

How do
Behaviourism and
Constructivism
Theories Help in the
Classroom



Skinner
Behaviourism



Piaget & Bruner
Constructivism



How Behaviourism and
Constructivism are
used in the classroom.

Scrap book By
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Behaviourism

B. F Skinner
(1904-1990)



B.F Skinner was an American Psychologist who was known for being the popular leader of behaviourism. He was very much influenced by Pavlov's experiments and the ideas of Watson. Skinner believed that the best way to understand behaviour is to look at the causes of action and its consequences this was the conception of operant conditioning. Operant conditioning demonstrates the effect of positive and negative reinforcement on behaviour. Open condition demonstrates the effect of positive and negative reinforcement on behaviour. For example, children can receive rewards like money for doing chores which leads them want to keep repeating that behaviour to receive the rewards, thus strengthening behaviour with positive reinforcement. You can also use negative reinforcement to strengthen their behaviour by removing an unpleasant experience.



Advantages of Behaviourism

- Pupils are easily controlled by the teacher.
- Some pupils benefit from repetition.
- Pupils know where they stand with rewards and sanctions.

Disadvantages of Behaviourism

- Repetition may become boring.
- Ignores thought processes and emotions.
- Totally Teachers orientated.
- Little or no input from the Learner.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOgowRy2WC0>

Constructivism

Jean Piaget
1896-1980



<http://web.archive.org/web/20070711090000/http://www.ship.edu/cgbox/r/paget.gif>

Piaget used his views of psychology on children's cognitive development so that children developed understanding through many channels such as reading, listening, exploring and experiencing his or her environment.

According to Piaget theory the three mechanisms he used are:

1. Assimilation – fitting a new experience into an existing mental structure (schema).
2. Accommodation - revising an existing schema because of new experience.
3. Equilibrium – seeking cognitive stability through assimilation. (John, 2010:95)

J. Bruner
1915-?



<https://psychology.fas.harvard.edu/people/jerome-bruner/>

Many psychologists such as Jean Piaget (1896-1980), Jerome Bruner(1915-?), Lev Vygotsky(1896-1934),and John Dewey(1859-1952). These psychologists believed that through constructivism, a person builds his or her learning ability process overtime through experience and surround knowledge. Constructivism is 'an approach to learning that holds that people actively construct or make their own knowledge and that reality is determined by experience of the learner'(Elliot et al.,2000,p.256).

J. Bruner was one of the founders of constructivism. Bruner is alive and well and lives in the USA and is 100 years old. Bruner's theory is based on existing knowledge, he also believes that his theories are a process of active learning. Sections of his process include transformation of information, decision making, generating hypotheses, and making meaning from information and experiences.

Pros of the approach

- Pupils are seen more capable of learning.
- Constructivism is pupil lead.
- It provides an indication of what development stage the pupil is on.
- Constructivism is an enjoyable approach to learning

Cons of the approach

- It is time consuming
- Constructivism does not fit into the standard testing
- Constructivism requires differentiation, which is resources intensive.



<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https://www.veducation.org/2016/04/20/active-learning-universal-design-learning-technology/&psig=ACQWaw2Me5i64pdptMCKYqC3nhW&ust=1605551152549000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=DCaCQsYDahcKEwiguGQlXAHUA>

How Behaviourism is used in a classroom setting



School A use these prompt cards for the beginning of a lesson which usually is a group activity, this is so the children no exactly what is needed of them. The prompt cards are also visual for those children who find it difficult to read. The teacher will then show a card and model what it says like good listening they would point to the ears and say good listening, point to your eyes and say good looking, and good thinking they would put a hand on head when the teacher is ready to start the task, the teacher will then say put your thinking caps on and the children will focus on this placing a hat on their head.

School A uses the marble jar as a great behaviour plan for the whole class. This is a great way to get the class to work as a team. However, the children need to know what they are working towards and what positive achievements they need to do to be able to receive a marble. This positive plan works as if the child did not receive a marble in the morning for something the did, they might be able to work on their behaviour in the afternoon to receive a marble. The teacher will put on a poster when the jar is full, we are working towards and then the children will say what they would like for their reward, which could be bring slippers to school day, hot chocolate with whipped cream and marshmallows, pizza party, extra playtime. If you wanted to do this as an individual reward you would have to labelled with every child in the class



<https://behaviormanagementplans.wordpress.com/2014/01/06/make-the-most-of-your-marble-jar/>



School A uses Skinner's theory of operant conditioning both positive and negative reinforcements. In class, school A not only uses the marble jar as a positive reinforcement for the whole class they also use stickers as an individually praise as well as a reward, this process seems to work to deter away from unwanted behaviour this seems to be very effect in the class environment. School A also has consequences/ sanctions for negative behaviour, and this does depend on what the child has done it can be a 5minute timer at playtime, sorry letter if a child has hurt verbally or physical another child or adult and a child/children sent to Headmaster and phone call home if very serious.

How Constructivism is used in the classroom setting

“Being able to ‘go beyond the information’
given to ‘figure things out’ is one of the
few untarnishable joys of life.”

Jerome Bruner, *The Culture of Education*

<https://quotesgram.com/quotes-on-education-jerome-bruner/>

Ideally, In a classroom, the pupil is the Explorer, digging and exploring what they need/want to learn on how to do it. While on the other hand, the teacher is the Guardian Angel guiding and giving them suggestions and instructions to help them reach their goals.

Children have real
understanding only of
that which they invent
themselves.

Jean Piaget

AbundantLifeChildren.com

School A uses Bruner's Theory of Constructivism in the classroom by sitting and listening to their children read. Children go through different stages of reading enactive when they just play and turn over the pages and make up their own stories, iconic when they just look through the book and learn through images and icons and finally, symbolic this is when children learn through abstract symbolic. Also whilst reading to children we are also scaffolding them become more independent learners.



<https://www.google.com/vr?team=8&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3F%3A%3D%2Fm569ucUePq8eddy=ADNawW1ERyT2x68a-nP15g3m1cQ&use=160554585932300&source=images&cd=y&ved=2anUXwmpgCgoXWWLg4BhZwFBjYQr4kDregQIAPEX>

School A uses the constructivism approach when having challenge time, this is when the learners learn to communicate with each other, and share their feelings, understanding, knowledge and experiences, to produce new knowledge. The teacher becomes the facilitator, and the learners are encouraged to interact, exchange views and experience and co-construct meaning and knowledge that is based on their needs (still with the teachers' intervention.)



<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/reading-children-education-paper-books-tablets-health-technology-a77061.html>

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