

Out-of-school and Outdoor Learning Pedagogy and Theory

Situated Learning Theory

- No prescribed script**
 - In all forms of outdoor education, due to its situatedness, there is no prescribed script which means that what one group of people in a particular place and time might view as a social or ecological problem can be completely different from what a different group in that same place or in a different place might view as a problem (Gruenewald, 2003a).
 - It is unintentional and situated within an authentic activity, context, and culture where many things combine to create learning. It resists being homogenized by its very nature and definition (Smith & Sobel, 2010; Theobald & Siskar, 2008)
- Context matters**
 - Varied contexts and communities are locations and subjects of learning which means looking at the community for learning opportunities (Gruenewald, 2008).
- Location and Time Dependent**
 - The reality and the challenge are that for all forms of outdoor education, there can be no prescribed script or set of places and assignments for teachers as it is locally dependent in both geography, context, and time (Gruenewald, 2003b).
 - Outdoor learning calls on students and teachers to experience and question the actual places that are part of their context and not just talk about them in class.

Environmental Education

- Concern for the Environment**
 - Cole (2007) identified a commonly accepted definition of EE as being "fostering an awareness of environmental issues and problems, developing the skills to solve those problems, and inspiring a willingness to make effective decisions as action-orientated citizens" (p. 37).
 - A commonly accepted goal of EE is to create awareness of and concern for the environment (Cole, 2007; Fraser, Gupta, & Krasny, 2015; Monroe, Andrews & Biedenweg, 2008).
- Changing Behaviour**
 - Environmental education is about more than just learning about environmental concerns, it is also about taking action to address those concerns (Monroe et al., 2008; Strife, 2010).
 - Wals, Geerling-Eijff, Hubeek, van der Kroon, and Vader (2008) argued that EE's main objective is to foster changes in behaviour that will lead to acting in a more sustainable way.
- Ecological Stewardship**
 - Strife (2010) and Sobel (1996), suggested that we give students opportunities to connect to and appreciate outdoor spaces and play to our innate selfishness by emphasizing the positive outcomes for humans in being more caring for our environment.
- Environmental Justice**
 - Cole (2007) argued for an environmental justice approach which looks at where we are, who gets to be here, and under what circumstances. He also felt that EE examines who is making decisions about land use, who is benefitting from that use, whose suffering due to that use, and why is it not happening elsewhere?
 - Cole (2007) and Gruenewald (2008) both indicated that environments are much more than the physical and living beings in it, so EE should be concerned with more. In other words, marginalization and poverty are also environmental issues (Gruenewald, 2008).

Place-based Education

- Challenges Dominant Views**
 - What did, is and should happen in the place, what needs to be kept, changed, or returned in the place?
 - examine how a place is constructed to maintain control and dominance over persons and environments
- Decolonization**
 - recognizing that historical damage has taken place and addressing the cause of that damage
 - deconstructing how the colonized system of education works and engaging in practices that are more environmentally and socially supportive
- Land Education**
 - learning explicitly about land and its history of settler-colonialism
- Connection to Community**
 - opportunity for diversity and community to meet and involve people from the community outside of the school involved with educating students
 - getting students into the community places will help them make real meaning with those places and impact what those places are
- Cultural Stewardship**
 - more than just examining places, it is also about contributing to the care of those places

Holistic Learning Theory

- Interconnected**
 - All things are interconnected which means that if one part is changed, it affects everything else (Miller, 2000).
 - Breaking things down into small subsets of knowledge and understanding is not very useful (Johnson, nd).
- Integrated**
 - Miller (2000) points out that holistic education is concerned with educating the "whole person" (p. 385) and that there is more to education and "human development" (p. 385) than subjects and curricular content.
- Collaborative**
 - Johnson (nd) identified that it is about helping students realize "their full potential in all dimensions: intellectual, emotional, social, artistic, moral, psychological, physical, aesthetic, creative, intuitive, spiritual" (p. 2) as we make use of all of them whenever we do something.
 - Miller (2000) explained that learning and education should take place within a supportive and open setting that is a "community of cooperative inquiry, discovery and learning" (p. 385).
- Experiential**
 - "Holistic educators seek to create more equal relationships in the school and classroom based on principles of respect, community, and a shared set of values" (Johnson, nd, p. 4).
 - It is about actually being involved in relevant and authentic experiences (Johnson, nd).

Social Development Theory

- Peer Collaboration**
 - Social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development (Powell & Kalina, 2009).
- Student Role**
 - They are learning contexts in which students play an active role in learning.
- Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)**
 - The area in between what the student can do on their own and what they can do when they have assistance (Powell & Kalina, 2009). It is the place of peak development.

Land-based Education

- Reconnecting With The Land**
 - Land-based education is also considered to be an essential and effective approach to decolonizing education as land-based education is about identifying Indigenous connections to land and interrupt colonial settler ways of knowing that have dominated and refused entry to other viewpoints in environmental education (Whitehouse et al., 2016).
 - Simpson (2014) went further and stated that decolonization could not take place if members of the Indigenous community and students are not connected to the land and their community and are instead co-opted into the current Eurocentric system of schooling. "The land must once again become the pedagogy" (Simpson, 2014, p. 14).
- Learning From The Land**
 - Land-based education underlines how all living and non-living things are connected and is the foundation of learning and all relationships and is viewed by many Indigenous peoples as the original teacher (Haig-Brown & Hodson, 2009; Tuck et al., 2016).
- Relationships**
 - A land-based pedagogy has a distinct focus on relationships between people and people and the land (Simpson, 2014).
 - Simpson (2014) was unequivocal in her belief that "long-term, stable, warm, and balanced relationships within the family, extended family, the community and all living aspects of creation" (p. 10) are necessary for Indigenous ways of learning.
- Decolonization**
 - Tuck et al. (2016) noted that one of the reasons it is essential to continue to discuss and analyze colonialism is because it is still alive and well and influencing how the dominant culture continues to perceive and present other cultures through education.
 - Band et al. (2016) explained that land-based education articulates the results of settler colonialism on the knowledge and ways of knowing of Indigenous peoples and begins the process of resistance.
- Indigenous Ways Of Learning & Knowing**
 - Theories are for all to access, use, and modify. She talked about how the old people taught "from the ground up" (Simpson, 2014, p. 8) to make learning, meaning, and knowledge accessible to all.
 - Within Nishnaabewin learning, the learner is responsible for their own understanding which would include an assessment of how well their learning is going and the elders are humble as they present their teachings as their experience and offer them to the learners (Simpson, 2014).
 - Simpson (2014) explained that Nishnaabewin ways of learning are about consent. It is an Indigenous definition of student engagement with the difference being that if there is no consensual engagement, there is no school.

Adventure Education

- Personal growth**
 - Adventure education has traditionally focused on personal development including social skills and problem-solving through adventure activities (Brown, 2009; Quay & Seaman, 2013).
 - Adventure education gives plenty of opportunities for practice and development of the myriad of skills necessary for successful relational work including communication, mediation, and compromise.
- Challenging Activities**
 - While there is support for the notion that being challenged can be valuable, Brown and Fraser (2009) stipulated that it is specific to each person and that it is not a case of one size fits all.
- Perceived Risk**
 - Adventure education leverages perceived and actual risk to create uncertainty or a problem to solved (Brown & Beames, 2017).
 - Useful and educative risk or challenges are not about physical danger or the possibility of personal harm and more about "creating an environment where students feel able to move beyond what they know, to question and to speculate without fear or risk of being wrong, is the educational challenge" (Brown & Fraser, 2009, p. 68).
- Autonomy**
 - Adventure education can support autonomous learning but the more limited and controlled an AE experience is due to a high level of risk, the less growth can be experienced by the participants (Brown & Beames, 2017; Quay & Seaman, 2013). This is why more open-ended and lower risk activities that are longer term and deeper are more effective.
 - When AE experiences are designed to provide an increasing goal of providing autonomy and opportunity for self-direction and the development of self-reliance that can reduce the need for direct adult supervision, they are more likely to result in deeper and longer lasting learning and autonomy development (Brown & Fraser, 2009; Brown & Beames, 2017; Loynes, 2018).

Experiential Learning Theory

- Hands-on**
 - Made up of real-life experiences that are relevant and authentic to the learner and actively involves them in the learning.
- Informal**
 - Ord and Leather (2018) identified informal education experiences as a big part of experiential education. A teacher can only plan so much for a 'good' experiential education activity. So much of what takes place in experiential education is informal. They did not plan for it. They do have to respond to it and help their students learn from it.
- Social**
 - It is difficult to participate in OL activities which are experiential by their very nature without constant and successful social interaction (Ord & Leather, 2018).
 - It provides plenty of opportunities for practice and development of the myriad of skills necessary for successful relational work including communication, mediation, and compromise.
- Reflection**
 - It is more than just an experience. There should be reflection on what took place where the experience is examined and discussed.
- Transactional**
 - According to Ord and Leather (2018), Dewey viewed true experiential education as a transaction where the environment had an impact on the student and the short term and long-term effects on the student of that experience, but there is also a consequence for the environment.
 - We act, and our actions have consequences for ourselves, those around us, and the environment that we are in (Ord & Leather, 2018).