

Current Approaches to Teaching, Learning, and School Improvement

Can we take a balanced view that allows us to see both the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches and develop our abilities to understand how they can be carried out effectively in particular schools and communities without leading to the kinds of polarizing debates about which one is “better”?

Goals:

- To develop a better understanding and appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to teaching and learning.
- To develop the ability to explain the implications of those approaches for policy and practice.
- To develop the ability to describe and justify one’s own approach to different audiences.
- To develop the ability to understand and deal with the inevitable conflicts that arise when different people and institutions advocate different approaches.

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What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches?

What's the rationale used to justify them?

Where does this rationale come from?

What implications do they have for our own beliefs?

For next week, please come prepared to discuss:

What is Teaching for Understanding from Gardner's perspective?

How does he justify the value/importance of the approach?

How might his background be reflected in his approach?

For the reflection next week, please describe your reaction to what you've learned about teaching for understanding:

What's most compelling about it? and/or What problems do you see with Gardner's approach?

What Questions do you have?