

Out-of-school and Outdoor Learning Pedagogy and Theory

Situated Learning Theory

- It is location and time dependent which is the reality and the challenge 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.
- It is unintentional and situated within an authentic activity, context, and culture where many things combine to create learning. Context matters.
- It has 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.

Environmental Education

- It is about 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.
- It is about changing behavior.
- It is more than just learning about environmental concerns, it is also about taking action to address those concerns.
- It should be about environmental justice including decisions about land use and who benefits and who doesn't.

Place-based Education

- It has the potential to challenge the dominant paradigm by examining the structures of place.
- It can support the act of decolonization by deconstructing how the colonized system of education works and engaging in practices that are more environmentally and socially supportive.
- It is learning explicitly about the land and its history of settler-colonialism.
- It is getting students into the community places that will help them make real meaning with those places and impact what those places are.
- It is more than just examining places, it is also about contributing to the care of those places.

Holistic Learning Theory

- It understands that all things are interconnected which means that if one part is changed, it affects everything else and breaking things down into small subsets of knowledge and understanding is not very useful.
- It believes that we should be educating the whole person and that there is more to education and human development than subjects and curricular content.
- It believes that learning and education should take place within a supportive and open setting that is a collaborative group of learners and teachers.
- It is about actually being involved in relevant and authentic experiences.

Social Development Theory

- It is that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development.
- It views learning as a social process in which children learn through collaboration and interaction with each other and with the adults around them.
- It states that the zone of proximal development or place of peak development is in between what the student can do on their own and what they can do when they have assistance.

Land-based Education

- It has a distinct focus on relationships between people and people and the land.
- It underlines how all living and non-living things are connected and is the foundation of learning and all relationships and land is viewed by many Indigenous peoples as the original teacher.
- It is 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.
- 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).

Adventure Education

- It has traditionally focused on personal development including social skills and problem-solving through challenging adventure activities.
- These activities include camping, canoeing, hiking, climbing, initiative tasks, ropes courses, biking trips, etc.
- It has traditionally relied on the notion of perceived and actual risk as a motivator and cause for learning and growth.
- It is designed to provide opportunities for autonomy and self-direction and the development of self-reliance that can reduce the need for direct adult supervision.

Experiential Learning Theory

- It is hands-on learning that is relevant and authentic to the learner.
- It is informal and seldom can be planned for or duplicated.
- It is social by default. It is very difficult to be experiential without being social.
- You can't describe what a banana tastes like to someone who has never tasted a banana. They need to taste the banana.