

Methods of Teaching Introductory Material: A Review

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Are You Wet or Dry?

- Learning is affected by temperament, and one of the biggest factors is whether you are wet or dry.
- Learning through texts alone is much more successful for people who are dry, but even then, there are pitfalls.

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Active vs. Passive Learning

- Passive learning is where the teacher “does” all the activity, and the students are expected to soak it up.
- Active learning is where the students are expected to learn for themselves, because the teacher supplies the “problem,” whereas the students provide the “solution.”
- Accordingly, active learning is sometimes referred to as Problem-Based Learning

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Passive Learning

- Called in some educational circles the Sage on the Stage, passive learning is the model for all our astrological conferences, where lecturing at an audience is the norm
- The problem with this model is that it encourages only superficial learning processes

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Bloom's Taxonomy



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From: <http://www.cpdscotland.org.uk/what/lead/tfe/skillsfortfe.asp>

Bloom's Taxonomy

- The lecturing model tends to stimulate only the knowledge level of the taxonomy
- Achieving mastery of higher levels of the taxonomy required direct engagement by the student with the material
- Because these levels are seldom explicitly taught, it's hard for a student to know how to reach them in a particular field.

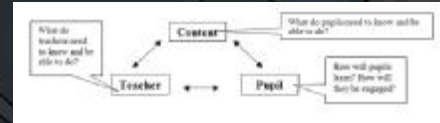
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Bloom's Taxonomy

- While a particular astrologer may have achieved a higher-order understanding, that does not mean she or he knows how to teach material that way.
- Unless thinking, reasoning, and logic methods are taught along with specific methodologies, the student is unlikely to learn mastery of the knowledge taught.

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James Elmore's Model



Elmore, Richard F. 2004. *School reform from the inside out: policy, practice, and performance*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Education Press. Elmore believes that none of these three areas can be considered in isolation and still get good learning outcomes.

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What We Need to Know: Knowledge & Understanding

- An operation definition of what a technique is
- How to calculate it, or how to get it calculated
- What factors are necessary to calculate the technique (zodiac, house system)
- What variations exist within a technique

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Problem #1: Defining Your Task

Break into your groups to discuss the following question:

What would be the astrological indicators of being a person who would land on the Moon?

Do not approach this question by pulling up charts of astronauts who have: this is a theoretical exercise.

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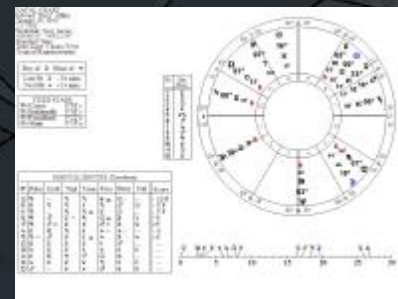
Discussion of Problem #1

- What astrological factors might you apply to this question?
- What logic do you use to find a "rulership" that you have never encountered before?

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Problem #1: Buzz Aldrin

Go back into your groups and examine Buzz's nativity, and how it applies to your models.



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Discussion of Buzz's Nativity

- Is there a configuration that means "astronaut?"
- Are there configurations that show his talents, which correspond to the factors NASA used to choose him?
- Is this luck, or talent, or being in the right place at the right time?

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Discussion of Buzz's Nativity

- What were the three most important factors related to his career?
- What were the three things in his nativity that either surprised you concerning his career, or that you noticed that didn't seem to fit with the story?

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Discussion of Problem #1

- Is the question of whether someone lands on the Moon based on the nativity, or on dynamic methods applied to the nativity?
- How does one account for having a chart indication, and yet only twelve people have ever gone there. What about others with similar configurations?

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What happens when you break into Groups

- Attendees/students shift focus from listening to doing.
- Attendees/students test knowledge they have or have just acquired.
- Attendees/students find they must justify their logic.
- Attendees/students begin to see nuances of method, and that it may not be straightforward.

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What Are Your Goals?

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"It is a basic and pervasive human need to invent meanings and invest meanings in one's world."

Gardner, Howard. 1983. *Frames of mind: the theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books, p 50.

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Goals

- Discuss: what are the goals of an astrological delineation?
- Who sets the goals: astrologer or client?
- How many subjects can one reasonably cover in 60-90 minutes?

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Confirmation and Conflict

- Many astrologers talk about needing several confirmations of a configuration in order to make a “serious” prediction.
- But what happens when these multiple methods instead produce conflicting results?

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Analyzing Cognitive Dissonance in Astrology

- Astrology is not one single tradition, but many.
- As a result, it is inevitable that many differences of opinion exist.
- Does that make any one opinion wrong?
- Is it possible to *measure* “right” and “wrong?”
- Is it possible to integrate different systems?

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What is “Wrong?”

- This is when a technique produces a low level of accuracy
 - A hint is when you see the user multiplying the possible ways it could work
 - Another hint is when the user multiplies the number of ways to compute the chart
 - Another hint is when the user multiplies the number of possible signifiers
- The user is often caught in the technique because of the occasional really accurate “hit,” suggesting that there is “something there.”

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How do Good Astrologers develop Bad Technique?

- There are two ways to integrate new knowledge:
 - By integrating it into what one already knows about the technique (accretion)
 - By keeping it separate, and learning how it is distinguished from what one already knows.
- Most astrologers favor the accretion method, and this has grave risks for technique disintegration.

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The Accretion Problem: Solar Returns

- A solar return is calculated for the position of the natal Sun in subsequent years.
- It serves the same function as the Aries Ingress does in mundane astrology, where the Aries Ingress can be seen as a solar return for the position zero Aries.
- In the traditional classical system, there was only one way to calculate the solar return: as the return to the [tropical] solar position in the birth location.

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Solar Return Methods Multiplying Daily...

- In the 17th century, the astrologer Morinus suggested doing the chart for the location of the solar return. And then there were two possible charts.
- Somewhere along the line, physical location and residence were distinguished, and then there were three charts.
- In the late 19th century, Theosophist astrologers got intrigued with the Indian system and proposed precessed solar returns, and then there were six charts.

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Still More....

- Ronald Davison mentioned converse solar returns, where one calculated the solar return for the same number of years before the person was born as the person's age. And then there were twelve charts.
- Zip Dobyns among others proposed doing the solar return for the progressed location of the Sun, and then there were twenty four charts.

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Beyond belief, and possibly Beyond Number

- If this isn't enough, one can run the lunar returns, which are calculated for the Moon's return to its natal location, or even the Moon's return to the Sun's location...
- This would then add $(13 \times 24 \times 2) + 24 = 648$ possible returns for the year!!

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Is this serious???

- I am not joking.
- Ronald Davison, one of the major sources, treats all the methods except the progressed equally, and does not express a preference.*
- More recently, Celeste Teal does the same thing.**
- Neither expresses the slightest concern about this multiplicity of charts.

* Davison, Ronald C. *Cycles of Destiny. Understanding Return Charts.* Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1990.

** Teal, Celeste. *Predicting Events with Astrology.* 1st ed. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1999.

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What Happened, anyway?

- Davison's book was published posthumously, so it is possible he never got to a conclusion.
- Teal clearly never saw any problem with the possibility of *a lot* of potentially conflicting charts.
- Nobody had to declare anybody else "wrong."
- Nobody considered that the various charts might actually be showing different things, and thus, they might not actually all be the same.

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What Happened, anyway?

- But the bottom line is: nobody considered the quantitative implications of the method.
- The old saw about multiple methods confirming a result obscured the reality of the increase of the noise at the expense of the signal.

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Bloom's Taxonomy



From: <http://www.cpdscotland.org.uk/what/lead/tfe/skillsfortfe.asp>

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Moving toward Step 5 in Bloom's Taxonomy

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There are educators who believe that teaching children something rather than allowing them to discover the same thing deprives them of the joy of discovery.

Papert, Seymour. 1996. *The connected family: bridging the digital generation gap*. Atlanta, Ga: Longstreet Press.

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Problem-based learning looks an awful lot like detective work.

Ronis, Diane L. 2008. *Problem-based learning for math & science: integrating inquiry and the Internet*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, p 13.

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Ronis goes on to define learning as that process of conceptual bridges between what is already known and what is being learned (p 26). Astrologically, we can understand this process as wet.

Passive learning by its very nature tends to be dry.

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Compare and Contrast

- This is older terminology for an exercise devoted to examining what about two authors or techniques is similar: and what is different.

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References

- Anderson, Lorin W., David R. Krathwohl, and Benjamin Samuel Bloom. 2001. *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: a revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Longman.
- Ronis, Diane L. 2008. *Problem-based learning for math & science: integrating inquiry and the Internet*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.