Project Construct
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A Learner-Centered Approach to Teaching
Developed under the direction of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in 1986.
It’s an **approach to teaching** based on what we know about how children construct knowledge.

**Authentic Learning**
Are we forming children who are only capable of learning what is already known?

Jean Piaget
Children Think and Process Information Significantly Different Than an Adult

Children Move Through Development at Their Own Pace
Stages of Development

- Sensorimotor Stage  
  Birth - 2 years
- Preoperational Stage  
  2 years - 7 years
- Concrete Operational Stage  
  7 - 11 years
- Formal Operational Stage  
  12 and up
Sensorimotor Stage

- Knows the world through movement and sensations
- Learns object permanence
- Learns to separate people from objects
- Learns that actions cause things to happen
Preoperational Stage

• Language Emerging
• Egocentric
• Learns through pretend play, but struggles with logic
Concrete Operational Stage

- Begins to think logically
- Understand conservation
- Thinking more organized
- Develops friends
- Struggles with abstract thinking
Formal Operational Stage

- Thinks abstractly
- Thinks morally, philosophically, ethically, socially, politically
- Deductive thinking
- Can find multiple solutions
Active Process

• “I believe knowing an object means acting upon it,...”

• “We are not passive recipients of knowledge, but actively involved in investigating and experimenting as we build understanding of how our world works....”

Jean Piaget
What Does All This Mean?

We Can’t Change Development, BUT We Can Change the Quality of the Experiences That Children Receive

The **Quality** of the Child’s Experiences determines how well and how thoroughly the wiring in the brain is complete.
Mystery Object
Children have an intrinsic desire to make sense of the world.
Children actively construct knowledge and values by interacting with the physical and social worlds.
The Story of Spilled Milk
In their universal effort to understand the world, children’s thinking will contain predictable errors.
Children’s development is an interactive and interrelated process...
Principle #4

...and spans the Sociomoral, Cognitive, Representational, and Physical Development domains.
The **primary aim** of the Project Construct approach is to help teachers **foster** the development of each child as an **autonomous** individual.
• think for oneself
• decide between right and wrong
• decide between truth and untruth
• consider all relevant factors when making decisions
• make decisions independently of reward and punishment

2018 Joint CIG Dissemination Event
Project Construct Classroom

Learning Centers

2018 Joint CIG Dissemination Event
Project Construct is aligned with **developmentally appropriate** state and national standards.
It’s all about Thinking

Questions?
Children Deserve the Best

You Can’t Rewind Childhood