

F.A.T. City and Ch. 17 Discussion Post

In the How Difficult Can This Be - F.A.T. City Workshop video by Richard D. Lavoie, he dramatizes what it is like to be a student with a learning disability in the classroom. The purpose of his video was to clear up many misconceptions associated with students of learning disabilities, and to understand the emotional turmoil they experience due to this misconception. For example, an LD student may have trouble processing language therefore have problems answering questions aloud in class. A solution to this was to only have the student answer a question if the teacher was standing directly in front of them. For this to work, the teacher would have to explain to the student that the rest of the class would not know about the strategy and that they will ask the question again after they are standing in front of them. By doing this the student is not embarrassed about the special treatment and also has time to prepare for the answer. Another interesting fact Lavoie demonstrated in the workshop was that 93% of teachers use vocabulary terms to teach comprehension. I found this statistic remarkable high, but was probably accurate when the video was made in the late 1980's. I believe through research and new teaching strategies, more teachers are starting to incorporate differentiated instruction into their curriculums. I am a strong believer of using a variety of teaching strategies in order to reach all learners in the classroom. At the end of the video, Lavoie demonstrates that being fair to all students is not giving them same treatment, but what each student needs. Therefore in order to be fair, we should treat students differently based on their learning differences. As a teacher, I will incorporate this into my classroom by offering different ways of submitting assignments and using a variety of teaching strategies into my lesson plans.

In CH 17 – Easing a World of Pain by Robert Kegan, he explains how children experience things based on the psychology of self-understanding. It originates from the work of Jean Piaget in which children learn differently than adults. It is also referred to as “constructive-development” psychology because of how differently people perceive constructive thinking throughout the life-span. Kegan elaborates on this by explaining that people go through life-stages of self-understanding and building an internalized point of view of themselves. He also uses this to build a connection between when a sense-of-self and self-esteem. By understanding this, Keegan

believes it is possible to determine students that are at risk of lower self-esteem due to learning disabilities. He aims at fixing this by having teachers and parents steer away from focusing primarily on academics, but also encourage other factors a student may excel at. To focus on a student with a learning disabilities weak point, it gives them lower self-esteem and makes it difficult for them to create a healthy self-image. He also encourages people to learn how to self-advocate and not to focus on what others believe you should be but to initiate self-control on what the person believes they should be. As teacher, I strongly believe in this and encourage diversity and uniqueness in my classroom.