

# An Overview of Selected Approaches to Education

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EDUC 203 - Philosophical Foundations of Education

	What is Real? Metaphysics	What is True? Epistemology	What is Moral? Axiology	What is the Goal of Education?	What is Worth Learning?	How Does One Learn?	What is the Role of the Teacher?	What is the Role of the Learner?
<b>Essentialism</b> The belief that fixed properties define the 'whatness' of a given entity - therefore certain concepts, ideas and skills are essential to society - and the survival of humankind.	* 'Esse' is 'percepti' - "to be is to be perceived" - (Geo. Berkeley) * "I think, therefore I am." - (Rene Descartes). * The nature of thought is real...ideas, spirit and mind. * Matter must be linked to a perceiving mind.	* Truth is independent of experience. True ideals represent true knowledge. * Truth agrees with the qualities revealed in our knowledge. (Hegel)	* "Morality is based on knowledge." - (Socrates) * "In every person there is an imperative to do good which is innate, as much a part of their nature as sensation, perception and thought." - (Kant)	* To present basic knowledge and skills (the fundamentals) that everyone should possess. * To convey general knowledge essential for survival. * To teach students the concepts of basic subject areas so students can function in society and progress through life	* We need traditional concepts, ideas and skills. The three 'R's': Reading, 'Riting & 'Rithmetic plus grammar, history, geography (vs 'social studies') and science. Clearly communicated facts (aka 'lecture') * Art and Physical Education are considered 'a break from studies' rather than essential.	* By processing facts, memorization, drills and reinforcements. * By moving from opinion (ignorance) to knowledge (truth). * By being part of a larger whole (society) yet retaining a thoroughly inquisitive mind as an individual.	<b>A Source of Knowledge</b> * The systematic, objective presenter of organized material to methodologically teach traditional concepts, ideals and skills in accordance with the learner's ability and need. * To ensure each student has access to a true 'fundamental' education.	* To learn the basics in order to become a lifelong learner.
<b>Perennialism</b> Rooted in Realism and Thomism the approach asserts that truths of education are timeless and recurrent. Permanence is of greater reality than change. Our universe is ordered and our task is to pursue timeless Truth.	* Reality is whatever remains constant and true regardless of circumstances and contingencies.	* Absolute truth exists. * Eternal values need to be transmitted to the next generation. * Popular ideas that fail 'the-test-of-time' are discarded.	* Morality is based on Truth portrayed in the great works of religion, philosophy, literature and history.	* To educate persons to cultivate their humanity, cultural heritage and human potentialities based on the Judeo-Christian heritage and concept of human nature. - (Maritain) * Rationality * Permanence of Classics	* We need information and values that remain constant: languages, history and geography. * Vocational, technological disciplines and contemporary content is shunned in favor of the 'Classics'.	* By didactic, well organized, systematic narrative instruction. * By coaching through organizing and correcting learners to perform skills. * By the Socratic mode: probing questions and directed discussions to develop rational thinking.	<b>An Expert Coach</b> * To facilitate discussion and evoke the development of rational thinking towards the learning of historical unchanging basic human needs.	* To learn the funded classic wisdom of the human race.
<b>Progressivism</b> "An attempt to develop the moral will, the intellectual insight and the political and administrative agencies to remedy the accumulated evils and negligence..." - (Hofstrader)	* "Reality has essence or ultimate being in several or many principles or substances"-(WBDictionary) * "The individual experience is the primary unity of life." - (Bernstein) * Humans and Society - the 'Social Process'.	* Truth is whatever each individual decides is best (ie what works) for them and for society. * What is truth is what the individual's true judgment is ...being true to one's individual uniqueness. * There is no absolute truth.	* "Morality and moral judgments are individualized and determined by one's life experiences." - (John Dewey) * One uses the scientific method to determine moral choices - (Bernstein)	* To develop critical methods of thought. - (Delaney) * To create the power of self-control. (Dewey) * To inquire, discover and solve problems. - (VanBrummelen) * To educate the 'whole child' - physical, emotional & intellectual. - (Hofstadter)	* We need the scientific method and good social skills. - (Dewey) * Concern for health, vocation and the quality of family / community life. - (Cremin) * The past is not to be valued for its own sake but for its role in developing and guiding those critical capabilities to deal with the future. - (Delaney)	* By doing. The child is naturally an active, curious and exploring creature... to be guided... so creativity and autonomy will be cultivated... - (Bernstein) * By the scientific method. - (Dewey) * By a democratic process.	<b>An Advisor Guide</b> * To utilize the surroundings, physical and social, that exist so as to extract from them all they have to contribute to building up experiences that are worthwhile. - (Dewey)	* To participate... in the formation of the purposes which direct his/her activities in the learning process. The child is the genesis and purpose of education. They are active learners - (Dewey) * What is learned must be used in real life else there is no reason to learn it.
<b>Existentialism</b> Emphasizes the existence of the individual as a free and self-determining agent in a universe that lacks essential meaning. Both theistic and atheistic schools of existentialism exist	* Reality is relative to what one's mind determines to be real. (Matter) "Existence precedes essence" - (Sartre) * "Man is God creating himself" - (Froebel) Man is a bubble of consciousness in a sea of nothingness." - (Sartre)	* Truth is personally relative and individually determined according to the needs of the individual. * Any belief held strongly enough to be justified with action that gives meaning. * There is no absolute truth.	* Morality is whatever the individual decides as self-applying. No absolutes. * The goal is internal personal harmony with the self. One is the judge of one's actions and responsible for the consequences.	* To emphasize individuality and help the learner become a fully authentic self. There is no one right answer. * To shift the emphasis from abstract thinking to real objectives. * To emphasize individuality. * To help learners explore possible answers.	* We need to permit the individual to choose (prize) what is worth learning. * The fundamentals necessary for making decisions. * "A truth that is true for me - that I can live and die for..." - (Kierkegaard) * Humanities rather than sciences.	* By encouraging the Learner to ask questions about themselves: Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? * By working with individuals and small groups.	<b>A Learner-Friend</b> * To encourage individuality in the Learner. * To develop an 'I-Thou' relationship. (Buber) * To identify choices and challenge the Learner to "Become". * To help one become an intelligent, sensitive, choosing, acting person	* To be a self-initiator involved in determining one's life choices. * To recognize the opportunity and the obligation of freedom and exercise it authentically. * To ask questions and answer probing questions about the human condition.
<b>Constructivism</b> A theory of knowledge (a branch of postmodernism) that encourages student construction of knowledge and a personal search for understanding.	* Reality is what each person constructs in their own mind. * Each person is an autonomous individual whose ideas should be treated with respect and accepted.	* Truth is personal. * Truth is whatever a person believes is true for that person. * There is no absolute truth.	* Morality is relative for each person. It is whatever they discover/construct to be right or wrong - it all depends. * Values are personal and valid for the individual as they are chosen.	* To enable students to become autonomous learners, thinking for themselves and able to acquire knowledge and produce their own ideas. * To be a process of learning and living - not a preparation for future living - to construct concepts.	* We need to understand the consequences of one's thinking and actions. * The process of Learning.	* By the exploration of ideas through discussions and investigations. * By individual and cooperative learning with less 'teacher-talk'. * By recognizing the need for socializing as well as autonomy.	<b>A Facilitator</b> * To enable the learner to gain autonomy in learning to construct ideas and concepts. * To encourage learners to think through complex concepts - not just prompt learners for the 'correct' answers the teacher wants.	* To be curious and inquisitive to the material being learned. * To be allowed to take risks. * To accept challenges to explore and construct knowledge.
<b>Post Modernism</b> A reaction to dehumanizing modernism that made man an animal without a soul worshipping science/technology as god. A diffused sentiment - rather than a set of doctrines - that humanity... must go beyond the modern(Griffin)	* Reality is Mind, Body, Spirit- the united holistic person and matter. * We are part of a living planet, a mega-organism and our destiny is dependent on what we do for the whole. - (Havel) * The spiritual aspect is real.	* Truth is what you perceive it to be. * Opinion = Evidence. * Truth is knowledge composed of facts, values and meanings. * Truth is neither universal, absolute, nor objective discovered in nonsensory ways.	* Morality is whatever leads to the preservation of the environment and humankind. * "Uncertainty replaces certainty" - (VanBrummelen)	* To emphasize the holistic perspective and create a globally interdependent ecological perspective to prevent the destruction of Mother Gaia. * 'self and social empowerment' - (McLaren) * To interconnect all cultures, languages, oral & written traditions.	* We need to provide experiences through science, history, economics, environment, spiritual and moral studies to allow students to interconnect with the larger community - the 'living earth'. * Submission to the authority of the universal order and creation. - (Havel)	* By establishing a 'sacred circle' in the environment for learning. * By questioning, reflective dialogue, journals, non-confrontational debates, discussions and cooperative relationships. * By releasing a power of soul awareness in ourselves and allowing intuition to guide us.	<b>A Guide - Co-Participant</b> * To guide learners into reflective enlightenment.	* To build authenticity, community and an anti-dogmatism worldview through many languages that offers hope for the survival of Gaia.
<b>New Age</b> A philosophical mixture of pagan religions, evolutionary science and global politics to achieve a New World Order of global peace and global government under one world leader.	* Reality is the Mind. * Matter is epiphenomenal. * Everything is an illusion created by our minds. * The Gaia Hypothesis (Lovelock) says all spirits make up one collective organism - humans, plants, rocks and animals.	* Truth is anything the Mind can believe and in turn can be achieved. (Hill) * Truth is a harmony of universal religious outlooks towards a conscious sharing & uniting of all religions, cultures and races.	* Morality is determined by Man consulting himself. * Morality is within one's mind - God is an impersonal force or energy - Jesus is an 'avatar' - a path, a guide, and enlightened master. * Meditation achieves self awareness & enlightenment.	* To build self-esteem, self-realization and develop altered states of consciousness. * To prepare for the coming World Leader: "The Christ" (Messiah, Buddha, Krishna, Immadi) * To achieve Tolerance - "the Alpha and the Omega of the New World Order" - (M. Gorbachev)	* We need to learn the 'spiritual aspect' of science, medicine, psychology.	* By psychotherapy, visualization, biofeedback and esoteric initiations into the 'kingdom of god'. * By 'super learning' using yoga, music, hypnosis, autogenics, meditation, aerobics, ionics, crystallography, nutrition, transactional analysis, etc.	<b>A Proselytizer - Enlightened One</b> * To orchestrate self-reflective experiences as a proselytizer of a globally interdependent ecological 'New World Order'	* To become enlightened by the god-within. * To become one with Mother Gaia. * To help build the New World Order.
<b>Evangelicalism</b> The view held by many Christians who have a common commitment to share the gospel (good news) with others. 'Evangelical' - a person devoted to the good news that God sent His Son Jesus of Nazareth to redeem us.	* Reality is Matter: the Earth and the Universe. * God exists as does Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. * Death is a transition to eternity in Heaven or Hell. * Salvation is by "grace through faith...a gift...not of works else we might boast.	* Truth is Jesus of Nazareth who is 'The Way, The Truth and The Life.' * Truth is revealed by God through Creation, Jesus Christ and the Bible - the Word of God. * God is the Author of all Truth - Truth sets us free.	* Morality is a life based on Biblical principles that allows actions that are transcultural to conform to principles of justice that promotes the well being of all people who are: 'made in the image of God.'	* To provide knowledge of the universe, our place in history and God's perspective on humans and history. * To provide a clear perception of Truth with a motivation to act in a responsible moral, social, economic and environmental way. * To equip learners to be compassionate worldshapers.	* We need to learn the Truth - about ourselves and our relationships with others and about God's Character and the 'Laws of the Universe'. * Strategies to provide food, clothing, shelter for all humans with a compassionate sharing of natural resources and quality of life. * How to be disciples of a loving God.	* By interaction with parents, peers, teachers and mentors to help learners understand events, objects and concepts.	<b>A Model-Example - Mentor</b> * To create a climate for the learner to systematically achieve the goal of education. * To influence and disciple learners in the Truth of God's Word such that each one becomes conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.	* To strive to be emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually balanced. * To remain open and loving to all humans made 'in the image of God'. * To examine all the evidence and when ready make a personal choice to accept Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.