

Bruner

“ A fish will be the last to discover water”
“How do I reach these children?”

To a degree almost entirely overlooked by anti-subjective behaviorists, our interactions with others are deeply affected by our everyday intuitive theories about how other minds work.”

Problem as teacher as facilitator vs teacher as authority who tells child

For once we recognize that a teacher’s conception of a learner shapes the instruction he or she employs, then equipping teachers (or parents) with the best available theory of the child’s mind becomes crucial.

The Importance of Structure

Two ways that learning serves the future;

- 1) Specific transfer or training- we learn how to hammer a nail and we can transfer that to hammering a tack**
- 2) The transfer of principles or attitudes**

In order to master principles we need to master the subject matter.

We must have children master general principles and develop a proper attitude toward learning.

“ Teaching specific topics or skills without making clear their context in the broader fundamental structure of a field of knowledge is uneconomical in several deep senses. In the first place, such teaching makes it exceedingly difficult for the student to generalize from what he has learned to what he will encounter later. In the second place, learning that has fallen short of a grasp of general principles has little reward in terms of intellectual excitement...Third, knowledge one has acquired without sufficient structure to tie it together is knowledge that is likely to be forgotten...Organizing facts in terms of principles and ideas from which they may be inferred is the only known way of reducing the quick rate of loss of human memory”

“ I have long argued that explaining what children do is not enough; the new agenda is to determine what they think they are doing and what their reasons are for doing it”

“ We must place ourselves inside the heads of our students and try to understand as far as possible the sources and strengths of their conceptions” Howard Gardner

Advances in how we go about understanding children’s minds are, then, a prerequisite to any improvement in pedagogy.

Children usually begin by assuming that the teacher has the knowledge and passes it on to the class. Under appropriate conditions they soon learn that others in the class might have knowledge too, and that it can be shared.

What about group discussion as a way of creating knowledge rather than merely finding out who has what knowledge?