Personal Learning Theory

Leslie Dawes

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Dr. Clifford Falk

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How people learn has always been an intriguing question for me as a teacher. During fourth year of teacher training I learned about Bloom’s Taxonomy and Piaget’s Stages of Child Development. I referred to these a lot as a beginning teacher and I have continued to do so. Since then Anderson has revised Bloom’s original theory and other theorists have come up with new theories. What has become evident to me is that people, especially children learn in many different ways and no one theory encapsulate everyone’s acquisition of knowledge.

Learning about the theories behind the learning has been helpful in assessing and recognizing the variety of ways children learn. Understanding my own personal learning style has also been informative in understanding best teaching practices. I learn best when something is modelled and I have time to repeat the acquired knowledge by actively doing. Sensory input by watching, listening, touching, tasting, and smelling, and being intuitive all contributes to effective learning for me. This learning approach fosters self confidence but de emphasizes creativity and personal discovery. Reflecting on the learning environments that I facilitate for my Grade Ones has helped me to provide activities and playtime learning to address the diverse learners in my class. I feel that children learn best with activities that involve some modelling and encourage experimentation and interactions with others and have been designed to scaffold previous experiences and knowledge.

The type of atmosphere in a classroom also contributes to how children learn. Positive reinforcement in a nurturing and developmental environment encourages learning. Stories, songs and discussions about positive behaviour before negative behaviours arise are effective in building self esteem and self regulation. Children learn most effectively through a safe, caring, predictable environment that fosters exploration, creativity, higher level thinking skills and individuality.

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