

Learning Theory in the Classroom

This chart will be very helpful for writing lesson plans and for reflections for the edTPA.

Theorist	Concept/Idea	Definition	Application in the Classroom
Piaget	Scheme, schemes, schema	Basic structures for organizing information; concepts (p. G-9) Mental systems or categories of perception and experience (p. G-9)	Teachers have to know students' prior knowledge in order to plan instruction that helps students build on their existing knowledge
Piaget	Developmental Stages	Piaget's theory that cognitive development occurs in predictable stages at roughly the same age for all students. (p. 44)	Good rule-of-thumb for making instructional decisions based on students' age and level of cognitive development.
Vygotsky	Zone of Proximal Development/ Scaffolding	ZPD: Stage at which a student can master a task if given appropriate help and support. (p. G-12) Scaffolding: Support for learning and problem solving. (p. G-9)	Students cannot learn new concepts if they are not in the ZPD for that concept. Prior knowledge is lacking. Support can be clues, reminders, encouragement, breaking the problem down into steps, etc.
Vygotsky	Importance of Language	Talking through a problem; audibly, internally, or with a partner, represent externalized thought and serves as a self-guiding function. (pp. 58-59)	Teachers arrange instruction so students have a chance to talk through a problem or concept with a partner, in a small group or as a whole class.
Paivio	Dual Coding	Information is stored in long-term memory as either visual images or verbal units, or both. (p. G-4)	Teachers explain visuals in textbooks to make sure all students understand the information being represented. Teachers use visuals in instruction to complement oral instruction.
Bandura	Observational Learning	Learning by observation and imitation of others— vicarious learning. (p. G-7)	Students learn from the teacher's modeling of problem solving, thinking strategies, etc.

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Ausabel & Mayer	Advance Organizers	Statement of inclusive concepts to introduce and sum up material that follows. (p. G-1)	Teachers use advance organizers to explain what is important in the coming material, to highlight relationships among ideas that will be presented, to remind students of relevant information they already have (activate prior knowledge stored in long-term memory).
Bronfenbrenner	Bioecological Model	Theory describing the unique nested social and cultural contexts that shape each person's development. The contexts are microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. (p. G-2)	Each student's unique bioecological system affects the prior knowledge and experiences s/he brings to the classroom.
Ladson-Billings	Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	Taking cultural meanings and styles into account when developing instructional plans, management plans and responding to students. (p. G-3)	This approach helps students of color and in poverty experience academic success, develop/maintain their cultural competence, and develop a critical consciousness to challenge the status quo in society.
Constructivism (Vygotsky, Piaget, Wertsch, John-Steiner, Mahn)	Learners construct their own knowledge	View that individuals actively construct their own understanding while engaged in the learning process. (pp. 60, 61, G-3)	Teachers plan instruction that allows students to actively engage with new concepts and strategies rather than passively absorbing information.
Constructivism (Vygotsky, Piaget, Wertsch, John-Steiner, Mahn)	Social interactions are important in the knowledge construction process	Language is the most important tool in students' "cultural tool kits" as they make sense of and learn about their worlds. Language helps students fill the tool kit with other tools. (pp. 57, 60, 61, G-3)	Teachers plan instruction that allows students to work in pairs or small groups when building on existing knowledge or when learning new concepts and strategies.
Bloom	Taxonomy of Thinking (Cognitive Domain)	Bloom's cognitive domain deals with memory and reasoning. The six basic objectives are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. (pp. 515-516, G-2,	Teachers design learning activities for students of all ages at all levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Also, the six objectives can be helpful in planning assessments because different procedures are appropriate for objectives at various levels.