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Discovering buried treasure: Teaching strategies for the aging population

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Discovering Buried Treasure: Teaching Strategies for the Aging Population

*by Susan M. Frey & Juliet Kerico,
Indiana State University*
LOEX National Conference. San Diego, California. May 2007



ISU's Definition of Community Engagement

The development of collaborative partnerships between education, business, social services, culture and government that contribute to the academic mission of the University and directly benefit the community.

Community Engagement Activities at ISU

- Technical assistance and applied research to help increase understanding of local, regional, national, or international problems or test solutions for such problems.
- Lectures, seminars, and other public forums that provide a neutral place to explore community issues.
- Extension of learning beyond University walls and into the community.
- Enriching the cultural life of the community.

Carnegie Classification At ISU



The Carnegie Foundation has placed Indiana State University in the Curricular Engagement and Outreach category.

This recognizes substantial commitments to community collaboration and extensive outreach and partnerships.

Only 62 institutions in the nation have this classification.

Examples of ISU Library Initiatives

- Book & Film Discussion Series
- This Old Book
- X Box Tourney
- Dewey Institute
- Bits n' Bytes



Westminster Village Retirement Community



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Bites & Bytes Program: Lecture



- Traditional 30 minute lecture
- PowerPoint details lesson
- Binder, photocopies distributed for each lesson

Bites & Bytes Program: Lab

- 30 minute workshop followed
- Structured activity
- Repetition of lecture material
- Skill development



Why did we feel like we were herding cats?



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Martinez's Learning Styles

- **PERFORMERS** - persistent in learning situations of interest to them; otherwise, they seek extrinsic rewards; are systematic learners; think hierarchically; want to explore the details and follow the best steps towards task completion; avoid making mistakes or setting challenging goals; enjoy coaching, social interaction, and collaboration.
- **CONFORMERS** - prefer routine, explicit, environments in which all expectations are made clear; passive learners who will accept, store, and reproduce information to please others; like others to make the decisions, avoid discovery; and complex thinking; want to be shown how to accomplish each step.

Martinez's Learning Styles

- **TRANSFORMERS** - highly motivated, passionate, and persistent; learning is valuable and acquiring new expertise is enjoyable; use their personal strengths to achieve goals despite failures; may become frustrated in environments that constrain their aggressive learning styles and will not take information on “trust”
- **RESISTERS** - lacks the belief that academic knowledge is useful but may enjoy studying outside academic settings; overly experiential

(Martinez , M. 1999)

How Our Elders Learn

PERFORMERS



- Interrupt for validation
- Impatient to perform
- Challenge methodology
- Social
- Mirror each other's behaviors
- Tell stories

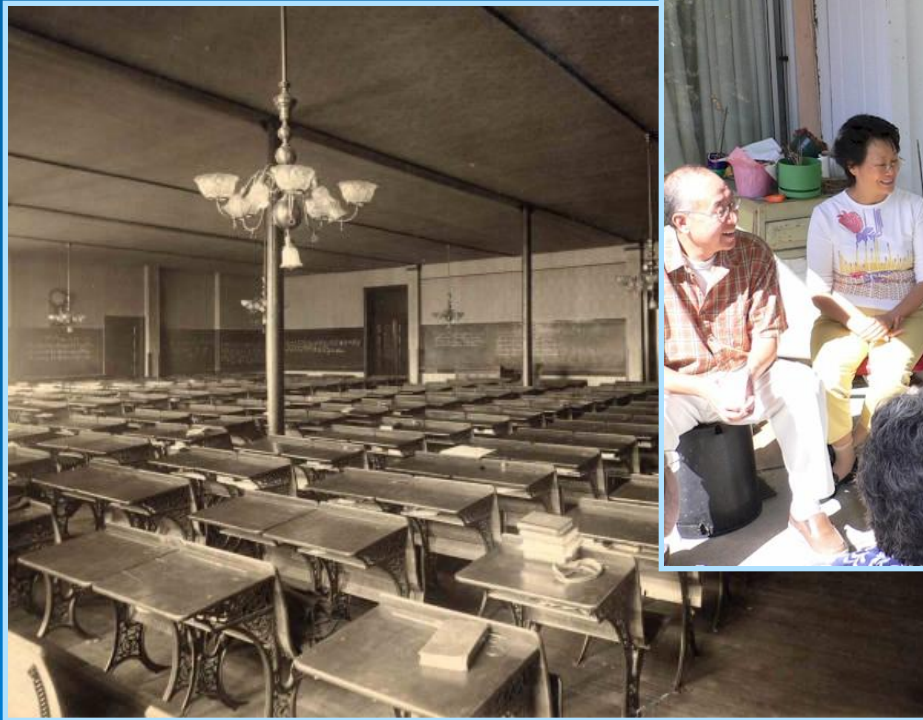
How Our Elders Learn

TRANSFORMERS

- Interrupt out of excitement
- Impatient to learn
- Challenge relevancy
- Social
- Mirror each other's behaviors
- Listen to stories



Learning Environment



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Buried Treasure!



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The New Bites & Bytes Program

- No lecture
- Introduce a theme
- Have a lesson prepared
but
- The class owns the lesson
- Offer guided learning when asked



Building Community in the Classroom



- storytelling
- mirroring

Storytelling



Situate learning: Building community by collaborating in the creation of a fictitious student who needs research assistance.

Mirroring

“Language is not only communication; it is also an instrument of our thinking”
(Butzkamm, 52).



Student Volunteer

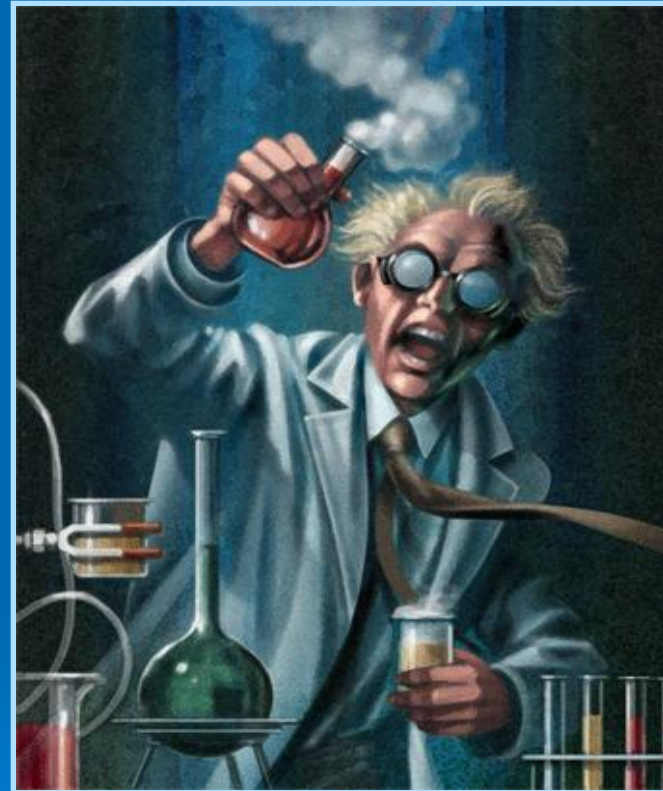


I have dedicated many hours of volunteer work in my life, but none compares to the hours completed at Westminster Retirement Village...

I would advise any social work 130 student to take full advantage of this opportunity. I would furthermore advise them not to participate only for the grade, but because of the unforgettable experience they would receive — *A. Mosley, social work undergraduate.*

The Value of Experimentation!

- Cognitive apprenticeships
- Communication strategies
- On-site apprenticeships



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