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5

Building an Educational Philosophy in a Changing World

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Recognize that educational philosophy includes ideas about existence, human nature, truth, and goodness along with psychological and sociological ideas about motivation, learning theory, social norms, and equality. (InTASC 4: Content Knowledge)
2. Identify the major tenets of the teacher-centered educational philosophies of essentialism, behaviorism, and positivism. (InTASC 4: Content Knowledge)
3. Identify the major tenets of the student-centered educational philosophies of progressivism, humanism, and constructivism. (InTASC 4: Content Knowledge)
4. State the components of your personal philosophy of education in light of classroom organization, discipline practices, motivation, and classroom climate. (InTASC 1: Learner Development; InTASC 4: Content Knowledge; InTASC 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice)
5. List the characteristics of teachers as change agents and leaders. (InTASC 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice; InTASC 10: Leadership and Collaboration)

EDUCATION in the NEWS

GIRL WHO FOUGHT BULLIES NOW LABELED ONE BY SCHOOL UMATILLA

BY THERESA CAMPBELL, STAFF WRITER

The Daily Commercial

"Caution: This campus is 100 percent against bullying. Speak out," reads a sign outside Umatilla High School, and one senior said she did speak out and has been punished for doing so.

Stormy Rich, 18, thought she was doing the right thing in reporting bullying incidents she witnessed against a mentally-challenged middle school girl by a group of girls on morning bus rides to school.

"I'm a very outspoken person," Rich said. "I stick up for what I feel is right. In the school code of conduct handbook, it is clearly stated that bullying is a non-tolerable offense."

Rich was riding that middle school bus because she earned enough credits to avoid having to take a first-period high school class and an earlier high school bus. The two schools are only a few blocks away.

Rich—who said she felt compelled to speak out because the girl couldn't even comprehend she was being picked on—first complained to the bus driver but the bullying continued. She then complained to a high school official, who said he would contact the middle school, but nothing changed.

"I would sit on the bus every single day and see the bullying was still going on and nothing was being done," Rich said. "It was aggravating."

The senior demanded the bullies stop, which worked for a while. She said they then began threatening her, even though she complained about this to school personnel on almost a daily basis for about two weeks. The mother and daughter even contacted police.

"Enough is enough," Rich said in her written complaint. "Something should be done."

That something was a letter sent to Rich's mother, Brenda, on May 4, saying her daughter was kicked off the middle school bus. A district school official said Rich displayed bullying behavior in her comments.

"She said what I did made me the bully, with me telling the kids that if they didn't stop, and if the school didn't do anything, that I would have to handle it," Rich said. "To me, it was just going too far."

According to Christopher Patton, communications officer for Lake County Schools, a courtesy had been extended to Rich to ride the middle school bus.

"Due to circumstances on the bus, the privileges were revoked," he said.

Patton said he could not discuss the bullying complaints filed by Rich or her mother. He also could not say if any action was taken about those complaints.

"I can't comment about student discipline, unfortunately," Patton said. "I think you're heading down a dangerous path because you've got one side of the story . . . There are other parents that are involved in this."

Asked if the district had additional complaints on the issue, Patton replied: "Just this one parent."

"My daughter was punished incorrectly," said Brenda Rich. "Stormy was standing up for a child with emotionally challenged disabilities that should not have been bullied. The district's policy clearly states that anybody [who] in good faith files a report on bullying will not face any repercussions and she is."

Brenda Rich said she has met the bullied student and the young girl does not comprehend sarcasm or even understand what "hate" means. She views everybody as her "friend."

"Just because she doesn't understand what people are doing to her is wrong, it doesn't mean it's OK," said Brenda Rich, who questions if the schools' anti-bullying policies are really working.

" . . . This child doesn't have the ability to stand up for herself, she has no voice. Stormy was her voice, even more so than the girl herself."

Her daughter won't have school transportation issues much longer.

Stormy Rich will graduate next week with a 3.67 GPA and has been awarded scholarships. She strives to continue to help others and plans to start nursing studies at Daytona State College.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. In this article, Stormy is faced with moral dilemmas focused on her concern for a student with special needs. If Stormy were one of your students and shared her thinking with you about this situation, what might you say to her? How might your own philosophy of education guide your response to her questions?
2. Think about ethical issues that you have faced in the past. Select one incident that you would have liked to share with your teachers or school administrators. In what ways could they have helped you? What stopped you from seeking their help?
3. Students often face ethical challenges regarding moral conduct; yet these sorts of issues are seldom discussed openly in the classroom. Why do schools tend to shy away from including ethical issues or controversial topics in the classroom setting? What are some ways that you think schools could incorporate issues of moral conduct and ethical dilemmas in the curriculum?

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THE DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION

Educational philosophy can be analyzed as the application of philosophy to the classroom. The way curriculum is organized, the manner in which instruction is delivered, the character of school environments, and the processes used in testing and grading are informed by the philosophical views held by educators, parents, and legislators. Such views vary greatly among school districts and states.

Educational philosophies are not pure philosophies in the classical sense; rather, educational philosophies also draw on psychological and sociological theories. This merger of different ideas and theories from different disciplines occurs because education itself is interdisciplinary. So, educational philosophies can be thought of as a mixture of philosophical ideas about existence, human nature, and truth and goodness along with psychological ideas about motivation, learning theory, and relationships along with sociological ideas about society, norms, and equality.

Developing a Philosophy of Education

A philosophy of education is not just a set of written words; it is a reflective platform on which decisions about teaching and learning are made in an effort to develop learners. A teacher's practices in the classroom provide the clearest indicators of her or his personal philosophy. A worthy goal for beginning educators is to become comfortable with a variety of classroom practices that

address the needs of learners. It is not a matter of selecting one methodology over another but rather of understanding different methodologies and using them responsibly. Your philosophy of education develops gradually over time; it is a living platform that is never complete. Your educational philosophy emerges based on your experiences with learners in and out of the classroom, your use of different teaching and assessment methods, and your interactions with parents and other teachers.

Building on the Philosophies of Others

One strategy that can help you develop your own personal philosophy of education is to build on the educational philosophies of others. In the first part of this chapter, we describe six major educational philosophies to show you how different classical philosophies give rise to divergent educational philosophies. We believe that this examination of different educational philosophies will prepare you to develop your own philosophy of education in the second part of the chapter.

The six educational philosophies presented in this chapter are organized according to the degree to which they focus on external (teacher-based) versus internal (student-based) authority. For example, a behaviorist educational philosopher primarily employs teacher-based authority. It would be inappropriate for the behaviorist to focus on personal choice because behaviorism essentially aims to control human behavior through teacher-directed reinforcement. On the other hand, a constructivist educational philosopher tends to emphasize student-based authority. Constructivist philosophers of education focus on developing students' individual meaning; hence, they provide greater opportunity for students to decide what classroom rules should be followed.

Educational philosophy is more than a set of words. It is embodied in the way teachers relate to students, other teachers, principals, and parents.

This same distinction (between teacher-centered versus student-centered authority) can be used to group the classical schools of philosophy that undergird all educational philosophies. For example, the ideas and principles that surround idealism and realism imply that external (teacher-centered) authority is important to the attainment of truth and goodness whereas pragmatism and existentialism focus more on the innate worth of the individual (student-centered authority).

Figure 5.1 should help you get started examining the six different educational philosophies that have developed over time. It provides a broad overview of these educational philosophies by clustering those that are teacher centered and those that are student centered. The three teacher-centered educational philosophies are essentialism, behaviorism, and positivism. Each of them tends to organize the classroom environment, instruction, and assessment approaches in a similar manner in that the teacher makes most of the decisions about the components of the classroom. You will find that many of these ideas are drawn from the classical philosophies of idealism and realism.

You will also notice that the three student-centered educational philosophies of progressivism, humanism, and constructivism differ in the way that they organize the classroom environment, instruction, and assessment approaches. Each of them tends to permit greater freedom and student choice, and each draws primarily from the classical philosophies of pragmatism and existentialism.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 5.1

To varying degrees, these educational philosophies are used by classroom teachers and are applied to the way they organize their classrooms, their instruction, and their assessments. As you study these different educational philosophies, you will find that one or more of them clearly meshes with your own views. Start an educational philosophy journal. Make a note in your journal when you find a match between your own thinking and a specific aspect of an educational philosophy.



Source: SuperStock/Alamy Stock Photo

Educational philosophy is more than a set of words. It is embodied in the way teachers relate to students, other teachers, principals, staff, and parents.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 5.1

Complete Check Your Understanding 5.1 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

FIGURE 5.1 Teacher-Centered versus Student-Centered Classroom Approaches

	EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES	
	Teacher Centered	Student Centered
	• Essentialism • Behaviorism • Positivism	• Progressivism • Humanism • Constructivism
Learning Focus	Convergent thinking; focused subject matter	Divergent points of view; diverse subject matter
Classroom Organization	Rigid/fixed; highly organized, from furniture to lessons	Open; flexible classroom furniture arrangement and teaching
Teaching Styles	Extreme amounts of teacher talk; directed learning	Considerably less teacher talk, more learner talk; discovery-based learning
Motivation	External controls	Internal incentives
Discipline	High teacher control	Equal teacher and learner control
Classroom Climate	Nurturing teacher voice; community of on-task learners	Teacher encourages student voices; community of inquirers
Leadership Styles	Teacher is primary authority source and evaluator	Teacher is model of participatory authority and evaluation

TEACHER-CENTERED EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES

Essentialism, behaviorism, and positivism are educational philosophies that espouse a teacher-centered approach to teaching and learning. The approach of each of these teacher-centered educational philosophies to subject matter, classroom organization, teaching methods, and assessment places most of the responsibility on the teacher, whose job it is to enable students to learn what is important. Although each of these educational philosophies forms a distinct cohesive whole, all three are rooted in an authoritarian principle—that is, that truth and goodness are entities best understood by the person with expertise who is in authority. The students' role, then, is to attempt to master and follow the directions of those in power.

This chapter presents each educational philosophy's perspectives on curriculum, teaching, and learning. In addition, for each educational philosophy, we describe an illustrative classroom activity that is consistent with the educational philosophy. The classroom activity is further analyzed according to the nature of the learner (active or passive); the nature of the subject matter; the use of the subject matter; and the type of thinking that is emphasized (convergent—focused on right answers, or divergent—focused on developing multiple perspectives).

Essentialist teaching methods require formal discipline through emphasis on required reading, lectures, memorization, repetition, and examination.

Essentialism

Essentialism holds that an educated person in a given culture must have a common core of information and skills. Schools should be organized to transmit this core of essential material as effectively as possible. The three basic principles of essentialism are (1) a core of information, (2) hard work and mental discipline, and (3) teacher-centered instruction. The back-to-the-basics movement is a truncated form of essentialism because it focuses primarily on the three Rs and discipline. Essentialism draws equally from the philosophies of both idealism and realism.

Essentialism has a close relative called **perennialism**. Like essentialism, perennialism holds that an educated person must have a common core of information and practice mental discipline. However, perennialism has a different definition of the common core. The term *perennial* means "ongoing or long lasting," so perennialists define a common core as time-honored ideas, the great works of past and present thinkers, and the ability to reason. To know reality, perennialists maintain that we must examine individual things and objects around us to find their essence. Instead of focusing on primarily current events, perennialists would have students focus on the big ideas and concepts that remain constant.

Essentialists are not so intent on transmitting underlying, basic truths; rather, they advocate the teaching of a basic core of information that will help a person live a productive life today. Hence, this core of information can and will change. Essentialism stresses the disciplined development of basic skills rather than uncovering essences or underlying principles. The following educational implications are provided from the essentialist point of view.

ESSENTIALIST LEARNING FOCUS. Essentialism's goals are to transmit the cultural heritage and develop good citizens. The role of the student is that of a learner. School is a place where children come to learn what they need to know, and the teacher is the person who can best instruct students in essential matters. (See the "Essentialist Class Activity.")

ESSENTIALIST CURRICULUM. The essentialist curriculum focuses on subject matter that includes literature, history, foreign languages, and religion. Teaching methods require formal



Source: CandyBox Images/Shutterstock

Essentialist teaching methods require formal discipline through emphasis on required reading, lectures, memorization, repetition, and examination.

essentialism An educational philosophy that holds that there is a common core of information and skills that an educated person must have; schools should be organized to transmit this core of essential material.

perennialism An educational philosophy that holds that there is a core of long-lasting ideas that an educated person must understand.

ESSENTIALIST CLASS ACTIVITY

Mr. Jackson's second graders had just learned to count money. He decided to let them play several games of "musical envelopes." Each student was given one envelope with each envelope containing a different number of paper "nickels," "dimes," "quarters," and "pennies." Students were told to open their envelopes and count the money inside and write the total amount on the front of their envelopes. When the music stopped, students were told to state their totals when called on by the teacher. The student with the most money for each game got a special prize (Duck, 1981, p. 40).

In this essentialist class activity, the nature of the learner is passive because students are given very clear and direct instructions that do not permit individual approaches. The nature of the subject matter is *structured* in that students are required to approach the task in a singular, specific, organized way. The use of the subject matter is cognitive, and the thinking approach is *convergent* because there is little room for emotional involvement and there is only one correct answer for each envelope.

discipline and feature required reading, lectures, memorization, repetition, and examinations. Essentialists generally agree about teaching the laws of nature and the accompanying universal truths of the physical world. Mathematics and the natural sciences are examples of subjects that contribute to the learners' knowledge of natural law. Activities that require mastering facts and information about the physical world are significant aspects of essentialist methodology. With truth defined as observable fact, instruction often includes field trips, laboratories, audiovisual materials, and nature study. Habits of intellectual discipline are considered ends in themselves.

Essentialism envisions subject matter as the core of education. Severe criticism has been leveled at U.S. education by essentialists who advocate an emphasis on basic education. Essentialism assigns to the schools the task of conserving the heritage and transmitting knowledge of the physical world. In a sense, the school is a curator of knowledge.

With the burgeoning of new knowledge in contemporary society, essentialism may be contributing to the slowness of educational change. In this context, essentialism has been criticized as being obsolete in its authoritarian tendencies. Such criticism implies that essentialism does not satisfy the twenty-first-century needs of U.S. youth. Essentialist educators deny this criticism and claim to have incorporated modern influences in the system while maintaining academic standards.



VIDEO NOTE 5.1

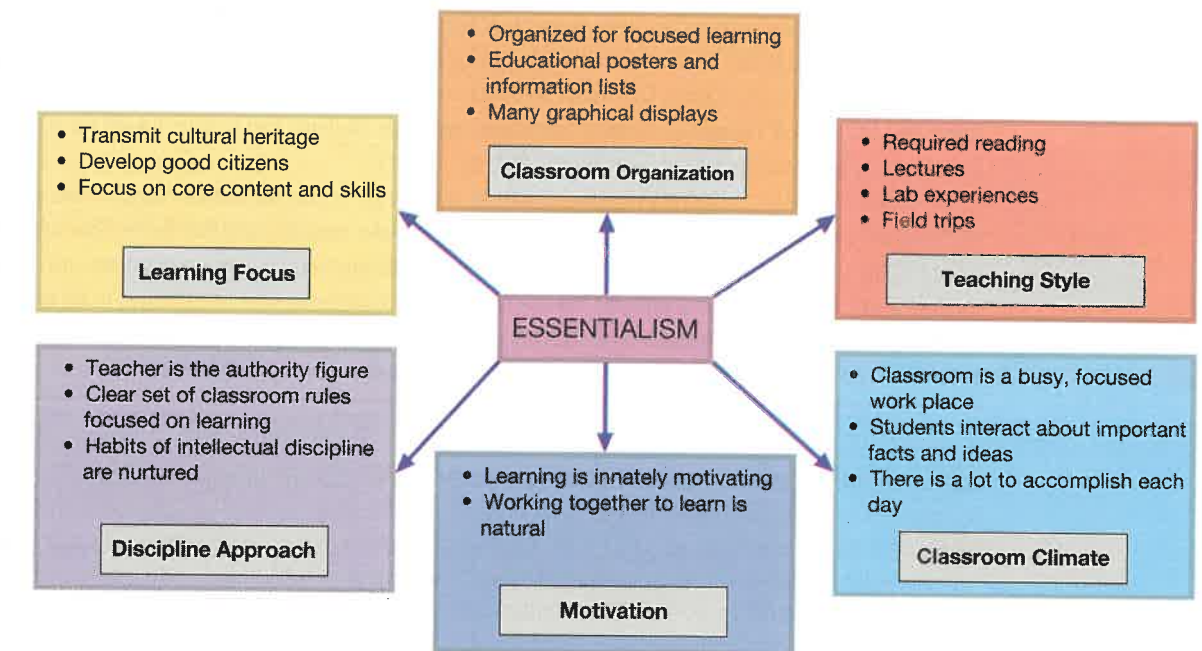
In this video, the teacher emphasizes the importance of allowing students to share their individual thinking about fulcrums. In what way does her teaching approach relate to essentialism?

ESSENTIAL SCHOOLS REFORM MOVEMENT. The Essential Schools movement is a contemporary school reform effort developed by Dr. TheodoreSizer that has many characteristics of essentialism. Sizer (2004; Sizer, Sizer, Benitez, Davidson, & Flaxman, 2009) contends that students need to master a common core of information and skills, and he encourages schools to strip away the nonessentials and focus on having students "use their minds well." The Essential Schools movement does not specify what content is essential in a given culture at a given time. Rather, "essential schools" are required to analyze clearly what this core of information should be and to change the curriculum to emphasize this core.

The Coalition of Essential Schools promotes a vision of schooling in which students engage in in-depth and rigorous learning. Essential schools select a small number of core skills and areas of knowledge that they expect all students to demonstrate and exercise broadly across content areas. Eight common principles have been developed by Dr. Sizer in collaboration with Essential School participants to guide the efforts of the coalition. These principles include the following:

- Use of the mind well with a focus on clear, essential learning goals
- An attempt to apply these goals to all students

FIGURE 5.2 Essentialism Educational Implications



- Personalized teaching and learning
- Emphasis on student-as-worker
- Student performance on real tasks with multiple forms of evidence
- Principal and teachers as generalists first and specialists second
- Budgets that do not exceed those of traditional schools by more than 10 percent
- Nondiscriminatory policies and practices.¹

Now that you have had a chance to consider the ideas of essentialism, use Figure 5.2 to examine how these ideas specify the learning focus, classroom organization, teaching styles, discipline, motivation, and classroom climate. As you examine the bullet points within this figure, consider which ones match your own way of thinking and jot them down in your journal.

Behaviorism

B. F. Skinner (1904–1990), the Harvard experimental psychologist and philosopher, is the recognized leader of the movement known as behaviorism. **Behaviorism** is a psychological theory and educational philosophy that holds that one's behavior is determined by environment, not heredity. Skinner verified Pavlov's stimulus–response theory with animals and, from his research, suggested that human behavior could also be explained as responses to external stimuli. Because of its focus on the careful examination of environment, behaviors, and responses, behaviorism is closely linked to realism. Other behaviorists' research expanded on Skinner's work in illustrating the effect of the environment, particularly the interpersonal environment, on shaping individual behavior.

BEHAVIORIST LEARNING FOCUS. Behaviorists hold that one's behavior is determined by environment, not heredity. This suggests that by carefully controlling the stimuli in the classroom, the teacher can significantly influence student behavior. Behaviorists believe that the school environment must be highly organized and the curriculum based on carefully developed behavioral objectives, and they hold that knowledge is best described as behaviors that are observable. They contend that empirical evidence is essential if students are to learn and that students must employ the scientific method to arrive at knowledge. The primary task of educators is to develop learning environments that lead to desired behaviors in students. (See the "Behaviorist Class Activity".)

behaviorism A psychological theory and educational philosophy that asserts that behaviors represent the essence of a person and that all behaviors can be explained as responses to stimuli.

¹Ten common principles have been developed by Dr. Sizer from *The Red Pencil: Convictions from Experience in Education* by Theodore R. Sizer. Published by Yale University Press, © 2004.

BEHAVIORIST CLASS ACTIVITY

Students in Mr. Drucker's civics class were given merit tokens for coming into the room quietly, sitting at their desks, preparing notebooks and pencils for the day's lesson, and being ready to begin answering comprehension questions in their workbooks. On Fridays students were allowed to use their tokens at an auction to buy items that Mr. Drucker knew they wanted. Sometimes, however, students had to save tokens for more than two weeks to buy what they liked best (Duck, 1981, pp. 50–51).

In this behaviorist class activity, the nature of the learner is *passive* in that students are carefully manipulated by providing responses to their behaviors that make students do what the teacher wants. The nature of the subject matter is *structured* in that the workbooks and comprehension questions are carefully focused and lead students step-by-step. The use of the subject matter is *affective* (having to do with feelings) because the teacher attempts to provide merit tokens that relate to what students desire. The thinking approach is *convergent* in that the comprehension questions require one correct answer.

BEHAVIORIST CURRICULUM: REINFORCEMENT. The concept of reinforcement is critical to teacher practices in behaviorism. The behaviorist teacher endeavors to foster desired behaviors by using both positive reinforcers (things students like, such as praise, privileges, and good grades) and negative reinforcers (things students wish to avoid, such as reprimands, extra homework, and lower grades). The theory is that behavior that is not reinforced (whether positively or negatively) will eventually be “extinguished”—that is, it will cease to occur. In general, behaviorists contend that learning takes place when approved behavior is observed and then positively reinforced.

A teacher may provide nonverbal positive reinforcement (smiling, nodding approval) or negative reinforcement (frowning, shaking the head in disapproval). Similarly, nondirective statements, questions, and directive statements may be positive or negative. Both children and adults respond to the models other people (peers, adults, heroes) represent to them by imitating the model behavior. Behaviorists contend that students tend to emulate behaviors that are rewarded.

Behaviorists have supplied a wealth of empirical research that bears on the problems of attaining self-control, resisting temptation, and showing concern for others. Behaviorists do not attempt to learn about the causes of students' earlier problems. Rather, the behaviorist teacher focuses on the here-and-now environment and must ascertain what is happening in the classroom to perpetuate or extinguish students' behavior. For example, if a student shouts out whenever she wishes and disturbs others in the class, the behaviorist teacher focuses on what response can be provided consistently to make this behavior cease. It does not matter what (in the past) may account for this unwanted behavior; the key is changing the current environment.

Now that you have had a chance to consider the ideas of behaviorism, use Figure 5.3 to examine how these ideas specify the learning focus, classroom organization, teaching styles, discipline, motivation, and classroom climate. As you examine the bullet points within this figure, consider which ones match your own way of thinking and jot them down in your journal.

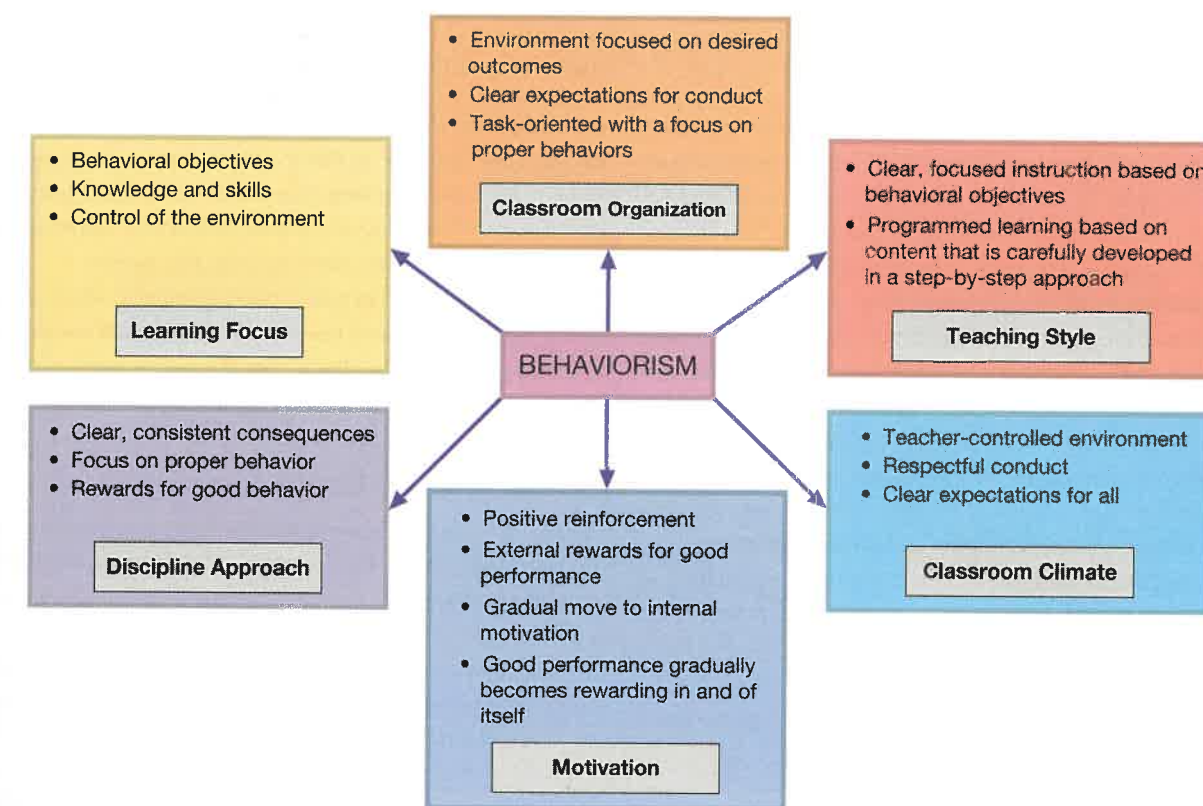
Positivism

The educational philosophy of positivism stems from what the social scientist Auguste Comte (1798–1857) described as “positive knowledge.” Comte divided the thinking of humankind into three historical periods, each of which was characterized by a distinct way of thinking. The first was the theological era in which people explained things by reference to spirits and gods. The second was the metaphysical era in which people explained phenomena in terms of causes, essences, and inner principles. The third was the positive period in which thinkers did not attempt to go beyond observable, measurable fact.

The positivist position rejects essences, intuition, and inner causes that cannot be measured. Empirical verification is central to all proper thinking. This educational philosophy rejects beliefs about mind, spirit, and consciousness and holds that all reality can be explained by laws of matter and motion. In sum, **positivism** limits knowledge to statements of observable fact based on sense perceptions and the investigation of objective reality. In the 1920s, positivism became a rallying point for a group of scholars in Vienna. Because the group consisted largely of scientists, mathematicians, and symbolic logicians, positivism became known as logical positivism.

positivism A social theory and educational philosophy that limits truth and knowledge to what is observable and measurable.

FIGURE 5.3 Behaviorism Educational Implications



Because positivist teachers are highly focused on teaching statements based on observable facts, they can sometimes overlook student engagement. It is difficult to balance the need to provide students with exact and precise information while allowing students an opportunity to explore and make sense of ideas on their own. Consider the “Teaching in Challenging Times” feature about the challenges related to student boredom and a lack of interest in learning.

POSITIVIST LEARNING FOCUS. Direct instruction is a teaching and learning approach that requires teachers to clearly and precisely identify and state what a student needs to learn and master, as well as to restate this expectation through different media and assignments. It is a teaching and learning approach that places the responsibility for clear, precise expectations on the teacher. Once a teacher has identified precisely what students should know and be able to do, the teacher is expected to clearly describe to students exactly what they should know and be able to do. Teachers are encouraged to use repetition and have students practice and practice again, recite and recite again, whatever is to be learned. Teachers are further encouraged to have students repeat the main ideas of the instruction by using different media: oral recitation, writing, restating, drawing, and so forth. The key ingredient for this approach is the use of clear, uncluttered statements and restatements about the focus of learning.



Source: Thinkstock/Stockbyte/Getty Images

Positivism focuses learning on acquisition of facts based on careful, empirical observation and measurement of the world.

TEACHING IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Adjusting the Attitude of Learners

Teachers in today's schools meet face-to-face with an increasing number of attitude problems from some learners. These problems are manifested in a lack of respect for teachers, visual boredom in learning, and a lack of a work ethic. The lack of respect may come from a societal image of teachers embodied in the saying "Those who can't, teach!" Additionally, whatever is wrong in society tends to be blamed on the teacher and the school program. Teacher authority is usurped by parents and society, both challenging the teacher's right to discipline students, even the unruly ones. Some students call into question the worthiness of professional teachers, who are considered to have lower status when compared with other professions. The fact that teachers tend to be grossly underpaid for the type of workload they face may bolster such questions.

Some students exhibit boredom and are not motivated to learn because they do not see the relevance of what they are studying. To them, much of what they study seems to be important only for the tests they take and thus has no relevance to their lives. They yearn for assurance that teachers not only are competent but also care. The lack of a work ethic may be attributable to an environment that provides

everything material they need and want. This student problem may be related to the "good-life" quality of a society that tends to have everything it needs. Many students have economically secure homes, are provided with an overabundance of goods and services, and are not held accountable for responsible activities within their families.

This dilemma does not paint a glowing picture of what is waiting for the teacher when she or he enters the classroom. If this picture is accurate, and if it is to be altered, then the teacher needs to actively develop with the students a common ground for the establishment of respect for each other.

WHAT ARE MY CHALLENGES?

1. How can you (as a teacher) show respect for your students and how can you teach your students to show respect for each other?
2. How can you prepare a learning environment that has meaning for the everyday life of the learner?
3. In what ways can you work with the home and community in providing a learning atmosphere in which students develop a work ethic and recognize its value?

This approach to teaching and learning fits the positivist educational theory because in such an educational approach, knowledge is considered something that is clear and precise. If all knowledge is clear, precise, and the same for all, then teachers can be expected to require all students to learn the same knowledge. Direct instruction is possible because all knowledge that is worthy is also clear and precise. (See the "Positivist Class Activity.")

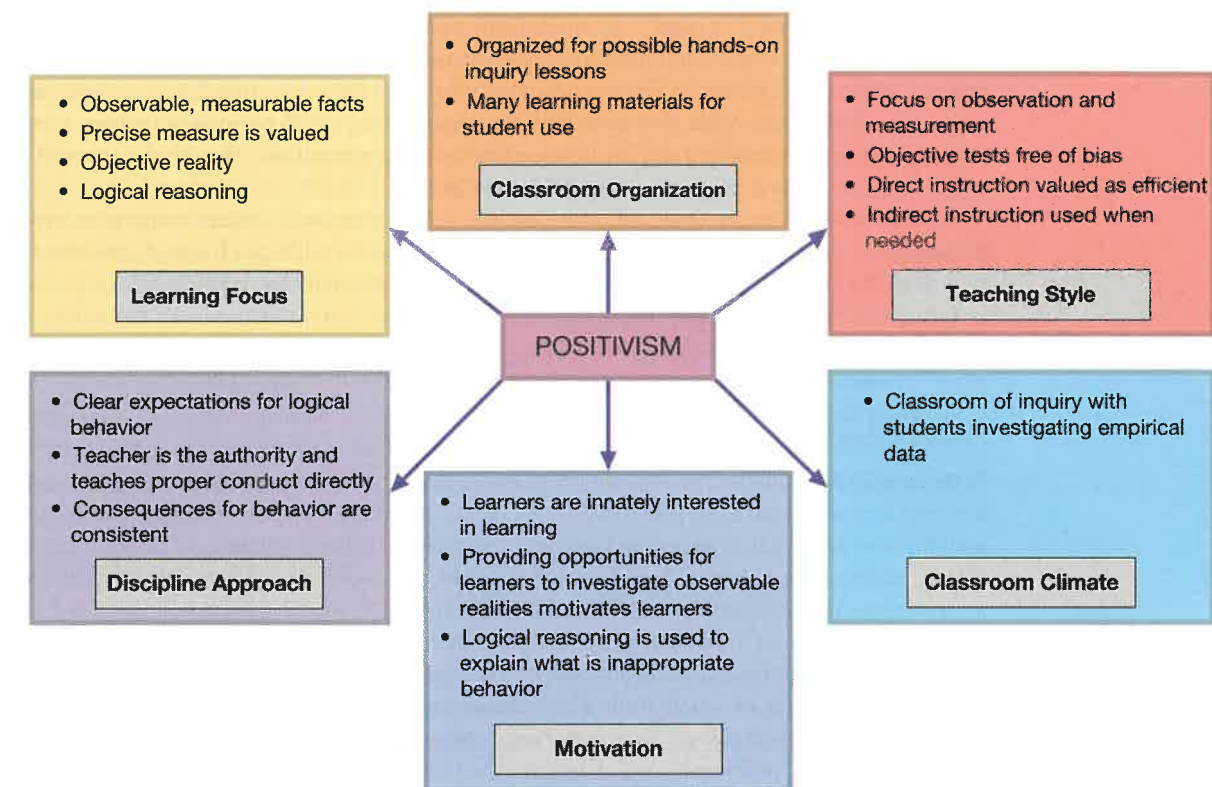
POSITIVIST CLASS ACTIVITY

Humberto Diaz introduced the meaning of surface tension to his junior high science students. He then told students that they could observe surface tension by watching water drops come together as they were placed on the surface of a penny. During class, he then distributed eyedroppers, water, and pennies to the students. He directed the students to determine how many drops of water could fit on the surface of the penny before spilling over. Students were to collect data and develop a data table and corresponding charts. At the end of the class, Mr. Diaz asked the students to discuss their findings and draw a conclusion about the surface tension of water.

In this positivist class activity, the nature of the learner is *active* because students are asked to investigate and collect data on their own. The nature of the subject matter is *structured* because students are provided carefully developed directions concerning what they are to do. The use of the subject matter is *cognitive* because students are provided questions that are focused on a single, important concept. The thinking approach is *divergent* because students are encouraged to think about how they will determine the number of drops that fit on a penny and why the numbers may differ across groups.

POSITIVIST CURRICULUM. Practiced as an educational philosophy, positivism focuses the curriculum on the acquisition of facts based on careful empirical observation and measurement of the world. Positivism requires schools to develop content standards that represent

FIGURE 5.4 Positivism Educational Implications



the best understandings of experts who have already uncovered important ideas based on their own observation and measurement. Students are encouraged both to master these expert understandings and to develop their own skills of observation, classification, and logical analysis.

Testing students' acquisition of content standards is a valued activity for the positivist educator. Creating objective tests that are free from bias is critical to education. Because empirical knowledge is proven by years of careful analysis, there is a set of truths that students should master and understand according to a clear set of criteria. The only way to ensure that such knowledge has been attained and understood is to test all students according to the same objective set of criteria.

Now that you have had a chance to consider the ideas of positivism, use Figure 5.4 to examine how these ideas specify the learning focus, classroom organization, teaching styles, discipline, motivation, and classroom climate. As you examine the bullet points within this figure, consider which ones match your own way of thinking and jot them down in your journal.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 5.2

Consider the different teacher-centered educational philosophies and recall a teacher you know who seems to follow one of these educational philosophies. Describe the ways in which the teacher's actions represent the teacher-centered educational philosophy.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 5.2

Complete Check Your Understanding 5.2 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

STUDENT-CENTERED EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES

Progressivism, humanism, and constructivism espouse a student-centered approach to subject matter, classroom organization, teaching methods, and assessment. Although each of these educational philosophies forms a distinct cohesive whole, all three are rooted in a student-centered principle—that is, the belief that truth and goodness belong to all persons no matter what their station. Teachers are learners and learners are teachers, and education is the process through which individuals help one another to clarify personal meaning.

As with the teacher-centered positions, we will present each student-centered educational philosophy's ideas on curriculum, teaching, and learning. In addition, for each philosophy, we will describe a representative program along with an illustrative class activity. The class activity is further analyzed according to the nature of the learner (active or passive); the nature of the subject matter; the use of the subject matter; and the type of thinking that is emphasized (convergent—focused on right answers—or divergent—focused on developing multiple perspectives).

Progressivism

In the late 1800s, with the rise of democracy, the expansion of modern science and technology, and the need for individuals to be able to adjust to change, people in Western societies had to have a new and different approach to acquiring knowledge in order to solve problems. As noted in Chapter 4, a U.S. philosopher, Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914), founded the philosophical system called *pragmatism*. This philosophy held that the meaning and value of ideas could be found only in the practical results of these ideas. Later, William James (1842–1910) extended Peirce's theory of meaning and asserted that if an idea works well, it can be considered true. The satisfactory working of an idea constitutes its whole truth. Pragmatism was carried much further by John Dewey, who insisted that ideas must always be tested by experiment. His emphasis on experiment carried over into his educational philosophy, which became the basis for what was usually described as progressive education (Dewey, 1916). **Progressivism** is an educational theory that emphasizes that ideas should be tested by experimentation and that learning is rooted in questions developed by learners.

From its establishment in the mid-1920s through the mid-1950s, progressivism was the most influential educational view in the United States. Progressivists basically favor human experience rather than authority as a basis for knowledge. Progressivism favors the scientific method of teaching and learning, allows for the beliefs of individuals, and stresses programs of student involvement that help students learn how to think. Progressivists believe that the school should actively prepare its students for change. Progressive schools emphasize learning *how* to think rather than *what* to think. Flexibility is important in the curriculum design, and the emphasis is on *experimentation*, with no single body of content stressed more than any other. This approach encourages *divergent thinking*—moving beyond conventional ideas to come up with novel interpretations or solutions. And because life experience determines curriculum content, all types of content must be permitted. Certain subjects regarded as traditional are recognized as desirable for study as well. Progressivist educators would organize scientific method-oriented learning activities around the traditional subjects. Such a curriculum is called experience centered or student centered, whereas the essentialist and positivist curricula are considered subject centered. Experience-centered curricula stress the *process* of learning rather than the result.

Progressivism as a contemporary teaching style emphasizes the process of education in the classroom. It is a teaching approach that focuses on interdisciplinary problems that encompass a variety of academic disciplines and skills rather than a subject-centered approach to problem solving. It would be naive to suggest that memorization and rote practice should be ruled out. In progressive teaching, however, they are not stressed as primary learning techniques. The assertion is that interest in an intellectual activity will generate all of the practice needed for learning.

PROGRESSIVIST LEARNING FOCUS: DEMOCRACY. A tenet of progressivism is that, to become an important social institution, the school must take on the task of improving society. To this end, progressivism is deemed a working model of democracy. Freedom is explicit in a democracy, so it must be explicit in schools. But freedom, rather than being a haphazard expression of free will, must be organized to have meaning. Organized freedom permits each member of the school society to take part in decisions, and all must share their experiences to ensure that the decisions are meaningful.

progressivism An educational philosophy that emphasizes that ideas should be tested by experimentation and that learning is rooted in questions developed by the learner.

Pupil–teacher planning is the key to democracy in classrooms and is the process that gives some freedom to students as well as teachers in decisions about what is studied. For example, the teacher might ask students to watch a film about an issue of interest and then have them list questions about the issue that were not answered by the film but that they would like to investigate. Students and the teacher can then analyze the questions and refine them for research. Such questions can become the basis for an inquiry and problem-solving unit of study.

Progressivism views the learner as an experiencing, thinking, exploring individual. Its goal is to expose the learner to the subject matter of social experiences, social studies, projects, problems, and experiments that, when studied by the scientific method, will result in functional knowledge from all subjects. Progressivists regard books as tools to be used in learning rather than as sources of indisputable knowledge. (See the “Progressivist Class Activity.”)

PROGRESSIVIST CLASS ACTIVITY

Mr. Powell asked his second graders to look at a cartoon that pictured a well-dressed man and woman in an automobile pulled by a team of two horses. The highway they were traveling along passed through rolling farmland with uncrowded meadows, trees, and clear skies in the background. He led a discussion based on the following questions:

1. What is happening in this picture?
2. Do you like what is happening in the picture? Why or why not?
3. What does it say about the way you may be living when you grow up?
4. Are you happy or unhappy about what you have described for your life as an adult?
5. How can we get people to use less gasoline now?
6. What if we could keep companies from making and selling cars that could not travel at least forty miles on one gallon of gasoline?

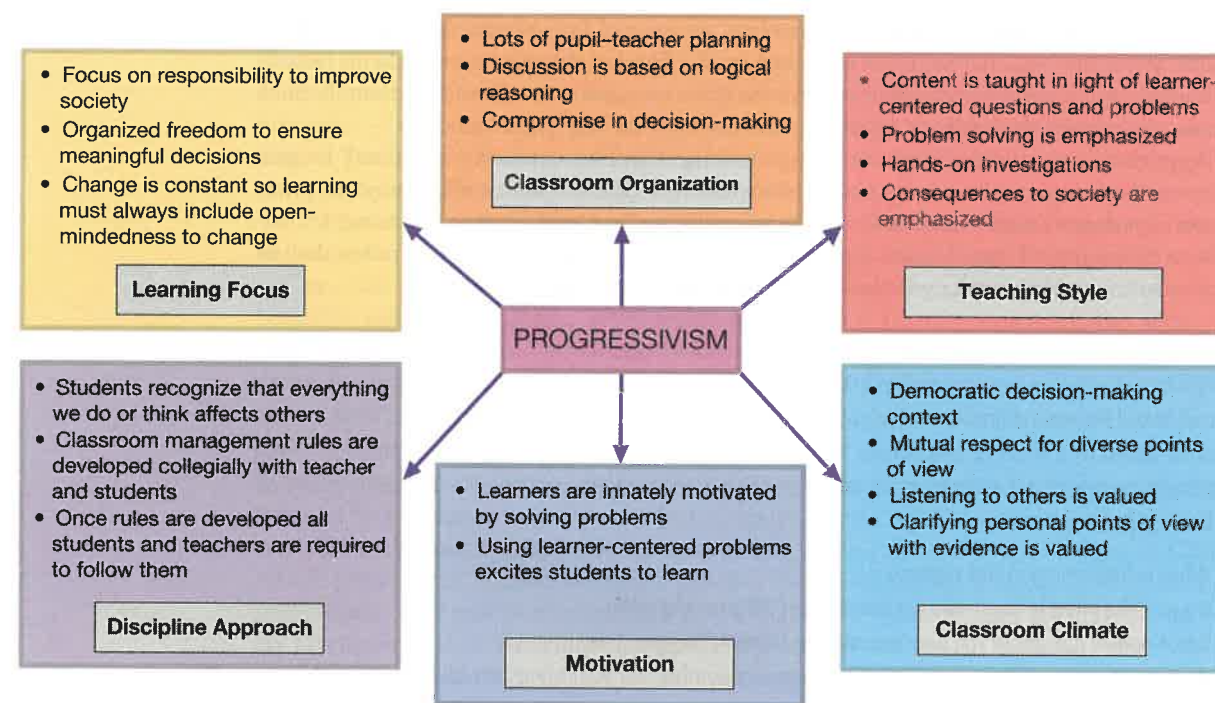
In this progressivist class activity, the nature of the learner is *active* because the teacher is asking open-ended questions that bring out the different ways that learners think about the picture. The nature of the subject matter is *ill* because although there is an order to the questions, the direction that the discussion may take is open ended. The use of the subject matter is *cognitive* and *affective* because the concepts that underlie the picture are both rational and value laden. The thinking approach is *divergent* because there is no single, correct answer to the discussion questions.

PROGRESSIVIST CURRICULUM: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY. Many people believe that the socialization aspect of progressivism—the fact that it represents the leading edge of society and helps students learn how to manage change—is its most valuable aspect. However, progressivism is criticized for placing so much stress on the processes of education that the ends are neglected. Its severest critics contend that progressive educators have little personal commitment to anything, producing many graduates who are uncommitted and who are content to drift through life. Progressivists counter by stating that their educational view requires that students be taught to analyze world events, explore controversial issues, and develop a vision for a new and better world. Teachers would critically examine cultural heritages, explore controversial issues, provide a vision for a new and better world, and enlist students' efforts to promote programs of cultural renewal. Although teachers would attempt to convince students of the validity of such democratic goals, they would employ democratic procedures in doing so.

A contemporary version of progressivism is rooted in the work of Henry Giroux, who views schools as vehicles for social change. He calls on teachers to be transformative intellectuals and wants them to participate in creating a new society. Schools should practice “critical pedagogy,” which unites theory and practice as it provides students with the critical thinking tools to be change agents (Giroux, 1985, 2001).

Now that you have had a chance to consider the ideas of progressivism, use Figure 5.5 to examine how these ideas specify the learning focus, classroom organization, teaching styles, discipline, motivation, and classroom climate. As you examine the bullet points within this figure, consider which ones match your own way of thinking and jot them down in your journal.

FIGURE 5.5 Progressivism Educational Implications

**VIDEO ANALYSIS 5.1**

Watch this video that shows a teacher's gradual transition from a teacher-centered teaching approach to a student-centered teaching approach. Then answer the question that follows the video in your Pearson eText.

Humanism

Humanism is an educational philosophy that is concerned with enhancing the innate goodness of the individual. It rejects a group-oriented educational system and seeks ways to enhance the individual development of the student. Humanism is rooted both in the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and in the ideas of existentialism. Rousseau (1712–1778), the father of romanticism, believed that the child entered the world not as a blank slate but with certain innate qualities and tendencies. In the opening sentence of *Émile*, Rousseau's famous treatise on education, he states that "Everything is good as it leaves the hand of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man" (From *Emile: Or, On Education* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Published by Basic Books, © 1979.). Thus, Rousseau believed in the basic goodness of all humans at birth. He also believed that humans are born free but become enslaved by institutions. Humanistic education mingles some of these ideas from Rousseau with the basic ideas of existentialism.

Humanists believe that most schools de-emphasize the individual and the relationship between the teacher and the student. Humanists claim that as educators attempt to predict the behavior of students, they turn individuals into objects to be measured. According to the humanist, education should be a process of developing a free, self-actualizing person—a process that is centered on the student's feelings. Therefore, education should not start with great ideas, the world, or humankind, but with the individual self.

Humanists believe that education should be without coercion or prescription and that students should be active learners and make their own choices.

humanism An educational philosophy that contends that humans are innately good—that they are born free but become enslaved by institutions.

HUMANISTIC LEARNING FOCUS.

Because the goal of humanism is a completely autonomous person, education should be without coercion or prescription. Students should be active and should be encouraged to make their own choices. The teacher who follows humanistic theory emphasizes instruction and assessment based on student interests, abilities, and needs. Students determine the rules that will govern classroom life, and they make choices about the books to read or exercises to complete.

Humanists honor divergent thinking so completely that they delay giving their own personal opinions and do not attempt to persuade students to particular points of view. Even though they emphasize the affective and thereby may make students feel a certain urgency about issues, it is always left to the individual student to decide when to take a stand; what kind of stand to take; whether a cause merits action; and, if so, in what kind of action to engage. (See "Humanistic Class Activity.")

HUMANISTIC CURRICULUM. To humanistic educators, the curriculum of any school is found not so much in subject matter but rather in the environment in which the subject matter is taught. Martin Buber's writings describe the heart of a humanistic school environment. In *I and Thou*, Buber portrays two different ways in which individuals relate to the outside world. In the "I-It" relationship, one views something outside oneself in a purely objective manner, as a thing to be used and manipulated for selfish ends. In contrast, "I-Thou" relationships are characterized by viewing other people as sacred entities who deserve profound respect. Such relationships focus on the importance of understanding and respecting diverse, subjective, personal meanings. Buber was deeply concerned that people were treated as objects ("Its") rather than as "Thou's," especially in business, science, government, and education (Buber, 1958).

Many students today believe that educators treat them as Social Security numbers stored in a computer. In college classes of 100 or more, it is difficult for teachers to remember students' names, let alone get to know them as individuals. Often teachers assign material, mark papers, and give grades without ever really conversing with students. When the semester ends, students leave class and are replaced by other, equally anonymous students. Buber did not believe that schools had to be this way. He contended that in a proper relationship between teacher and student, there is a mutual sensibility of feeling. There is empathy, not a subject-object relationship.

A humanistic school environment (in other words, its curriculum) is one in which people (both teacher and student) share their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, fears, and aspirations with one another. Nel Noddings (2005, 2010) labels this an *environment of caring*. According to humanists, this kind of caring relationship should pervade the educational process at all levels as well as society at large.

HUMANISTIC CLASS ACTIVITY

Ms. Fenway wanted her ninth graders to really recognize the effectiveness (and manipulation) of television, radio, and Internet advertising. She asked students to write down any five slogans or jingles they could remember and the products advertised. Ms. Fenway selected from their items at random and tested the class. For each slogan, class members had to identify the product advertised. The test was corrected in class by the students and submitted to Ms. Fenway for a grade.



Humanists believe that education should be without coercion or prescription and that students should be active learners and make their own choices.

When the tests were graded and returned, students were very surprised because the grading scale was reversed. Those students who had all correct answers received Fs, and those who had only one correct answer received As. When students asked why she had reversed the grades, Ms. Fenway responded, "Because those of you who knew every product's slogan have been somewhat manipulated by advertising. On the other hand, those of you who knew very few products' slogans have avoided the influence of advertising." Ms. Fenway then told students the grades were not their actual grades; rather, they were simply an indicator of how strongly we all are influenced by contemporary advertising.

She then asked whether students resented some companies' selling tactics. Next, she and the class made a list of questions to ask themselves in order to avoid spending money in ways they might later regret. She also asked for specific examples of spending money for items they later wished they hadn't bought.

In this humanist class activity, the nature of the learner is *active* because the teacher asked students questions that were open ended and permitted the individual student to build on her or his own experiences. The thinking approach is *divergent* because there was no one correct answer or way of thinking about the answer. The nature of the subject matter is *structured* in that the teacher directed the questions and slowly unfolded each question to build on the prior one. The use of the subject matter is both *cognitive* and *affective*. It was cognitive because logic was required in the last question focused on avoiding spending money in ways that that students might regret. The activity was also affective because she built the activity around students' preferences for different products.

Inspired by humanism, many educators attempt to personalize education in less radical ways. Examples include individualizing instruction, open-access curriculum, nongraded instruction, and multiage grouping. Each of these approaches attends to the uniqueness of the learner. Block scheduling permits flexibility for students to arrange classes of their choice. Free schools, storefront schools, schools without walls, and area vocational centers provide humanistic alternatives to traditional school environments.

Educational programs that address the needs of the individual are usually more costly per pupil than traditional group-centered programs. Consequently, as taxpayer demands for accountability mount, humanistic individualized programs are often brought under unit-cost scrutiny. Nonetheless, growing numbers of educators are willing to defend increased expenditures to meet the needs of the individual learner within the instructional programs of the schools.

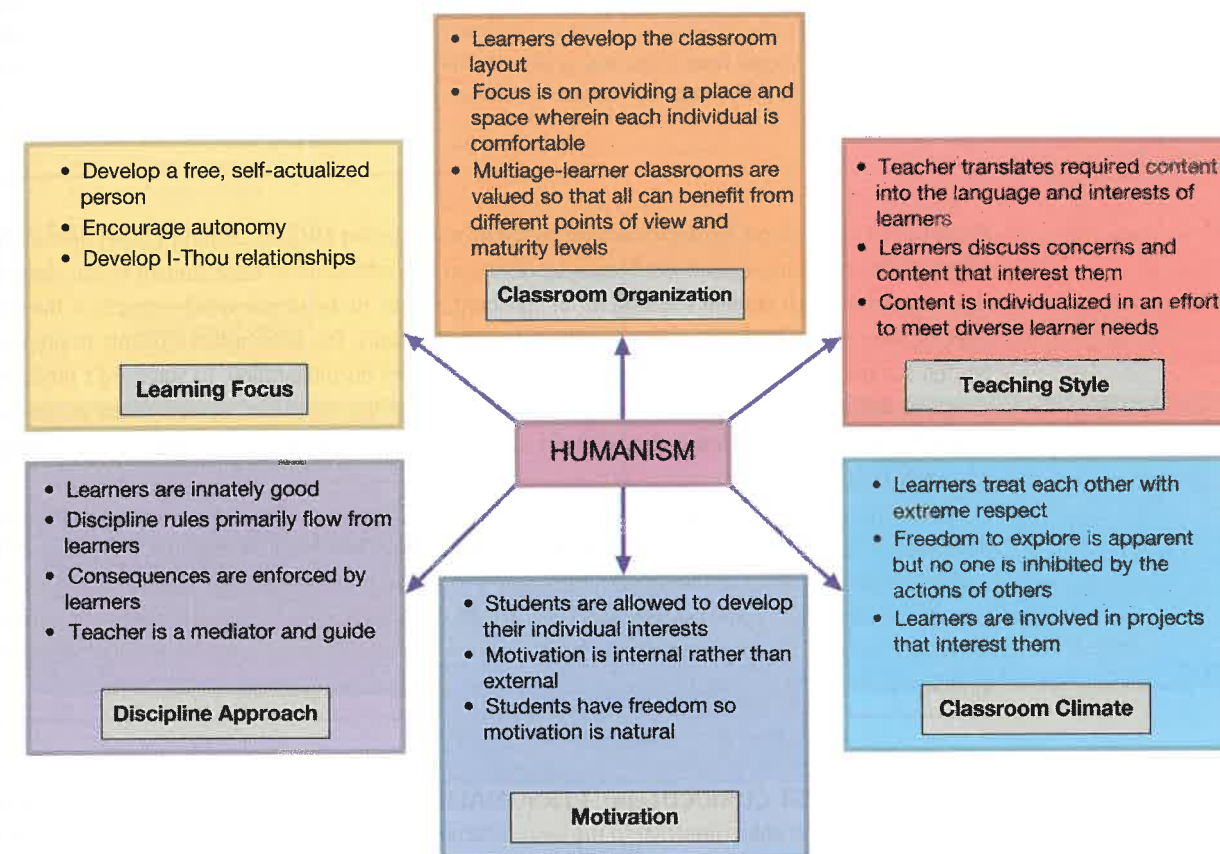
Now that you have had a chance to consider the ideas of humanism, use Figure 5.6 to examine how these ideas specify the learning focus, classroom organization, teaching styles, discipline, motivation, and classroom climate. As you examine the bullet points within this figure, consider which ones match your own way of thinking and jot them down in your journal.

Constructivism

Constructivism is an educational philosophy that emphasizes developing personal meaning through hands-on, activity-based teaching and learning. Constructivism is closely associated with existentialism. The American Psychological Association (APA) has encouraged teachers to reconsider the manner in which they view teaching. The APA contends that students are active learners who should be given opportunities to construct their own frames of thought. Teaching techniques should include a variety of different learning activities during which students are free to infer and discover their own answers to important questions. Teachers need to spend time creating these learning situations rather than lecturing. Constructivist educators consider true learning to be the active framing of personal meaning (by the learner) rather than the framing of someone else's meaning (the teacher's).

Such a view of teaching and learning has profound ramifications for the school curriculum. If students are to be encouraged to answer their own questions and develop their own thinking frame, the curriculum needs to be reconceptualized. Constructivist theorists encourage the development of critical thinking and the understanding of big ideas rather than the mastery of factual information. They contend that students who have a sound understanding of important principles that were developed through their own critical thinking will be better prepared for the complex, technological world.

FIGURE 5.6 Humanism Educational Implications



CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING FOCUS: PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING. Problem-based learning has recently emerged as a student-centered teaching and learning approach that is in keeping with constructivist tenets. Based on Dewey's concept of teaching through student-centered problems, this educational methodology centers student activities on tackling authentic contemporary problems. Problem-based learning is a radical approach in that it challenges educators to focus curriculum on student interests and current societal problems and concerns rather than on disciplinary-content coverage.

VIDEO NOTE 5.2



In this video, students are introduced a recent decision by their community to open a new airport. The teacher describes how he used problem-based learning as a motivational approach to engage students. In addition, he shows that problem-based learning is a type of educational philosophy related to giving learners more control over their own learning.

In what ways does the teacher provide his learners more control over their own learning?

In a problem-based experience, students are presented with a "hook." The hook might be a letter from a civic group, a request from an environmental agency, or any other motivating beginning. The hook describes a contemporary dilemma and requests students to take on some real-life role to solve the problem. Problem-based learning usually requires students to spend time finding the core problem, clarifying the problem, assessing what is and is not known about the problem,

constructivism An educational philosophy that emphasizes hands-on, activity-based teaching and learning during which students develop their own frames of thought.

gathering needed data to complement what has been uncovered, and finally presenting a position statement and/or suggesting a solution. Throughout the process, teachers act as guides or coaches and give great latitude to student interest. Students learn content and skills within the problem context. Teachers spend time selecting problems that are compatible with student maturity levels and curricular needs. (See the “Constructivist Class Activity.”)

CONSTRUCTIVIST CLASS ACTIVITY

Ms. Nishioka’s sophomore biology class had just completed reading Michael Crichton’s novel *Jurassic Park* when a letter from movie producer Steven Spielberg arrived addressed to each student in the class. The letter requested each student’s assistance in Spielberg’s effort to determine which aspects of the novel were or were not scientifically accurate with regard to dinosaurs. The letter asked students to prepare a written summary and to send the summary, along with proper documentation, to Spielberg’s production company. Because time was limited, Spielberg requested that the summaries be completed within three weeks. Ms. Reiko provided time for her students to think about the letter and then asked them to determine what they would do next.

In this constructivist class activity, the nature of the learner is *active* because students not only determine what it is they need to find out or learn but also how they will learn the material. The nature of the subject matter is *unstructured* because students are free to tackle many different concepts based on their interests and they must figure out how they will learn the material. The use of the subject matter is *authentic* to real life because the content is embedded in a contemporary problem or concern. Finally, the thinking approach is *divergent* because there is no single correct answer to the problem.

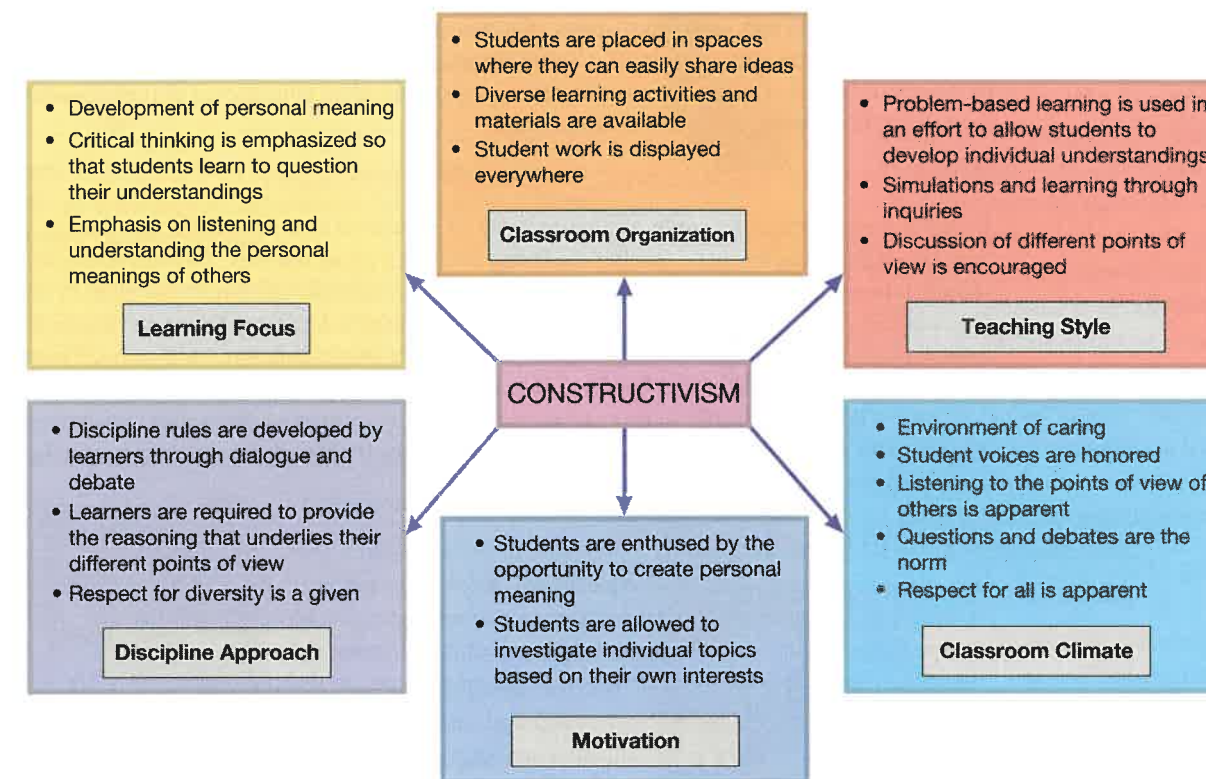
CONSTRUCTIVIST CURRICULUM: PERSONALIZED LEARNING. Constructivist ideas about curriculum stand in sharp contrast to the authoritarian approaches we described earlier. Traditionally, learning has been thought of as a mimic activity, a process that involves students repeating newly presented information. Constructivism, on the other hand, focuses on the personalized way a learner internalizes, shapes, or transforms information. Learning occurs through the construction of new, personalized understanding that results from the emergence of new cognitive structures. Teachers and parents can invite such transformed understandings, but neither can mandate them.

Accepting this simple proposition—that students learn by shaping their own understandings about their world—makes the present structure of the school problematic. According to constructivist principles, educators should invite students to experience the world’s richness and empower them to ask their own questions and seek their own answers. The constructivist teacher proposes situations that encourage students to think. Rather than leading students toward a particular answer, the constructivist teacher allows students to develop their own ideas and chart their own pathways. But schools infrequently operate in such a constructivist way. Typically, schools determine what students will learn and when they will learn it.

Now that you have reviewed the descriptions, learning foci, and curricular implications of progressivism, humanism, and constructivism, you can better understand why they are grouped as student-centered philosophies. All of these educational philosophies are focused on students’ interests, ideas, and contemporary societal problems. These philosophies use cognitive and affective subject matter and open-ended learning tasks and encourage students to take control of their own learning. Direct instruction by the teacher is limited, and emphasis is on helping students develop their own perspectives and ways of thinking. In the next section of this chapter, you will explore your own thinking about teaching and learning in light of both teacher-centered and student-centered educational philosophies. Ultimately, you are asked to develop your own educational philosophy and provide a rationale for your thinking.

As you consider the ideas of constructivism, use Figure 5.7 to examine how these ideas specify the learning focus, classroom organization, teaching styles, discipline, motivation, and classroom climate. As you examine the bullet points within this figure, consider which ones match your own way of thinking and jot them down in your journal.

FIGURE 5.7 Constructivism Educational Implications



JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 5.3

Choose and write down a metaphor for each of the educational philosophies you have studied so far. For example, “constructivism is a shared voyage into new and uncharted territory.” Then design a metaphor for your personal educational philosophy and clarify how it compares to the other metaphors.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 5.3

Complete Check Your Understanding 5.3 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

DEVELOPING YOUR OWN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

This section helps you to clarify your role as a teacher in society and identify effective classroom practices. It offers a number of big ideas or key concepts that will challenge your image of what constitutes a good teacher. Ideas such as classroom environment or climate, voice and space, community of learners, and teacher as leader are presented to help you clarify your own approach to education. Which type of environment is best for today’s students? How much teacher control is needed? Whose voices are predominant and whose voices are muted in today’s classrooms? What teaching and learning methods will you use and how will you determine if these methods are working? These questions are examined and shown to be important to the development of a classroom climate that is either directed and didactic (like essentialism, behaviorism, and positivism) or open and authentic (like progressivism, humanism, and constructivism).

As you examine and refine your own philosophy of education, it is helpful to review how the six different educational philosophies relate to the contemporary classroom. Refer to Figure 5.1,

which summarizes how teacher-centered educational philosophies versus student-centered philosophies affect learning focus, classroom organization, teaching styles, motivation, discipline, classroom climate, and leadership styles. You may find that this chart quickly provides you a starting point for the clarification of your own personal philosophy of education. You may want to refer to this chart and the figures that relate to the individual educational philosophies as you read throughout the next section of this chapter.

What Does an Educational Philosophy Look Like?

Figure 5.8 provides an example of a philosophy of education that developed and changed over time based on decisions that a teacher made and evaluated along the way. You will notice that the sample educational philosophy is organized according to specific headings that relate to the different aspects that any philosophy of education should include: Learning Focus and Goals, Classroom Organization, Lesson Planning, Student Assessment and Evaluation, Motivation, Classroom Climate and Student Voice, and Personal Learning Focus.

We will keep referring to this sample philosophy of education throughout this part of the chapter in an effort to show how clarifying your responses to these different categories helps you build your own educational philosophy.

Learning Focus and Goals

One of the first components of an educational philosophy deals with the overall goal for learning. What is it that you believe are the most important outcomes for learners? Another way of asking this question is: What knowledge and skills are of the most worth?

Let's begin by looking at the way that the sample educational philosophy responds to these learning focus and goal questions.



Throughout my entire teaching and learning career, I have been fascinated by the diverse ways each of us makes sense of the world. Learning is inextricably intertwined with our identity; we know things as we know ourselves. Personal identity interacts with our knowledge of the world and this interaction is at the center of the act of teaching.

This overall goal is centered on respect for the individual ways that learners understand concepts. The writer sees a strong connection between how learners know something and who they are, how they act, and what they like. So the learning focus of this educational philosophy centers on the development of each learner's unique way of knowing things. Immediately, you can see that this educational philosophy is one that is learner centered rather than teacher centered. Progressivism, humanism, and constructivism inform the learning focus of this educational philosophy.

Now, take a look at the next paragraph, which focuses on the nature of learning:

For me, learning is an artistic act; learners fashion their understanding by linking and structuring personal experiences into a whole. This new idea is framed and bounded momentarily so that learners can step back and view the idea internally. Then, they can share the idea and describe the unique way they know something much like an artist does when sharing a work of art.

This paragraph shows that the writer recognizes that all of us know things differently. Such a view of learning implies that the writer does not view teaching as the act of telling students what she knows. Direct instruction and multiple-choice examinations would not be viewed to be as



Source: BananaStock/Getty Images

The physical setting of the classroom tends to reflect whether the teaching follows a directive or nondirective theory of education.

FIGURE 5.8

Education Philosophy Example:
Teaching as Framing Ways of Knowing



Learning Focus and Goals

Throughout my entire teaching and learning career, I have been fascinated by the diverse ways each of us makes sense of the world. Learning is inextricably intertwined with our identity; we

know things as we know ourselves. Personal identity interacts with our knowledge of the world and this interaction is at the center of the act of teaching.

For me, learning is an artistic act; learners fashion their understanding by linking and structuring personal experiences into a whole. This new idea is framed and bounded momentarily so that learners can step back and view the idea internally. Then, they can share the idea and describe the unique way they know something much like an artist does when sharing a work of art.



Classroom Organization

My instructional methods and learning environment center on the development of learning situations that force a student to come to grips with her or his personal understanding. Hence, for me, teaching is the designing

of educational experiences that bring out students' thinking. On the practical level, this means that I employ simulations, case studies, problem-based learning events as well as readings, personal investigations, and presentations. Rather than telling students things, I prefer to place students in learning situations that allow them to figure out their own meanings.



Teaching Style and Lesson Planning

As a teacher, I must constantly assess what type of understandings might develop learners' personal frames of thought. I

have come to value the beauty and the usefulness of rich ideas that tend to cross disciplines but also bring structure and focus to individual frames of thought. These ideas can be found in the work of great scientists, mathematicians, writers, poets, educators, artists, etc. Examples include equality, justice, power, individuality, place, environment, voice, community (drawn from the social sciences) and interaction, cycle, time and space, matter and energy, organism, equilibrium, field, force (drawn from the physical sciences) and symmetry, scale, validation, replication, quantification, probability (drawn from mathematical sciences) and form, function, line, color, hue, tone, mood (drawn from the arts). I find that by anchoring my teaching on the development of these larger ideas, students can better assess their own understandings and extend them through their exploration of these ideas.



Student Assessment and Evaluation

An instructional event is incomplete if it ends with a student simply clarifying a personal knowing. To complete a lesson, this knowing needs to always be challenged or at least submitted for review to other knowers. This final

component of a learning event implies that to know is to frame a personal understanding, communicate it, and allow the community of scholars (other knowers) to respond and perhaps modify that understanding. I do not simply conclude my courses of study with a final paper; rather, I conclude it with a presentation based on a paper wherein students receive feedback and are challenged to develop new questions about their understanding. In fact, I explicitly state at the beginning of each new course that the epitome of a learner is the ability to frame a new question based on something he or she thinks he or she understands.



Motivation

I contend that sharing personal understanding with others is at the heart of learning. My classroom setting must convey this freedom for

students to make sense of things on their own and to communicate their understandings even if they are not yet complete. In order to provide this freedom to express incomplete understandings, I need to make certain that learners feel comfortable seeking help from others and that learners are taught to patiently listen to one another and provide helpful feedback.



Classroom Climate

I began my formal teaching career working with seventh- and eighth-grade students in an inner city, poor neighborhood of Chicago. It was there among these children that I

began to understand how the context of children's and adults' lives influenced what they knew and how they knew it. I did not fully understand, then, that there is such an integral relationship between who we are and what we know. Fortunately, as teacher, I remain a learner and through these early experiences, I began to understand the importance of providing a safe place for students to make sense of their lives in light of what others have discovered. Only by providing students a voice to clarify their own needs could the classroom function and learning occur. It was in Chicago that I began to view my teaching role no longer as a provider of truth, but as a prod or questioner who gently tries to extend and refine the personal understandings of my students.

important as having students form concepts in their own unique way. Assessments would tend to include more open-ended questions so that students could share their unique ways of stating ideas. This view of learning can cause dilemmas for the writer because performance on multiple-choice tests is currently very important.

Classroom Organization

Because the way you organize your classroom encompasses and affects all other aspects of teaching and learning, it is useful to begin thinking about this topic next. All teachers must be able to organize their classrooms in such a way that they are conducive to teaching and learning. In fact, many school principals are quick to assert that the easiest way to predict the success of a beginning teacher is to evaluate her or his ability to organize the classroom.

A common misconception is that good classroom organization means maintaining a controlled atmosphere and refusing to allow any behavior that even looks ungoverned or unplanned. Actually, **classroom organization** is a multifaceted dimension of teaching that includes the content, methods, and values that infuse the classroom environment. It is a dimension of teaching that requires analysis and selection similar to that used in the identification of a preferred teaching philosophy.

The physical setting of the classroom tends to reflect whether the teacher follows a directive or nondirective theory of education.

THE PHYSICAL SETTING. The mere arrangement of classroom furniture and the use of classroom materials may be predicated on the teacher's perception of the learners as passive or active. Teacher-centered educational philosophies would support classrooms arranged in rows because this type of classroom arrangement has often been thought to be the best for classroom control and supervision. Also, this arrangement allows the teacher to capture the attention of students quickly and focus students on specific, important pieces of essential information.

Student-centered educational philosophies tend to support more open classrooms with small circles for special groupings in reading, mathematics, and other specific subjects. The teacher intends learning for the students to be divergent in nature, and the student is expected to be more active in the learning process. This is not to suggest that one type of classroom arrangement is better than another or that one theory is superior to another, but we do suggest that the teacher-in-training examine classroom theory as it relates to the physical environment for learning.

Let us return to the exemplar philosophy of education and consider what type of physical setting this teacher might use. One key to determining this is as follows:



My instructional methods and learning environment center on the development of learning situations that force a student to come to grips with her or his personal understanding. Hence, for me, teaching is the designing of educational experiences that bring out students' thinking. On the practical level, this means that I employ simulations, case studies, problem-based learning events as well as readings, personal investigations, and presentations. Rather than telling students things, I prefer to place students in learning situations that allow them to figure out their own meanings.

Based on this quote, the teacher would most likely set up a classroom with a variety of learning centers (readings, hands-on activities, computer stations, video and audio resources with headphones, etc.). Student seats would be arranged in small groups to permit discussions. Students would be free to roam around the room much of the time, working on all sorts of learning activities and personal investigations.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 5.4

Think about the different student seating arrangements in various classrooms you encounter. Sketch each seating arrangement and describe the types of student interaction and the types of learning that each seating arrangement supports. Draw the seating arrangement that you prefer, and describe the types of student interaction and learning that it encourages.

TEACHING STYLE AND LESSON PLANNING. Careful lesson planning is mandatory if effective teaching and learning are to follow. If the learners are considered to be passive (teacher

centered), the lesson plan might emphasize students' absorption of the factual content of the subject matter. Adherents of teaching styles that consider the learners to be active participants (student centered) would tend to emphasize thinking processes and skills and view the factual content of the subject matter as important but variable.

Regardless of the expectation for the learner, active or passive, all teachers need to plan sound lessons. Every lesson should be built from a basic set of general objectives that correspond to the overall goals of the school district. This is not to suggest that every third-grade classroom in a school district should have the same daily learning objectives for the students. Daily lesson objectives can vary from classroom to classroom depending on the particular needs of the students being served. However, if those daily teaching objectives are closely related to the overall objectives of the school district, then cross-district learning will reflect the school district's overall goals.

Lessons are often tied to some form of teaching units. These units should be planned in detail to include suggestions for teaching the lessons, types of materials to be used, and specific plans for evaluation. When it comes to designing teaching units, the differences between teacher-centered and student-centered styles become more pronounced. The reason is that the types of questions and learning content can differ greatly. For example, if a teacher is generally focused on teaching essential pieces of information and verifying that students understand this information in a very specific way, teaching units would tend to be shorter and focused on precise, specific learning outcomes. The unit would tend to have short, focused assignments based on some overall theme that students complete and submit for review by the teacher. On the other hand, if a teacher is focused on the development of big ideas that students learn and make sense of in their own unique way, learning units would tend to have a number of related investigations that students complete in an effort to make sense of the big ideas that underlie the teaching unit.

Initially, these are all decisions that must be made by the teacher based on the implications of her or his educational philosophy. Let us return to the educational philosophy example to determine what type of learning units this teacher would probably design:



As a teacher, I must constantly assess what type of understandings might develop learners' personal frames of thought. I have come to value the beauty and the usefulness of rich ideas that tend to cross disciplines but also bring structure and focus to individual frames of thought. These ideas can be found in the work of great scientists, mathematicians, writers, poets, educators, artists, etc. Examples include equality, justice, power, individuality, place, environment, voice, community (drawn from the social sciences) and interaction, cycle, time and space, matter and energy, organism, equilibrium, field, force (drawn from the physical sciences) and symmetry, scale, validation, replication, quantification, probability (drawn from mathematical sciences) and form, function, line, color, hue, tone, mood (drawn from the arts). I find that by anchoring my teaching on the development of these larger ideas, students can better assess their own understandings and extend them through their exploration of these ideas.

Given that the teacher's educational philosophy is focused on large interdisciplinary ideas that students are to explore, the learning units would focus on one or more big ideas. The learning activities include a number of open-ended investigations during which students gather data and make sense of the information in their own words. Learning journals and a portfolio might be used to keep all of their information and insights organized. The teacher would coach each student along the way by asking probing questions in an effort to redirect each student and assist him or her by clarifying misconceptions.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION. In assessing student progress and assigning grades, most teacher-centered and student-centered teachers use a variety of techniques including examinations, term papers, project reports, group discussions, and performance assessments. If the subject matter is treated as a bundle of information, teacher-made tests will tend to seek certain facts and concepts as "right" answers, suggesting emphasis on convergent thinking. However, if the subject matter is treated as big ideas that are applicable to problem solving, and if students are expected to engage in processes and develop skills to arrive at several "right" answers, teacher-made tests will tend to allow for divergent thinking.

How you develop your classroom philosophy will also dictate the emphasis you place on a student's academic performance. You must decide whether a student is to be compared with his or

classroom organization A multifaceted dimension of teaching that includes the content, method, and values that infuse the classroom environment, planning, and discipline practices.

her peers or with a set of expectations based on individual needs and differences. Generally, teachers who support student-centered classrooms look for divergence in learning and tend to place less emphasis on group norms. Teachers who favor teacher-centered authority for the classroom with a stress on convergence in learning are more apt to favor student evaluation strategies that are based on group norms.

Returning to our exemplar educational philosophy, we can use the following segment to infer what types of assessment this teacher might use.



An instructional event is incomplete if it ends with a student simply clarifying a personal knowing. To complete a lesson, this knowing needs to always be challenged or at least submitted for review to other knowers. This final component of a learning event implies that to know is to frame a personal understanding, communicate it, and allow the community of scholars (other knowers) to respond and perhaps modify that understanding. I do not simply conclude my courses of study with a final paper; rather, I conclude it with a presentation based on a paper wherein students receive feedback and are challenged to develop new questions about their understanding. In fact, I explicitly state at the

beginning of each new course that the epitome of a learner is the ability to frame a new question based on something he or she thinks he or she understands.

Based on this, the teacher would probably use a wide variety of assessments so that students could receive all sorts of feedback about their understanding. However, such a teacher would emphasize open-ended questions that allow students to construct their own answers rather than pick them in a multiple-choice test format. The reason for this is that the teacher wants students to think about big ideas and then describe their understanding of these ideas. Forced-choice tests limit this exploration and hence essays, interviews, learning journals, and portfolios would be heavily employed.

Motivation

The concept of **motivation** is derived from the word *motive*, which means an emotion, desire, or impulse acting as an incitement to action. This definition of motive has two parts: First, the definition implies that motivation is internal because it relates to emotions, desires, or other internal drives; second, it implies that there is an accompanying external focus on action or behavior. Organizing a learning environment so that it relates to student needs and desires (internal) and permits active participation in the learning process (external) is important to student motivation.

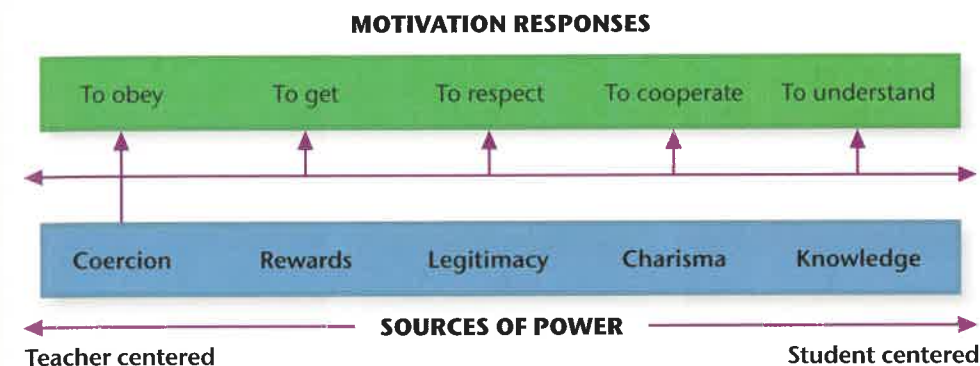
Teachers want students to be motivated to do many things: complete homework, be responsible, be lifelong learners, be on time, have fun, care about others, and become independent. However, it is not always clear how one sets up a classroom environment that ultimately promotes these desired outcomes. For example, in a teacher-centered orientation, control is primarily in the hands of the teacher. In such a setting, motivation tends to come in the form of rules and regulations. Students are given clear directions concerning their responsibilities, and they are expected to follow these directions because the teacher is in charge. For some students, this clarity of expectations and rules is comfortable. Students achieve because they must; in such a setting, the second half of motivation (external action) is achieved, but not the first (internal desire). The reason students' internal motivation may suffer is that they recognize that both the task of teaching and the responsibility for their learning belong primarily to the teacher.

In a learner-centered setting, the responsibility for learning is primarily borne by the students. The teacher attempts to produce a climate of warmth and mutual respect. Students are encouraged to achieve specific outcomes, but ultimately, they are free to select those that most interest them. In this type of setting, the first aspect of motivation (internal desire) is achieved in that students select the learning outcomes and processes that interest them; however, the second aspect of motivation (external action) is not as clearly achieved in that students act according to their personal desires and these desires do not always match those of the teacher.

Your task is to consider carefully the “sources of power” that best reflect your philosophy of education. Figure 5.9 illustrates five different power sources that relate to five different levels of motivation (Schmuck & Schmuck, 1983). Power can be coercive when the motivation is “to obey.” Power can take the form of rewards when the motivation is “to get.” Power can be seen

motivation Internal emotion, desire, or impulse acting as an incitement to action.

FIGURE 5.9 Sources of Power and Types of Motivation Responses



as legitimate when the motivation is “to respect.” Power can be in the form of charisma when the motivation is “to cooperate.” Finally, power can be knowledge when the motivation is “to understand.” Your philosophy of teaching could include all of these sources of power. All of them might be necessary at one time or another. On the other hand, it is important to assess how you set up your classroom rules and environment and make certain that they match your personal understanding of where power should lie in the teaching and learning process.

As a teacher, you should arrange the classroom environment so that it matches your personal philosophy. Let's return to the educational philosophy exemplar and see what type of classroom environment and source of power would motivate her students to learn.



I contend that sharing personal understanding with others is at the heart of learning. My classroom setting must convey this freedom for students to make sense of things on their own and to communicate their understandings even if they are not yet complete. In order to provide this freedom to express incomplete understandings, I need to make certain that learners feel comfortable seeking help from others and that learners are taught to patiently listen to one another and provide helpful feedback.

Clearly, this educational philosophy views the classroom as one in which students feel free to express themselves and make mistakes. After reading this approach to motivation, what type of power do you think the writer is emphasizing?

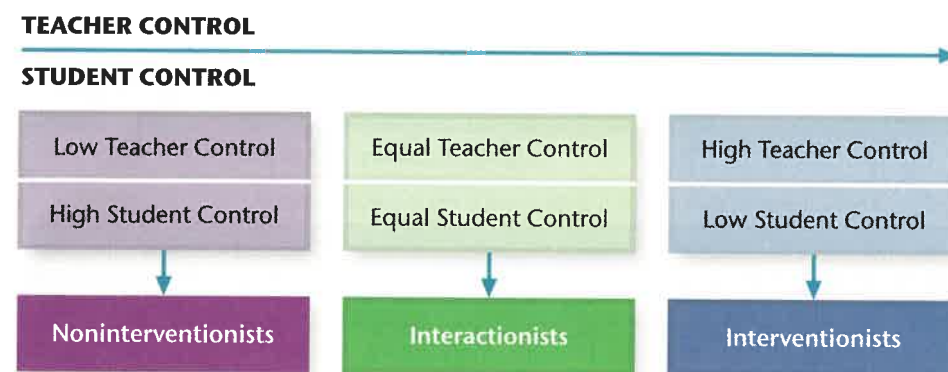
Classroom Management and Discipline

The attention given by the national media to disruptive behavior in the classroom has rekindled conflicting views regarding discipline. Polls of parents and teachers alike list discipline among the top issues confronting the schools. The main source of dissatisfaction for nearly two-thirds of today's teachers is their inability to manage students effectively. Teachers also are concerned about the effect disruptive behavior has on learning. The discipline dilemma—how to achieve *more* teacher control in the classroom while adhering to a more open philosophy that advocates *less* teacher control—precludes the development of a school discipline policy that would satisfy both views. Depending on the school district's expectations, the teacher might be caught between conflicting demands.

Carl Glickman and Charles Wolfgang (1978) have identified three schools of thought along a teacher–student control continuum (Figure 5.10). Noninterventionists hold the view that teachers should not impose their own rules; students are inherently capable of solving their own problems. Interactionists suggest that students must learn that the solution to misbehavior is a reciprocal relation between student and teacher. Interventionists believe that teachers must set classroom standards for conduct and give little attention to input from the students.

As you prepare to be a teacher, you need to identify your own beliefs regarding control in the classroom. The goal is to keep disruptive behavior at a minimum, thus enhancing the students' potential for learning as well as your own job satisfaction. Where maintenance of discipline is

FIGURE 5.10 Teacher–Student Control Continuum



the primary concern, one might choose from among the entire range of possibilities along the Glickman–Wolfgang continuum regardless of one's own teaching style preference.

Figure 5.11 illustrates how classroom management relates to different types of teacher behaviors. In the following section, we examine three types of discipline along the teacher–student control continuum; that way you, as a future classroom teacher, can understand how different kinds of teacher behaviors can be used to support your preferred teaching philosophy.

TYPES OF DISCIPLINE. Whatever the personal philosophy of the teacher, he or she must address the wishes of the district when establishing classroom management schemes. The division of views on classroom discipline has inspired numerous books to assist teachers with discipline problems, and many special courses and workshops have been developed to deal with classroom discipline strategies. But because very few beginning teachers are given extensive exposure to discipline strategies in teacher preparation programs, the vast range of alternatives makes the choice of strategies difficult for teachers who have yet to develop their own styles. The following discipline approaches are described because they offer a variety of alternatives in classroom management. Based on your own educational philosophy, you will find that one or more of them is compatible with your own thinking.

Choice Theory. The psychiatrist William Glasser (2000) has advanced **choice theory** as a way to determine classroom discipline practices. He suggests that a person's total behavior is composed of feelings, physiology, actions, and thoughts. How a person manages these aspects of behavior makes up an operational definition of control theory. Choice theory contends that we choose most of our behaviors in an effort to gain control of ourselves and other people.

According to Glasser, people are driven by six basic needs. All of our choices and behaviors are based on the urgency for survival, power, love, belonging, freedom, and fun. If there is an imbalance in any of these six basic needs, people act out. Choice theory encourages you to realize that it is somewhat natural and human for students not to take responsibility for disrupting class or deviating from classroom norms. As a matter of fact, even adults find it difficult to take responsibility for some of their own behaviors that deviate from the norm. Choice theory requires teachers to consider the many factors that can account for problem behaviors rather than responding immediately. Teachers are encouraged to seek the assistance of counselors, social workers,

choice theory A theory of discipline that contends that people choose most of their behaviors to gain control of other people or of themselves.

FIGURE 5.11 Teacher Behaviors Related to Theories of Classroom Management

Choice Theory		Conflict Resolution			Assertive Discipline	
Visually looking on	Nondirective statements	Probing questions	Modeling	Reinforcement	Directive statements	Physical intervention
NONINTERVENTIONISTS		INTERACTIONISTS			INTERVENTIONISTS	

and parents to fully understand what is causing the problem behavior and only then to design an appropriate response.

Choice theory is one of the more difficult management approaches for a new teacher to implement. The first challenge to a new teacher is to evaluate the inappropriate behavior exhibited by the student, determine which need the student thinks is being met by that behavior, and think of appropriate replacement behaviors. The next step, according to choice theory, is to help the student identify the inappropriate behavior and the natural consequences of that behavior. This is done by asking a series of questions:

- What are you doing?
- What are you supposed to be doing?
- What is the rule?
- Are you making the best choices?

It is important for teachers not to impose artificial consequences for problem behaviors. The key to choice theory is to get students to design a plan on their own. This can be accomplished by asking follow-up questions such as these:

- What is your plan?
- What choices do you need to make?
- What are you going to do to bring your plan into action?

Take another look at Figure 5.11 and you will see that choice theory falls within the noninterventionist type of classroom control. As a prospective teacher, you will need to evaluate whether choice theory is compatible with your view of human nature. If you believe that problem behavior is a natural consequence of our need to balance and fulfill natural urges for survival, power, love, belonging, freedom, and fun, then choice theory will fit your philosophy of education. If, however, you believe that humans are blank tablets who simply need to be directly taught the proper ways of acting, this approach probably won't be for you. You may find the following discipline approach (an interventionist) more compatible with your beliefs.

Assertive Discipline. Assertive discipline is a teacher-in-charge, structured classroom management approach designed to encourage students to choose responsible behavior. Developed by Lee Canter (2010), this discipline approach is based on consistency, follow-through, and positive relationship building. The underlying tenet of this approach is that teachers have a right to teach and pupils have a right to learn.

Assertive discipline contends that the teacher has the right to determine what is best for students and to expect compliance. No pupil should prevent the teacher from teaching or keep another student from learning. Student compliance is imperative in creating and maintaining an effective and efficient learning environment. To accomplish this goal, teachers must react assertively as opposed to reacting aggressively or nonassertively.

Assertive discipline requires teachers to develop a clear classroom discipline plan. The classroom plan must clarify behaviors that are expected of students and clarify what students can expect from the teacher in return. The aim of the plan is to have a fair and consistent way to establish a safe, orderly, positive classroom in which teachers teach and pupils learn. The plan consists of three parts:

- *Rules* that students must follow at all times
- *Positive recognition* that students will receive for following the rules
- *Consequences* that result when students choose not to follow the rules

According to assertive discipline, students cannot be expected to guess how a teacher wants them to behave in all situations. If students are to succeed in the classroom, they need to know, without doubt, what is expected of them. When students are not given the limits they need, they will act up in order to make the adults around them take notice. A student's disruptive behavior is often a plea for someone to care enough to make him or her stop.

Assertive discipline is not without critics. Some contend that assertive discipline is undemocratic. It conveys a message that only those with power have the right to make rules. Some teachers

have responded to this criticism by allowing students to enter into the rule-making process. However, in the end, the assertive discipline teacher makes the final decision.

Other critics contend that children should obey rules because that is the right thing to do, not because there is some reward associated with obeying or some punishment for not obeying. The long-term implications of rewarding behavior as suggested by the assertive discipline model is that children obey because of positive feedback or because they are told to obey by an authority figure. Real discipline, according to the critics of assertive discipline, should be internal. Responsible behavior should be based on doing what is right.

Return to Figure 5.11 and revisit the behaviors that are associated with an interventionist theory of control. As a prospective teacher, you will need to assess to what degree assertive discipline and its related behaviors fit your philosophy of education. If your philosophy tends to be focused on the teacher's responsibility to control students, assertive discipline is compatible. If your philosophy is focused on students' authority, you would need to modify some of the assertive discipline tenets or not use this approach to discipline.

Conflict Resolution. As another approach to discipline, conflict resolution focuses on the process of teaching students how to recognize problems and then solve them constructively. Students are taught to be conflict managers and are trained to deal with difficulties on the playground, in the hallways, and in the classroom. The student "managers" learn specific skills that enable them, for example, to guide a discussion about a problem between two people who are fighting. There are a variety of ways to train the students, but the underlying benefit is that the students solve their own problems with minimal assistance from adults. Advocates of conflict resolution contend that permitting students to share in the structure and even the enforcement of discipline policies helps them learn to contribute to the school and to society as a whole.

Peer mediation programs are closely associated with conflict resolution approaches. The focus of peer mediation is not so much the resolution of conflict but rather the proactive cultivation of a climate of peace. In these programs, students receive training in empathy development, social skills, and bias awareness. The overall goal of peer mediation training is to help students develop a social perspective wherein joint benefit is considered over personal gain.

Revisit Figure 5.11 and review the types of control behaviors that relate to an interactionist approach to classroom control. These behaviors are compatible with conflict resolution and peer mediation.

Discipline Guidelines. There is no cookbook formula for classroom discipline rules and procedures. Some general guidelines, however, can help the beginning teacher to establish some operating rules that will be accepted and practiced by students:

1. Students and teachers need to learn the importance of considerate behavior and communication.
2. Students need to be treated with respect. Students who are treated with respect develop strong self-esteem.
3. Teachers need to apply critical thinking skills when creating disciplinary rules or analyzing needed disciplinary action.
4. Teachers need to examine how their actions of a social or instructional nature may have helped trigger misbehavior.

The way the teacher introduces and uses these general principles for establishing rules for discipline will set the tone for classroom interactions, creating an environment that is conducive to learning and that minimizes classroom interruptions.

Classroom discipline strongly reflects the teacher's operating classroom philosophy. As you examine the educational philosophy that wins your interest and support, search for its applications to discipline in your classroom. The "Perspectives on Diversity" feature discusses the choice of a classroom discipline approach.

Classroom Climate

John Goodlad, in his observation of more than 1,000 classrooms, found that differences in the quality of schools have little to do with teaching practices. Differences come from what Goodlad

PERSPECTIVES on DIVERSITY

Classroom Management

Mr. Manijue was concerned about his classroom management practices in his sixth-grade classroom. He had involved students in a discussion concerning his classroom discipline expectations at the beginning of the year and thought the students had agreed with his approach. Recently, however, Mr. Manijue noticed that several of his students consistently challenged his authority when he called for silence, and they often refused to stay seated during assignments.

After attending a professional development workshop on different classroom management approaches, Mr. Manijue was impressed with an interactionist approach toward discipline that required students and teachers to negotiate classroom discipline rules and consequences. Mr. Manijue notified students that he would hold a discussion on Monday to discuss new discipline rules and consequences; he asked all students to develop a list that they thought would be helpful and come prepared to share their ideas.

On Monday, Mr. Manijue asked students to take out their list of ideas. He then went around the room and asked students to share one of their ideas. He was eager to hear what the students who were especially difficult to manage would suggest. Sadly, one after another refused to share her or his thinking. Mr. Manijue explained

that it was important to share ideas so that everyone's thinking was included in the new discipline approach. However, the disruptive students refused to offer anything.

Disappointed by the disruptive students' refusal to share their thinking, Mr. Manijue decided to call each of those students' parents and ask them for support. When he called the first parent and asked for help, he was shocked to hear, "Why are you bothering me with this? As the teacher you need to demand that my son obey you. In my native country, teachers are in charge and students must listen. Students have no place in developing classroom rules."

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

1. Why do you think the parent thought that Mr. Manijue should not require students to participate in developing classroom rules?
2. What does the parent's response imply about her view of authority?
3. Should Mr. Manijue modify his interactionist approach toward discipline in an effort to take into account this parent's view of authority? Why or why not?

(1984, 2004) called an overall **classroom climate**. Classroom climate is not a simple set of rules or ways of acting; it is a holistic concept, one that involves a set of underlying relationships and an underlying tone or sense of being and feeling.

Different types of classroom climate have been found to be successful. Goodlad's research showed that successful schools are ones with favorable conditions for learning, parent interest in and knowledge of the schools, and positive relationships between principals and teachers and teachers and students. S. M. Johnson (1990) identified school climate as one of the most important components contributing to effective learning and high levels of student motivation. Diane Ravitch (2001) defined a positive school climate as relaxed and tension free. Teachers and students alike know that they are in a good school, and this sense of being special contributes to high morale.

Vito Perrone (1991) set out to uncover the underlying characteristics of a classroom climate that could be linked to increased student achievement. After examining hundreds of studies, Perrone determined that a successful learning climate was one in which (1) students have time to wonder and find a direction that interests them; (2) topics have an "intriguing" quality, something common seen in a new way; (3) teachers permit—even encourage—different forms of expression and respect students' views; (4) teachers are passionate about their work; (5) students create original or personal products; (6) students do something—they participate in activities that matter; and (7) students sense that the results of their work are not predetermined.

The problem with establishing a certain type of school climate is that climate is not something that can be developed artificially. Climate arises from the interactions of all of the things that teachers do in the classroom. There are two concepts, however, that can help you examine climate a little more closely: voice and space.

VOICE. *Voice* is a term brought to education by Henry Giroux. Giroux's (1981, 2001) concept of **voice** refers to the multifaceted and interlocking set of meanings through which students and teachers

classroom climate A holistic concept that involves a set of underlying relationships and a tone or sense of being and feeling in the classroom.

voice The multifaceted interlocking set of meanings through which students and teachers actively engage with one another.

actively engage in dialogue with one another. Each individual voice is shaped by its owner's particular cultural history and prior experience. Voice, then, is the means that students have at their disposal to make themselves "heard" and to define themselves as active participants in the world. Voice is an important pedagogical concept because it alerts teachers to the fact that all learning is situated historically and mediated culturally and derives part of its meaning from interaction with others.

Teacher voice reflects the values, ideologies, and structuring principles teachers use to understand and mediate the histories, cultures, and subjectivities of their students. For instance, teachers often use the voice of common sense to frame their classroom instruction. It is often through the mediation of teacher voice that the very nature of the schooling process is either sustained or challenged. The power of teacher voice to shape schooling is inextricably related not only to a high degree of teacher self-understanding but also to the possibility for teachers to join together in a collective voice for social betterment. Thus, teacher voice is significant in terms of its own values as well as in relation to the ways it functions to shape and mediate school and student voices.

Teachers need to be aware of the voices of their students as well as their own voice. Too often the teacher's voice is the only voice that counts in a classroom. Teachers must analyze the interests that different voices represent less as oppositional components and more as a medley that shapes the individual meanings of all participants in the learning process.

As a teacher, you will find that small group discussions provide a key opportunity for students to share their thinking with others. However, it is important for the teacher to visit each of the discussion groups; listen to the conversation; and encourage students who are silent to speak and, vice versa, encourage students who are controlling the conversation to listen. Establishing a rubric that clearly details the characteristics of a good discussion can also help. Using this rubric, students can regularly evaluate their own discussion participation.

By creating an environment in which students listen to each other with respect and build on one another's ideas, a teacher helps students build a community of inquiry.

SPACE. "Authentic public space" is a concept developed by Maxine Greene (1975, p. 12). She contends that a climate consists of spaces between and among people. The manner in which this space is maintained and the type of space that is created determine the climate. Space that permits students to explore, take risks, make mistakes, and take corrective action is an authentic space—one in which people do not have to engage in pretense. Space that requires perfection, does not tolerate divergent responses, and is limited is a space that restricts freedom (Greene, 2000).

Another way of creating space is by developing a "community of inquiry." This phrase, coined by Charles Sanders Peirce (1955), has come to mean an environment in which students listen to one another with respect, build on one another's ideas, challenge one another to supply reasons for their opinions, assist one another in drawing inferences, and seek to identify one another's assumptions. Teachers ask questions and students answer them without either party feeling

the least twinge of embarrassment because the process of such thinking and rethinking is natural. An ongoing dialogue ensues and a community of inquiry forms.

Ultimately, classroom climate arises from the beliefs and values held by teachers and students. Your understanding of your own views and beliefs is critical to the climate that will ultimately emerge in your classroom. Your clarity about your most deeply held views on the nature of knowledge, the nature of reality, and the importance of teacher-led versus student-led actions will ensure that your classroom climate authentically represents you.



Source: Steve Debenport/E+/Getty Images

By creating a learning environment in which students listen to each other with respect and build on one another's ideas, a teacher helps students build a community of inquiry.

Returning to the sample educational philosophy in Figure 5.8, it is clear that providing an authentic space for all students' voices is critical. This is evident in the following quote.



I began my formal teaching career working with seventh- and eighth-grade students in an inner city, poor neighborhood of Chicago. It was there among these children that I began to understand how the context of children's and adults' lives influenced what they knew and how they knew it. I did not fully understand, then, that there is such an integral relationship between who we are and what we know. Fortunately, as teacher I remain a learner and through these early experiences, I began to understand the importance of providing a safe place for students to make sense of their lives in light of what others have discovered. Only

by providing students a voice to clarify their own needs could the classroom function and learning occur. It was in Chicago that I began to view my teaching role no longer as a provider of truth, but as a prod or questioner who gently tries to extend and refine the personal understandings of my students.

VIDEO ANALYSIS 5.2



Watch this video showing how a teacher employs learning centers to create more space and voice in her classroom. Then answer the question that follows the video in your Pearson eText.

Personal Teaching and Learning Vision

As you consider the components of your personal philosophy of education, you will face the question of student learning. What constitutes your vision for a learned person? Is learning about the acquisition of knowledge? Is it concerned with good thinking? Or is it concerned with good character? An easy answer, of course, is that learning includes all of these things: knowledge, thinking, and dispositions. However, as a teacher, you will need to determine what the proper mix is: How much learning time should be spent on knowledge acquisition, how much time should be devoted to practicing skills, and how much time should be spent on the development of character traits or values? You will not find easy answers to these questions in your district's curriculum guide or textbooks. These tools provide only a set of opportunities for learning; your philosophy of education will be the force that guides you in determining which of all these things you wish to emphasize in your teaching.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 5.5

Describe the teaching method and classroom environment that you believe have been most effective for you as a learner. Identify the educational philosophy or philosophies that would encourage the teaching method and environment you have selected. Create a graphic that visually represents your own theory of teaching and learning.



CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 5.4

Complete Check Your Understanding 5.4 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

The way you manage your classroom and the content, teaching methods, and values you stress will be based on your personal view of the proper role of the teacher in society. A classroom philosophy must incorporate this larger societal view into other views that relate to student learning and behavior in the classroom.

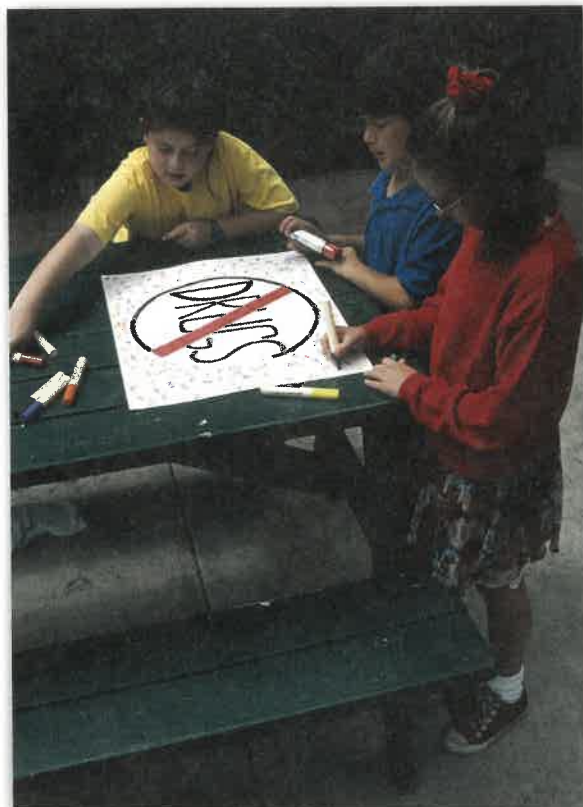
Schools play a role within the larger society. This role is determined by a number of factors: the expectations of society's leaders, economic conditions, the ideologies of powerful lobbying

change agent A person who actively endeavors to mobilize change in a group, institution, or society.

adaptation In the context of social change, an educational approach that favors the promotion of a stable climate in schools to enable students to obtain an unbiased picture of changes that are occurring in society and thus to adapt to those changes.

dialectic A conflict between opposing forces or ideas; in change theory, this conflict is the one between individual needs and the needs of society.

Teaching can be looked at in a variety of ways, ranging from helping students create their own meaning to taking a deliberate stand and arguing for social change.



Source: Myrleen Pearson/PhotoEdit

groups, and the philosophies of teachers. It is especially important for educators to examine the role of the school in terms of the larger society—because if such reflection does not occur, schools will merely reflect the status quo or the needs and desires of a single powerful group.

Teachers as Change Agents

An age-old question about the role of schools in a changing society concerns the proper role of the school and the teacher in relation to change. Should teachers be **change agents**, actively working for changes in the existing scheme of things? Or should they re-emphasize eternal truths and cultural positions? This question of change versus transmission of ongoing values has been articulated in a variety of ways.

CHANGE AS ADAPTATION. Isaac L. Kandel (1881–1965) was a leader in the essentialist educational philosophy movement who advocated change as a process of **adaptation**. The adaptation approach emphasizes the importance of promoting stability in schools and enabling the individual to adapt to the larger environment (Kandel, 1938). The school should provide students with an unbiased picture of the changes that occur in society. But schools cannot educate for a new social order, nor should teachers use the classroom to promote doctrine. Change occurs first in society. Schools follow the lead.

If a teacher's educational philosophy is one in which the goal for teaching is the mastery of facts and skills so that students can enter society and get a job, that teacher would tend to look at change as the process of adaptation. Students would be taught to accept society as it is today and develop skills that make success in the world of work and daily life possible.

CHANGE AS RATIONAL PROCESS. John Dewey (1897) believed that schools have a part in social change. He contended that change continually occurs, often without a clearly defined direction. Schools need to assume a leadership role in this change because educators have the time to study newer scientific and cultural forces, estimate their direction and outcome, and determine which changes may or may not be beneficial. Schools need to provide an environment in which students can learn these analytic skills and participate in helping society determine the direction that is of most worth.

If a teacher determined that students needed to participate in an ever-changing society, that teacher would tend to provide students with many opportunities to wrestle with problems that characterize society. Students would also be asked to constantly question their own thinking and share their ideas with others.

CHANGE AS DIALECTIC. Samuel Bowles, Herbert Gintis (1975) call for a dialectical humanism through which teachers can help students explore the tension between the individual and society. They identify a conflict, or **dialectic**, between the reproductive needs of society and the self-actualizing needs of the individual. Bowles and Gintis claim that entities such as schools, churches, peer groups, and town meetings attempt to mediate this tension between individual freedom and responsibility for the community. The problem facing schools is that they are often unaware that they are mediating this underlying tension, and teachers are often caught in the middle of the dilemma. Teachers are asked to respond to the unique needs of the individual while answering the conflicting needs of society.

Bowles and Gintis call on teachers to develop a participatory democracy in which all interested parties learn both to pursue their interests and to resolve conflicts rationally. As a teacher, you will become part of the educational system. As part of this system, you will be asked to make decisions about student outcomes, discipline procedures, instructional methodologies, and assessment methods. Your decisions regarding these educational issues will be greatly influenced by how you perceive teachers as change agents. You will make different decisions depending on whether you determine that teachers need to help schools adapt to the demands of society, rationally change the social order, reconstruct society, or participate

in a dialectic. Your task is to consider carefully each of these change paradigms and select the one that matches your personal system of beliefs. Examine the “Differing Perspectives” feature concerning the use of controversial topics in the classroom. It is a contemporary example of how communities’ views about the proper role of schools can affect what is taught in the classroom.

DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES

SHOULD TEACHERS EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS IN CLASS?

Communities differ in their perspectives about the use of controversial topics in the classroom. Should schools advocate for social change by encouraging students to debate controversial topics?

YES

Rachael Rice is an artist and activist who teaches fifth- to eighth-grade art at Barre City Elementary and Middle School in Barre, Vermont.

If those views support civil and human rights, of course they should!

I believe one cannot advocate for children anywhere without advocating for children everywhere. This means advocating for children in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine as well as in Western and European countries.

Advocating for peace is now considered controversial in my district, as are rainbows and pink triangles (“pro-gay”). Here at Barre City School, I have had a “Safe Space Ally” sign illegally stolen off my door by a former school board member. Our administration forbade me to replace it, citing “controversy.”

At one time, the abolition of slavery, desegregation, and women voting were considered controversial topics. But today, we as teachers are freely encouraged to support equal rights around Dr. Martin Luther King’s birthday and to examine the effects of prejudice as we study the Holocaust or slavery. We are encouraged to educate students for participation in the democratic process, which depends so much upon the freedom to express dissent.

So the truth is that teachers are supported when they express controversial views, as long as their opinions are aligned with those of the majority.

Of course, it is extremely important for teachers who express strong opinions to respect the fact that some students may feel intimidated. That’s why I tell all my students on the first day of school not to believe anything I say just because I say it.

I urge them to turn a critical eye toward their teachers as well as toward their studies.

They trust me to help create a safe environment in which unpopular sentiments may be expressed and responded to in appropriate, kind ways.

The best teachers teach students to think for themselves.

NO

Lacey Pitts is an NEA student member in Americus, Georgia.

I do not believe teachers should share their opinions on controversial topics in the classroom. Too often teachers attempt to share their views to stimulate conversation, but only end up alienating students.

I am in college and still in a student’s position, and I am not far removed from being a high school student. I was in a classroom where a teacher attacked my personal view and I remember how terrible it felt.

I was in tenth grade. The teacher opened a discussion of homosexuality in the classroom by stating that she felt homosexuality was wrong and a sin, implying that supporting such an alternative lifestyle was also wrong.

I was crushed, having family members and very close friends who were homosexual. I felt attacked for my love of these people and for accepting their lifestyle choices.

My teacher was supported by other students, but no one, not even I, advocated homosexuality. I was afraid of being told I was wrong and feared a personal attack by the teacher or other students. My voice was silenced in the classroom.

As educators, we must never allow this stifling to occur. Instead, we must strive to construct and foster environments that support differences in views and opinions by informing students of all arguments involved. We are in the classroom to guide, inform, and inspire our students.

When I become a teacher, I plan to play devil’s advocate on controversial topics. I want my students to hear and consider all sides of an issue.

Impartiality is the key to allowing our students to think and decide their own stances on these topics individually.

Teachers must correct misstatements of facts, but a student’s individual opinion should be allowed expression without fear of judgment.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON THIS ISSUE?

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 5.5

Develop a statement that depicts how you intend to function as a teacher/leader within the larger society. Describe one position you support that is related to a political action.

Teaching can be looked at in a variety of ways, ranging from helping students create their own meaning to taking a deliberate stand and arguing for social change.

Teachers as Leaders

Teachers serve as leaders for their students. Evidence of this can be found in the testimonials that are offered by former students when they have become adults. Most students, whether they have achieved graduate degrees or have followed vocational pursuits immediately after high school, report remembering teachers who had a personal impact on their lives. These students will usually discuss the leadership and modeling behaviors of the teachers they remember.

The idea of teachers as leaders suggests that the new teacher should be aware of the need to develop a beginning repertoire of leadership qualities to which students can look for guidance during their developmental years. These leadership qualities—and the practice of them—are highly dependent on the classroom philosophy that the new teacher puts into practice. Some beginning concepts for teacher leadership are vision, modeling behaviors, and use of power.

VISION. Classroom leadership behaviors begin when a teacher possesses both a vision and the intent to actualize that vision for the students. How a teacher actually puts his or her vision into practice depends wholly on the teacher's philosophical convictions. A **vision** is a mental construct that synthesizes and clarifies what you value or consider to be of highest worth. The clearer the vision or mental picture, the easier it is for a leader to make decisions or persuade or influence others. Formulating a vision requires reflection concerning what you believe about truth, beauty, justice, and equality. It is important to consider these issues and formulate a vision about how schools and classrooms should be organized and what ideas should be implemented.

Linda Sheive and Marian Schoenheit (1987) offer five steps to help leaders put their visions into action:

1. Value your vision.
2. Be reflective and plan a course of action.
3. Articulate the vision to colleagues.
4. Develop a planning stage and an action stage.
5. Have students become partners in the vision.²

If teachers reflect on their vision, they can plan the course of action they need to use with their learners. Articulation provides teachers with an opportunity to share their vision with colleagues. In-service or staff development sessions are excellent times to articulate a classroom vision. Visions require a planning stage and an action stage if they are to become reality. Planning and action stages should involve the students who are intended to be the receivers of this vision. For example, if a teacher wishes students to be reflective in his or her learning environment, then the teacher needs to help the students understand the benefits of reflectiveness and become partners in planning for it. The teacher might engage the students in free and open discussions of the vision and its importance to the learning environment in the classroom.

MODELING. If teachers hold certain expectations of learner behaviors in the classroom, it is imperative that they model those behaviors with the students. If the classroom teacher is rigid and fixed in his or her classroom practices and creates an authoritarian atmosphere, then the students will probably respond accordingly. On the other hand, if the teacher provides a more democratic classroom, the students will respond similarly in their classroom encounters. We would caution that a laissez-faire environment will probably produce a classroom where learners have little or no

vision A mental construction that synthesizes and clarifies what a person values or considers to be of highest worth.

²Based on Sheive, L. T. and Schoenheit, M. B. (1987). Vision and the worklife of educational leaders. In *Leadership: Examining the Elusive*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, p. 99.

direction. Teachers should consider the modeling effect on the classroom environment and exhibit behaviors consistent with their philosophy of education.

EMPOWERMENT. The concept of power in the classroom should not be considered good or bad; power in itself has no value structure. The use of power, however, gives it a good, poor, or bad image. All leaders have power that is associated with their position, but the successful leader is judicious in its use. The nature of the teaching position entrusts a teacher with power both within and outside the classroom. How a teacher uses power in the classroom or in the school building is wholly determined by the classroom philosophy the teacher wants to project.

Teachers' use of power can be classified into two different styles: teacher centered and learner centered. A teacher-centered power style is based on an authoritarian construct for the classroom. Learners are not expected to be active verbally in the learning process but are generally expected to be receivers and practicing users of teacher-given information. Learning is very convergent. It is selected and given to the learner in the particular way in which the teacher wishes the student to acquire it.

A learner-centered power style views the learner as someone who is verbally active and who seeks divergence in learning. Learner-centered power styles encourage the active participation of the learner in exploring learning and helping to determine the extent to which he or she will engage in alternative approaches. Learning is very divergent. These power styles tend to recognize differences in learning, individual interests, and higher order learning.

Past and present practices in schools tend to lean heavily on the teacher-dominant style. Therefore, although many teachers in training study both categories of teaching styles, they tend to see only one major type in practice when they visit schools. We suggest that you continually study both major styles so that you can apply either one as needed on the basis of your classroom objectives for students and your classroom philosophy.

Teachers' use of power extends beyond the classroom. Teachers, by their very occupation, are empowered with both rights and responsibilities. They have a unique obligation to advocate for the needs of children, to remind society of its obligations to coming generations, to look beyond material wealth, and to consider the spiritual wealth of knowledge. Teachers, by virtue of their occupation, are given certain rights to speak and be heard.

JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 5.6

Read through your journals for this chapter and determine what type of change agent characteristics best fits your educational philosophy. Provide a clear rationale for your change agent type based on evidence drawn from your educational philosophy.

**CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING 5.5**

Complete Check Your Understanding 5.5 to gauge your understanding of the concepts in this section.

SUMMARY**THE DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION**

- Educational philosophy can be analyzed as the application of philosophy to the classroom.
- Humanism and existentialism reflect a student-centered approach to education because they place more emphasis on developing students' individual meaning.
- A philosophy of education is not a set of written words. It is a platform on which decisions are made and a teacher's professional life is led.

- One strategy that can help teachers develop their personal philosophy of education is to build on the educational philosophies of others.

TEACHER-CENTERED EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES

- Teacher-centered educational philosophies (essentialism, behaviorism, and positivism) emphasize the importance of controlling the subject-matter content, thinking processes, and discipline procedures within the classroom setting.

- Essentialism holds that there is a common core of information and skills that an educated person in a given culture must have.
- Behaviorism is a psychological theory and educational philosophy that holds that one's behavior is determined by environment, not heredity.
- Positivism is an educational philosophy that rejects beliefs about mind, spirit, and consciousness and holds that all reality can be explained by laws of matter and motion.

STUDENT-CENTERED EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES

- Student-centered educational philosophies (progressivism, humanism, and constructivism) place less emphasis on the external control of the teacher and more emphasis on developing students' personal meaning.
- Progressivism promotes individual student inquiry, humanism stresses student freedom, and constructivism emphasizes the importance of supporting personal meaning.
- The humanistic educational philosophy is concerned with enhancing the innate goodness of the individual. It rejects a group-oriented educational system and seeks ways to enhance the individual development of the student.
- Constructivism is an educational philosophy that emphasizes developing personal meaning through hands-on, activity-based teaching and learning.

DEVELOPING YOUR OWN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

- One way of clarifying your philosophy of education is to examine the different aspects of teaching and determine your own preferences for classroom organization, student motivation, your discipline approach, and classroom climate.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Your philosophy of education is more than a set of words; it is based on actions such as how you treat learners, how you set up your classroom, and what types of rules you enforce. Select one key idea that you would include in your educational philosophy and describe something you would do in your classroom that reflects this idea.
2. What were the characteristics and behaviors of one of your favorite teachers who had a teacher-centered educational philosophy? What about a favorite teacher who had a student-centered educational philosophy?
3. Constructivism rules out some of the conventional notions about educating youth. It emphasizes students'

- Classroom organization includes the way you set up your classroom, the way you develop lesson plans and implement those plans, and the way you assess students.
- Motivation approaches include noninterventionist, interactionist, and interventionist.
- Classroom climate involves the type of voice you choose to encourage and how much space you provide for collaboration and discussion.
- Most teachers use various aspects of different educational philosophies as they determine the specific type of classroom organization, discipline, motivation, and classroom climates that they prefer. For this reason, we encourage an eclectic approach—an approach that draws on many different sets of ideas.

YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

- In life, one must consider the implications of a philosophy of education for acting responsibly in society. What types of societal change match your philosophy of education, and what type of responsible leadership does your philosophy compel you to assume?
- Teachers can choose to be a change agent in society by helping students prepare to enter society (adaptation), by helping students deal with change in a rational way (rational process), or by directly working on specific change initiatives (change as dialectic).
- Teachers can lead by modeling and empowerment
- The need to be clear about your personal approach to teaching and learning becomes especially important as calls for alternative approaches to teaching and learning increase.

construction of personalized understandings of the world rather than an established curriculum. What implications does constructivism have for grouping students?

4. Teachers must be able to manage the classroom in such a way that the environment created is conducive to teaching and learning. How do you plan to organize your classroom to set up such an environment?
5. What is your vision of democracy in the classroom? To what degree should students be permitted to decide what they will study, when they will study, and how they will study? Why?

SCHOOL-BASED OBSERVATIONS

1. This chapter contains examples of classroom activities associated with various educational theories. As you work in the schools, take the class activity features placed throughout this chapter with you and see whether you can determine which educational philosophies you are observing. Then decide which educational philosophy you subscribe to and determine whether your own classroom activities are consistent with your personal educational philosophy.
2. Interview several teachers who organize their classrooms and teaching materials differently. Using probing questions, try to uncover the educational philosophy or philosophies that account for the differing teaching approaches.
3. Prepare a synopsis of your overall philosophy of education. Then interview a teacher who seems to teach and organize the classroom the way you would. Ask the teacher to review your synopsis.

PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

1. Select one major concept from one of the national standards documents (available in your college library). Describe ways that you might help students learn a particular concept. You might consider methods that helped you learn a concept. Then, determine and explain which educational philosophy or philosophies match your description best. Include this description and explanation in your portfolio as an example of your ability to analyze lessons in terms of theories.
2. Prepare a synopsis of your overall philosophy of education perspective. Include your views about classroom organization, motivation, discipline, and climate. Try to develop a graphic that clearly shows how all of these components connect and are consistent with your overall perspective.
3. Develop a statement that depicts how you intend to function as a teacher/leader within the larger society. Describe one position you support related to political action.

WEB SOLUTIONS

You have been asked to participate in a review of your district's philosophy of education and mission statement. As a beginning exercise, each committee member has been asked to critique the school district's philosophy of education and mission statement in light of contemporary societal issues and demands. The websites of the following may assist you in preparing your critique:

Educational Theory is a quarterly publication that fosters the continuing development of educational theory and encourages wide and effective discussion of theoretical problems within the education profession. You will find this journal (located on the University of Illinois College of Education website) is filled with contemporary concerns that relate to teaching and learning.

Funderstanding contains a variety of theories on learning, instruction, assessment, influences, history of education, learning patterns, and educational reforms.

The Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) website has developed a network of problem-based-learning programs and ideas, examples of problem-based learning in classrooms, access to a problem-based-learning teachers' network, and other resources that relate to the use of problem-based learning in contemporary schools.

The Foundation for Critical Thinking website is dedicated to providing educators, students, and the general public with access to information about critical thinking, theory and practice, concepts, techniques for learning and teaching, and classroom exercises.

The Teachers Guide is a Web-based company that provides information, professional articles, resources, books, virtual field trips, and educational software related to classroom management, educational psychology, special education, and so on. Click on Class Management for more information.

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We dedicate this seventeenth edition to all educators who use interpretive, normative, organizational, and critical perspectives to wrestle with the demands of our rapidly changing society. There is no question that these four perspectives of *Foundations of American Education* are crucial components for making reasonable decisions in light of so many uncertainties. Without the thoughtful involvement of educators who struggle to open spaces for reflection and diverse voices, closed mindedness and violence will run rampant. As never before, the forthcoming generation of effective and reflective teachers will foster understanding our differences and facilitate continuing development of a peaceful and pluralistic societal fabric.

James A. Johnson, Diann Musial, Gene E. Hall, and Donna M. Gollnick