

Personal Theory of Learning and Teaching

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ED 504

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Overview. Write a 5-7 page paper about your personal theory of learning and teaching. The purpose of the paper is to organize your thoughts on the key theories and principles discussed in class and how they apply to your ministry context. This will be done by integrating what you learned through this course to the approach you plan to take as an educator. Specifically, this paper asks you to identify connections between your teaching and what research has demonstrated in terms of the psychology of learning, development, and motivation.

Description of Ministry

Begin the paper with a one-paragraph description of your ministry – or your vision for your future ministry. Explain the teaching role that you have within this ministry.

Application of Educational Psychology

Then pick three principles from the course and explain how they apply to your “teaching” philosophy for your teaching roles in ministry. For each theory of learning that you select, respond to the following points:

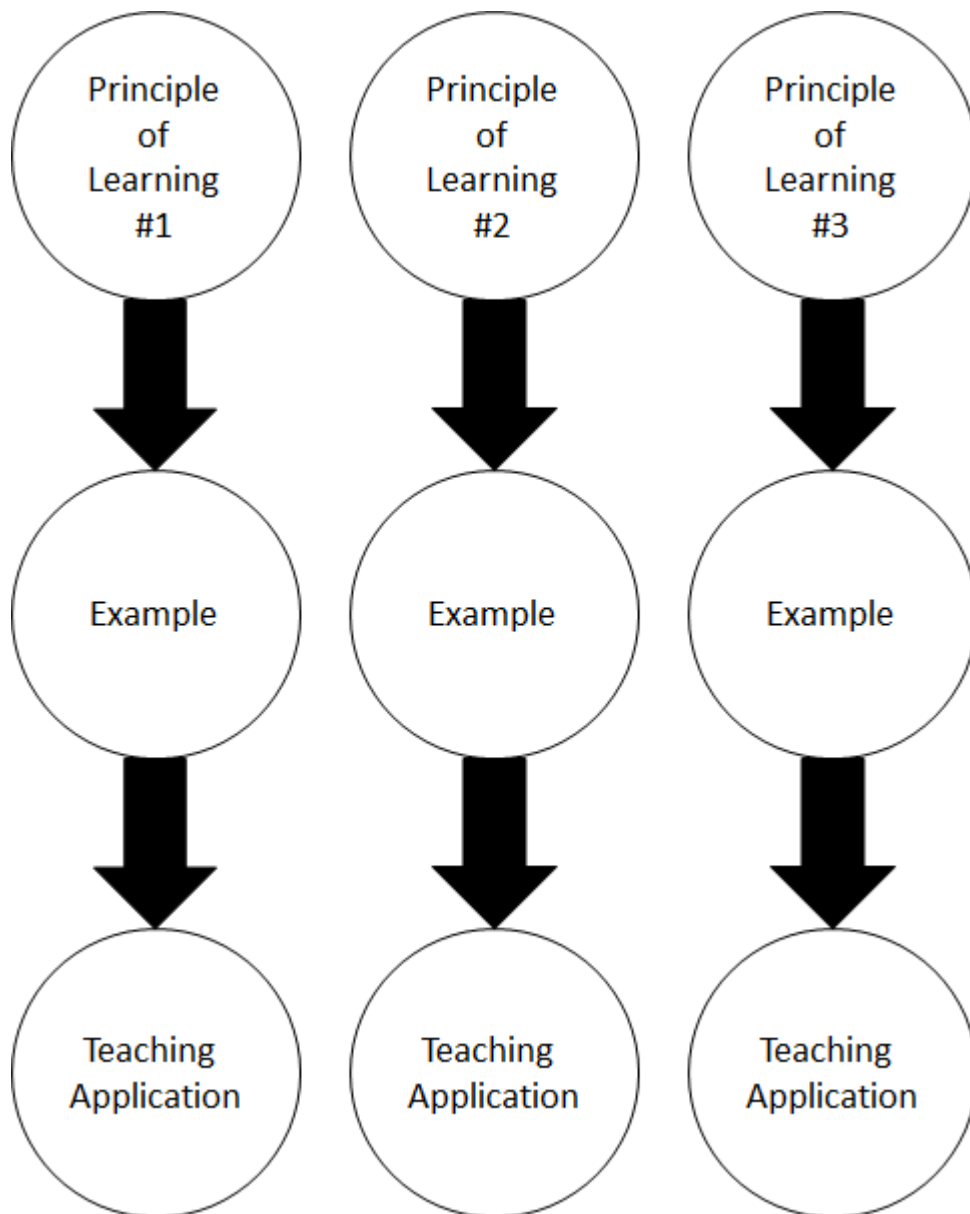
- *Description of principle.* Give a brief overview describing the theory/principle.
- *Example.* Describe a practical example of that theory/principle based on your personal experiences from being a teacher and/or a student, or your observations from watching other teachers.
- *Teaching Application.* How will this principle of learning influence your role as an educator? Here, practically apply the theory to your role as an educator. When you return to your educational context, will you change any of your teaching practices based on what you learned from this learning principle? If so, what will you change? Or, perhaps this theory supports a teaching practice that you previously used but you never quite realized why the teaching strategy works. The purpose of this point is to describe how the theory will be – or *should be* – implemented in your educational context.

Each learning principle should have its own separate section. There should be a direct link between the learning principle, practical illustration, and teaching application. The figure below may help you understand how these are related.

Conclusion

Write a brief description (one or two paragraph) of your main “take-away” from the course (e.g., the main thing you learned).

NOTE: NO bullet points or numbered lists!



Quick Example. Operant conditioning is a behaviorist theory that explains how rewards and punishment increase and decrease behavioral responses, respectively. (*Description of learning principle.*) In my classroom, my students obey my commands because I beat them if they do not obey. The beating, positive punishment, effectively stops misbehavior in my classroom (*Example*). Therefore, as a teacher, I will use beating on a variable ratio schedule by beating students after a random number of misbehaviors to ensure maximum compliance with my rules (*Teaching application*).

| Category | Points Possible | Points Earned |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Description of Teaching Ministry | 2 | |
| Overview of Theories | 9 | |
| Practical Illustration of Theories | 6 | |
| Teaching Applications | 9 | |
| Conclusion | 4 | |
| Total | 30 | |