

2015-05-13

Engaging Students as Adult Learners

Nanji, Afroza

<http://hdl.handle.net/1880/50559>

Downloaded from PRISM Repository, University of Calgary

Adult Learning

**Design for Learning: Fostering Deep Learning,
Engagement and Critical Thinking**

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY CONFERENCE ON TEACHING
AND LEARNING**

ROUNDTABLE SESSION

MAY 13, 2015

AFROZA NANJI PhD(c)

WERKLUND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT ADULT LEARNING?

- Start by answering this question

Artwork in this presentation is by Andy Goldsworthy



The assumptions of Andragogy – Malcolm Knowles

- Independent self-concept
- Adults have a reservoir of life experiences
- Learning needs are closely related to changing social roles
- Problem-centered disposition and are interested in application
- Adults are internally motivated



Instead...think of a Continuum



Ranging from teacher-directed to student-directed learning

Andragogy being defined more by the learning situation than by the learner

Involve learners in as many aspects of their education as possible

Key Messages

- Learning for adults is most effective when connected to:
 - A learner's real life issues and needs
 - A learner's previous life experiences
 - Other learners
- Spectrum of learning with little knowledge or experience on one end, and existing understandings and experiences that need to be considered on the other.

Little knowledge

Existing knowledge,
experiences



DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF ADULT LEARNING

- Adult learners and their experiences are rich resources for learning
- Make room for a multiplicity of voices
- Increased attention to context
- Learning is a multidimensional phenomenon
- Learning in community



Example

"Throughout this book the point is consistently made that research suggests there is an association between how faculty teach and how students learn, and how students learn and the learning outcomes achieved. Further, research suggests that many faculty members teach in ways that are not particularly helpful to deep student learning" (Hughes & Mighty, 2010, p. 10).

You have been divided into 5 working groups for this week.

Your group has been hired by the University of Calgary Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning in a consultancy role. Your task is to provide a statement on how the University can support deep student learning. You are required to provide a maximum two page, double spaced statement to the University leadership team, in time for their annual planning meeting.

- Your group has been hired by the University of Calgary Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning in a consultancy role. **Based on your experiences in higher education**, You have been asked to provide a statement on how the University can support deep student learning. You are required to provide a maximum two page, double spaced Times Roman 12 statement to the University leadership team, in time for their annual planning meeting.
- **Did this learning activity foster deep learning for you? How or how not? What other past learning activities/assignments have fostered deep student learning?**

Learning activities

How integrate ideas of adult learning?

- Readings and answer questions
- Case study
- Research paper
- Group presentation
- Beginning of class primer
- Debate
- Pro and con grid
- Quiz
- Role playing

Excellent resource to get you started:

Merriam, S. B., Caffarella, R. S., & Baumgartner, L. M. (2007). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide, 3rd edition* CA: Jossey-Bass,

WHAT DID I LEARN AND WHAT DO I
STILL WONDER ABOUT?

Roundtable outcomes:

- All 8 conference participants from a variety of teaching backgrounds (business, health, nursing, geology, child studies, health) were interested in learning more about learning activities that make room for the experiences adult learners bring to their learning
- Modeling, providing background and examples and then facilitated rich discussion led to co-learning and exchange of transferrable ideas from this session