AMBROSE

Learning Theory and Application 600

Bernie L. Potvin PhD
September 6th-November 10th, 2011

6 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is the second of three (3) graduated and integrated courses in Learning Theory and Application. This course builds onto the initial foundational course in the Learning Theory and Application component of the Bachelor of Education Program. This course will provide opportunity for students to understand more about the specific learning requirements of children and youth in schools (K-8). The specific learning requirements include literacy and numeracy development, transfer of learning, concept formation, being able to engage in learning activities as designed by the teacher inclusive of learning and developmental realities, developmental stages and phases of a child's life, and how technology be integrated into learning in public school classrooms. This course is designed for students to examine a variety of learning theories, models of course and program design in elementary and middle schools, perspectives on designing learning experiences for children and youth and principles of learning relevant to teaching in public school classrooms. Based upon the assumption that the future of K-12 education will include online designed courses and programs this course will include a major focus on technology, including program and course design in online learning environments.

Through examination of ten research-based models of program and course design and analyses of twelve research based "science of learning" principles, students will have an opportunity to grow in their understanding of their own teaching strengths and challenges, and to consider with others in the course, how to best design and implement effective learning experiences in schools. This course will include student's presentation of a discipline specific program of studies (e.g. mathematics) intended for implementation in schools. This program will be series of learning experiences (set of 5-6 slesson plans) designed according to one or more of the models discussed in the course, the theoretical perspectives regarding designing learning experiences for children and science of learning principles examined in the course.

COURSE GOAL AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

GOAL

The main goal of this course is to strengthen the competency of students to apply theories of curriculum, learning and assessment to the development of programs. integrate their understanding of learning into their practices of program and course design as well as their teaching competencies so that they become more effective architects of learning experiences and teachers in public school classrooms.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:
- Identify selected learning perspectives and principles and describe their application to teaching and facilitation practice in schools;
- Analyze learning perspectives and principles and understand how each inform and strengthen teaching and facilitation competency;
- Develop learning experiences with learner understanding intentionally designed for within the learning experiences;
- Identify and describe current practices as a teacher with its attending assumptions, beliefs, theories and values;
- Determine how perspectives and principles examined in the course confirm/disconfirm your practice and its attending assumptions, beliefs, theories and values;
- Analyze how your current practice in turn affirms/disaffirms the course's perspectives and principles of learning.
- Develop courses and programs of study for children (K-8) that include an online component, in part or whole in online learning environments.

PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

Students will be expected to give evidence of the following competencies:

Competency	Description
1	Build affirmative relationships with children.
2	Apply theories of curriculum, learning, and assessment to the development of programs.
3	Build learning communities.
4	Design teaching and learning scenarios that include inquiry-based learning.
5	Design inclusive learning experiences that recognize and accommodate all children, including those with exceptional learning needs.
6	Engage in shared praxis.
7	Design and implement programs that incorporate attention to cultural realities and diversities.
8	Understand critical and creative thinking as essential to learning in all programs.

9	Demonstrate the essential dispositions that characterize a professional educator from the Ambrose University College Bachelor of Education Program.
10	Design and develop teaching portfolios, with an emphasis on electronic portfolios.

COURSE TEXTBOOK: HANDOUTS

Ormord, Jeanne Ellis (2008). *Human learning*. New Jersey: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall

Potvin, B (2011). Don't waste your time teaching in an online environment. *Journal of Research in Higher Education*. Florida: AARBI

Alberta Education (2009). *Setting the Directions*. Edmonton: Alberta Education

COURSE OUTLINE: Topics

For each topic of the course, the instructor will post a brief introductory statement to identify and clarify the topic's main propositions, concepts and assumptions regarding learning and teaching. For each topic, students will provide a written initial response that draws from their previous teaching practices, feedback to their group members regarding their group member's initial response and a final considered response regarding the topic.

Topic 1: Week 1   Transmission Model/Nurturing Model-(Mathematics/numeracy)
Topic 2: Week 2   Principles of Learning: Part 1
Topic 3: Week 3   Guided Discovery Model/Projects (Social Studies/Science)
Topic 4: Week 4   Principles of Learning: Part II
Topic 5: Week 5   Insight generating Model/Training Model (ELA/Physical Education)
Topic 6: Week 6   Principles of Learning: Part III
Topic 7: Week 7   Shared Praxis Model/Apprenticeship Model (Religious Education/
Topic 8: Week 8   Case Study Model/ Inquiry Model (Fine Arts)/Principles of Learning
Topic 9: Week 9:   Presentations of programs   .

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

1. **Teacher Professional Growth Plan Statement**

Describe your current **Teacher Professional Growth Plan**. Write your plan in a statement in **two pages (double spaced)** that describes:

- Who are you as a teacher;
- What you stand for (as a teacher);
- What you would like to be known as, by those who learn from you in a public school classroom.
- Why? How have you come to this 'mission' statement?
- What will you do this year to develop the competencies required of a successful first year teacher?
- What evidences do you feel you can present to me (professor) that confirm your achievement of the competencies (above)?

September 15th-10%

2. Each student will work with a partner to lead the discussion on one of the course's topics. Your leadership of the discussion (30 minutes in total) must include
-One (1) relevant piece of information (research, concept, best practices….) drawn from either Ormrod's text or from the Course Handouts
-One (1) proposal for the class to consider regarding their considered response for the week and topic in question
-One (1) insight regarding children and learning
-One (1) suggestion for professional practice (designing experiences, creating conditions, organizing resources for children's learning in classrooms)

Beginning September 29th-(schedule and topics to be determined in class) 20%

3. **Course/Program Design**

Each participant will design a ten page (or equivalent) program for possible use in their school in FE 700. Students will be expected to submit drafts of their work on the program on a regular basis throughout the course, and receive feedback from peers and instructor regarding the program and its development. Submission of drafts of the program will be submitted into Moodle in the Group section. The program will be presented in three parts:
- Course/program description of goals, objectives, rationale, materials/resources required, statements of course/program themes or content, instructional strategies chosen to deliver the content and assessment procedures chosen to gather information to determine of your course/program has been effective;-6-8 pages
- Clear identification of how your course/program is based on at least two of the models examined this week in this course; 1-2 pages
- Clear identification, in writing in the actual course/program, where at least six principles of learning have been deliberately considered in the design of the course/program. 1-2 pages

- Integration of technology evidenced in the program. You may include some part of your program designed into an online learning environment, one which allows children to access your program as designed from a distance (at home or from a location away from the classroom) or through blended (combined face to face and online) means.
- Description of how your program is inclusive of all learners? This important statement must be specific, indicated measurable outcomes, be achievable and shown to be achievable, be realistic (and while your choice of inclusion practice in your design must be theoretically based and conceptually sound, the practice you design must be shown to realistic and above all truly inclusive). You should refer to specific learning, developmental and behavioral examples.
- A set of rubrics you propose could be used to evaluate your program

November 2nd-30%

4. External Review of Course/Program

Each student will arrange for an external review of their course/program. The review is to be undertaken by a peer in the class, a mentor or current or retired educator. The review should be **one page** or equivalent. Each student is required to submit the review; the reviewer provides the review information to each student who in turn writes and submits the review.

In addition, each participant is to submit a **two page** Reflection Paper that answers three questions:
- In my program, what emerged as my main idea about designing and delivering programs of studies designed so that all children learn and enjoy learning in public school classrooms;
- On the basis of the external review, what now is my main conclusion regarding designing programs;
- What remains fuzzy for me regarding learning and designing learning programs.

November 6th-10%

5. **Postings**

Each student must post for **each** of the course's topics, each week, the following:
- One Initial Response
- One Considered Response

Completed by November 10th-30%

Week One (September 6th-9th): Transmission Model/Nurturing Model

Summary

Transmission is the presentation of content (information) to learners. Implicit in this perspective is that there exists a stable body of knowledge that can be 'accurately and efficiently' (Apps, p. 40) delivered to learners. The emphases are on the teacher and the content to be transmitted, and the efficiency of the teacher as an "architect" of learning experiences. What is uniquely afforded to both teacher and learner in transmission based design of online courses, because time serves the best interests of both teacher and learner, is the opportunity to develop deep, meaningful and pedagogically sound relationships.

Initial Response

What one or two preferred or typical instructional practices did you use to transmit information in FE 600? If relevant, refer please to your work in mathematics and to your practices in inclusion?

What assumptions (then) about instruction motivated you to use these preferred or typical practices?

Considered Response

What two (2) ideas in this week's conversation, or in the readings, call into question your preferred or typical practice used to transmit information (1 each for mathematics and inclusion)?

What practice that you used to transmit information most cogently calls into question (some) ideas in this week's conversation?

What transmission based instructional practices (2) are you now committed to integrate into your program of studies and ultimately into your instructional practice in schools, for teaching mathematics and for inclusion of children with special learning needs?

Readings: Transmission of information in online courses (Handout)

Setting the Direction (entire)

Nurturing Model

To nurture is to direct learning activities to the inner world of a learner. To nurture means to carefully, with wisdom, design nurturing based learning experiences that are intentionally and carefully woven into courses and their design. For example, adult learners find feedback highly nurturing. However not all feedback is "created equal." The timing of feedback, along with the choice of words and `tone` with which the words are delivered all influence the effect of feedback. Online courses in which there is a live or synchronous session or in which there are chat rooms, opportunities for Skype based conversations are best for providing feedback. Emailed or written feedback can misinterpreted as most teachers know. To nurture is to focus on some psychological need of the learner. Self-efficacy is one example from the inner world of a learner and personal communication rich with appreciation, truthfulness and intentional patience and care for the learner`s well being including communication can serve to nurture a learner.

This perspective is about a teacher being intentional and deliberate in aiding and sustaining the personal well-being of the other-the psychological and spiritual health of a person. The guiding metaphor is that of a loving parent. The learner's self esteem, the 'self (false and true) of the person is the locus, or attention of the teacher. Issues related to control, learned helplessness, efficacy etc are the content of the teaching/learning activities. Teachers use empathy, listening, coming alongside and skills in understanding with activity and compassion. The ideal is awareness and growth in the learner's true self, the self that God intends.

Initial response

What preferred or typical practices have you used in the past, perhaps in FE 600, to nurture some particular need in a child or children (psychological health/emotional health/physical health/spiritual health…your choice)

On what assumptions about helping others (through nurturing) did you base your practices?

Considered response

How does one idea in this week's conversation regarding nurturing others call into question your practice or assumptions about nurturing?

How does one practice you used call into question suggestions for practices offered in this week's conversation?

What nurturing based practices are you committed to integrate into your professional practice or ministry practice?

Readings: Nurturing-Scenario building in online courses

Week Two (September 12ᵗʰ-16ᵗʰ): Principles of Learning: Part 1-The importance of cognitive activity

Introduction

The more cognitively active the learner during a teaching/learning activity, the more likely it is that understanding can occur. Teachers need to design learning experiences with regularly dispersed and imbedded, ready to be activated instructional strategies that promote cognitive activity (predicting, hypothesizing, analyzing, elaborating, chunking…). If teachers fail or are unable to promote cognitive activity, learning will be limited and understanding an unlikely outcome.

Initial Response

What are two typical or preferred instructional practices you used to promote cognitive activity-engaged thinking-in your students in your classroom in FE 600?

Why

What assumptions about learning and children motivated you to use these typical or preferred practices?

Considered Response

What idea or ideas in this week's conversation calls into question your instructional practice used to promote thinking?

Which of the two instructional practices that you use to promote thinking most clearly calls into question some idea in this week's conversation?

What instructional practice are you now most committed to integrate into your instructional practice so as to promote cognitive activity?

Week Two: Principles of learning (contd): The importance of concepts in learning

Introduction

Information needs to be organized in a conceptual framework. Information that is presented in a fact after fact framework is largely meaningless at worst or becomes meaningful through the construction of meaning by the learner at best. Learners who understand that cultural practices determine what people in Kenya, for example, do to discipline of children better able to understand why physical punishment is readily used. The number after a decimal point in 2.2 means that there are more than 2 of something but less than 3 of something, a concept that needs to understood in order for children to meaningfully manipulate (add, subtract, multiply…) numbers with decimals.

Initial response

What one or two preferred or typical instructional practices did you use in FE 600 to organize information for presentation or (for) reading by your students?

Why

What assumptions about one of more of children, teaching or learning motivated you to use these preferred or typical practices?

Considered response

What idea in this week's conversation calls into question your preferred or typical practice used to organize information?

How does one of your preferred or typical instructional practices used to organize information for presentation most evidently (for you) call into question some idea in this week's conversation?

What information organizing practice are you now most committed to integrate into your instructional practice?

Week Two: Principles of learning (contd): Assessment

Introduction

Feedback and other forms of assessment of and for learning are highly correlated to learning, and should be deliberately integrated into instructional design for learning

Initial response

What two most preferred or typical practices did you use to gather information about either the effectiveness of your instruction or about your students learning?

What assumptions about assessment (gathering information in order to make a judgment or evaluation) motivated you to use these two practices?

Considered response

How does this week's conversation about assessment call into question your preferred or typical practices in doing assessment in your context?

How do your practices in doing assessment call into question an idea or two in this week's conversation about assessment?

What assessment practice(s) are you now committed to integrate into your practice or ministry?

Week Two: Principles of learning (contd): Constructivism-how learners make meaning

Introduction

Thinking is socially constructed; knowledge is a social construction. The social settings influential in leaning include history, family background, culture, people, and future imagination and hopes.

Initial response

What one or two preferred or typical practices did you use to ensure that information is meaningful for all of your children, inclusive of cultural background, learning needs or developmental place in life?

What assumptions about 'meaning' and how people make information meaningful motivated you to use these preferred or typical practices to ensure information is meaningful?

Considered response

What idea about meaning and how people make meaning calls into question your preferred or typical practice used to make information meaningful for your students or parishioners?

What practice used to make information meaningful most clearly (for you) calls into question an idea in this week's conversation about how to help students or parishioners make information meaningful?

What instructional practices regarding practice for helping your students or parishioner make meaning are you most committed to integrate into your professional practice or ministry?

Readings: Ormrod: Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10 and 14

Week Three (September 19th-23rd): Guided Discovery Model/Projects Model

Guided Discovery

Guided discovery is the teacher led systematic scaffolding of learner attempts at a response, guesses at solutions to problems, application of strategies and understanding of ideas. Guided discovery is most useful when working in courses or classes when a teacher is guiding students into some sort of discovery, 'finding' some idea or principle, notion or concept on their own. Scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1983) is a variety of activities that collectively help students complete certain tasks designed into courses. The variety of activities includes helping students map out an approach to learning, modeling, enhancing attention of students through creating anomalies or unusual events, bring students back to the purposes of learning, providing an approximation of the desired terminal behavior (e.g. a bounce is allowed in volleyball classes) and allowing that approximation to serve as a legitimate response (Ormrod, 2008, p335). The prevailing view is that scaffolding is best mediated socially; students need deliberately planned cooperative based learning activities through which they can access "…cues, reminders, breaking a problem down into steps, provision of exemplars ….anything that allows learners to grow in independence as a learner (Woolfolk, 1998, p. 45). The online environment supports provision for the learning and the development of higher level problem-solving skills (Vygotsky, 1983) because teachers can build scaffolding into the course-using that most important of all supporting systems, i.e. language to do so (Vygotsky, 1983)

Initial response

What preferred or typical practices did you use to guide some discovery for children in your class in FE 600?

What 'general' assumptions about thinking (the mind and all its possible activities such as creativity, imagination, predicting, inferring, extrapolating, generalizing, interpreting, classifying, evaluating, synthesizing…**choose one**) did you base your instructional practice?

Considered response

How does this week's conversation about guiding discovery in children and their thinking call into question one of your preferred or typical practices you once used to guide discovery?

What instructional practice for guiding discovery in other's thinking are you committed to integrate into your professional practice?

Readings: Guided discovery in online courses; Chapter 6 & Ormrod: Chapter 11

Week 3 (contd) Projects

Projects are student led investigation into a topic. Projects lead learners into the territory of deep knowledge. Learners are in charge of the procedures used in the investigation. The purpose of projects is for students to experientially understand that there are solutions to problems, answers to questions and better then worse ways to address issues. The outcome of projects is deeper understanding and a broader knowledge base regarding a topic. Projects encourage students to use a coordinated set of skills (including inquiry, problem solving and presentation), to build a base of knowledge about an issue, question or problem. The best projects include research into 'living cases,' real situations or an actual problem. Online courses are uniquely designed to permit projects to be taken up because time, opportunity to reflect, communication that is transactional not linear and informed access to relevant project information is possible in an online environment.

Initial Response

What practical decisions have you made in the past, or did make in FE 600, to organize children for learning through projects?

Why? What did you assume to be true about children, learning or projects (one or more of these)?

Considered Response

Given this week's conversation about projects, what do you now consider to be true about children, learning and /or projects?

What teaching practice are you committed to regarding projects as a consequence of this week's conversation?

Readings: Projects in online courses

Week Four (September 26th-30th)-Principles of learning: teaching the unfamiliar from the familiar

Familiar to Unfamiliar

Humans are goal directed seekers of new information. Learners use pre-existing information to make sense of new information, using knowledge, values and theories to construct meaning. What learners know influence what they can learn. Teachers need to actively draw out what learners know and create conditions of learning where learners can actively use their knowledge to make sense of new information. Misconception checks and awareness of misperceptions are important teacher activities in designing learning experiences however and should not be considered problems but opportunities for deep learning in children.

Initial response

What one or two main practices did you use in FE 600 to help with children's misconceptions? What did you do in the classroom to realign learners thinking?

What assumptions about learning or teaching (choose one or both) do you base your practices on regarding helping your children make conceptually accurate connections (familiar with unfamiliar)?

Considered response

How does this week's conversation call into question your preferred or typical practice(s) in helping others make accurate conceptual connections (your new information with their prior understandings)?

What preferred or typical practice that you use most evidently calls into question some idea form this week's conversation about making connections and learning?

What instructional practice are you now most committed to in helping students make connections?

Week Four: Principles of learning (contd): Competence-the important difference between declarative and procedural knowledge

Introduction

Competence in an area requires that learners have deep declarative knowledge, understand the concept and facts of the concept and remember in ways that make retrieval easy. Teachers who teach with awareness of strategies and the importance of strategies for learning, for retrieval and for construction of meaning, will teach strategies along with the knowledge and concepts. All procedural knowledge was first declarative knowledge

Initial response

What preferred or typical practices do you use with your students to develop competency in some aspect of their learning? (e.g. physical education, pro-social skill)

What assumptions about competence guided your practices?

Considered response

What idea or ideas in this week's conversation calls into question your professional practice in teaching or working with children to develop their competency?

What practice or yours used to develop competency most evidently (for you) calls into question an idea from this week's conversation?

What instructional practice used to develop competency in others are you most committed to integrate into your professional practice?

Ormrod: Chapters 13 and 15

Week 5 (October 3rd-October 7th): Insight generating/Training

Insight generating is the deepening awareness of the importance of one's commitment to choosing actions consistent with one's real life (Lonergan, 1972), arrived at through engagement with the data of one's life, understanding what the data means and choosing ethical actions accordingly. Communication between children and teacher is essential to insight formation; the online environment as well as conversations inside and outside classrooms are essential and offer opportunities for different forms of communication between child and teacher.

Insight means a deep awareness of causes or motivations of one's actions. The notion of coming to insight has been written about by Bernard Lonergan, the Catholic philosopher and theologian, in his books Insight (1957) and Method in Theology (1972). The notion of coming to insight is one small part of a larger method espoused by Lonergan. In coming to insight, the rational, as well as affective and cognitive elements of knowing are taken up. In Lonergan's method there are four steps or methods in the pedagogy (children's learning) or andragogy (adult learning)   According to Lonergan insight lays compacted, amorphous within a person, requiring the necessary conditions to unfold; The necessary conditions are the methods below. They are:
- Paying attention to the data of one's life (e.g. what are the reasons I do or do not have friends; what are the elements of my life at school that bring joy or woe, hope or fear)
- Understanding the meaning of the data (what is the purpose and/or reason for this data, i.e. what agenda, mine or another's, is being served by these conditions ; what is it that I know for is true about these conditions and what is it that is unclear about these conditions).
- Judging the value, place, role and efficaciousness of the data (e.g. shall I carry on as business as usual; what is the likely outcome if I do; is what is happening to me good or bad? Useful or a waste of time)?
- Action chosen as a consequence of paying attention, understanding and judging the data of one's live. What can I try now?

Initial response

What preferred or typical communication practice did you use to (try/attempt to) guide a child to some insight regarding their current state of affairs in their life (school, home, friends)?

On what assumptions about insight, children and/or communication did you base your practices?

Considered response

How does one idea in this week's conversation regarding insight call into question your practice or assumptions about nurturing?

How does one practice you have used call into question suggestions for practices offered in this week's conversation?

What insight-generating based practices are you committed to integrate into your professional practice?

Readings: Insight generating

Week 5 (contd): Training

Training is the systematic shaping of observable behaviors, through the planned use of reinforcers. Implicit in this perspective is that people may 'act their ways into new ways of valuing and thinking' (Palmer, 1998). The online environment provides teachers with a unique opportunity to shape at least three important behaviours-writing with clarity, responding to classmates in appreciative yet truthful ways, and negotiating accommodations to timetables, assignments and schedules, and doing so professionally (e.g. submitting late assignments)

Initial Response

What operant conditioning practice did you seem drawn to use in schools, in your FE 600 classroom?

Why? What theories, beliefs or assumptions about conditioning and children led you to be drawn to use this practice?

Considered Response

As a result of this week's conversation what part of your practice regarding conditioning in schools needs to be modified?

How? What practice regarding conditioning are you committed to you now?

Readings: Ormrod: Chapters 3, 4, and 5; Training and online courses

Week Six (October 11th-14th): Principles of learning: experiential learning: myth, fact and truth and the importance of the quality of initial learning

Introduction

The quality of one's initial learning is critical to a learner's ability to learn new information, later on. Superficial learning needs to be avoided; teaching from context and situational appropriate ways is ideal. Community becomes the ideal teaching setting to enhance quality of initial learning.

What assumptions about learning in real situations and through real experiences (choose one) did you base an instructional decision on when you intended to making learning experiential in FE 600?

What one or two typical or preferred practices did you actually use to make learning experiential?

Why?

Considered response

How does this week's conversation call into question your practices and understandings (choose both) about experiential learning?

How do your practices and understandings (choose both categories) call into question some practice and understanding presented in this week's conversation?

What professional practice regarding experiential learning are you now committed to integrate into your professional practice or ministry?

Week Six: Principles of learning (contd): Transfer of learning: what goes with the learner from a teaching experience?

Introduction

All learning involves transfer. The most effective learning involves deliberateness and intentionality about transfer, bringing into learning a learners prior knowledge and in turn, accounting for the new situations in which the learning is eventually to be transferred or applied.

Initial response

What one typical or preferred instructional practice do you use to help children either transfer prior understandings into their (hopefully) understanding of new information that you are presenting OR transfer new understandings into the 'real' world?

On what assumptions about transfer of learning do you base your preferred or typical practices regarding encouraging transfer?

Considered response

What one idea from this week's conversation about transfer most cogently calls into question your practices used to encourage transfer of learning?

What one practice that you use to encourage transfer of learning most cogently (your opinion) calls into question a practice we discussed in this week's conversation?

Readings: Ormrod: re-read Chapter 13, 14, and 15

Week Seven (October 17th-21st):Shared Praxis Model/Apprenticeship Model

Shared Praxis

The notion of relationship by design is borrowed from McTighe and Wiggins (2005) and their notion of understanding from design. Relationship by design means that opportunities to develop relationships are woven into the course`s learning activities (what the learners do). Relationships are not necessarily developed in the transmission of information, unless the transmission of information is designed intentionally to in fact lead to the development of relationships. Participation in designed learning activities (e.g. scenario development) contains opportunities for understandings to emerge regarding relationships and how they are formed. The online teacher has a very special opportunity to make explicit and draw learner`s attention to where in a course relationships have been strengthened and why a comment worked to build community.

Understanding by design was developed in part at Harvard (Project Zero) and popularized in K-12 educational practices. Relationships from design, adapted and modified for the purpose of this paper, mean that in the design of programs and classes, the teacher (i.e. the architect of learning experiences) builds activities to nurture good relationships into the actual learning activities of the course, in what have been typically non-relationship building activities such as assignments, conversations and threaded discussions in forums. In other words, through the learning activities designed intentionally to do so relationships are developed and community is nurtured. For example, teachers can design a relationship building assessment activity for each online session. To illustrate, learners may be asked to identify at what time in the week's discussions were they most engaged, least engaged and most troubled; what idea or activity caused each response? In this designed assessment activity learners engage meaningfully with the week's information, as well as with theirs and others lived experiences. The learning opportunities lay dormant, amorphous and designed, ready to unfold in the careful implementation of both time and application to do so.

Shared praxis for this workshop means coming to know or understand something, through deliberate reflection on one's previous actions and behaviours. In this form of experiential based

learning, a student, through teacher-questioning, returns to a previously experienced action, and with a teacher's careful guidance, reengages with that action(s) by considering critically how some teacher-introduced new information' calls into question or not the student's actions and reasons for the actions. What is produced is a way of knowing that the Greeks called praxis, a word that roughly means knowing through reflecting critically back into some social engagement (Groome, 1981).

Initial Response

In FE 600 did you 'feel' that you were successful in engaging the children in shared praxis?

If so, what assumptions about children and/or learning were correct and proven to be correct as a result?

Name one decision about designing shared praxis learning experiences for children that you are prepared to make at this time?

Week Seven (contd): Apprenticeship

The problem of transfer of learning and transfer of training remains unresolved in learning situations where attention is not paid to the psychological conditions of the learner (e.g. readiness), the sociological conditions in which the learning is to take place (new learning conditions) (Haskell, 2001). Apprenticeship models in online courses can address this need, if the outcome intended is for learners to develop mastery in procedural skill related to a value. In modified apprenticeships, students take up short-term mission or work trips, international work projects, and 'outward bound type' activities. The context for modified apprenticeships is work in a challenging context, one unfamiliar to the student, but one in which the student recognizes opportunities to address a deep value. (e.g. poverty alleviation) The possibility for learning values rests in the opportunities to work alongside mentors and coaches, as novices experience directly but in abbreviated ways what the mentors experience daily. In online courses "assessment for learning" activities can be integrated, assignments included that require an apprentice and protégé relationship. In addition, online environments permit cognitive apprenticeships (Collins, Brown & Holum, in Woolfolk, 2000). Cognitive apprenticeships share many of the features of regular apprenticeships but differ in that the objectives are not skills but cognitive attributes, such as reading, problem-solving, analytical thinking, through provision by the teacher or other learners of models, tutoring, scaffolding opportunities to articulate their emerging knowledge, and suggestions for ways to explore and transfer new knowledge (Woolfolk, 2000, p 334).

The apprenticeship perspective is about the enculturation of an individual with the larger contexts and settings the person finds himself/herself in (family, church, workplace). The enculturation is through a progressive, mutual accommodation of the person with the expectations, theories, values, assumptions, behaviours and beliefs of the contexts (e.g.

marriage). The guiding metaphor is that of a sage. The learner learns through being involved, through reflecting in and through experience. Learning is situational and often informal. Learning is socially constructed (constructionsim). The teacher informs experiences, creating the hermeneutic and dialectic opportunities (to interpret and synthesize new information). Content is the day to day life of the setting, context, and persons in them. The context is real world. The ideal is learning tied to the contexts in which it occurs.

Initial response

What one or two preferred or typical practices did you *see used* in FE 600 to mentor (coach, apprentice) children? Would you use this practice in your own professional practice as a teacher?

What assumptions about children, learning or apprenticeship give rise to your decision to use this practice?

Considered response

What one idea from this week's conversation most clearly calls into question your practices in mentoring (or coaching)?

What one practice or yours used to mentor (or coach) others most clearly calls into question a practice we identified in this week's conversation?

What mentoring or coaching practice are you now committed to integrate into your professional or ministry practice?

Readings: Apprenticeship in online courses; Shared praxis in online courses

Week Eight (October 24ᵗʰ-28ᵗʰ): Case Study/Inquiry/Principles of learning

Case Study

Best used in courses where interpretation is valued and non-positivistic ways of understanding the lived experience of people in context
The learner's lived experience in an online environment is often one characterized by a shift in power and control, from teacher to subject matter (Pratt, 1998). As a result, the learner in the online environment can focus on the information and attending activities designed for learning in the online environment, one developing the skills, knowledge and attributes identified in the course and stated in course objectives and goals. The teacher no longer holds the trump card in terms of course success for the learner, particularly for the learner whose attributional make-up is

characterized by luck (Weiner, 1995). The information and all attending learning activities designed by the teacher become most important for the learner.

Case study is a process where learners read a selected case, a particular instance of a behaviour or action, and then describe and analyze the events in the case to 'see' what themes make up the event or behaviour. Case study-based learning tries to encourage 'thick' description of the case (thorough description of an instance of behaviour or action), analyses of the particular instance so that cause and effect relationships within the case are revealed (Pratt, 1998).. Also, case study-learning provides opportunity for learners to let the case interpret them, for the learner to let be revealed what personal meanings reside within the learner, regarding the case's main causes and effects.

Initial response

What experiences have you had with case studies, either as a teacher or as a learner?

Why do case studies engage us (learners) in ways that abstractions do not?

Considered response

What personally held theory of teaching has been most challenged by this week's conversation about case studies?

Week 8 (contd): Inquiry

Adult learners maintain a default interest in most course's abstractions, theories and concepts. Children however do not. Adults assume an interest in abstractions because they are required to continue to do so, to broker in abstract ideas in their many courses and programs. Adult learners are primarily and fundamentally interested in inquiry-solving real problems, discussing real issues and addressing real questions. I have found in my courses that adult learners respond with heightened involvement and deeper, more intimate relationships with their teacher and other learners in a course when my course is designed to be inquiry based. Children are more naturally drawn into case study

Inquiry is the systematic investigation of a problem, issue or question (I.O. Intelligence Online, www.myio.org). The distinguishing feature of an inquiry-based learning experience is that the lesson may develop from student responses, and therefore the problem, issue or question being investigated may 'open up' into new questions, issues and problems (I.O. Intelligence Online, www.myio.org). If an inquiry is allowed to be open-ended, the teacher should accept that at least for the time being, for the student, there is no right answer, and no conclusion is required to end the inquiry (Davis, 1993). Inquiry can continue.

Initial Response

How did you use inquiry based methodology in FE 600?

Why? What did you assume to be true about learning and children in your use of inquiry?

Considered response

What decisions have you made about using inquiry in teaching and learning in schools?

Week Eight: Principles of learning: learning: from head to heart and hands

Introduction

Specific knowledge through the hands, the competence and skill in doing something is different yet related knowledge to domain specific declarative knowledge (what something is).Practice of a certain kind (not any form of practice) is required for declarative knowledge to be proceduralized. The main insight in this principle is that life is a verb, not a noun, an activity to be lived not a place or thing to possess.

Initial response

What preferred or typical practices did you use to teach skills in FE 600(choose one from psychomotor, interpersonal, preaching, teaching, or your choice)

What assumptions gave rise to your choice of practice(s) to teach skills in the way you did?

Considered response

How does one idea about teaching skills discussed in this week's conversation call into question one your ideas (or practices…you choose) about teaching skills?

How does one of your practices call into question an idea from this week's conversation?

What changes to your professional or ministry practice are now desirable?

Week Eight: Principles of learning (contd): Self concept and learning

Initial response

Complete the following stem "Children appear to be_____but really they are_____

Why do you respond as you did to the stem?

Self concept is related to learning. What learner's think about themselves influence what they learn, how and why.

Considered response

Interpretation and Synthesis

How did this week's discussion inform your understanding of self-concept and its relationship to learning?

What changes to your professional practice are now desirable?

Week Eight: Principles of learning (contd): Context

Introduction

Learning is influenced by the context in which it occurs. This statement is hardly overwhelming until one considers the implications of where we teach (buildings) information that really 'lives' somewhere else (homes, hearts, minds….)

Initial response

What settings or contexts have you found to be most conducive to learning

Why?

Considered Response

Interpretation and Synthesis

How does one idea from this week's discussion affirm your preferred setting or context for learning?

What new practice in teaching in contexts and settings most conducive to learning are you now committed to integrate into your instructional and ministry practices?

Readings: Ormrod: Chapters 1, 2, 3 6

Week 9-10 (October 31st-November 10th): Presentations of Programs

THREE GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What piece of information in your classmate's program/course has engaged you most?

2. What piece of information in your classmate's program/course provides opportunity for further thought?

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