Lilli Nielsen’s Active Learning

EARLY LEARNING FOR CHILDREN WITH VISION IMPAIRMENT
AND MULTIPLE DISABILITIES
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Author:

*Space and Self*

*Spatial Relations in Congenitally Blind Infants - Are You Blind?*

*Educational Approaches - The Comprehending Hand*

*Early Learning Step By Step*

Creator of the approach called Active Learning
Is Lilli Nielsen’s Active Learning different from other Active Learning?

Active Learning

- Model of instruction focusing on responsibility of learning on learners
- Students engage in analysis, synthesis and evaluation
- Activities include:
  - Think-pair-share
  - Learning cells
  - Student debate
  - Class games

Lilli’s Active Learning

- Learning approach for blind, multi-disabled children with developmental age <3
- Students engage in exploration of materials in unique learning environments
- Learning is achieved by being active
- Learning materials include:
  - Little Room
  - Resonance board
  - Support bench
  - Scratching board
  - Activity vest
LN Active Learning was designed for children who:

- Show little interest in playing or exploring environment
- Have delayed motor development
- Cry much of the time
- Demand too much or too little attention
- Passively wait for others to get them going
- Do not develop speech
How do young children learn???
Difficulties with Traditional Teaching Methods – Lilli Nielsen

- Child becomes unwilling to do for himself
- Child becomes prompt dependent
- Child withdraws from contact with adult
- When you move a child’s hand, arm, or leg, the decision comes from YOUR brain
Principles of LN Active Learning

- Children under 3 learn by exploring and trying things themselves
- Children who are blind and multi-disabled need special environments that allow and encourage them to explore and interact
- Environments and adult roles change as children move through 5 stages of development
Phase 1
Offering

Children at this level

- Reluctant to do much
- Passive or self-stimulatory behaviors
- World confined to their own body
- Seldom seek interaction

Goal for this level

- Child trusts the adult will make no demands
- Learn child’s likes and dislikes
- Learn how the child moves, contacts people and objects
Phase 2
Imitation

The child at this level:

- Interested in some things outside their own body but very limited
- Still self-stimulatory behaviors, but can be enticed to interact with trusted people
- Have a few actions they perform on objects

The goal of this level:

- Increase the child’s interest in activities happening nearby
- Increase the child’s ability to take initiative
- To introduce new activities and movements
Phase 3
Interaction

The child at this level:
- Beginning to be interested in interactive games
- Interested in the environment and the actions of others
- Begins to attempt to interact

The goal at this level:
- Help the child initiate interactions
- Build communication - “more” or “again”
Phase 4
Sharing the Work

Children at this level:
- Show confidence performing some actions and activities
- Begin to understand time and sequence of events

The goal of this level:
- Child engages in activities, doing as much as he can, any way he can
- Child interacts with new people
- Child wants to acquire new abilities
Phase 5
Consequence

The child at this level

- Has an emotional age of 2 years
- Has confidence in what he can do
- Is secure interacting with people

The goal at this level

- Help the child get used to demands
- Help the child handle change
- Establish the basis for responsibility
Early Learning Step by Step

The steps to introduce a skill to a child through a progression of experiences

- Midline orientation of hands
- Head control
- Learning to eat
- Learning to dress and undress
- Learning to play constructively
Learning to Play Constructively

LN defines playing constructively as using objects and surroundings to create.

This is achieved step by step starting with:
- putting one object into another
- separating simple construction toys
- playing banging games and sequence games
- playing pouring games and quantity games
- emptying a box with toys or other objects
- filling a box or other objects
- stacking objects
- putting two or more objects together
- arranging objects in particular orders
- playing more and more constructively, and
- using tools for constructing new devices
Learning about Quantity

Typically developing child

- experiences quantity while playing with hands
- experiences with toys that can be taken apart and become “two”
- likes collecting toys, books, etc.

Child with vision and/or multiple disabilities

- cannot experience the quantity of fingers by looking
- does not usually experiment with toys
- does not have the opportunity to see when there is more than one object to play with
Learning about Quantity

Using the Little Room and resonance platform to play quantitative games
Learning about Quantity

Using objects that fit between the child’s fingers to learn about quantity.
Importance of Banging Games

help the child learn about the auditory qualities of objects and surfaces
help the child compare these qualities
help develop muscle strength
enhance babbling and vocalizations
enhance quantitative knowledge
facilitate learning to use new tools
A tool for assessing the developmental levels of a learner who, irrespective of age and/or handicap(s), has developed to a level between birth and 48 months.

Users are encouraged to add items to each subsection of things a child can do if nothing on the list illustrates the capacity a particular child demonstrates. For teachers working with visually impaired children who have multiple disabilities.

Used in conjunction with the FIELA curriculum to make sure activities are at the appropriate level.
FIELA Curriculum

- Ideas for introducing learning activities based on the child’s developmental level
- Includes 730 learning environments for gross and fine motor
My Top 10 Active Learning Materials
(in no particular order)

Little Room
Support bench
Essef Board
Tipping Board
SPG (Scratch, Pull, Grab) Board
Resonance Board
Position Board
Velcro Vest
Bead and Chain Holders
Bead and Object Kits
Resources for DIY Active Learning Materials

How to Make a Texture Board to Scratch, Grab, Hold & Release
www.tsbvi.edu

Resonance Board Design and Little Room Configurations
www.tsbvi.edu

Active Learning Study Group December 2, 2014
www.tsbvi.edu

Dens by Millie Smith
www.tsbvi.edu/article/1732-dens
Examples of home made SPG Boards
Resources to learn more about Active Learning


- Active Learning and the Exploration of Real Objects - by Stacy Shafer and Ann Adkins, TSBVI [http://www.tsbvi.edu/seehear/winter04/active.htm]


- Incorporating Active Learning Theory into Activity Routines - by Kate Moss and Stacy Shafer, TSBVI [http://www.tsbvi.edu/seehear/winter06/learning.htm]


Books by Dr. Nielsen – available at [www.lilliworks.com]
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Functional Schemes
The Comprehending Hand
Educational Approaches