

## **VILLAGE STYLE LEARNING**

**By**

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For years, instructors have come up with many ways of reaching students in the classroom. There are many theories about how to engage students of different ages, classes, genders, and diverse backgrounds. Research shows that various learning styles affect teaching, student engagement, and the assessment of student achievement. This paper will focus on the concept of village-style learning as a key element in the learning process; village-style strategies and techniques that engage the entire class, and suggestions on how to integrate village-style activities in the classroom.

The motivating forces to learning in 2012 and beyond are applying learning styles that consist of activities, interaction, and fun. The learning style that I have developed is village style learning. Village style learning coexists within the theories of positive and cognitive psychology. Positive psychology places emphasis on an individual's strengths and human potential (Schultz & Schultz, 2012). Cognitive psychology believes individuals can consciously change their thoughts and behaviors from undesirable to desirable (Schultz & Schultz, 2012). Village style learning places emphasis on a system of symbols, meaning, and relationships to accomplish the students' human potential.

The concept of village style learning occurred from the ideas of cognitive and positive psychology as a technique to emphasize a student's strengths and human potential. This is achieved by changing the structure of learning and the students' process of learning. Changing the process of learning involves changing the perception of learning.

The process of emphasizing relationships starts with changing the focus of a classroom into the focus of a community. This change consists of introducing the concept of villages. The concept of villages spotlight connections and relationships within a community. The first activity that initiates the concept of relationships is placing individuals into small villages. This activity directs the class community into movement and change.

The next activity of movement involves having each individual introduce themselves to each other, to develop a village name, a village Covent, and a village image. This activity of developing a village identity automatically bonds individuals together. The bond is established through the identity of a village name.

For example, the village POLLA their name represents letters of each individual's name; in addition POLLA represents peace, organization, love, life, and ambition. These words reflect the characteristics of each individual within the village. POLLA continues their connection through creating a village Covent. POLLA's Covent is composed of having clear communication with each other, being on time for class, being helpful to each other, and sticking together. POLLA's idea of always sticking together was consistent in their village image.

The image of POLLA is a circle with six layers of three colors that blends. The color red that symbolizes love, the color yellow that symbolizes peace, and the color green that symbolizes unity. When POLLA presented their name, Covent, and image to the class community, it was obvious a system of relationships has been established. Each individual becomes a part of a village and each village becomes part of a community.

To embrace each individual, I had to construct a system of meaning within a person's learning style. I shaped individual learning styles into a multimodality theory. This theory addresses behavior, affect, sensations, and cognition. To address behavior, I developed a tool basket of fun activities that encourages feelings of belonging and comfort. My strategy was to have the class community function as a safe place of support and fun. The next step was addressing affect and sensations. My technique for addressing a person's affect and sensations was to use words, symbols, and images to stir emotions, moods, feelings, and discussions. Within community discussions, I used humor and experiments to promote integrative thinking. My last strategy of the multimodality theory was to address a person's cognition. This strategy celebrated the different modes of learning and integrative learning through reiterating the process of village identity.

Celebrating the process of developing a village identity, celebrates the process of establishing relationships. The relationship between the pursuit of meaning and the engagement of a system of symbols is how I empower individuals to create and develop a village identity.

The system of symbols is the link between dignity and respect. Reflecting back on the village POLLA, their name represented each individual and characteristics of each individual. The words peace, organization, love, life, ambition are symbols of dignity, meaning, respect, and how the village will conduct themselves. POLLA's image of a circle symbolizes their commitment to stay together. This image served as a transition into the world of words and action. The system of symbols is an expression of action, ideas, and beliefs that inspire an individual and a community to their highest potential.

It is my intention to inspire my students within a village community that connects through the idea that each person matters and each person has a voice. The approach of village style learning focuses on changing the process and structure of learning. By changing the structure and process of learning, students' are able to learn from their highest potential.

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