

# Using knowledge meaningfully



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According to Barbour (undated), knowledge must exist within a boxed process if we are to use it meaningfully. And as Locke said that knowledge is power, we must use this meaningfully. The Dimension 4 of the Dimensions of Learning is considered to be the most effective learning when we use our knowledge to do meaningful tasks (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, 2007). We are encouraged to use knowledge meaningfully through the following reasoning processes: decision making, problem solving, invention, investigation, experimental inquiry and systems analysis.

Sheppard said “ knowledge can help us acquire new concepts and use “ old” concepts in new and more sophisticated ways.” Moreover, “ the development and utilization of concepts has a ‘symbiotic’ relationship with meaningfulness” (Sheppard, undated). Hirst added that these concepts become meaningful when we use them in a particular way (1969). According to the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (2007), the different Dimensions of Learning are useful in every facet of education. Enhancing learning is the major goal of education, thus the system of education in our country must choose a model that would result to effective learning.

Dimension 4 in teaching voice lesson  
In the case of teaching music, it is also important that we use knowledge meaningfully. In one to one lesson in voice (singing), the teacher must create an environment where the student can learn new concepts in music and use these concepts to be much aware of facts, truths and forms of different kinds (Hirst, 1969). Kelly (2002) says that the best teaching method is through the application of information through

instruction. For instance, the student breathes through his chest when singing.

But through lecture and demonstration, the student finds that he can sing better if he breathes through his diaphragm. Kelly added that:“  
Understanding the constituent parts of the vocal apparatus, and how each contributes to the act of singing, can be a valuable tool for our students, both in enabling them to communicate with their teachers more effectively, and in giving them the information they require for self-assessment” (2002).  
As a result, the student learns new principles in music and applies these during his voice lessons. This can help the student to have greater understanding and to improve his skill. UNICEF (2003) noted that children apply their existing knowledge and experiences in gaining new understanding and skills.

The handbook also noted that children must be encouraged to work and interact with groups. This concept can be applied even to adults and adolescents when it comes to learning and using their knowledge meaningfully. When it comes to a small group, the teacher must consider the different learning abilities and recognize the members’ experiences, interests, knowledge and skills so that the teacher knows how to motivate his students to learn and use knowledge in a meaningful way. The Dimension 4 can be applied in a way that the members of the group can encourage each other to enhance their skills through constant practice.

They can practice to improve the blending of their voices. They should also discuss solutions in tackling a problem. For instance, a member produces the

wrong tone. Other members can help him straighten this out. They can also teach each other and find ways to further improve as a group and demonstrate their knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music. Another example is to help each other out how to sing a song expressively with technical accuracy.

One member can also use an improvised instrument to go along with their singing. On the other hand, managing a large group for voice lesson is much harder than a one to one or small group because there are more members to attend to. Although a large group facilitates faster transfer of information and allows all members to be engaged at the same time, the teacher can experience difficulty. However, the teacher can be aided using the Dimension 4 of learning. He can provide an environment where the members can socialize and share their musical experiences and skills. For instance, when a particular song is sung by the choir, this skill can be applied to different contexts.

Jellison added that when a student applies what he learns from practicing playing piano or practicing playing other instruments or music, “transfer has occurred across a number of tasks” (Jellison, 2000). The underlying principle here is that when the members of the choir are exposed to more frequent opportunities to practice their skills or demonstrate their knowledge through various examples, learning can be transferred to different and new situations. In short, the application and transfer of knowledge to different situations is affected by the frequency and variety of practices. For instance, a member who constantly practices singing expressively and with technical accuracy can transfer his skill in new literature. He can also share this skill

through demonstration and instruction with the other members of the choir. Thus, he uses his knowledge in a meaningful way.

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