

mammals and birds, reptiles and amphibians, and ducks and hawks. Vocabulary is built: biped/quadruped, autotrophic/heterotrophic, lanceolate/hastate. Students are soon able to write keys, classify, and discern similarities and differences between specimens which are more similar to each other than the previous examples. Differences and similarities are

more subtle, but students are quickly able to sort out various species of oaks, pines, beetles and fish.

Lessons Learned

Dichotomous thinking is restrictive. Mental boundaries are erected if one is forced to think in an "if not this, then that" style. Obviously, there are times when dichotomizing is useful and other times

when it limits creativity. It does give practice in outline construction. How many times have you received student outlines with an "A" category but no matching "B?" Some students find it quite simple to organize information dichotomously; others have difficulty in producing an efficient, well-organized outline. Learning specialists and psychologists...Help!

Classroom Research Abstracts

"The Effect of Self-Generated Elaboration on Students' Recall of Tax and Accounting Material: Further Evidence," to appear in *Issues in Accounting Education* (Fall 1994)

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Research has shown that active learning strategies often lead to better recall of material than do passive strategies. This study compared the effectiveness of self-generated elaboration (an active learning method) and instructor-generated elaboration (a more passive method).

Students in introductory accounting were given a series of tax laws and accounting concepts. After reading each law, groups of stu-

dents were asked to indicate why they thought lawmakers enacted this law, and how this law achieves its goal (self-elaboration). After each accounting concept was presented, student groups were asked to suggest the logic behind this concept and how this logic supports the concept. As a control, other students, not placed in groups, were given the goal and logic underlying the laws and accounting concepts by the instructor.

The results indicate that the active method better promotes recall of both simple and complex accounting material. In addition, both high and low-ability accounting students benefitted from the use of the active method. For low-ability students, a factor associated with the effectiveness of the active method was the students' ability to generate reasonable explanations of the material presented. (For complete copy of this research, contact CETL).

Crossing the Cognitive Divide: Using Portfolio Assessment with Preservice and Inservice Teachers, Presented at Eastern Educational Research Association Conference, February 1994.

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As is true in most educational settings, quantitative assessment dominates the post-secondary experience. But changes are taking place to find more authentic assessment tools that measure through direct demonstration. One such tool is the student portfolio.

We conducted a qualitative evaluation of portfolio assessment among 123 KSC education students who had to prepare portfolios in upper division and graduate courses to determine if such a process positively affected their educational objectives as well as served as a model for future use in their own classrooms.

Students were asked to reflect on their portfolios at mid-term and end of term through evaluation instruments.

Results Indicated

- 1) Students were confused at first by the unfamiliarity of the portfolio assignment and by the freedom to choose evaluation parameters;
- 2) Students' school experiences had limited their vision of class assessment to traditional objective measures;
- 3) Faculty adapted to the portfolio process by modifying practices to emphasize application during instruction;
- 4) Students reported they "worked harder and dug deeper" using portfolios, and that subject matter was much more meaningful;
- 5) Initially the use of portfolios seemed to create grade anxiety for some;
- 6) Students felt the time necessary to create a portfolio was lengthy, but many said they intended to use their products as professional advancement tools.

While there are numerous obstacles to overcome in implementing authentic assessment in college classrooms, we are optimistic about the use of portfolios in making assessment more meaningful for the student.