

First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL)

Learning involves patience and time

This principle reflects the awareness that knowledge and understanding is built over time, often requiring a recursive approach to teaching and learning. It reflects the understanding that Indigenous knowledge is the result of centuries of learning and teaching in by Indigenous peoples.

This principle directly supports the idea that learning is an individualistic process that cannot be rushed or arrived at according to a pre-determined schedule (including specific age). This refers to the understanding that learning happens when a person is ready for it, and that learning is most effective when it occurs in a setting where the learning can be applied in an authentic context. The need for patience and time is also a requirement to develop thorough conceptual and transferable understandings, rather than surface level familiarity. In order to develop understanding, information needs to be examined/explored from multiple perspectives, in different contexts, and over time.

In First Peoples' contexts, this understanding of learning is also the result of cultural values of collaboration and taking the time needed to develop consensus. Collaboration requires that all people in a group contribute according to their specific skill sets, or "gifts". Through collaboration group members also learn from each other.

Traditionally, group decisions were often made through consensus rather than by voting, and this requires the time needed for everyone to have a say and be heard. It requires skilled negotiation, a process that also requires patience and time, and encourages people to listen to and understand differing perspectives. And while the process takes longer than a "majority wins" process, decisions that result from the consensus process tend to build stronger communities.

Relation to Other Education Theory

It is recognized that learning in a constructivist environment usually requires more time than might be needed in a more didactic, knowledge as transmission teaching environment (Perkins, 1999, as cited in Wing-Mui So, 2002). The increased time and patience is also reflected in collaborative learning environments which require members of a group to make connections and organize their knowledge. In addition, the need for time and patience indicated in this principle is also needed to encourage learners to reflect on their performance in order to further their own learning. Jonassen (1999) indicates that in a constructivist learning environment, a good coach encourages and supports learners to reflect on their own learning.

Implications for Classroom and School Include:

- Ensuring that learning is about understanding concepts and the application of knowledge, rather than only memorization of information.
- Allowing for time to develop relationships and to revisit prior learning to help build new knowledge.

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- Revisiting concepts multiple times, providing learners with opportunities to deepen their knowledge by layering their understanding (recursivity).
- Providing for flexible scheduling in schools and in classrooms so that learners can take more or less time to learn what they need to know and understand.
- Understanding the value of Indigenous knowledge that has been built over centuries.