Stages of Learning

The stages of learning are based on an interactive-constructivist view. The cycle is not developmental; children and adults experience the cycle of learning whenever they acquire a new skill or gain new knowledge.

### Awareness

**What Children Do**
- Experience
- Acquire an interest
- Attend
- Perceive

**What Teachers Do**
- Create the environment
- Provide opportunities; introduce new objects, events, people
- Respond to child’s interest/experience
- Show interest, enthusiasm

### Exploration

**What Children Do**
- Observe
- Explore materials
- Discover
- Create
- Figure out components
- Construct own understanding
- Apply own rules
- Create personal meaning
- Represent own meaning

**What Teachers Do**
- Facilitate
- Support/enhance exploration
- Extend play
- Describe child’s activity
- Ask open-ended questions “What else could you do?”
- Respect child’s thinking and rule systems
- Allow for constructive error

### Inquiry

**What Children Do**
- Examine
- Investigate
- Propose explanations
- Compare own thinking with others
- Generalize
- Relate to prior learning
- Adjust to conventional rule systems

**What Teachers Do**
- Help refine understanding
- Guide children, focus attention
- Focused questions, “What else works like this?”
- Help make connections

### Utilization

**What Children Do**
- Use the learning in many ways; learning becomes functional
- Represent learning in various ways
- Apply learning to new situations
- Formulate new hypotheses and repeat cycle

**What Teachers Do**
- Create vehicles for application in real world
- Help children apply learning in new situations
- Provide meaningful situations in which to use learning

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