Learning Design: Evolving Practices

A Brief Overview of Learning Design in the United States from the 1700s-2025

1700s
grading and competitive grades begin in colleges

1800s
Increasing need for a massive and efficient national education system

1900s
In the early 1900s movements of: Behaviorism, Social Efficiency, Scientific Management, and Eugenics infiltrate schools in the forms of: (grading, IQ testing, standardized testing, and different tracks for students)

These concepts all influence modern education and design to varying degrees in contemporary times; luckily, lots of people across disciplines have pushed back and offered new ideas.
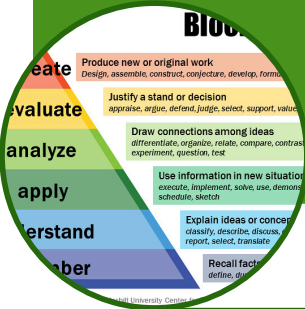

Factory systems forever changed education.

1950s
Bloom's Taxonomy

- help educators make objective
- ranking of lower order and higher order thinking
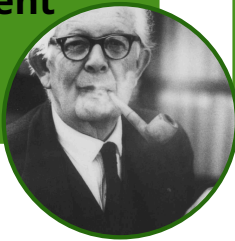

1960s
Constructivism

Jean Piaget proposed:
- children learn in stages
- learners construct knowledge based on environment

1970s
Social Development Theory
Lev Vygotsky proposed:
- social interaction is key to learning
- learners can learn with varying levels of guidance from more knowledgeable others

These tools and theories led to a host of others such as:

Inclusion and Accessibility   Situative Learning   Sociocultural Theory

Multiple Intelligences   Nine Events of Instruction

The Internet also forever changed the landscape of learning and design. Starting in the 1990s, the internet allowed and paved the way for:

- **Massive Online Open Online Courses (MOOCs)**
- **Affinity Spaces**
- **Better Adaptive Design**
- **Gamification**
- **Virtual Reality**

Learning Experience Design emerges in 2007 as a way to bring together tried-and-true learning theories with new and innovative practices to focus on the learner and foster deeper connections with the material.

My Thoughts

We cannot escape or ignore the origins of the education system. We can, however, choose to grow from them. By centering the learner in learning experiences, designers can create experiences for all learners of all backgrounds in any place in their journey.

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