



Exploring the Philosophical Foundation of Process Education

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Abstract:

Researchers and practitioners of Process Education are familiar with designing learning exercises that assist students in growing as learners. They also have plenty of assessment and evaluation tools that they can use to determine whether students are growing as learners. Yet many practitioners of Process Education are not acquainted with the philosophical presuppositions of their preferred pedagogy. After reading the Learning to Learn textbook and several articles on Process Education, two of these presuppositions become evident. First, students are more than the sum total of their past and present experiences; rather, they possess the potential to transcend their past selves and grow as people in the future. Second, students can change themselves by actively committing themselves to follow a different life vision than they presently follow. Participants in this session will analyze how these two presuppositions work in Process Education by first answering a few exploration questions from the Learning to Learn textbook, then discussing those answers in small teams, and finally analyzing those answers.

Learning Outcome:

1. Analyze how the idea held by practitioners of Process Education that students can become self-growers and lifelong learners is dependent on two philosophical presuppositions—namely, (a) that students are more than their past and present selves and (b) that they can actively commit themselves to follow a different life vision than the one they current follow.

Facilitation Plan:

1. Ask participants to think about how they would answer the following questions: Who are you? What are the 1-3 activities you actively perform that make your life meaningful? (Participants aren't meant to answer these questions aloud. I will ask them to answer these questions later in the session.)
2. Use a Prezi or Slides.com presentation to explain two of the philosophical presuppositions functioning as the philosophical foundation for Process Education and identify a few of the philosophically meaningful concepts associated with Process Education (e.g., identity, life vision).
3. For 10-15 minutes, participants will answer the following activity and exploration questions from the Learning to Learn book:
 - a. "Who Am I?" activity from Experience 1.
 - b. Second exploration question from Experience 3.
 - c. Second, third, and fourth questions from Experience 7.
4. Participants will discuss their answers to 3a – 3c in small teams for 15 minutes. In these discussion, they will reflect on how their answers to 3a are related to their answers to 3b and 3c.
5. As a group, participants will analyze how the philosophical presuppositions identified in the session abstract are important to understanding the pedagogical commitments associated with Process Education.

Resources Needed:

1. Participants will need pens or pencils to complete handouts during the session.
2. I will need an overhead projector for Prezi or Slides.com presentation.
3. I will need wireless internet service for laptop computer.
4. Each participant will need handouts of the "My Life Vision" Worksheet from Experience 1 of *Learning to Learn: Becoming a Self-Grower* textbook and several exploration questions from Experiences 3 and 7 of Learning to Learn textbook. (These are available on the following pages.)

Learning To Learn: Becoming A Self-Grower	EXPERIENCE 3:
EXPLORATION QUESTION	YOUR PAST DOESN'T DEFINE YOUR FUTURE

2. What are the most significant changes in identity you want? (Review the Theory of Performance from Experience 1.) In other words, what aspect of your identity do you want strengthened?

Learning To Learn: Becoming A Self-Grower	EXPERIENCE 7:
EXPLORATION QUESTIONS	VISIONING YOUR FUTURE

2. How much does your environment shape who you are versus how much do you shape your environment?

3. How much do you believe that your destiny is in your own hands? Why?

4. Imagine that you've just reached retirement age. Look back over the course of your life and list the 10 most important or valuable things that have happened to you over the course of your life.