers can harness online learning as a powerful educational tool.

The effective use of digital learning tools in classrooms can increase student engagement, help teachers improve their lesson plans, and facilitate personalized learning. It also helps students build essential 21st-century skills.

Virtual classrooms, video, augmented reality (AR), robots, and other technology tools can not only make class more lively, they can also create more inclusive learning environments that foster collaboration and inquisitiveness and enable teachers to collect data on student performance.

Still, it’s important to note that technology is a tool used in education and not an end in itself. The promise of educational technology lies in what educators do with it and how it is used to best support their students’ needs.

Educational Technology Challenges

BuiltIn reports that 92 percent of teachers understand the impact of technology in education. According to Project Tomorrow, 59 percent of middle school students say digital educational tools have helped them with their grades and test scores. These tools have become so popular that the educational technology market is projected to expand to $342 billion by 2025, according to the World Economic Forum.

However, educational technology has its challenges, particularly when it comes to implementation and use. For example, despite growing interest in the use of AR, artificial intelligence, and other emerging technology, less than 10 percent of schools report having these tools in their classrooms, according to Project Tomorrow. Additional concerns include excessive screen time, the effectiveness of teachers using the technology, and worries about technology equity.

Prominently rising from the COVID-19 crisis is the issue of content. Educators need to be able to develop and weigh in on online educational content, especially to encourage students to consider a topic from different perspectives. The urgent actions taken during this crisis did not provide sufficient time for this. Access is an added concern — for example, not every school district has resources to provide students with a laptop, and internet connectivity can be unreliable in homes.

Additionally, while some students thrive in online education settings, others lag for various factors, including support resources. For example, a student who already struggled in face-to-face environments may struggle even more in the current situation. These students may have relied on resources that they no longer have in their homes.

Still, most students typically demonstrate confidence in using online education when they have the resources, as studies have suggested. However, online education may pose challenges for teachers, especially in places where it has not been the norm.

Despite the challenges and concerns, it's important to note the benefits of technology in education, including increased collaboration and communication, improved quality of education, and engaging lessons that help spark imagination and a search for knowledge in students.

The Benefits of Technology in Education

Teachers want to improve student performance, and technology can help them accomplish this aim. To mitigate the challenges, administrators should help teachers gain the competencies needed to enhance learning for students through technology. Additionally, technology in the classroom should make teachers' jobs easier without adding extra time to their day.

Technology provides students with easy-to-access information, accelerated learning, and fun opportunities to practice what they learn. It enables students to explore new subjects and deepen their understanding of difficult concepts, particularly in STEM. Through the use of technology inside and outside the classroom, students can gain 21st-century technical skills necessary for future occupations.

Still, children learn more effectively with direction. The World Economic Forum reports that while technology can help young students learn and acquire knowledge through play, for example, evidence suggests that learning is more effective through guidance from an adult, such as a teacher.

Leaders and administrators should take stock of where their faculty are in terms of their understanding of online spaces. From lessons learned during this disruptive time, they can implement solutions now for the future. For example, administrators could give teachers a week or two to think carefully about how to teach courses not previously online. In addition to an exploration of solutions, flexibility during these trying times is of paramount importance.

Below are examples of how important technology is in education and the benefits it offers to students and teachers.

Increased Collaboration and Communication

Educational technology can foster collaboration. Not only can teachers engage with students during lessons, but students can also communicate with each other. Through online lessons and learning games, students get to work together to solve problems. In collaborative activities, such as project-based learning, students can share their thoughts and ideas and support each other. At the same time, technology enables one-on-one interaction with teachers. Students can ask classroom-related questions and seek additional help on difficult-to-understand subject matter. At home, students can upload their homework, and teachers can access and view completed assignments using their laptops.

Personalized Learning Opportunities

Technology allows 24/7 access to educational resources. Classes can take place entirely online via the use of a laptop or mobile device. Hybrid versions of learning combine the use of technology from anywhere with regular in-person classroom sessions. In both scenarios, the use of technology to tailor learning plans for each student is possible. Teachers can create lessons based on student interests and strengths. An added benefit is that students can learn at their own pace. When they need to review class material to get a better understanding of essential concepts, students can review videos in the lesson plan. The data generated through these online activities enable teachers to see which students struggled with certain subjects and offer additional assistance and support.

Curiosity Driven by Engaging Content

Through engaging and educational content, teachers can spark inquisitiveness in children and boost their curiosity, which research says has ties to academic success. Curiosity helps students get a better understanding of math and reading concepts. Creating engaging content can involve the use of AR, videos, or podcasts. For example, when submitting assignments, students can include videos or interact with students from across the globe.

Improved Teacher Productivity and Efficiency

Teachers can leverage technology to achieve new levels of productivity, implement useful digital tools to expand learning opportunities for students, and increase student support and engagement. It also enables teachers to improve their instruction methods and personalize learning. Schools can benefit from technology by reducing the costs of physical instructional materials, enhancing educational program efficiency, and making the best use of teacher time.

Conclusion and Thoughts

Classrooms certainly have changed over the years, but what counts the most is their efficiency. Educational technology has its moments, but at the same time it can open students' minds and help them to achieve great things that will help them in the future. The only way technology can be effective is if the teacher becomes educated in what tools are available, and learns how to use the tools appropriately. If the teacher relies on just the technology as their way of teaching, then it will not get through to the students. A teacher should still incorporate appropriate lectures and learning from the textbook, but teachers also need to be at the forefront of technology to meet the needs of their students. Students can gain knowledge from textbooks, but can gain experience through technology.

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12.2: What are the benefits of techology in the classroom?

Benefits of Technology in the Classroom:

Engagement

Students who use technology in the classroom may be more engaged. When schools have a 1:1 initiative (one device for every student), students benefit because technology can be more smoothly integrated into the curriculum. Many teachers use interactive software and programs as learning technologies so that students can respond to questions and lectures digitally. In addition, gamified learning makes education and fun and engaging as they earn badges and move through competencies.

Collaboration

Technology makes it easier for students to collaborate and save their work. Traditionally, when students collaborated, they may have created posters or notes of their work together. However, technology allows students to create digital collections of research and ideas. They can draw and write together in the same program, creating documents and projects that are fully collaborative.

Inclusion

Technology allows some students to be included in the classroom in ways they have never been before. Many students who receive special education can benefit from technology that helps them write, spell, read and do mathematical computation. Word processors can point out spelling mistakes to students. Adaptive readers highlight text or read aloud to students so they can research and use websites like their peers using technology. As technology becomes more prevalent in schools, students who receive special education and use a laptop for help will not stand out or seem out of place.

Differentiation

Technology gives students access to a variety of programs and information sources at the simple click of a button. Teachers can find leveled readers or allow students to choose research topics that fit their interests much more easily than by going to the library where resources may be limited. In addition, teachers can assign programs to help students remediate or expand their knowledge so that students can process or investigate topics further. This work can be done during centers or group work, freeing the teacher to attend to individual students or other small groups. Using technology in this way ensures that all the students get what they need.

Productivity

Analog tools need to be tended to, cared for and replaced. Using technology allows students to access what they need when they need it. They can keep calendars online, and teachers can push due date reminders in a learning management system (LMS). Word processors do not need to be sharpened and online books do not get lost. Technology allows students instant access to all the materials they need, saving time, space and mental effort.

Creativity

The content available online is endless. Students who are interested in learning about arts, music, videos - and virtually anything else - can find plenty of resources. Any creative endeavor that calls to a student can be supported by technology. Tablets have the capabilities to capture students' sketches. Editing software lets students bring photos to life and manipulate them in creative ways. Technology can enhance creativity rather than inhibit it if students are given choice about what they create.

Automation

A huge benefit of educational technology for teachers is automation. You can upload lessons into an LMS for students to access on their own time. Online assessments make grading easy and parents can automatically be messaged when students receive a failing grade. Teachers are always looking for ways to find more time in the day, and technology can assist in big ways.

Future Focus

We do not yet know what types of jobs will be around when many of our students are adults joining the workforce, but we do know that technology is not going anywhere. Students will need strong technology skills to be successful in whatever job or career they may go into after school. Simply having a mindset that embraces the process of learning and using new technology can make a difference in a student's future.

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12.3: What are disadvantages to technology in the classroom?

Though we generally see progress as a good thing, there are definite disadvantages of technology in the classroom. From distraction to reducing face time, Educational Technology (EdTech) isn't a magic bullet for every situation. With some awareness, however, most disadvantages can be overcome, like some of the surprisingly old-school thinking that helps with tech disparity.

Read on for some disadvantages of technology in the classroom (and potential solutions).

From apps and e-textbooks to organizational platforms and "gamification," there's no shortage of technology in the classroom. But, while EdTech tools can make lessons more engaging and useful for students raised on technology, they can equally challenge teachers and lead to suboptimal outcomes for students. How can teachers get the most out of technology without sacrificing efficiency or engagement?

Here are 5 disadvantages of technology in the classroom and how to get past them for your students.

Distracting Students

Smartphones have a bad reputation in classrooms and there have been strong cases for banning them in schools. Research suggests that during class time, when smartphones 42% of the time that students spent on their smartphones in the classroom, it was to text, tweet, or otherwise engage in social media rather than the lesson.

However, bans on devices such as smartphones are unlikely to work as students will inevitably get around them. Also, such bans would be resented by students, who consider the use of technology to be a matter of personal autonomy that should only be regulated when it distracts other students. While teachers can help students learn better self-control methods to help them to regulate their own use of devices, research shows that better lesson plans that promote student engagement have less off-task use of technology.

Therefore, the onus is on instructors to create engaging, inspiring, and stimulating lesson plans that incorporate technology. For example, smartphones can access educational apps that promote learning as well as time management.

Many teachers incorporate digital platforms into lesson plans and find that using social media can actually keep students engaged and encourage classroom participation. Some teachers even create twitter hashtags to encourage comments.

Technology can be used to supplement lesson plans with digital materials, including video, news stories, online discussions, and to encourage participation. Get creative!

Requires Management and Training

The rise EdTech means that being effective in the classroom requires that teachers are effective on the screen and tech platform. Studies show that three-quarters of teachers say the internet and other digital tools have added new demands to their lives and have dramatically increased the range of content and skills about which they must be knowledgeable, with nearly half saying it has increased their workload.

New tech in the classroom also means needing IT professionals to help set it up, maintain it, and support teachers and students in its use. Clear and transparent communications among administration, faculty, and tech vendors that clarify how adopting a particular device, platform, or program will benefit students and teacher alike, can greatly enhance the use of technology in the classroom, to remove the suspicion that such technology is just "bells and whistles" with little actual value. Teachers also need access to training.

Moreover, institutions can help maximize their technical support staff by finding a less resource-intensive solution.

Leads to Tech Disparity

Tech disparity refers to how much access students have to the necessary devices. The differences in access can be seen between school districts, with more affluent districts having greater resources, but it can also refer to differences among students in the same school, where students from wealthier families having greater access. A recent survey indicates that while 84 percent of American teens have a smartphone, the other 16 percent don't. Reaching out to that 16 percent is the goal.

Tech disparity also refers to school policymaking and tech management. For example, the above survey also points out that while three-quarters of teachers working in wealthier districts felt that their schools provided adequate training, only half of the teachers in low-income areas agreed. Around 40 percent of teachers in economically disadvantaged areas saw their schools as behind the curve in technology advancement.

Teachers and administrators can take practical steps toward bridging the tech divide. Assuming unequal access to devices, schools can focus on technology that can be shared among classes, for example, shared tablet computers and school computer labs, not to mention school-based Wi-Fi.

Then, there is tech that can be used within the classroom, such as interactive whiteboards and projectors, as well as a digital curriculum that all students can access.

Bridging the tech divide is not easy, but for a fairer society with equal opportunity, it needs to be the focus of all efforts. (But a good start to fighting tech disparity is a computer lab in school.)

Cost Money

Nothing in this world is free, and buying cutting-edge electronics for a classroom is downright expensive. While there's no way to avoid spending money modernizing a classroom, it is at least possible to maximize the total cost of ownership (TCO) by installing devices with longer lifespans and reduced maintenance. Tech with higher upfront costs might actually save the school money as it will face fewer issues and have less downtime while being easier to use. Schools need to assess TCO carefully before choosing purchasing tech.

Moreover, the use of technology should not be confined to the classroom and in fact can be used to streamline administrative systems, cutting costs, boosting productivity, and reducing time wasted on administrative tasks. Cloud computing, for example, offers substantial opportunities for schools to save money. Switching to a digital curriculum eliminates the need to continuously replace outdated textbooks.

Cloud-based computing also reduces the need to keep expensive hardware on-site, which can save in administrative costs, reduce payroll costs (fewer IT techs), and eliminates that 24-hour air-conditioned server room. Also, sharing materials online rather than printing them out saves costs of printers and ink – substantial costs for schools – not to mention all that hard work spent printing.

In short, while technology has obvious costs attached to it, viewed holistically, it can also provide substantial opportunities for cost reductions that more than compensate.

Less Face Time

No amount of technology in the classroom can replace talented, inspired teachers. As the adage goes, any teacher that can be replaced with a tech device probably deserves to be replaced.

Technology is not the solution to ensuring a healthy vigorous learning culture, it is simply a pedagogical tool that is only as valuable as the instructor who wields it. In fact, while billions of dollars are spent on EdTech, countries that don't deploy tech often have better educational outcomes than countries that spend heavily.

Face to face interactions between teacher and student can help students not just acquire facts, but to understand, interpret, and apply these facts into useful and interesting knowledge. Through face to face interactions, teachers can help students build self-esteem and confidence and emotional maturity. Particularly in disadvantaged areas, teachers can provide a zone of comfort and security, and everywhere teachers can reduce the cyberbullying that so often accompanies social media.

There are lots of ways to synthesize tech into real-world activities, but sometimes teachers just need to switch off the tech and get down to personal interactions. For example, while so much information can be readily accessed on the Internet, so much of that information is dubious at best and sometimes downright malevolent. Teachers need to guide students on how best to identify useful sources and balance differing viewpoints.

Final Thoughts

Of course there will be challenges along the way as we adopt new technologies in education and improve them to suit student outcomes. But the advantages vastly outweigh the disadvantages of technology in the classroom. It is just always important to remain aware of where the latest tech is coming up short and to adjust course for the best possible learning outcome for the students.

There’s no reason to be afraid of EdTech, but nor should we rush blindly into digital transformation. After all, education is all about learning, and we should all be open to the ongoing process of improvement that comes with it.

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12.4: What have we learned about virtual learning?

Deborah Rosenthal starts her virtual kindergarten class on Zoom every morning with a song — today, it's the Spanish version of "If You're Happy and You Know It." Her students clap along. There's a greeting from the class mascot (a dragon), yoga, meditation and then some practice with letter sounds: "Oso, oso, O, O, O."

Rosenthal teaches Spanish immersion in a public school in San Francisco's Mission District. Most of the families are low-income, and many are now affected by job losses related to COVID-19. She has taught kindergarten for 15 years, and she loves how "hands-on," "tactile" and "cozy" it is to work with 5-year-olds.

But this year, she's spending 10 or 12 hours a day on, basically, her own home production of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood en Español*. "It's a very two-dimensional experience," she says.

Few people would tell you that online kindergarten was a good idea, or frankly even possible. That was before 2020. The number has fluctuated as cases rise across the country, but throughout this fall pandemic semester, between 40% and 60% of students have been enrolled in districts that offer only remote learning, according to a tracker maintained by Burbio.

And even in hybrid districts, some students have been learning remotely, either part or full time. In short, online learning is the reality for a majority of students this fall.

We are still starved for data on what this all means. The earliest standardized test scores coming out show modest learning loss for students in math, but there are worries that the most at-risk students are not being tested at all.

For this story I talked to educators in six states, from California to South Carolina. For the most part they say things have improved since the spring. But they are close to burnout, with only a patchwork of support. They say the heart of the job right now is getting students connected with school and keeping them that way — both technologically and even more importantly, emotionally. Here are five lessons learned so far:

1. The digital divide is still big and complex.

Eight months after schools first shut down, how many students still can't sign on? We don't really know, and that's a problem, says Nicol Turner Lee, director of the Center for Technology Innovation at the Brookings Institution. "We've not done a really great job in aggregating the data as to how many kids are still disconnected," she adds. "It's very disappointing as well as concerning."

The National Education Association recently reported, based on pre-pandemic census data, that one quarter of households with children ages 5 to 17 lacked either high-speed Wi-Fi, a computer or both. For households near the poverty line, the number was closer to half.

That figure may have gotten better. Many districts have scrambled to distribute their classroom laptops to families, to buy portable hot spots, and call on private and corporate donations. But there are still gaps.

Partly, that's because there hasn't been any pandemic federal stimulus aid to public schools since April. State revenue is down, too. For example, Richard Carranza, chancellor of New York City public schools, said last month that 60,000 of the district's 1.1 million students are still missing devices — about 5.5%.

Lee at Brookings is working on a book about the digital divide, and she says it's multidimensional. There's housing: Lose your home and you lose your broadband connection. There are backlogs of items such as Chromebooks.

Then there's infrastructure.

"That rural Internet divide is real. I mean it's a real problem right now in America," says Caroline Weathers, who teaches in a small town in South Carolina. Her district gave out hot spots, but in some places they didn't work because there wasn't cell service from the major carriers.

And the digital divide is about more than equipment. Rosenthal's school in San Francisco, Buena Vista Horace Mann, is a community school, meaning there are wraparound services, including lots of help with technology.

Despite all that, she didn't make contact with one of her students until 2 1/2 months into the school year. That's so even though her mother had come to school to pick up a laptop and hot spot. "The little girl was going to a babysitter that was not literate," Rosenthal says. "And so nobody could help this child get onto a computer."

Another of her students has a single mother who works cleaning hotel rooms; the girl goes along and often joins the class from her mother's smartphone. Because of barriers such as these, although attendance on her daily Zooms is high, Rosenthal says no more

than a fourth of her students have been accessing the written assignments.

2. Relationships are everything when it comes to keeping kids engaged remotely.

Successful schools are using every adult on the team and every form of communication possible. Theresa Rouse is the superintendent of Joliet Public Schools District 86 in Illinois, where a majority of the students are low-income and either Latino or Black. She says their focus has been on relationships.

The district spent the first three weeks of the school year focusing just on social and emotional learning. Educators communicate expectations to parents and teachers by email, calls, texts, over social media, YouTube videos and podcasts.

And, Rouse says, any adult at a school — from teachers, to the assistant principal, to a school counselor or social worker — might drop in during video class to show they care: "If they're seeing a student that looks distressed, they pull them aside into a breakout room, have a conversation."

In South Carolina, Weathers usually teaches science at St. George Middle School. This year she created a new role for herself, helping families — sometimes with an app that parents can download to track kids' grades, or with strategies to build kids' executive function skills so they can succeed in remote learning. She says she'd like to continue the role going forward, making parents more active partners in their kids' education and taking learning out into the community as well.

"We could take this as a learning moment," Weathers says. "Now we have the parents' attention. So maybe now is the time to really reach out and say, 'This is what we need you to do on your end, and we'll take care of this on our end.' And in 10 years, we might see something entirely different in education in the country if we did that."

3. Digital teaching can be good, even great with the right support for teachers. But that's far from the norm.

Districts such as Weathers' and Rouse's are working with the Digital Learning Collaborative, a nonprofit that is dedicated to best practices in digital learning.

Rouse, in Joliet, calls its training "pretty fabulous" and essential to her district's transition from teaching mainly through paper packets in the spring to full-on remote using Google Classroom this fall. The training "was more intense than [teachers] expected it would be, but that's OK because teaching online is more intense than people anticipate as well."

Another organization, Cadence, is also trying to improve digital teaching at scale. It pairs "mentor teachers" with "partner teachers" to deliver a standardized curriculum in reading, math and science. The teaching is a high-intensity blend of video lessons, active classroom instruction with breakout sessions, and software-based practice.

Olyvia Kozicki teaches fifth grade at Augustine Prep, a nondenominational private school in Milwaukee, and is a Cadence partner teacher for English language arts. She says she's overjoyed at the quality and quantity of work her students are producing. It's not only more than she expected from online teaching, "it's more just in general."

Twice a week, she meets with other Cadence teachers from around the country who are also teaching the exact same material on the same timetable. She says that makes it the most practical and actionable professional education she's ever had.

"When we switched to virtual, it was very overwhelming, and it seemed like such a daunting task," she says. And now "I am so happy with what the kids have been able to do."

Justin Reich says Kozicki's experience is unusual for teachers this year. Reich is an expert on educational technology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the author of the new book *Failure to Disrupt: Why Technology Alone Can't Transform Education.*

He says that across the country this fall, "I've heard very little evidence of innovation." Even moves that might seem relatively simple, such as adopting a free, online university-level course for use by high school students, aren't happening often. Mostly, he adds, districts are trying to re-create classroom teaching routines online with varying levels of success.

"I don't think it's getting better because there are major approaches that people have figured out or there's a model that's sort of spreading around," he says. Nor is there a lot of leadership or direction on improving online learning coming from the federal Department of Education or anyone else.

Instead, Reich says, what improvement there has been since spring comes mainly from teachers such as Rosenthal — putting in long hours and learning as they go. "It's just kind of folks sanding down one little rough edge at a time."

4. Hybrid models are extremely challenging.

At last count, according to Burbio, 17.5% of districts were offering school in person just a few days a week, with students learning from home the rest of the time. The purpose was to maintain social distancing by reducing class sizes, but the model has created confusion and constant interruptions. Many students are struggling to adjust to classroom routines when they may attend only five days out of three weeks.

Depending on available staffing, teachers, meanwhile, may be yelling through a mask and face shield to be heard by students over Zoom. Jennifer Echols is the director of online and personalized learning for Mesa Public Schools, the largest school district in Arizona. She calls this model "one of the biggest challenges" in remote learning right now. Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, has called for this "hybrid" model to be phased out. "Hybrid doesn't work," Weingarten says flatly. "You can't livestream and teach in person at the same time."

5. Some kids are not learning much online. They'll be playing catch-up in years to come.

There are some anecdotes of children who are thriving with remote learning. "There's [approximately] 10% of people for whom it works better," Reich says. And for these students, "this is actually a better version of school."

Maybe they had school anxiety, he explains, or were victims of bullying or discrimination, or have sensory issues and enjoy having more control over their learning environment.

But districts including Houston, St. Paul, Minn., and Fairfax County, Va., have reported historically high failure rates this fall.

Echols, in Arizona, says both attendance and engagement in online learning is suffering. "Some kids have had difficulty just paying attention and keeping themselves focused." In other cases, she adds, "we have families where parents are working, and there's not the appropriate supervision for young learners, or children that need to be babysitting siblings during the school day."

What keeps Rosenthal up at night are the kids she just can't reach. Every year, she says, out of a class of 20 or 21, there are five or six students who show up unprepared for kindergarten.

"They're struggling, but at least they're with me all day long. And so I can support them six or seven hours a day."

This year, she sees most of her students learning and growing despite all the obstacles. But those five or six who started out behind aren't getting much of anywhere.

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12.5: How can we teach "digital natives"?

While we often think of millennials – those born between 1981 and 1996 – as the first wired generation, the truth is that most millennials were teenagers when the iPhone was invented. Anyone born before those years is called a "digital immigrant". But today's K-12 students, on the other hand, are true "digital natives" in the sense that they've never known a world without swiping and apps — and many were watching videos on their parents' phones or tablets when they were toddlers.

This generation of students, Generation Z, has very different expectations for how they'll learn, and teaching them requires a different approach as well. K-12 educators and administrators have to be very thoughtful and deliberate about how to best reach them.

We've spent a lot of time talking with educators and administrators about how to reach today's students effectively. Based on what we've learned, here are five recommendations for educating the true digital natives of Gen Z.

1) Meet them where they are

Incorporate tools students are comfortable with and are already using every day for communication and entertainment. Many of these resources have education-specific versions available that are purposefully built to encourage self-directed learning.

For instance, Gen Z frequently streams video from sources such as YouTube and TikTok. According to the 2019 Speak Up survey from Project Tomorrow, a third of students in grades 6-12 use YouTube to help with their homework, and 49% say they use it to explore topics they're interested in on their own. What's more, 28% of middle schoolers have their own personal YouTube channel — and 7% are running a YouTube business! Educators can engage students more effectively by incorporating short video clips from well-vetted sources into their instruction and having students create their own videos to demonstrate their learning.

Besides YouTube, the most popular online platforms among teens are Instagram and Snapchat, according to Pew Research Center. Students like the positive reinforcement they get when their posts generate likes and comments on these social media platforms. An app called Seesaw is like Instagram for learning, turning school projects and assignments into social media that students share with the world. Instead of collecting likes and comments for posting selfies, students receive positive reinforcement on their schoolwork.

Note

Are You a Digital Immigrant?

- If you answer yes to any of these questions then you are a digital immigrant:

1. Do you remember when telephones had a dial on them (after all, we still "dial" a phone number don't we?) and were actually connected to the wall by a wire?
2. Do you remember TV test patterns and antennas on the roof?
3. Do you remember the electric typewriter?
4. Do you remember carbon paper?
5. Do you remember the Apple II, The TRS 80?
6. Do you remember the IBM PC and the black and white Macintosh?
7. Do you remember America Online, The Source, CompuServe or other online services, i.e., Mosaic or Netscape?
8. Do you remember getting broadband in your home?
9. Do you remember the Compact Disc (CD)? (Riedl, 2007)

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2) Focus on equity and inclusion.

Make sure every student has equitable access to digital devices and learning opportunities. If you're rolling out a 1:1 learning program but don't yet have the resources to provide a device for every student, we recommend giving all students in a particular grade level a device. Rather than divvying up devices by class type, distributing devices by grade is a more equitable approach. If you establish a "bring your own device" policy, make sure you have extra devices to give to students who don't have one of their own.

Consider how students will access technology not just at school, but also at home. The "homework gap," or the disadvantage that students face in completing homework when they don't have broadband access at home, is real. The 2019 Speak Up survey

revealed that 13% of students struggle to complete homework because they lack home internet service. Lending students mobile hotspots, keeping the library open before and after school, and partnering with local businesses to give families discounted broadband can help solve this challenge. For more ideas, read Bridging the Digital Divide When Students Go Home

3) Teach and model effective digital citizenship.

Just because today's students are digital natives doesn't mean they understand how to behave safely and responsibly online. Teachers need to explicitly teach and model responsible and ethical digital behavior.

A Pew survey reveals that 59% of teens have directly experienced some form of cyberbullying. According to the 2019 Speak Up survey, only one in five girls and 36% of boys rate their digital citizenship skills as "advanced."

While many schools address digital citizenship in an assembly or one-time workshop with students, these skills should be taught and reinforced throughout the core curriculum. Common Sense Media is one of many organizations with a free digital citizenship curriculum guide for schools.

4) Provide a safer online environment.

Cyberbullying takes a heavy toll on students. Of children currently experiencing a mental health problem, more than two-thirds (68%) say they experienced cyberbullying in the last year, according to The Children's Society and Young Minds. The organization notes that a study by Birmingham University found that cyberbullying victims are twice as likely to attempt suicide or engage in self-harm as non-victims.

Aside from teaching responsible behavior, teachers need tools that can help keep students safer while they're working online. Classroom management software that provides insight into students' online activity provides an additional layer of defense. And now, a new partnership between LanSchool and Bark for Schools gives schools even more security. Bark's research backed solution alerts administrators to activities that may indicate issues such as depression, cyberbullying, self-harm, and sexual content on students' school accounts. Schools that register for Bark as part of their LanSchool relationship will also receive complimentary access to Bark's image removal software, a powerful tool that helps prevent explicit images of minors from ever entering the digital space.

5) Turn them loose.

Teachers have to be willing to give up some degree of control in their classroom by letting students create, collaborate, and take charge of their own learning. Research shows students are more engaged, explore content in greater depth, and retain knowledge more effectively when they take ownership of their learning.

But this doesn't mean giving up all control – teachers are still there to guide students and ensure a safe learning environment. Teachers must establish clear rules for their classrooms and hold students accountable for breaking them. In fact, research suggests that classroom management plays a critical role in student achievement, as Robert Marzano and his colleagues have indicated.

Classroom management software can help teachers effectively manage instruction for today's digital natives, providing a safer digital environment that supports student-centered learning while empowering the teacher to guide on the side.

The true digital natives of Generation Z expect to learn differently than prior generations. By integrating the kinds of digital tools they're familiar with, focusing on equity, teaching and modeling responsible digital citizenship, providing a safer online environment, and empowering them to take charge of their learning, schools can deeply engage Gen Z in their learning and achieve better outcomes.

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