

Article Review

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10 September, 2019

Article Title: The Generative Theory of Musical Learning Part III: Planning for Learning

Author: Eunice Boardman Journal: University of Illinois Press

Publication Date: Spring 1989

Page Numbers: 11-16

What is the author's purpose?

Boardman's purpose in this article is to provide the reader (most likely an educator) with a set of prompts to help plan to set up students for success within a lesson. These prompts include questions that encourage ideas about class objectives, activity sequences, and making connections between different lessons (or rather different fragments within the same lesson).

What are the salient issues in this article? (i.e. the main issues that provoked/stimulated your thinking)

The salient issues that provoked my thinking were the questions that Boardman poses throughout the article. The first asks, "Toward what objective should the class be progressing?" It is important for an educator to consider this because all concepts should be generative. As with the first two parts of this article series, Boardman makes it clear that the goal is to guide students from the known, through the unknown, to the new known -- a never ending cycle of learning. I think that this idea is interesting because through this three part series, Boardman is essentially taking the reader through the generative approach of learning *about* the generative theory by using repetition and building on what we already know and leading us to something else that we didn't know before, but now we do after having read her works.

More related to the content of the article, she advises that the objective must be something observable that can be demonstrated by the student. I thought this was interesting because we had discussed this last week in class. If the student cannot demonstrate the objective, there is no way for the educator to assess or evaluate if they have truly learned it or not. The objective should ask the student to do an action -- such as sing, play, clap, or tap -- in order to physically show their understanding of the concept.

The second question that Boardman suggests considering while planning a lesson is, "What sequence of activities will help the learner reach the objective I've established?" This section is divided into even more specific questions about beginning the class and proceeding with the lesson. This was intriguing to me because I've never really known where to begin while creating a lesson plan. She suggests starting the lesson with an activity that your students are already familiar with and enjoy. This will help to create a foundation for them to build upon. To proceed with the lesson, Boardman says that students must be able to make connections between each part of instruction. Everything must be tied together in order to ensure successful generative learning.

The final question is "How can I be sure that the learner grasps the connections between succeeding lesson segments?" This section was the most interesting to me because while

explaining how to make successful connection, Boardman gave examples of lesson fragments. I found this to be very helpful as the way she blocked it out gave me a more in depth understanding of what she was trying to explain in the first place.

How do you believe this article will impact your personal/professional development as a teacher? (i.e. what insights, connections, comparisons, or considerations resulted from reading this article?)

I think this part of the article series that Boardman released regarding the generative theory will be the most useful in my development as a teacher because she wrapped together everything that she had already explained in detail in the other two parts. Essentially, she gave us all the information we would need to create a holistic learning environment in the other two articles, and in this section she told us what to do with it. Also, I knew what to include in a lesson plan before reading this, but this article told me how to do so and I think that will be incredibly helpful in my near future.

I will be able to use the first question she posed in order to determine if my objectives are observable and if they pertain to the rest of the content my students have been learning. After reading all three of these articles, I feel I have a better sense of what to expect from my students and what they need to know before moving on to the next step of a lesson. I also know how to guide students in the correct direction to reach the objective I put in place for them.

The second question will be helpful because sequencing is incredibly important to ensure that my students will successfully understand the objective they are trying to achieve. Sequencing is something I don't have very much experience with yet, and reading this section of the article helped to determine in what order different activities should be presented. I knew to begin with something students were already aware of and comfortable with, but I wasn't sure how to proceed without leaving too much grey area for confusion. This article helped to show how much overlap needs to be between each concept and/or segment of a lesson.

The last question is the one I have been most curious about ever since I decided that I wanted to be a teacher. I never understood how a teacher could plan out a lesson while being sure that each student would know a concept before moving on without actually having seen the plan in action. This section explained how to do so, and it even gave examples. These examples showed me just how much each individual step in a lesson needs to connect to the next. Repetition is incredibly important, and her lesson examples really show this.