

Learning with understanding, Teaching for understanding

David Perkins

Our Questions

What does “teaching for understanding” have to do with Jewish education?

What does “teaching for understanding” have to do with professional development?

What is understanding?

$$1 \frac{3}{4} \text{ divided by } \frac{1}{2} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

- a. Find the answer.
- b. Make up a story problem to illustrate the problem.
- c. Share your story with a neighbor and talk about how the story fits the problem.

Learning with understanding [at MTEI]

Think of a time when you were engaged in “learning for understanding.”

- a. What understanding were you working on?
- b. What were you doing to build understanding?
- c. How did the activity (activities) contribute to your understanding?
- d. What role did others play?

Investigating our learning

1. Sit with two other people.
2. Share & examine your examples of learning with understanding.
3. Be attentive to the details regarding the “what” and “how of your learning. In what sense were you engaged in “performances of understanding?”
4. What might be “next steps” in your learning? Evidence of learning?

Analyzing our learning

Understanding	Activity	Teaching moves	Peers, co-learners

How can we teach for understanding?

1. Make learning long-term, thinking centered.
2. Provide for rich ongoing assessment.
3. Support learning with powerful representations.
4. Attend to developmental factors.
5. Induct learners into the discipline (practice, tradition).
6. Teach for transfer

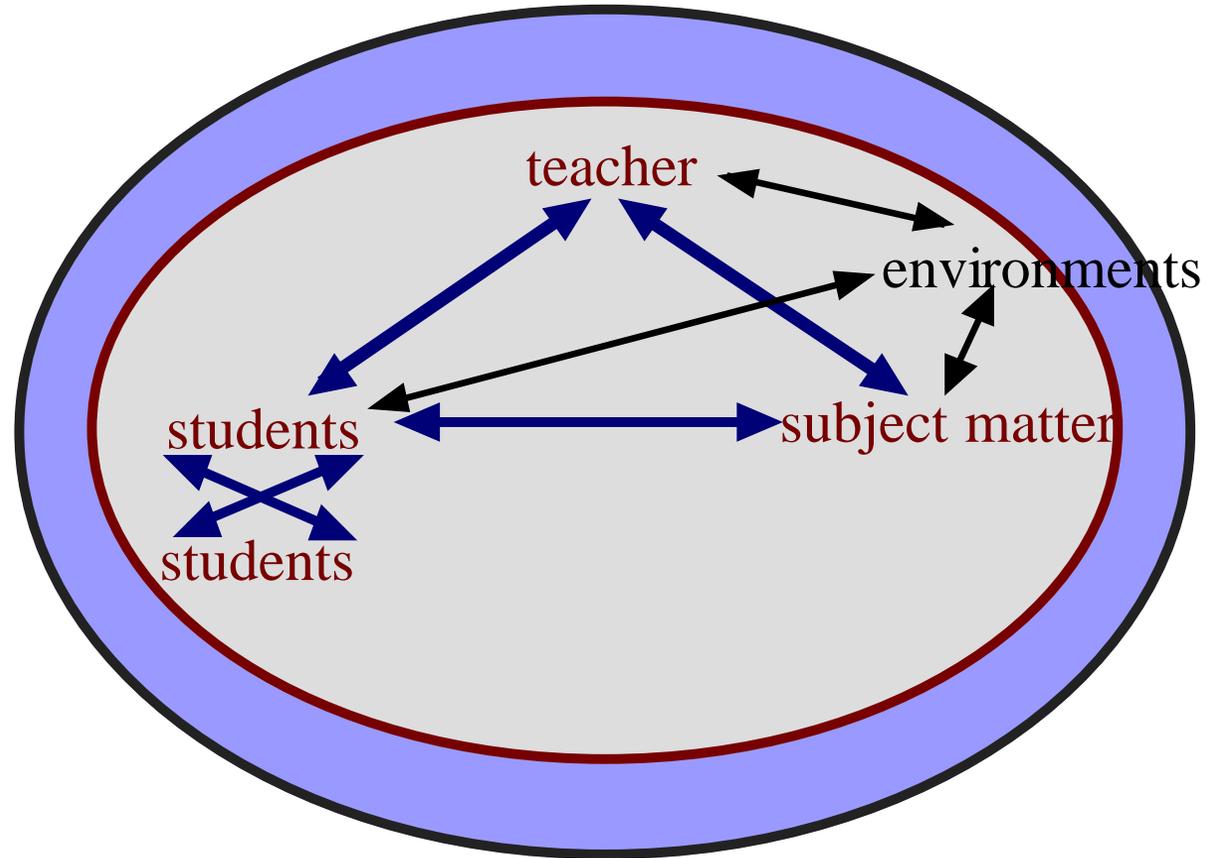
Taking these ideas home: Version 1

What do Perkins' ideas have to do with our work?

Taking these ideas home: Version 2

1. Suppose you were going to teach this article to your colleagues. What are your purposes? How might you go about it? Over what period of time? How will you assess teachers' understanding?
2. Imagine using Perkins' ideas as a framework/lens for looking at the teaching/learning in your school or setting. What would you look for? How do you anticipate finding? What could you do with the fruits of your inquiry?
3. Imagine using Perkins' ideas as a framework for looking at your curriculum. What would you look for? How would you make sense of what you find? What do you anticipate finding? What might you do with the findings?

The instructional triangle*



*Hawkins, Feiman-Nemser,
McLaughlin & Talbert, McDonald, Lampert, Ball & Cohen, Sizer, Lee