**Learning Theories and Theorists: Plan/Instruct/Assess Created by Laura Lemanski for Ohio University**

| **Theory/Theorist** | **Activity/Lesson** | **Justification** |
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| **Active Learning/C. Bonwell*** Responsibility of learning falls on the learners
* Students must do more than just listen, they must be actively engaged in the process—discuss, write, read, solving problems
* Students engage in higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Examples: class discussion, think-pair-share, collaborative learning, debates, games |  |  |
| **Bloom’s Taxonomy/Benjamin Bloom*** Classification of learning objectives
* Focused on Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor domains
* Six levels: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation.
* Goal is to focus on all three for a more holistic approach to education
* Goal is to move from the lowest order processes to the highest order
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| **Critical Pedagogy/Paulo Freire*** The continuous process of “unlearning, learning, relearning, reflecting, evaluating.”
* Encourage students to think critically about education and recognize the “connections between their individual problems and experiences and the social contexts in which they are embedded.”

Examples: KWL, dialogue journals, encourage students to challenge long-held assumptions, consider multiple ways of knowing, let practice and experience inform theory/knowledge.  |  |  |
| **Constructivism/Jean Piaget*** Dewey, Montessori, Vygotsky, Piaget, Bruner and Kolb are considered constructivists.
* Self-directed learning that is innovative and creative in the creation of new knowledge. The educator is a mentor/facilitator of the process.
* Learning is an active, social process that involves sharing and collaborating.
* Includes discovery, hands-on, task-oriented, experiential, collaborative, project-based learning.
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| **Discovery Learning/Jerome Bruner*** Inquiry-based learning (constructivism)
* students draw from past experiences and existing knowledge to solve problems.
* Students interact with the world and make their own discoveries. Teacher is guide and facilitator.

Examples: Experiments, simulations, problem-based learning, web quests. |  |  |
| **Experiential Learning Theory/David Kolb*** Learning from experience through reflection.
* Encourages the learner to observe, interact, experiment.
* The cycle: concrete experience-reflective observation-abstract conceptualization-active experimentation
* Learning by doing.

Examples: Hands-on activities, field work, learning-by-doing (experiments, tying shoes, recipes, games, pretend), outdoor/unstructured play,  |  |  |
| **Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs*** Needs based on the five levels, beginning with the basic need and moving to the more higher-order needs that influence behavior:
	+ Psysiological (air, food water)
	+ Safety (secure environment, employment)
	+ Belongingness (love, friendship)
	+ Esteem (confidence, respect)
	+ Self-actualization (morality, creativity)

Example: Safe, secure classroom environment, lighthearted, fun class, interaction and discussion-based activities, avoid questions that could cause embarrassment, respond to bullying behaviors, consider exceptionalities with lessons and activities, providing praise and encouragement, set high expectations, real-world applicable activities |  |  |
| **Multiple Intelligences/Howard Gardner*** Based on the following learning styles:
	+ Visual-spatial
	+ Bodily-kinesthetic
	+ Musical
	+ Interpersonal
	+ Intrapersonal
	+ Linguistic
	+ Logical-mathematical
 |  |  |
| **Pragmatism/John Dewey*** Practical approach to problem solving
* Application of experiences to solve problems—education is realistic
* Activities, experiences are useful to the needs of the student and learning can be applied later in life.
* Encourages original thinking and learning by doing
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| **Psychosocial Development Stages/Erik Erikson*** Eight stages of identity and psychosocial development, including:
	+ Infancy-Trust vs. Mistrust
	+ Toddler-Autonomy vs. Shame
	+ Preschooler- Initiative vs.Guilt
	+ School Age (6-12)- Industry vs. Inferiority
	+ Adolescent (12-18)-Role Confusion vs. Identity
	+ Also, young adult, middle age, late adulthood

Example: Build confidence, provide specific praise, involve students in decision making, provide choices, treat all students fairly, encourage multiple approaches to problem-solving, incorporate life skills |  |  |
| **Social Cognition/Lev Vygotsky*** Children develop best when they are learning within their **zone of proximal development** (tasks that are slightly above their ability level that are facilitated by adults through **scaffolding**).
* Knowledge and development from relationships and social activities in the natural world.

Examples: Discussions, questioning, social interactions, providing hints/prompts, cooperative learning |  |  |
| **Stage Theory of Cognitive Development/Piaget*** Cognitive development happens in four stages:
	+ Sensorimotor (birth-2)
	+ Preoperational (2-4): simple classification, especially by important features
	+ Concrete (7-11): begins to think more abstractly and conceptualize, creates structures that explain his/her experiences.
	+ Formal (11-15): can make rational judgments, can reason deductively and hypothetically, can think abstractly

Examples: Self-initiated activities, activities based on varied levels of development, **discovery learning** (exploring and experimenting with the environment), stimulating environments, hands-on play, manipulatives, classification, collaborative learning, discussion |  |  |