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Departing from Tradition: Innovation and Accountability in Two Primary Schools in Denmark and the USA

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Departing from Tradition: Innovation and Accountability in Two Primary Schools in Denmark and the USA

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Departing from tradition: Innovation and accountability in two primary schools in Denmark and the USA

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Traditional



Schooling

USA

- Textbook driven curriculum
- Whole-group instruction
- Emphasis on teaching
- Teacher-directed learning
- Isolated knowledge and skill development
- Students as passive recipients
- Individual learning
- Desks in rows
- Factual recall

Denmark

- Similar to USA
- Authority driven “discipline”
- Classes based on age of pupil, not subject-specific proficiency of the pupil



Why depart:

Theory & philosophy influencing change

1. Constructivist viewpoints
2. Gardner- Multiple Intelligences
3. Dunn & Dunn- Learning Styles
4. Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey
5. Developmentally Appropriate Practice

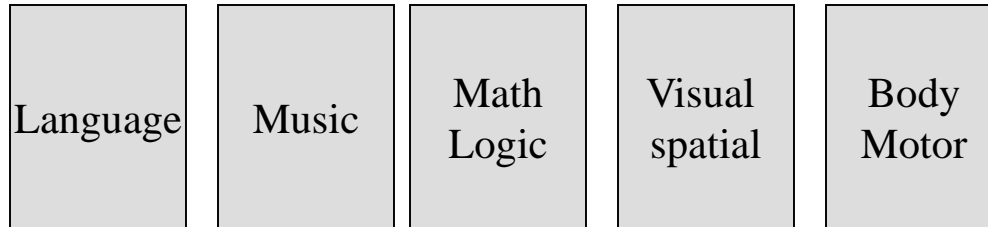
Constructivist viewpoints

- Neuropsychology and Cognition
 - Deconstructivist move from normalization to positive psychology
 - Brain and behavior
 - Paradigm shift
- Brain based research and practice

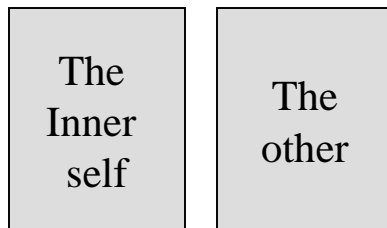
Gardner- Multiple Intelligences

Meaning emerges when pulling these together:

Cognition



Emotion



Linguistic, Musical, Logical/Mathematical, Spatial/Visual, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, **Naturalist, Existentialist**

Dunn & Dunn- Learning Styles

Børns læringsstil Dunn og Dunn-modellen⁷



Environmental –
Sound, Light, Temperature, Seating

Emotional –
Motivation, Task Performance
Responsibility,
Structure

Sociological –
Self, Pair, Peers, Team, Adult, Variety

Physiological –
Perceptual, Intake, Time of Day,
Mobility

Psychological –
Global, Analytic, Right/Left Dominant,
Impulsive, Reflective

Drs. Ken and Rita Dunn, St. John's University

Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey

- Piaget- cognitive construction of knowledge
- Vygotsky- social structures influence on cognitive processes
- Dewey- pragmatic approach to learning

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

- Definition
- Principles
 - developmental domains
 - predictable sequences of growth
 - individual variations
 - impact of early experiences
 - predictable process of development
 - influence of social and cultural contexts
 - active learning
 - heredity and environment
 - play as a vehicle for development
 - opportunities to practice newly acquired skills
 - demonstration of different modes of knowing and learning
 - learning in the context of a community

A model for departure: Multiage

I. In Denmark



Hellerupskole ,
Hellerup, Copenhagen

II. In USA



Washington
Elementary
School
Kingsport, TN

Denmark

The pedagogical and organizational pillars at Hellerup School are:

- ❖ Working with projects – problem and product orientation, disciplinary and interdisciplinary, democracy in between the participants, the exemplary principle
- ❖ Working styles – respecting and valuing diversity
- ❖ Individual student plans and portfolios
- ❖ Year plans in the home areas
- ❖ Autonomous/self steering teams
- ❖ The line in the everyday of the youngest grades – school and recreation
- ❖ Evaluation and documentation
- ❖ School-home cooperation



USA

The main features of the program include:

- ❖ Nongradedness
- ❖ Multiage grouping
- ❖ Developmentally appropriate practice
- ❖ Child-centered learning
- ❖ Integrated thematic instruction
- ❖ Team teaching
- ❖ Community involvement
- ❖ Parent involvement



With emphasis on building a sense of community

The journey towards innovation: Physical environment

1. Small group areas
2. Large group areas
3. Work centers
4. Flexible space

Small group areas

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhdqWXi2x3I>



USA



Denmark

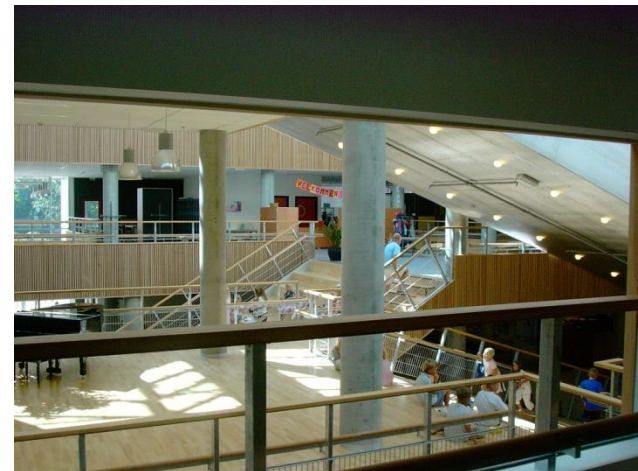


Large group areas

Denmark



USA



Work centers



USA



Denmark



Flexible space



USA



Denmark



The journey towards innovation: Active learning

1. Teacher practices
2. Student expectations
3. Innovative experiences

Teacher practices



Denmark



USA



Student expectations

Denmark

LIFELONG GUIDELINES

TRUTH
TRUST
ACTIVE LISTENING
NO PUT-DOWNS
PERSONAL BEST

LIFE SKILLS

INTEGRITY: To act according to a sense of what's right and wrong.

INITIATIVE: To do something because it needs to be done.

FLEXIBILITY: To be willing to alter plans when necessary.

PERSISTENCE: To keep at it.

ORGANIZATION: To plan, arrange, and implement orderly way to keep things orderly and ready to use.

SENSE OF HUMOR: To laugh and be playful with others.

EFFORT: To do your best.

COMMON SENSE: To use good judgment.

PROBLEM SOLVING: To create solutions in difficult times and everyday problems.

RESPONSIBILITY: To respond when appropriate and accountable for your actions.

PATIENCE: To wait calmly for someone or something.

FRIENDSHIP: To make and keep a friend through trust and caring.

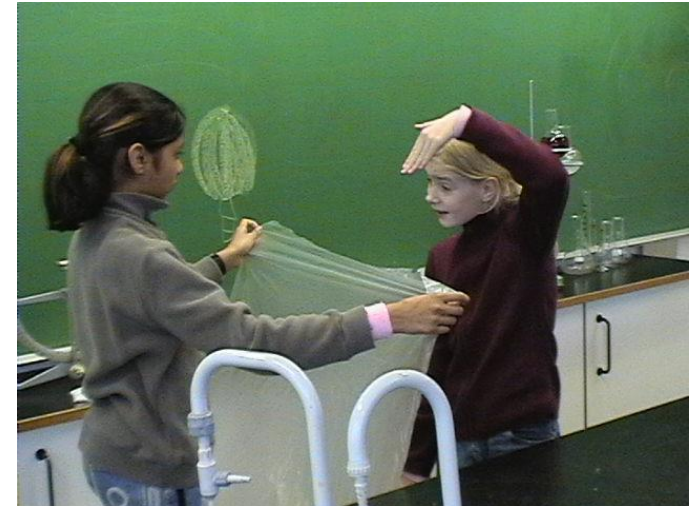
CURIOSITY: A desire to investigate and seek answers of every world.

COOPERATION: To work together toward a common purpose.

CARING: To feel and show concern for others.



USA



Innovative experiences

Denmark



USA



The journey towards innovation: Accountability

1. Student assessment
2. School assessment

Student assessment

Denmark

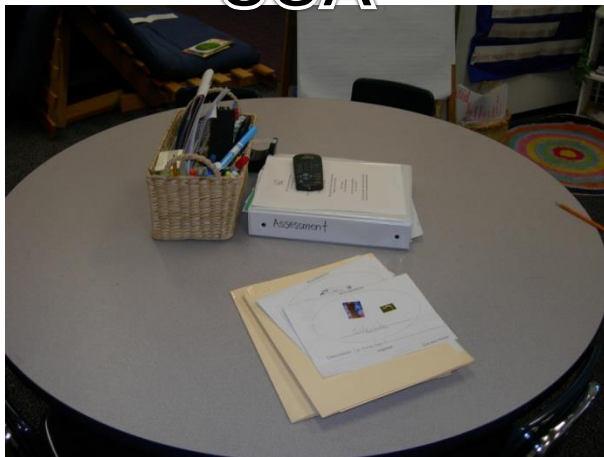


USA

**Assess Prior Knowledge,
Formative (On-going),
and Summative
(Concluding) Knowledge**



**Individual Plans - leading to
Authentic Assessment**



**Portfolio Assessment
Reflection
and
Planning for Next Steps**

School assessment

USA

- Terra Nova Standardized Testing
- 2007 - named a SMART Showcase School by SMART Technologies.
- 2005 - one of 30 schools in the nation to be named a Blue Ribbon Lighthouse School by Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence, Inc.
- Intel Scholastic 2005 School of Distinction Award (winner in the elementary teamwork category)
- 2001- recognized as a *National Blue Ribbon School of excellence by the United States Department of Education*. The intensive application process included reflection upon all accomplishments since the school's beginning in 1994. It was truly validating to receive a site visit and then to be recognized as the only Blue Ribbon School in Tennessee at that time.
- 2001 - won the Tennessee State Board of Education's Parent Involvement Award for the 1st District. It's PATRIOTS (Parent Action Team Reinforcing and Integrating Opportunities To Succeed) logged more than 9,500 volunteer hours, the majority of which involved direct contact with the students.
- Since opening in 1994, Washington has had ten system-wide Teacher of the Year awardees.

School assessment

Denmark

- 4th grade grades reported and compared
- Grades are compared with other schools
- Hellerup is 235 of 1617 - compared in 9th grade
- Transfer of these “best practices” into other schools

Challenges

- School system support of the program
- Community support of the program
- Flexible groupings
- Differentiation of instruction
- Curriculum integration
- Teacher collaboration and team building
- Authentic assessment
- Active learning
- System wide curriculum mapping

Successes & Motivation

Moving from Traditional to Non-Traditional Designs

Innovative Education in the 21st Century

- Educational environment designed around knowledge of how children learn and develop
- Students that love to learn
- Parent involvement
- Collaborative teaching and learning
- Appreciation and recognition of individual strengths, interests and needs
- Continuous learning
- Trust children to be responsible learners
- Application of knowledge
- All learners learning about themselves as a person
- Learners knowing their strengths and ways to contribute to society

The main reason to continue to “Depart from Tradition”

Children - Our Global Future

