CONSTRUCTIVISM APPROACH IN TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES

by:

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Recently, the education officials from Connecticut have spearheaded the implementation of new learning and teaching approaches for Social Studies after a consistent 15 years of chalk-talk teaching. The set up was called Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Frameworks which was led by a senior associate of the state Alan S. Marcus. The newly implemented approach targets creating a field for learning where learners do not necessarily learn through the inputs of the teachers but instead, they are to learn the concepts being provided by Social Studies through creating their own questions and formulating their own understanding on the lessons. This falls absolutely on the Theory of Constructivism which lets the learners create their own interpretation on the ideas. As this is applied in Social Studies, it would advocate a more interesting sense of learning. Due to the increasing demands for skills that are required for the teachers to be able to comprehend to existing 21st Century learning, the framework has been created. Firstly, the learning will no longer depend on the educators but will lean on how the learners interpret the definitions provided by manuals. How has it been quite interesting? Though the concept is a little confusing and complex, it would replicate the scenarios where learners are to see the places themselves and explore the sites without their tour guides or a friend to tell them the things embodying such place. It could be inferred that it is better to be mesmerized with the beauty of the place through your own eyes instead of just listening to others' stories over the greatness of such place. In that sense, this framework also advocates individual learning and such learning is not restricted in any sense as the learners are given the freedom to unbox the concepts outlying the lessons being tackled. Moreover, as critical thinking is a requirement for the 21st learning mode, it is good to start from letting the learners interpret the teachings
through their own without the prior inputs of the educators. It might be questioned that as if this strategy is promoting laziness in the side of the teachers however if the sense of promoting 21st learning will be the case, then it will never be an absence of the willingness to teach. Besides, teachers are still to prepare the lessons but it is just that the learners will have to commit to self-feeding to be able to absorb the lessons. In the higher sense, such idea really promotes advance thinking and prior in-depth analysis among the learners as this may also include peer understanding that learners will be able to share common understanding and interpretation on concepts and their strength and weakness on getting the lessons will be showcased and will be prioritized by the educators. If only this strategy in teaching will be applied to every country in the world, then it would no longer be a hard thing to teach. Teachers will also be able to multitask as this approach is not really time-consuming. In this era where 21st learning is the mode of educating the learners, it is a must for the authorities to be able to construct various frameworks promoting prior learning amongst the learners in the way that they will not get bored and will not just stick to the inputs of the mentors. Moreover, considering different levels of thinking skills, it might not be applicable to some learners however, the ease it provides for both the students and the learners are evident and must be considered as an effective effort to answer the call for promoting critical thinking and in-depth understanding of concepts as being competent starts from those concepts.

References: