Perry's Stages of Student Development for Information Literacy Instructors

Catherine Johnson - Thomas Arendall
University of Baltimore
Langsdale Library
Setting the Stage

- What's wrong with traditional library instruction?

- How can we improve it?

Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/trucolorsfly/352573802/
Perry's Stages (simplified)

- Dualism
- Multiplicity
- Relativity
- Commitment
Cognitive Development

1st year - College

1. Dualism
2. Multiplicity

4th yr - College

3. Relativity

Professional

4. Commitment
Under stress…

- Dualism
- Multiplicity
- Relativity
- Commitment
Under stress...

Temporizing - pause
Retreat - backtracking
Escape - rejection

Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/tzofia/270800047/
Perry's Stages (simplified)

- Dualism
- Multiplicity
- Relativity
- Commitment
Dualism

• Black/White
• Right/Wrong
• Authorities have the answers
• Students receive knowledge

Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/swamibu/2855812597/
Multiplicity

• Diversity recognized
• Authorities disagree
• Everyone's opinion equal
• Students give the teacher whatever they want

Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/paulyp13/2869931859/
Relativity

- Context matters
- Authorities can be analyzed
- "Truth" depend on evidence
- Students actively make meaning

Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/nachoissd/3499105933/
Commitment

• Faced with relativity, you make choices
• Students stake a position in debates

Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/sholt/2507005746/
Scenario 1: Evaluation

Approach:
Information is right or wrong. Struggle with differing viewpoints on a given issue.

Encouragement:
Students consider multiple 'expert' viewpoints on a controversial topic.
Scenario 1: Evaluation

Approach:
Every idea is equally valid, so why do we need to evaluate?

Encouragement:
Give students a specific set of criteria to look for while evaluating sources.
Scenario 1: Evaluation

Approach:
Evaluate based on context and evidence.

Encouragement:
Ask students to take a position based on the information they find most valuable.
Scenario 2: Select Results

Approach:
Pick sources with exact keywords used in search.

Encouragement:
Give students checklist of what makes a good source.
Scenario 2: Select Results

Approach:
Pick first sources that meet minimum required standards.

Encouragement:
Ask students to articulate why a particular source is better than others the for topic.
Scenario 2: Select Results

Approach:
Choose more sources than needed, read them, then pick best for argument

Encouragement:
Ask students to make connections between assignments. What implications do arguments used have on students as professionals?
Scenario 3: Source Types

Approach:
Can describe main qualities of each type of source (magazine, journal, book etc).

Encouragement:
Ask students to compare information from multiple types of sources discussing the same topic.
Scenario 3: Source Types

Approach:
Understand differences between types of sources; Don't see value in using 'best' types.

Encouragement:
Have students mimic professional standards of information use.
Scenario 3: Source Types

Approach:
Understand the value of different types of sources in different situations

Encouragement:
Have students identify and use most reputable sources in their field.
In Conclusion...

Covering the content isn't enough - Teach in ways that help the students learn.
References


