Developing and Selecting Learning Opportunities

Chapter 6

Teaching Standards
A Constructivist View

1. Making subjects comprehensible
2. Engaging students in learning
3. Designing learning experiences
4. Creating and maintaining effective learning environments
5. Assessing learning

Learner Perceptions:
Making subjects comprehensible

- “We start with a big and messy problem and everyone tries to solve it.”
- “We look for different ways to solve a problem. We explain our solutions.”
- “We look for patterns and relationships”
Learner Perceptions:
Engaging students in learning

• “Most problems are solved by us.”
• “We know how to give and receive help.”
• “Other students and the instructor really listen to me.”
• “My classes make me question my own beliefs.”
• “First, we work alone to have something to share and then we discuss and argue in small groups or with the whole class.”

Learner Perceptions:
Designing learning experiences

• “We choose, design, revise, carry out, and evaluate our projects.”
• “We do projects that help our school and neighborhood.”
• “We collect information and resources from the community.”
• “Our projects connect math, science, language, and the arts.”

Learner Perceptions:
Creating and maintaining effective learning environments

• “We apply what we are learning to situations outside of school.”
• “We seek new information to settle arguments.”
• “Everyone expresses opinions and gives reasons.”
• “I know when to give help and when I shouldn’t.”
Learner Perceptions:
Assessing learning

• "I test myself to see if I really understand."

What are learning activities?

• A means for achieving objectives!

Why are they important in curriculum development?

• To achieve aims, goals and objectives.
• To indicate to others how to implement content/curriculum.
Learning Activities

- Are recitation, reading and listening activities?
- Are they the only classroom activities?
- Do they get students involved in learning?

Ralph Tyler’s View on Developing Activities

- Appropriate practice
- Satisfaction to learners
- Success possible for students
- Multiple approaches can be used
- Multiple outcomes because each student differs in interpreting ideals

A learner does not learn by doing but by perceiving the consequences of what he or she has done in relationship to what he or she may or may not do in the future.

In seeing how his or her acts change the world, he or she gains meaning of his or her powers and the ways in which purposes must take account of things.

With this experience, there is growth in what one may call “education.”

— Adapted from Mayhew and Edwards
Learning Activities

- In curriculum development, planners can readily prescribe the learning activities that students will be engaged in, but they can only hope these activities will result in the desired experiences.
- In reality, content and activity never exist apart from one another.

Activities are clearly specific enough to provide instructional personnel with a sense of the curriculum planner’s intent, while being sufficiently indefinite to allow for detailed development and execution in accordance with the teacher’s instructional style and personality.

Examples of Learning Activities

- Objective - Generalize war as a human experience.
- Create maps of battles and illustrate strategies.
- Write an imaginary journal entry of a soldier at the front.
- View Private Ryan -- Interview a war veteran on their war experiences.
- Photocopy cartoons depicting attitudes toward war.
Narrowly focused activities vs achieving multiple objectives?

- Learning becomes more meaningful to learners if we can use activities that integrate a number of objectives into an integrated whole.
  - Solve a real problem.

Contextual Learning

- Learning in context to what is real.
  - Give students activities that are real problems they identify with.
  - In CTE... Work-related activities/issues are good contextual activities, especially if they are based on local industries and companies.

Other Issues

- Political Criteria
  - Gender, racial, learners with special needs, stereotyping, patronizing
- Practicality
  - Cost of the activity
  - Equipment and facility availability
  - Safety concerns
Key Point

- Philosophical assumptions about society, the individual, learning, and the nature of knowledge demand continual examination in planning learning activities.

- Why?

- Stuff Changes!

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The Curriculum Developer’s Dilemma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Activities Should...</th>
<th>But They Also Should...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the ideal as just, beautiful, and honorable.</td>
<td>Describe life as it is, including corruption, violence, and profanity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat the thought and behavior of the group to which the learner belongs.</td>
<td>Treat the thought and behavior of the groups other than those to which the learner belongs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase variability by stressing individuality.</td>
<td>Silence human variability by stressing common outlooks and capacities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stress cooperation so that individuals share in achieving a common goal.</td>
<td>Stress competition so that the able person excels as an individual.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allow students to clarify their own positions on moral and controversial issues.</td>
<td>Instruct students in the values of moral and intellectual integrity rather than allowing students to engage in sophistry and personal indulgence.</td>
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Questions About Learning Activities

- Will the activity move the learner closer to a true view of society and culture (our standard)?
- Will the activity help the student to clarify the conditions of his/her own existence?
- Will the activity have a tendency to broaden or constrict one’s perceptions?
- Will the activity strengthen the student’s range and/or depth of knowledge of the objective(s)?
Systemic designers use the following criteria in assessing instructional activities:

1. Learning activities are directly related to benchmarks and specified content standards.

Boring but Foundational Activities
How can you make them exciting?

- Keyboarding to desktop publishing.
- Turning soil for gardening.
- Cleaning the kitchen for baking.
- Physical training for sports.

Organization and Learning Activities

- Step by step in proper sequence.
  - Be sure students are ready... with the skills and prerequisite knowledge to do the activity
  - Don’t just jump into an activity, prepare students for it
    - Do they have the prerequisite preparation?
    - Do they understand how it connects to previously learned knowledge?
Developing Activities

Goal: Get a job.

- List the steps an individual should experience in seeking employment. You can show it on PowerPoint. Make a bulletin board display of them.
- Have students:
  - Locate sources of job in a newspaper.
  - Locate job sources on the Internet.
  - Prepare a Personal Data Sheet/Resume.
  - Fill out a simple job application form.
  - Fill out a moderately complex job application form.
  - Write out a step-by-step role play for a job interview.
  - Practice the step-by-step role play for a job interview.
  - Go through a job interview with the teacher.
  - Go through a job interview with a business person.

Discussion as an Activity

- It is a wonderful activity . . . IF you can pull it off.
- Learners need to have the requisite insight, prior knowledge, and interest to discuss things.
  - It can be used as an introductory activity or a closing activity. But it must be supported with other participative activities.

Textbook Activities

- Many lack purposes.
- Mostly busywork.
- Generally peripheral to powerful ideas
- Minimal application potential
- Do not apply to your learner’s experiences

- Look for ones that will connect to your learners and have application of the content toward the goals you are trying to reach.
Why are they learning activities important in curriculum development?

- To achieve aims, goals and objectives.
- To indicate to others how to implement content/curriculum.

Assignment

- Text, read Chapter 7
  - Answer question 5, p. 168
- Annotation no. 4 (Blue)
- Annotation no. 5 (Green)

Project 785 -- The Final Project

What should it include?
OTED 785 -- The Final Project Product

- Curriculum Foundation
  - Definition
  - Rationale
  - Content Source
  - Content Structure
  - Aim
  - Goals
- Curriculum Content
  - Unit Goals
  - Rationale
  - Objectives
  - Activities
  - Resources
- Curriculum Evaluation
  - Content Evaluation
  - Document Validation

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After you turn in the Foundations . . .

- I will evaluate it and return it.
- You should make corrections to it and resubmit it as part of the final project.
- In the mean time begin working on the Units and then the Evaluation.

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Final OTED 885 Project Product

- Make any corrections to your Phase Two and submit an addendum sheet for each modified and added Course:
  - Course Title (and number is applicable)
  - Course description
    - Include a content outline
    - Rationale for the course
Project Final Products due:  
July 23rd

See you next week!