



Texas Professional Home Childcare Association

2025

2nd Quarter Self-instructional training **“Child Development and the Teacher’s Role”** **6 training hours**

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Master Registered Trainer with Texas Trainer Registry -#1509

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To obtain your certificate:

- ✓ Answer the questions attached
- ✓ **Mail answers to:**
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With 70% or 28 of your answers correct you will receive your certificate along with your corrected answers. The date your test is received by the Education Chair is the date that will appear on the certificate. Please allow four weeks to receive your certificate.

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Child Development and the Teacher's Role

4 Hour Class

Objectives

1. As a result of this training, the participant will be able to explain the components of brain based learning.
2. As a result of this training, the participant will be able to list 5 ways that they will help the children in their classroom's development.
3. As a result of this training, the participant will be able to explain their influence on the children in their class.

Introduction

Each early childhood teacher has a significant amount of influence on the children in their classroom. We often think about how we influence academic learning but what about the rest of a child's development? This course will take a look at how you, the teacher or director, directly and indirectly influences how children are growing up today. These influences can last a lifetime.

Brain Based Research

Brain based learning is a learning theory that believes that as long as the brain is not hurt or prohibited in some other way and is completely normal, learning will always occur. Structure and function of the brain is the bases for Brain Based Learning. This learning uses current research from neurosciences and is a comprehensive approach to teaching by emphasizing the brain's natural learning ability. (Woolfolk, 2007). Brain based education strives to bring insights and conclusions from brain research into educational instruction and learning.

The brain is a connecting of loops and layers of connecting organic material. This connection makes it possible for teachers to plan curriculum lesson plans that include physical, personal, social and cognitive development. Teachers are able to connect a child's learning to their emotional experiences, real life experiences, and their personal experiences. Stimulation by the child and his environment is very important for development and learning. (Woolfolk, p. 24). This stimulation is very important for early learning. Extreme deprivation has a negative effect of the development of the brain, but over stimulation does not necessarily mean that the brain will develop more or faster. The brain develops rapidly over the years of early childhood, and therefore if extreme deprivation occurs lifelong effects might happen. Some compensation might overcome this deprivation because of the brain's plasticity or adaptability. Teachers need to know about brain based education because they need to be prepared for anything. Teachers need to understand exactly how the brain works, develops, and can be damaged so they can take each individual child into consideration when dealing with them.

Over the years, I have learned many theorist views on the way our brain develops, grows, and matures. By knowing the different views, I have been able to plan and execute a learning environment that takes all of these thoughts into consideration. I really believe that my knowledge of brain research and brain based education will only help me to better educate each individual child in my classroom.

Cognitive Development - Piaget

Cognitive developmental theories focus on play's content, emphasizing the different aspects of play as children grow and develop. Piaget is one of the major theorists in this area. I have really enjoyed learning more about Piaget's views and how they reflect on a child's developing intellect. In the assimilation process, children view their external environment and fit information from it into their established cognitive stage. I really am grateful that I learned that if children's concepts are incomplete or inaccurate the child will then alter their pattern of thinking by the accommodation process. Play is how children practice, consolidate and elaborate what is going on in their environment. The part that I really enjoy thinking about is that Piaget's theory comes from the perspective of the child (p. 509). It is very important to me to learn more about Piaget's viewpoint because it comes from the child's perspective. One thing I really enjoyed about this article is the discussion of development occurs along a continuum. (p. 510). I had never thought about how a child's development occurs through a continuum. This is great information for me to have.

Researchers over the years have misunderstood Piaget's development theory as being about "age determined stages." This means that a child must reach a particular age before he is able to perform or master certain task. Instead of being age specific, it is more correct to speak in general terms. Child's ability to understand and master the different stages of development is individual. Each child's background and ability must be taken into account. For example, a six year old might be able to master a concept before a seven year old. It is important to keep in mind the child's abilities not just their age. Another misunderstanding of Piaget's by many researches is that a child must reach a certain age before we attempt to teach them something. It is important for educators to remember and understand the nature of a child's through process and how it is different than an adults. Age appropriate activates are important in introducing concepts to children. Activities like creative art, music, reading, role playing and enacting stories are how children are able to comprehend and understand a concept.

Piaget's foundational insight and believe was that each individual must construct their own personal understanding and that learning is always a constructive process (Woolfolk, 2007). It is the responsibility of the teacher to interact with the children and help the children to test their thinking, to be challenged, give feedback, and allow the opportunity for all children to watch others work out issues. The second article, "Cognitive and Social Constructivism: Developing Tools for an Effective Classroom", (Powell & Kalina, 2009) that I read reinforced my knowledge in Piaget's theories. I found many areas of knowledge that I know are going to help me in being a better teacher. Piaget's idea of how individuals construct knowledge is his main focus when speaking of constructivism teaching. Piaget's work is the main force behind constructivism teaching.

With Piaget's views that people are not able to just be taught any information, but rather must construct their own knowledge about the information is his theory of cognitive development. Piaget's four stages of development are sensorimotor stage, preoperational stage, concrete operational stage, and formal operational stage.

Piaget's first intellectually development period is called the Sensorimotor Period and is from about birth to age two. This period is from a newborn child, whose interactions with the environment are based on reflexes to toddlers who will interact with people in their environment. The toddler is able to walk, run and even manipulate the environment and interact with people for their own purposes. The basic mode of operating is through senses and muscles. Children learn about their environment and how to manipulate it by the use of their bodies. Through interactions with the environment, as well as innate maturation, children begin to understand the concept of object permanence, which means objects exist even if the child cannot actually see them. They also begin to be able to see themselves as separate from others and from objects in the environment.

The Pre-operational Period is from about two to seven years of age. It is characterized by the child learning to use mental symbols or imagery. The language develops rapidly from using words for immediate things or actions to beginning steps in reasoning. Play takes on symbolic forms, with children playing as blocks were a guitar, truck or golf club. Dramatic play develops as children pretend to be teachers, doctors, parents and other individuals that have been a part of the child's environment. Child's thought process and play is egocentric, meaning they cannot think from another's point of view.

The Concrete Operational Period is from about seven to eleven years of age. This stage of intellectual development is characterized by a child's ability to think logically. This logical thinking works well as long as they are able to manipulate the objects from a base of concrete reality. During this time frame children are able to develop and refine abilities to classify, seriate, mentally reverse a process and deduce new relationships. Thinking is less egocentric during this period. Children start to problem solve, yet they cannot yet think abstractly and must still have concrete objects to use when problem solving.

The Formal Operational Period last from about ages eleven through adulthood. This period is characterized by the child moving from concrete manipulations to abstract thinking and problem solving. This is the highest level of intellectual development and the person is able to form abstract ideas, formulate and test hypotheses and engage in reflective thinking. Many believe that most people never complete this stage.

As children go through the four stages, they will be able to construct schemas, or organizational patterns through the process of assimilation and accommodation, and equilibration. These are the foundations for more complex structures and mental activity develops. Children will absorb new information and material into an existing schema or structures through assimilation. Children will change the already existing structure to include new situations through accommodation. Children will bring a balance between the existing structures and the new structures through equilibration. Children are able to

develop ways that are effective in dealing with their environment. As they gain more experiences they will acquire more structures and be able to deal with more complex situations.

The celebration of the individual and the process that each of us goes through to gain knowledge is built on experiences. Piaget believed that a prerequisite to thinking is not that one must listen to their inner speech. Piaget believed that language was preceded by thought and our inner activity was the driving force that would help language evolve.

It is my responsibility to make sure I create a classroom that is effective in allowing a learning environment to occur. I need to create a classroom where children are able to explore the environment and create unique concepts that they can place in their own memory for retrieval at a later date. This environment needs to be based on real world experiences and meaningful practices. My role is very important as students learn through examples that they can relate to on a cognitive basis. I must make sure those opportunities for the children in my classroom can acquire knowledge and experiences plus I need to measure the successful understanding of these experiences. I need to make sure that trust and honesty go hand in hand with an open classroom where children can be engaged in activities to promote knowledge.

Comparison of Piaget and Vygotsky

Piaget believed that children develop stages of thinking in the same sequence and around the same time, but the exact age differs from child to child and in individual cultural. Piaget's four major periods of cognitive development are Sensorimotor, Preoperational, Concrete Operational, and Formal Operational. (Woolfolk, 2007). The sensorimotor period in children will last from birth to around age two. During this period children develop from newborns, which interact with their environment based on reflexes, to toddlers who can interact well with people who walk, run and manipulate their environment for their own purposes. The basic structure of operating and exploring their environment is through their senses and muscles. Children learn about their world through manipulating and exploring with the use of their bodies. It is in this period that children develop object permanence which means an object exists even if the child cannot see it anymore. The child is also able to decenter, which is seeing themselves as separate from other people and from items in their environment. Children in the sensorimotor period are also at the beginning of being able to perform goal directed actions. This is a logical thinking process that children are able to think in steps to accomplish a goal. (Woolfolk, p. 30). The preoperational period of Piaget's cognitive development in children lasts from early childhood to early elementary years which are normally between the ages of two and seven. This period is marked by children learning to use imagery and mental symbols. Children have not yet mastered mental operations but are moving toward it. Children are able to use symbols, which include gestures, signs, and images and so on. As children move through this stage they have one way thinking, meaning they can't think backward about a subject. Children have a tendency to be very egocentric, which is to see the world and other's actions only from their own viewpoint. They have trouble understanding other's points of view and desires. Children are only

able to focus their attention on one aspect of a concept or situation at a time, which is called decentering. Children are able to move to a symbolic play where they will pretend to be a doctor, parent or make a block into a truck or phone. (Woolfolk, p. 31). The concrete operational period last between later elementary to the middle school years or from around age seven to eleven. This period is marked by children's ability to think logically. This logical thinking only exists as long as they are able to manipulate the object from a base of concrete reality. During this stage children have three basic aspects of reasoning: identity, compensation, and versatility. During this stage children develop and then are able to refine the ability to classify, seriate, mentally reverse a process and deduce new relationships. (Woolfolk, p. 34). The formal operational period will occur usually in high school and college or around the ages of eleven to adulthood. This period is marked by a movement from concrete manipulations to an ability to think abstractly. At this highest level of cognitive development and thinking the adolescent should be able to form abstract ideas, formulate and test hypotheses, and engage in reflective thinking. There is evidence that not all people are able to reach this stage of cognitive development. This stage people are able to move from a thinking of what must be to a thinking of what might be. During this stage people are able to imagine what might be instead of having to draw off of experiences and objects they can touch and manipulate. In this stage people develop what is called adolescent egocentrism, which has a different meaning than that of a young child egocentric. This stage of egocentric behavior is characterized by only being able to focus on their ideas and believes. (Woolfolk, p. 36).

A fundamental Vygotsky's belief is that view that as a result of the social interactions of children and their unique cultural and historical settings will influence their development. The child develops on two planes, which are the natural or biological and the cultural. (Woolfolk, p. 39). There comes a time during the child's development that biological factors and maturational factors are influencing the physical and mental structures of the child. As the child develops and changes, new influences affect that change. The dominate influences for development becomes the varying social factors the child experiences and thus offer better explanations of changes. The development operates within a given biological framework and must be accepted as that. From the earliest time in a child's life, learning and development are interrelated. During different developmental stages children will learn different things through their environment and act on them independently. Vygotsky's belief that cultural settings are the only place human activities can occur. Vygotsky suggested that there are two different developmental levels at which children are able to operate. The first level of operation is the stage where children do problem solving tasks independently, while the second level is where children can do the same task under the guidance of an adult. AS children mature, the potential level becomes the actual level when the child can perform the task independently. The distance between these two levels is called the zone of proximal development. (Woolfolk, p. 34). Vygotsky was very concerned with the child's actual level of development and urged that children be tested more often to determine their potential level.

Piaget and Vygotsky believed that a child's development success could not be explained by a single factor such as biological or maturational influences and environmental or social factors. They both believed that the child's development was depending on both of these interactions and factors. Both theorists believed that children must have both inner influences and social interactions with others to develop and grow naturally. A child cannot develop to the best of his ability without being hands on involved with their environment.

Erikson's psychosocial theory of development

Each of the eight Erikson psychosocial strengths exists at all eight stages and are all related to each other. (Woolfolk, 2007). Each strength however has its own critical period for development, and follows a proper sequence and structure. Cultural and social values can also affect how people maintain progress from one of the stages to another. For a child to develop a normal pattern of behavior the positive attribute of the stage needs to be satisfied and each crucial period before the next period begins to develop. A person's development from a trusting infant to an old person that has ego integrity depends on the successful completion and integration of all stages.

The first stage is titled basic trust vs mistrust and affects children ages birth to 12 – 18 months. For basic trust to develop, infants from birth to eighteen months must gradually develop a sense of "inner goodness" since they have now determined there is an "outer predictability." The child's environment has provided consistency, continuity, and sameness of experiences. Without this children will develop a basic mistrust and hostility toward others and the world. The second stage is titled autonomy vs. shame and doubt and affects children ages 18 months to 3 years. Between nineteen months and three years of age, toddlers develop a sense of autonomy. As they begin to move around through walking they develop a desire to let go and well as a need to hold on even more. Children begin to develop a sense of self and pride in their own achievements. If they are shamed because of their attempts at letting go and their experiments with the world, they will develop a sense of shame and self-doubt as they function in the world. The third stage is titled initiative vs. guilt and affects children ages 3 to 6 years of age. At about the age of three a new stage unfolds which is initiative, where children are able to undertake and plan their own activities then do them in cooperation with other children around them. When an adult does not offer proper regulations, children may undertake more than they can achieve. This will develop into a sense of guilt or failure. If the caregiver doesn't permit practicing developing skills the child will live with a sense of failure. The fourth stage is titled industry vs. inferiority and affects children ages 6 to 12 years of age. When children are approximately six years of age until puberty they are developing a sense of industry. At this stage they become producers of things and users of tools, not the least being reading, writing, and mathematics. Children become socially adept as they work beside and with others. One problem that occurs in this stage is that children may develop a sense of inadequacy in using the "tools" of their world. Another danger adults need to be careful of is to overwork the child which will make them feel conformists. The fifth stage is titled identity vs role confusion and affects adolescence. Peer relationship is so important with the adolescence that they start to listen to their peers instead of their parents. This is a

time when adolescence start to figure out who they are. Adolescence will start to achieve their own identity in gender roles, politics, religion and occupation. The sixth stage is titled intimacy vs. isolation and affects young adults. As adolescences move into young adulthood they start to create intimate relationships or suffer isolation feelings. When they are unable to create love bonds, they will start to pull away and be alone. The seventh stage is generativity vs. stagnation and affects people in middle adulthood. As we start to have children and look at their future, we must start to support our children's generation. This stage revolves around the adult's ability to care for other people and societies future generations. The final stage is titled ego integrity vs. despair and affects adults in late adulthood. This is a time when we sit back and reflect on our life. We either have a sense of acceptance of our self or we don't. We will have a sense of fulfillment of our life if we have gone through the stages correctly and meet each level.

Foster and Support Emotional Development

We are all drawn to education for different reasons. For me, I believe in helping children in more ways than just academic. I believe there are good teachers, bad teachers, and teachers that are in-between. To be a good teacher, one must look past only the academic part of their job and look more into the development of the child. To really see the child for how they are and to help develop all aspects of their personality is what makes an exceptional teacher.

A child that is in a teacher's classroom that shows the children how cared for they are will feel secure and that will encourage the child's emotional development. (Woolfolk, 2007). An early childhood teacher that provides a loving and trustworthy relationship with the children in their care will help a child to develop a basic trust with the world. This trust that they have will be the foundation for them to move on in life. Having a trust in the people that they have in their environment will help children's emotional state feel secure. Teachers need to show each individual child special attention that will let them know that they can do anything they want. A child that feels love and safe in his environment will feel secure enough to explore it with all that he is. This exploration will make a child feel secure in who he is which will also make him feel valuable and worthy.

It is very important for teaches to not only think about what they teacher, but who they teach. There are many factors a teacher can set into motion that can affect a child's emotional development. Teachers need to show a child they are respected, loved, valuable, believed in and important. By showing a child that the teacher has time for them, respect their ideas and personalities, and truly make a place for the child, a teacher will be providing an outstanding environment to help a child emotional development grow.

Self-concept and self-esteem

A person's evaluation of themselves, their self-worth, and their self-competence is their self-esteem. The combination of a person's self-image and self-esteem is called their self-concept. A person's ideas, feelings, attitudes and expectations about themselves are a general term that refers to each individual person's self-concept. (Woolfolk, 2007). A person's self-esteem is often marked by the cultural they live in. The cultural influences put importance on particular characteristics and capabilities of each individual. I was raised in a small town, on a small farm. I was not raised with money, and worked hard to help my parents. Everyone in the town was poor, hardworking farmers who didn't have a lot of extra after paying bills. It was expected that we work hard, do the best we can, and money wasn't a factor in how we viewed each other. I had a high self-esteem because I was accepted by everyone in the town, since we were all lived very similar lives. As I grew up and moved away for college, my self-esteem changed. I went to a larger college than I was ready for. The dorm was full of girly girl ladies that were more interested in makeup and fashion than I was. I was more interested in finding a place to ride a horse. My self-esteem changed so much because I no longer felt that I was as good as the people in my environment.

The combination of a person's self-image and self-esteem is called their self-concept. A person's ideas, feelings, attitudes and expectations about themselves are a general term that refers to each individual person's self-concept. Self-concept is more an issue of us trying to explain ourselves to ourselves. This self-concept can change from situation to situation and from environment to environment. As I was in college, I changed to fit in with the other girls in the dorm. Within a year, I had learned how to be one way at college and another at home in the small town. I joined a sorority and learned out to fix my hair and makeup the way other sorority girls did. I also went to a very small public school so when I graduated 3rd in my class I was very proud. Once I got to college, I understood that being 3rd in a class of only 52 isn't that big a deal. I had to really focus more on studies and found myself struggling at times. My self-concept of being one of the smartest kids in school changed as the people I was in school with changed.

As an educator we need to make sure that we allow children to be exactly how they are. We need to help build their self-esteem by accepting their feelings and always being an understandable adult in their life. One thing I notice teachers do all the time is label a child according to their temperament traits. I believe that this label will stay with them and start to influence how they think of themselves. There is a situation called "self-fulfilling prophecy" which means that if you tell a child what they are, they will soon be that way. This can be a positive or negative label. For example, if you call a child "lazy" or "stupid" then soon they will start to believe that about themselves and become that. Attitudes that are formed very early in life contribute to a positive or negative self-concept and self-esteem. Teachers need to show children that they are loved, valued, can learn, can succeed and be secure in the world. My parents gave me all of these things without labeling me so I was secure in whom I was a child in the small town. Many girls that I went to school with were unable to move from small town to college because they did not have adults who helped them develop a positive self-esteem as a child.

Dimensions of identity

In our society today a person's socioeconomic status is often a determination factor on the way other's think of you. (Woolfolk, 2007). In 2005, about one in six children lived in poverty. It is sad that so many children are struggling in their daily life. Children need a secure and safe place to explore and learn, but sometimes they are not able to receive that when they live in poverty. Children that live in poverty are often stressed. Their environment is more polluted both in air and water. Children of poverty are usually 2 times more likely to contract lead poisoning. Children that are born to adolescent mothers usually did not receive good prenatal care. Children born into poverty are often viewed in a negative light because they might be dressed in old clothing, speak in a different dialect, no have the same store bought school supplies and not be as familiar with activities. Teachers might have a bias against these students because they feel that the child can't learn anyway. Expectations are low from teachers, staff, parents and often the student himself. This can become a self-fulfilling prophecy where if everyone thinks the child will do poorly, he will. He will not feel that he is encouraged to do better, so he will stop working toward success. If the child doesn't feel that he is worthy of a high education or success, then he will absolutely fail. It is important for adults to make sure they do not have any biases against children that come from lower socioeconomic society.

Teachers must be careful not to have a bias against a child's ethnicity or race. A group that is characterized because of common nationality, culture or language is referred to as ethnicity. There are many differences between different cultural, like holidays, but there are also small differences that teachers need to be careful of. Teachers need to watch out for the little differences that children might have in their classroom. An issue that all teachers need to be careful of is that some ethnic groups seem to achieve below the average test scores. In 2004 I witnessed a Principal at Jackie Carden Elementary in Crowley Texas make a speech about how the African American children in her school had driven the TASK scores down for her school. This principal was so upset over low standardized test scores that she actually made a speech in front of the school student body, staff, and PTA regarding it. She obviously had a bias against the children that had recently moved into the neighborhood, and blamed them for her school's low grade. She was fired the next week and a black principal was brought in to replace her. I can only imagine what her speech did to the minority children in the school and I am so glad the district took steps to help all the children.

So many times we make comments and views regarding gender to children that we shouldn't. I see it often when a teacher doesn't want a boy to play in the kitchen center or tell a girl they can't play with the brio train set. A part of our self-concept is our gender role identity, which is how we view our self as either feminine or masculine. Teachers need to encourage children to be whatever they want to be, not what we think a boy or girl should do. I was shocked to see that research has shown that boys are given more freedom than girls to walk around the neighborhood. I can however, see that I have to be careful of this also. I have though hard about if I tell the boys in my class to "dust it off" when they fall while I run to a girl's side to help her when she falls outside. This gender role stereotyping isn't fair to children and we need to be very

careful how we treat all the kids in our care. All educators need to make sure that they do not expect more from one gender than the other. I have seen teachers expect the boys in her class to do better in math, while she expects the girls to do better in English. This is a type of sex discrimination in the classroom, and we need to give each gender the same attention and encouragement in all subjects. (p. 180).

Bias and Discrimination Based on Sex and Gender

Gender-role stereotyping is when an adult treats the genders differently. To many times teachers want the boys to be rough and tough, and the girls to be little ladies. We need to be careful in this and let children be children. I have a book from my childhood in the 1970s that was about what girls will be when they grow up. As I flip through it now, I see that girls were only able to be teachers, nurses, mothers, bakers, secretaries, and sales ladies. I find it so sad that everything that is written in the book is a stereotyping of what a girl can be. Unfortunately it is still that way today sometimes. As I bought groceries today I went to the toy side of the store to look at what was offered. I notice how dolls, Barbie's and pretend play items like kitchen set were marketing toward women. Boys had cars, guns, and trains marketed toward them. When a child reaches 4 to 5 children have already developed their gender schema for clothes, games, toys, and behaviors. We need to make sure in our classrooms that we offer both genders all activities, toys, games and learning activities possible. If a teacher can't find a book that shows both genders playing with all toys, a teacher can make them own. A teacher needs to do whatever they can to bring activities alive for both genders.

As children move through the elementary school years, they learn the definition of being a boy or a girl. So many times schools unfortunately show children what is meant to be gender biases. Even though publishers have tried hard not to show text books in gender stereotypes, it does still happen. Books try to have equal number of boys and girls in the books, but still many times boys are on the title page or the cover of the book. Children see this not only in text books, but also on television. Teachers need to provide an equal as possible showing of boys and girls. We also need to be careful not to show boys in gender stereotyped roles. As teachers pick books and videos to show in the classroom they need to be careful not to allow gender stereotyping.

I think all of us have to watch ourselves in how we treat the different genders. Research has been done of this treatment by teachers but most of it was focused on White students. Teachers have to be careful to not ask more questions to males give males more feedback and give more specific comments to males. It seems that this type of sex discrimination has been proven from preschool through college. Teachers also need to be careful not to give one gender or race all of their attention. We have to learn to balance everyone fairly and to share our time between each child. Every child deserves the very best from us, and if we let our biases get the better of us, we will be doing an injustice to others. To be careful not to have sex discrimination in your classroom, one must view and treat each child the same. Do not think of boys as better in science and math, or girls better in English. Give them all the same attention in each subject. As we give sex discrimination a voice in our classroom, the children in our class will pick up on it.

Sense of community

Children need to have a safe and productive educational system. Johnson and Johnson focused on the three C's (cooperative community, constructive conflict resolution, and civic values) to help achieve this educational system. Piaget's development theory on conceptual change is a great reinforcement of the constructive conflict resolution. Piaget's theory of development shows that cognitive conflict must be present for true learning to occur. We must learn to resolve conflict of all types. There is community conflict for humans of all ages. We must learn to resolve these community conflicts because it is an important life skill. Teachers need to make sure that they handle aggressive children correctly and help them learn to resolve their own conflict. It is hard to handle conflict at any age but for young children it can be even harder. There is evidence that shows that conflicts occur over school resources and preferences.

Civic values are the views, understandings and beliefs that bond a community together. A teacher will help children learn values through direct teaching, modeling, reading literature, sharing concern with each other, and by engaging discussions in both small and large groups. Teachers have also provided an outlet for children to write concerns and comments about the classroom. Once a week or so, the class comes together and discusses what has been written. Children are able to be there for each other, help them through difficult times, and to really hear what children are in need of. Children are given this opportunity to be able to discuss values and morals. If a child is feeling disrespected, the other children will be able to have an opportunity to learn about how to be more responsive and show respect to others.

When a teacher helps children to have a safe environment where they feel that all their emotional needs are met, they are freer to learn. So many times children feel the pressure from their neighborhood community that they can't think about learning. When they have so many other things on their mind they can't open it for learning. By having an open discussion in the classroom they can make sure and alleviate some of that stress. For children to feel comfortable to explore learning, they have to feel safe and secure. Part of making sure a learning environment is secure, is to make sure they feel appreciated by each other. When children are helping each other they form a bond that isn't normally there. This bond helps them to have a learning environment that promotes both community and education.

Declarative and Procedural Knowledge

When knowledge is able to be declared through words and symbols it is referred to as declarative knowledge (Woolfolk, 2007). These symbols and words can be spoken words, sign language, musical notations, mathematical symbols, written words, dance and more. There is a large range of declarative knowledge. Someone can know very specific facts (5 k is the same as 3.1 miles), generalities (it is hot in Texas in the summer), personal desires and preferences (my favorite color is blue), or specific rules (to add numbers that equal more than ten, one must carry the tens spot). At times larger units are declarative knowledge that are smaller units that have been organized. When my children are faced with a test at school, they are using declarative knowledge as they explain their answer on paper. My daughter is in the 8th grade but

taking Freshman Algebra this year. She has to remember all the rules of how to work her algebra problems and then be able to use symbols to correspond the correct answer on the paper.

Knowledge in action or knowing how to do something is procedural knowledge. My husband has procedural knowledge when it comes to cars. He can take an engine apart, repair the broken pieces and put it back into the vehicle. I have no idea how to do anything with cars and so I do not have any procedural knowledge of vehicles. For a student to learn something through procedural knowledge the student must act and explore. My husband went to college to learn how to work on cars. He actually received a B.S. in Automotive Engineering. His classes were all about hands on activities and very little lecture class. He owns a few Automotive Garages now and when he has a new hire, especially interested teenagers or young adults, he teaches them with procedure knowledge. The student demonstrates his ability to remove a carburetor and rebuild it by doing it, not by explaining it.

When we apply our declarative and procedural knowledge we are using our conditional knowledge. Being able to know when and why is referred to as conditional knowledge. For many students and even adults, conditional knowledge is a road block and sometimes they struggle with it. My daughter's algebra class is full of conditional knowledge because she has to remember when to apply each different algebra rule. If she doesn't remember the correct rule, then she will struggle with the answer and fail the test. The same works for my husband with his auto shop. At times a customer will come in and explain a problem. To fix the car, there are 3 or 4 different procedures he could try. It is up to his knowledge to come up with the correct answer to fix the person's problem with their car.

Metacognitive skills

People have their own automatic awareness of their individual knowledge and their own ability to manipulate their cognitive machinery (Woolfolk, 2007). Metacognition is literally thinking about thinking, or cognition about cognition. People are all different and therefore they differ in their metacognitive knowledge and skills. Each person will differ on the way they learn: how quickly, how fast, how well.

There are three basic skills and types of knowledge we refer to when we talk about metacognition. The first one is declarative knowledge. This means the personal knowledge about oneself as a learner. It also refers to the factors that influence ones learning and memory. The skills, strategies, and resources that are needed for one to perform a task are also part of declarative knowledge. A good example is my husband is able to put all of those together when he removes an engine in a vehicle, remembers how to rebuild it, rebuilds it, and then places it back in the vehicle. The second basic skills and type of knowledge in regard to metacognition is procedural knowledge. Procedural knowledge is the knowledge of knowing how to use strategies. When I play chess with my oldest son I always lose. He is able to use strategies to remember the way I am going to place my pieces on the chess board and he always wins. The third basic skills and type of knowledge is regard to metacognition is conditional knowledge. This knowledge is being able to know when and why to apply the procedures and

strategies. To accomplish goals and solve problems one must use the strategic applications of declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge. This working together is what we refer to as Metacognition.

Constructivist views of Learning

Many viewpoints of some great theorist like Piaget, Vygotsky, Barltett, Bruner and Dewey are the foundation views of constructivist perspectives. (Woolfolk, 2007). Teachers and text books transmit knowledge for students, but the constructivism views on learning are more than that. Learners must be actively involved in constructing the own personal individual learning and important to knowledge construction is social interactions.

There are many factors that can make constructivism beneficial to the students. Learning needs to start with the student's interest and issues. It is all about the student searching for knowledge and meaning to understand concepts. Teacher's curriculum must change for the constructivism view point. It would eliminate a standardized curriculum. Instead, lesson plans are planned for individual students. The teacher will tailor fit their lesson plan and teaching strategies for the student's responses, interest, and desires. The teacher will need to rely heavily on open ended questions and encourage the students to analyze, interpret and predict information. This is a lot more work for teachers. I understand how teachers are already over worked and under paid, but I really believe the benefits of constructivism are very important.

I really do believe that constructivism is very beneficial to learning. I have seen children in classrooms that react better to curriculum that they are interested in. I try now to use a child's interest as much as possible when I am planning lesson. Children want to do activities that they are already interested in. Children will connect better to an interesting subject and therefore they will explore it in more depth and details. When children are bored they will lose interest and their attention will be distracted. I have seen classrooms use a constructivism approach and have seen the results. Yes, I do believe it is more work for the teacher because there is no more cookie cutter lesson plans, but being able to see the way a child connects to the subject they are interested in is worth all the extra planning work.

Motivating students to learn

Intrinsic motivation is the motivation we each have within ourselves (Woolfolk, 2007). When we are completing a task or activity for the pure pleasure of completing it we are referring to intrinsic motivation. My husband at age of 32 decided he wanted to complete a triathlon, and then an iron man. He trained for 8 months before his first full triathlon. He researched the proper way to train for your first triathlon, bought a special bike, special shoes, and started the exercise. At first he did not enjoy it at all, but soon grew to where he found great inner reward in his accomplishments. He is not a morning person but he got up each morning at 4:30 to go swim laps at the gym, and then he would either run or bike later that day. It didn't matter if it was 32 degrees outside, raining, or if it a normal Texas summer day, he was outside practicing. After he completed his first triathlon he came in 43 out of 76 people in his age group, but he

didn't care about where he finished in the rankings. He was so proud of himself for following a dream and a routine to finish. That was my husband's intrinsic motivation was the inner feeling he received by being able to complete his first triathlon. Now, completing a triathlon doesn't give him as much reward. He is working toward doing the iron man in Hawaii one day, and that is his reasoning for training even harder now. Sometimes it is hard for people to want to do something for the pure pleasure of doing it. People are more likely to participate in activities that they can relate to and identify with. When a classroom is supportive of self-determination usually relate to greater student interest, sense of competence, creativity, conceptual learning, and preferences for challenges. When we creative the correct environment, children will find it within themselves to seek out learning.

When we work toward a reward or toward not receiving a punishment for our actions we are referring to extrinsic motivation. When we complete a task for a reward only, not for the pleasure of doing it, we are working within the extrinsic motivation guidelines. My daughter is a straight "A" student, on the honor rolls every six and a member of National Junior Honor Society. This year she took Algebra 1 in the eighth grade because her seventh grade math teacher recommended it, but she has struggled understanding the concepts. To continue to be a member of the National Junior Honor Society she has to maintain a 93 average in all her core classes, including Algebra 1. She has studied almost every night on her Algebra and has even gone to the schools Math Lab weekly for more help. The fear of her not being able to stay in the National Junior Honor Society with all her friends has motivated her to do whatever it takes to earn a 93 in Algebra 1. We need to be very careful with our extrinsic motivation because if a person is always rewarded for an activity, it becomes a habit where the true reason for the activity is lost. I use to pay my children money for doing chores around the house, until I realized that they had lost the respect and feeling of helping out the family. They only reason they were doing chores for me was for the money, and I didn't like that. Now, they receive an allowance and they know that everyone helps out with chores at our home. The two are no longer connected and I find they do much better and even more work around the house now. It is very important that when we do use extrinsic motivation that we are careful to not try to take the credit. If we are giving praise to a child for doing what the teacher said to do, that takes the accomplishment away from him and puts it on the teacher. It is important that we give the credit for the accomplishment to the child. Also, at times I believe people accidentally use extrinsic motivation incorrectly and receive behaviors they don't want. I have seen parents laugh at a child for saying an inappropriate word at home, which gave the child extrinsic motivation reward of parent's attention. Then when the child says the same word in public, the parents are embarrassed. They don't understand that they actually rewarded him by giggling at home two days prior and that is why he tried it again.

I think as we consider using both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation we need to consider the reason we need to motive a child and the child themselves. Some children are naturally motivated and involved in activities. The face that they are able to finish a more challenging puzzle on their own is enough joy and reward for them, while others need more praise and encouragement. When we think about motivation we need to

understand the situation which motivation is needed and the individual characteristics of the child. When we plan our curriculum and environment to foster a child's interest we might start to motivate them extrinsic, but soon they will be motivated intrinsic because they have found something they love. Our classrooms need to be a safe, secure place for children to explore their own interest. Once we present this type of environment, I believe that it is much easier to motivate children. When they feel that they have a control in it and own the activity, they are more likely to be engulfed in the process of the activity.

Self-efficacy and Learned Helplessness

In any given area we have personal beliefs and competence which we refer to as self-efficacy. Children need to be able to learn mathematics, writing, history, science, sports and even other subjects so they need to be able to be self-efficacy. As children develop self-efficacy they learn that attributions and self-efficacy relate to each other. Self-efficacy is enhanced when internal or controllable causes such as effort are attributed to success. Self-efficacy is not enhanced when luck or the intervention of others is attributed to success. When a person has a given task that they have self-efficacy they will give themselves the reward for doing well. For example, my daughter is great in science and always says "I am very good in Science and it is easy". When she does badly she always attributes the failure to lack of work. She will say "I didn't do well on the test because I didn't study enough". When a self-efficacy is low the same people will attribute their failure in that task for lack of ability. Christa struggles with spelling so always attributes her not spelling correctly on a paper by saying "I am just a terrible speller". My daughter has the feeling that she will never be a good speller. She even had a teacher tell us at a parent – teacher conference her sixth grade year that it was a good thing we now had spell check on computers. My daughter that I spoke about above doesn't try to spell anymore.

Learned helplessness occurs when someone starts to believe that the events and outcome of events in their life have happened because they have no control over them. I believe that children get like this when they are not given a quality program to explore and learn in. When children are in an environment that they are not given an opportunity to be successful in task they end up stop trying anymore. Children need to have task that they are able to complete and find success in so they are able to build a foundation of success. If they are never given the ability to succeed they think they never can so they stop. When a child has learned helplessness they will no longer be motivated to try and succeed with missing the opportunity to practice, succeed and try again children might suffer many issues like depression, anxiety and listlessness.

Teacher's Role

An expert teacher is someone that looks at the child and sees them for who they truly are, a child. An expert teacher doesn't look at the past or judge the child in anyway. An expert teacher takes the time to really get to know the child, and then uses that knowledge to encourage the child to learn, to behave, and to develop all the skills

that are acceptable for the child's age. An expert teacher is one that really wants what is best for the child, and will do whatever it takes to make that occur. An expert teacher is one that is in the teaching field to make a difference in the life of a child.

I believe that an expert and quality teacher must be loving, fair, accepting, and not judge due to color, gender or financial ability of the children. I am a very lucky person because I have 12 children ages 13 months and 4 years of age come to me each morning for school. They all come from families that do not qualify for government subsidy but also do not have enough money to pay the fees normal child care centers charge. We charge on a sliding scale so each parent pays a percentage of their net income. I have a couple of families that pay very little, and some that pay close to what the other day care centers in our area charge. I know firsthand that children can blossom with the right relationship with a teacher, and it isn't the amount of money their parents make that decides their educational outcome. There are times that I will have a child come to my classroom after they were terminated from another day care center. I find it fascinating how a little extra attention and love can turn a child's behavior around. After their behavior is under control they can then start to learn and enjoy learning. Children need to feel accepted and loved and once they do they feel safe to let go and explore their environment to learn. When a child feels like they are a "problem" they are going to live up to that label. When a teacher respects each individual child for who they are, then can then start to accept them and love them unconditionally. I feel very blessed each morning to have my day care children in my care!

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Child Development and the Teacher's Role
6 Hour Class Quiz

1. _____ is a learning theory that believes that as long as the brain is not hurt or prohibited in some other way and is completely normal, learning will always occur.
 - a. Brain Based Learning
 - b. Child Development
 - c. KBBLD
2. Knowledge of brain research and brain based education will help teachers better educate each individual child in the classroom.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. Piaget believed that learning should always be teacher directed and never come from the child's perspective.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. The _____ period in children will last from birth to around age two.
 - a. Operational
 - b. Critical
 - c. Sensorimotor
5. _____ believed that a child's development success could not be explained by a single factor such as biological or maturational influences and environmental or social factors.
 - a. Piaget
 - b. Vygotsky
 - c. Erikson
 - d. Piaget and Vygotsky
 - e. Vygotsky and Erikson
6. Erikson eight psychosocial strengths are separate from each other and do not related at all.
 - a. True
 - b. False
7. The ability to really see a child for who they are, their unique characteristics and to help develop all aspects of their personality is what makes an exceptional teacher.
 - a. True
 - b. False
8. An early childhood teacher that provides a loving and trustworthy relationship with the children in their care will help a child to develop _____ of the world.
 - a. indifference
 - b. fear
 - c. basic trust

9. It is very important for teachers to not only think about:

- a. what they teach
- b. who they teach
- c. neither
- d. both

10. There are _____ factors a teacher can set into motion that can affect a child's emotional development.

- a. some
- b. few
- c. many

11. Teachers need to show a child they are respected, loved, valuable, believed in and important.

- a. True
- b. False

12. A person's ideas, feelings, attitudes and expectations about themselves are a general term that refers to each individual person's _____.

- a. Self-esteem
- b. Self-Concept
- c. Self-Worth

13. Teachers need to help build a child's _____ by accepting their feelings and always being an understandable adult in their life.

- a. Self-esteem
- b. Self-Concept
- c. Self-Worth

14. A group that is characterized because of common nationality, culture or language is referred to as _____.

- a. race
- b. ethnicity
- c. childhood

15. Gender specific stereotyping is when an adult treats the genders differently.

- a. True
- b. False

16. The Three C's to help achieve a safe and productive educational system for children are:

- a. constructive conflict capabilities
- b. constantly connecting communities
- c. cooperative community, constructive conflict resolution, and civic values

17. When knowledge is able to be declared through words and symbols it is referred to as _____.
- a. Declarative Knowledge
 - b. Descriptive Knowledge
 - c. Commoniarity Knowledge
18. Knowledge in action or knowing how to do something is _____ knowledge.
- a. practical
 - b. procedural
 - c. authentic
19. _____ is literally thinking about thinking, or cognition about cognition.
- a. Metacognition
 - b. Automatic Awareness
 - c. Declarative thinking
20. Learners must be actively involved in constructing the own personal individual learning and important to knowledge construction is social interactions is a view of:
- a. Constructivism
 - b. Behaviorism
 - c. Standardized Curriculum
21. In any given area we have personal believes and competence which we refer to as _____.
- a. Self-Esteem
 - b. Self-Efficacy
 - c. Self-Concept
22. _____ occurs when someone starts to believe that the events and outcome of events in their life have happened because they have no control over them.
- a. Low Self-Esteem
 - b. Authentic Learning
 - c. Learned Helplessness
23. When children are in an environment that they are not given an opportunity to be successful in task they end up stop trying anymore.
- a. True
 - b. False
24. An expert teacher is someone that:
- a. looks at the child and sees them for who they truly are, a child
 - b. doesn't look at the past or judge the child in anyway
 - c. takes the time to really get to know the child
 - d. all of the above

25. Children need to feel accepted and loved and once they do they feel safe to let go and explore their environment to learn.

- a. True
- b. False