

How do we learn?

Over the course of the year, the Leadership team will be presenting different ideas, theories and research papers on how we learn. Learning theory is complex, involved and as expected has many points of view. At Ashburton Primary School, as at most schools, we have melded a number of learning theories to develop our beliefs and understandings about how students learn in order to provide the best possible learning outcomes academically, socially and emotionally for your children. Most learning theories abide under three premises;

We all learn in different ways and at different rates

We learn through social interaction

Learning needs to be relevant, meaningful and purposeful

The next in our series is about how education has changed.

Education has changed

There is a Hebrew proverb that states; **“do not confine your children to your own learning, for they were born in another time”**, (CSE Journal, 2007). This proverb connects so well with education today. Our students are ‘tech savvy’ and as Marc Prensky (2001) states **“students today are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach”**. Centre for Strategic Education Victoria, 2007

So what is different?

The 70’s Child	21 st Century Child
<p><i>As a primary school child of the 70’s I was...</i> Taught by one teacher who sat behind a desk. My work was copied onto a blackboard or found in a reading book called ‘Betty and Jim’. My reading material came from the Readers Digest. I sat in a wooden desk in rows.</p>	<p><i>Primary aged children today have the opportunity to...</i> Work as part of a team. Have individual learning catered for their strengths and weaknesses. Have a voice for what and how they learn.</p>

Research states that the child of the 21st century will need the following skills in order to function within society. (Marc Prensky’s Essential 21st Century Skills)

Knowing the right thing to do Behaving ethically Thinking critically Setting goals Having good judgement Making good decision	Getting it done Planning Problem solving Self directing Self assessing Iterating	Doing it creatively Adapting Thinking creatively Tinkering and designing Playing Finding your voice
Doing it with others Taking leadership Communicating / interacting with individuals and groups Communicating / interacting with technology Communicating / interacting with a world audience Communicating / interacting with across cultures	Constantly do it better Reflecting Being proactive Taking prudent risks Thinking long term Continually improving through learning	

Most of these skills we have always expected from children, but more than ever collaborative skills, the ability to reflect and be a self motivator is critical in our society. Children leaving school today can expect to have at least 3-4 careers within their lifetime. All of these skills will help them to learn, unlearn and relearn as required by a global environment.

Did you know? ***Shakespeare had 24,000 words to work with, Eminem has 1,000,000 words. China has more honour students than America has students. The average students today will have 10-14 careers. The average student lives in a world of instant communication, entertainment, collaboration and multimedia.***

Excerpt from Education Today and Tomorrow created by Tom Woodward found on Youtube
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fnh9q_cQcUE

It is imperative that we provide a stimulating learning environment that provides opportunities for children to develop and practise these skills on a daily basis. Learning how to communicate creative ideas effectively to a wide and varied audience is one of the most critical skills students need to develop. Being exposed to a variety of communication strategies, including technology helps students to become better communicators both visually and verbally. It also helps students to be proactive, be a risk taker and improve their learning through instant feedback. Everyday teachers at Ashburton Primary School plan and provide a complex array of learning experiences that allow children to practise and develop these skills during literacy, numeracy, integrated learning and all specialist sessions.