

Chapter 2

Developing Your Stance Toward Education

CHAPTER OVERVIEW AND KEY OUTCOMES

Chapter two argues that teachers' actions and words—both intentional and unplanned—convey the teachers' convictions about schooling and education. Therefore, Chapter 2 urges readers to develop their own stances toward education. It also presents historically prevalent stances toward education.

By the time they finish this chapter, students should be able to:

1. Analyze an educational experience in terms of three curricula.
2. Recall enduring questions of education.
3. Connect current practices to historically prevalent stances.
4. Develop and defend your own stance.
5. Use your stance to guide short- and long-term professional decision-making.

CHAPTER OUTLINE AND GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

1. Reasons for having an educational stance today
 - a. Guidance for interactions and goals
 - b. Compass for decision making
 - c. Tool to provide focus on the big picture
 - d. Power to implement mandates thoughtfully
 - e. Aid to understand the perspectives of others
 - f. Aid for assessing unintended consequences and their costs and benefits
2. Three curricula
 - a. Explicit
 - b. Implicit
 - c. Null
3. Considering the questions of education
 - a. What is the good? Who is the good person living in the good society?
 - b. What is the purpose of education?
 - c. What should everyone learn? Why?
 - d. What is the nature of learning?
 - e. What is (excellent) teaching?
 - f. What does school do?
4. Conceptions of education found in practice
 - a. Technical

- b. Rational
 - c. Personal
 - d. Social
5. Developing your stance
- a. What is the good? Who is the good person living in the good society?
 - b. What is the purpose of education?
 - c. What should everyone learn? Why?
 - d. What is the nature of learning?
 - e. What is (excellent) teaching?
 - f. What does school do?
6. Using your stance
- a. Short-term decisions
 - b. Long-term decisions
 - c. Revision

See Handout 2A for a graphic organizer of Chapter 2's main points.

SAMPLE CLASS ACTIVITIES

1. Immerse students in philosophical conversations using Overheard Quotes (Guillaume, Yopp, & Yopp, 2007).
 - a. Reprint many (one per student, perhaps) quotes from famous people (educators and others) that in some way address one or more questions of education. Handout 2B gives some samples I recently found using creativequotations.com.
 - b. Fold each quote in half or place it in an envelope. Distribute the quotes.
 - c. Ask students to respond in writing to their quote.
 - d. Ask students to circulate and listen to each other's quotes. They are not to comment; only to share and listen.
 - e. Ask them to reflect a second time to what they heard.
 - f. Use their insights to introduce the questions of education and discuss the notion that philosophies require perennial discussion as the context (people, place, and time) for education is constantly shifting. As an alternative to Overheard Quotes, consider using Magnetic Quotes, explained on p. 8 of this manual.
2. Access students' initial ideas about stances toward education using a four corners activity.
 - a. Have students complete the questionnaire in Handout 2C.
 - b. Designate four areas, or corners, of your room where students can congregate. Mark them SA, A, D, and SD (the possible responses for the questionnaire).
 - a. Choose for discussion just a few items from the questionnaire that are likely to encourage productive discussion.
 - b. Ensure that students understand that the questionnaire's prompts are value-based with many possible perspectives. Establish rules for appropriate discussion.
 - c. For each selected prompt: Read it aloud and have students go to the corner that corresponds with their response (SA, A, D, or SD). Allow them to discuss with others in

- their corner. Then mix students so that they talk with a peer whose answer was different. For example, people can meet with someone across the diagonal from them.
- d. Close by stating that students have been discussing parts of their educational stances—answers to some of the enduring questions of education.
3. Build an understanding that teachers' actions and school activities convey a stance toward education. Some of these choices may be useful:
- Share a personal vignette that illustrates how and/or what students learn in school.
 - After sharing a personal vignette, invite students to do the same. Remind them that some of the most powerful messages we may learn in school may be related to our gender, our heritage, our home language, or other traits or experiences. Invite them to share such stories as appropriate. Using partner groups can reduce the risk.
 - Provide a list of school events and nonevents that spark students to realize that schools teach three curricula. Some sample questions include:
 - (1) When and how often are the visual and performing arts taught?
 - (2) Which subject areas are considered “givens”? What is left out?
 - (3) How do students know if their thinking is accurate in schools?
 - (4) For which behaviors are students praised? Criticized?
 - (5) Whose values do certain practices reflect?

Reflection: One year, my students had a poignant discussion about the fact that many of them were first-generation college graduates whose adult friends did not value higher education as highly as my students did. Some of the most powerful stories told by my students were those that described the tellers' experience of learning to live in two worlds: The one of higher education, and the one of their friends. Other powerful stories included some students' perception that the school culture viewed their ability to speak another language as a bad thing.

4. Discuss guiding questions of education.
- a. Use the images found in Chapter 2's warm up exercise to spark conversations about the questions of education. You may wish to find each online and project larger versions of the images.
- Child 1: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/young/images/y10-3a15966r.jpg>
 - Child 2: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/nclc.03293/>
 - Children 3: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsc.00276/>
 - Children 4: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/young/images/y51-3c18706r.jpg>
 - Child 5: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c30870/>
 - Child 6: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8d34706/>
- b. Consider sorting the quotations from Handout 2B into the question(s) they address.
- c. Point to particular questions as students discuss. Examples include issues such as gifted education and the current curricular emphasis on language arts, reading, and mathematics. This can help them see the relevance of philosophies, or stances, toward education.

5. Teach historically prevalent stances toward education. Perhaps you will choose one or more of these strategies:
- Provide additional reading or lecture on major philosophies (e.g., Essentialism, Perennialism, Progressivism, and Existentialism) if your students need more exposure to the philosophy of education.
 - Complete Opportunity for Practice number 2 at the chapter's close, which helps students identify prevalent stances through mock interviews with four teachers.
 - To build students' understanding of the scheme used in the Primer (technical, rational, personal, social stances), provide time for them to complete Figure 2.3 in small groups. You might ask students to number each cell in the grid and then have them match the groups of responses on the next page with each cell. You can use Handouts 2D and 2E for this purpose. Or print the statements in large font and create a class chart instead of individual charts.

Reflection: Students experience great success with this exercise.

- Allow students to apply their knowledge of historically prevalent stances. Divide students into small groups and have the groups write a brief lesson description for the same objective. For example, the objective could be, "Learners will paint a picture of flowers using water color paints." But wait! It gets harder! Have each group draw the name of a historically prevalent stance toward education (technical, rational, personal, and social) from a bowl and write their lesson description from that perspective. See if other groups can identify the stance given the group's (1) intended outcomes (2) description of the procedure, and (3) assessment.
6. Practice identifying stances toward education in policy and practice. School mission statements can provoke intriguing discussions.
- a. Assign students to bring in mission statements from their K-12 sites if they are completing field experiences. Students can download and print the mission statements from the School Accountability Report Cards, available on the web. Alternatively, you might provide sets of examples that show clear contrasts.
 - b. Divide students into small groups and have them read and discuss the mission statements. To focus the task, you can ask them to mark—or color code—sections that reveal different orientations such as technical, rational, personal, and social.
 - c. Discuss questions such as: Can students identify prevalent stances toward education in these statements? How are mission statements formed? How are they enacted? Is there accountability? What is a potential teacher to do if he does not embrace the stance of a site?

Reflection: This discussion was very helpful for my students because it brought them back to a point from Chapter 1: Teachers are a part of a system. They need to weigh competing demands and have their own stance. It also showed them that educational philosophies are not purely a university concern. Additionally, it helps students learn about the sites where they complete field experiences.

7. Provide support as students write their own stances. Because students' stances toward education are at least partially (largely!) formed before they enter formal teacher preparation, students can begin writing stances early on, and revise them as their thinking matures. Try this procedure.
 - a. Before assigning the stance assignment, read a few excerpts of contrasting philosophies aloud. Help students to draw out main ideas and find differences among the stances. (Hint: Ask a few students each year if you may keep a photocopy or e-copy of their stance for this purpose. Respect students' work as you share.) Use the excerpts found in the text for this purpose until you have a supply of your own, or share your own stance and make up one for the sake of comparison.
 - b. Assign students to small stable groups. Students need to view these groups as safe and supportive.
 - c. Assign one or two of the questions of education per week. Require students to bring in rough draft answers to share in their small groups.
 - d. Teach students to respond appropriately to a peer's work: What specifically did they appreciate about the work? Which point(s) seemed underdeveloped? Inconsistent? Needing further attention?
 - e. Ask questions to help students evaluate what they read: Can they name one logical connection among the answers to two or more questions in a peer's paper? Did the author leave key assumptions unquestioned?
 - f. Invite students who need more support to show you their rough draft work.

Reflection: Students suggested this Read Around Group procedure to me years ago. Every term I am pleased with the success students experience as a result of structured peer support. The one drawback from my perspective is that stances sometimes become homogeneous within the small group. Students, though, view their stances as "enriched."

8. Share patterns of students' stances when you hand them back. Use them in future learning situations to hook onto what students view as important. This can help students attach specific strategies and topics to their global priorities. Here are two examples:
 - If you later teach students' mathematics methods course or their science methods course, you may state, "I know from your stances toward education that many of you view problem solving as one of the central purposes of education."
 - In subsequent assignments, you ask students to reflect on how their work relates to their stance toward education. For instance, you require students to head their social studies' unit plans with a statement of their convictions about teaching and learning.
9. Use Opportunity to Practice number 7 in class. Students enjoy creating both six-word memoirs and collages of their philosophies, and translating representations from text to other formats can add layers of meaning.
10. Model one or more of the Teaching Tips found throughout the chapter. Allow students to discuss them and how they might be implemented in different contexts. Invite students to

add their selections to the collection of Teaching Tips they began in Chapter 1. Teaching Tips in Chapter 2 include:

- Visual literacy: Photo Analysis
- Uncovering School Culture
- A Teacher's Epitaph
- Using Your Stance in the Days of Accountability
- Podcasting: Your Stance and Your Students

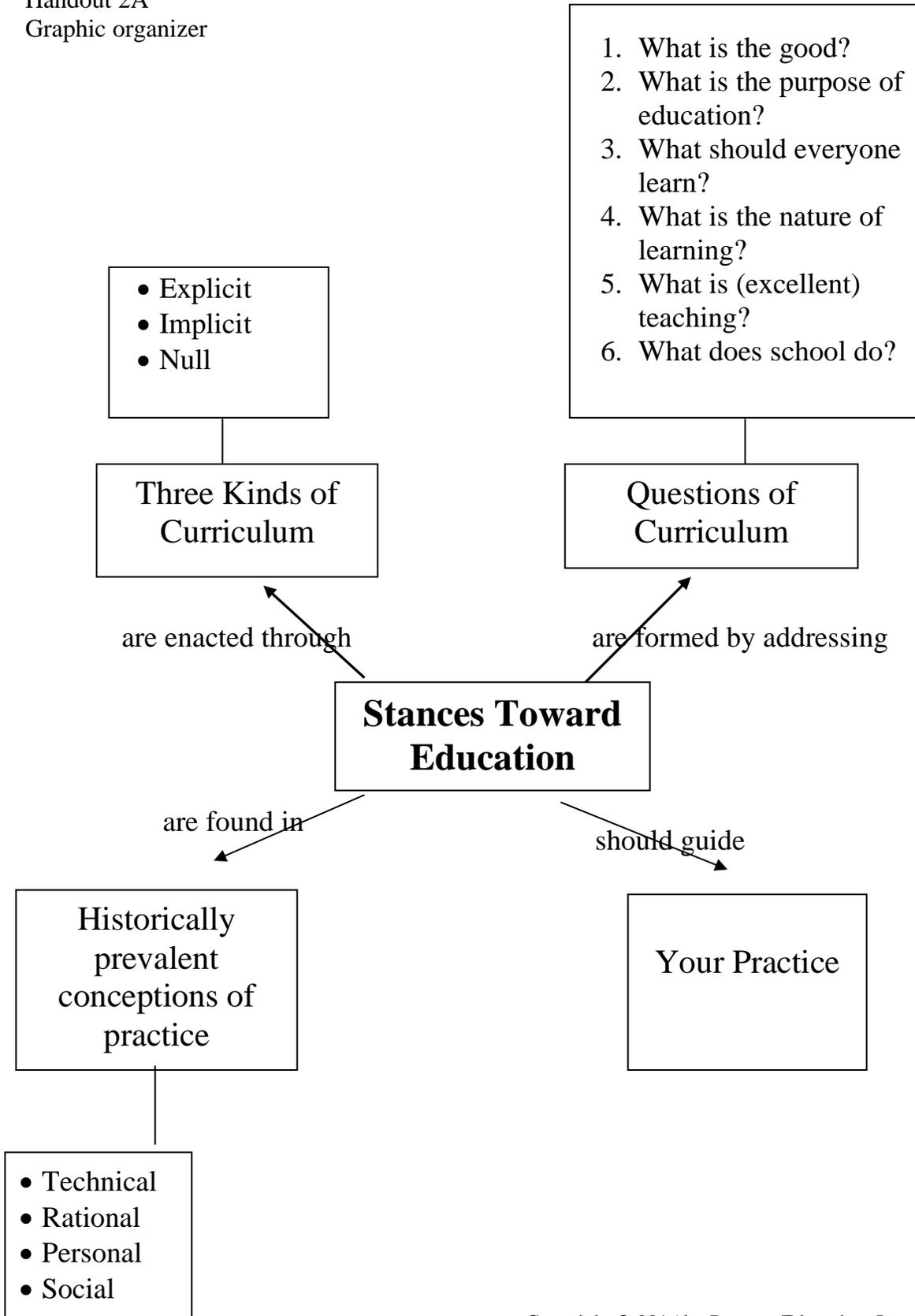
11. Ideas for ongoing activities

- Observations: If your students are completing fieldwork, invite students to observe an experienced teacher and interview her afterwards. Have students first try to infer the teacher's stance from her lesson, and then check their inferences during the interview. Ask students to interview children about the children's answers to the questions of curriculum. Students' drawings of excellent teachers can fuel many intriguing discussions!
- Scavenger Hunt: Ask students to review adopted curricular materials, state frameworks, or national recommendations. Have them search for the implied stance toward education of the authors. Lead them to envision how the curriculum might have taken another perspective when written by an author with a different stance toward education.

HANDOUTS

- 2A: Graphic organizer of Chapter 2
- 2B: Sample educational philosophy quotes
- 2C: Four corners questionnaire
- 2D: Stance matchup: blank
- 2E: Stance matchup: scrambled key
- 2F: Blank graphic organizer of Chapter 2 (to be used as an assessment)

Handout 2A
Graphic organizer



Handout 2B
Sample Educational Philosophy Quotes
(source: creativequotations.com)

Genius without education is like silver in the mine.
Benjamin Franklin

My idea of education is to unsettle the minds of the young and inflame their intellects.
Robert M. Hutchins

The education of a man is never completed until he dies.
Robert E. Lee

I think education is power. I think that being able to communicate with people is power. One of my main goals on the planet is to encourage people to empower themselves.
Oprah Winfrey

The gains in education are never really lost. Books may be burned and cities sacked, but truth, like the yearning for freedom, lives in the hearts of humble men.
Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in.
Abraham Lincoln

Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of inert facts.
Henry Brooks Adams

Education remains the key to both economic and political empowerment.
Barbara Jordan

My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her.
George Washington

The Founding Fathers in their wisdom decided that children were an unnatural strain on parents. So they provided jails called schools, equipped with tortures called an education.
John Updike

Education is what survives when what has been learnt is forgotten.
B. F. Skinner

Education helps one cease being intimidated by strange situations.

Maya Angelou

Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army.

Edward Everett

An education isn't how much you have committed to memory, or even how much you know. It's being able to differentiate between what you do know and what you don't.

Anatole France

Reading and writing, arithmetic and grammar do not constitute education, any more than a knife, fork and spoon constitute a dinner.

John Lubbock

What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to the soul.

Joseph Addison

Education is the transmission of civilization.

Will Durant

I respect faith, but doubt is what gets you an education.

Wilson Mizner

The things taught in colleges and schools are not an education, but the means of education.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.

G. K. Chesterton

The chief object of education is not to learn things but to unlearn things.

G. K. Chesterton

Education is the power to think clearly, the power to act well in the world's work, and the power to appreciate life.

Brigham Young

No one has yet fully realized the wealth of sympathy, kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure.

Emma Goldman

Education is the methodical creation of the habit of thinking.

Ernest Dimmet

Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.

Malcolm Forbes

Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.

H. G. Wells

The test of every religious, political, or educational system is the man it forms.

Henri Frederic Amiel

Any place that anyone young can learn something useful from someone with experience is an educational institution.

Al Capp

Education is not a preparation for life; education is life itself.

John Dewey

Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know.

Daniel Boorstin

Education is the path from cocky ignorance to miserable uncertainty.

Mark Twain

The highest result of education is tolerance.

Helen Keller

Handout 2C
Four Corners Questionnaire

Please rate your agreement with each of these statements. Note that they are based on values and opinions. We expect to see a range of ratings.

- SD = Strongly Disagree
D = Disagree
A = Agree
SA = Strongly Agree

	SD	D	A	SA
1. When given the chance, people will usually do the right thing.				
2. Respect for fellow humans is highest ideal we can pursue.				
3. Americans focus too much on gaining material goods.				
4. Schools should prepare students to compete in college.				
5. When we choose subject matter, we should pick the enduring classics.				
6. Every student in the United States should learn to speak a language in addition to English.				
7. Humans learn mostly by watching and listening.				
8. Excellent teachers are born, not made.				
9. You can judge excellent teachers by their passion for the subject matter.				
10. Schools should try to fix some of the problems our society faces.				

Handout 2D

Handout 2E

Stance Matchup: Scrambled Key

(Note: The cells within each column are scrambled.)

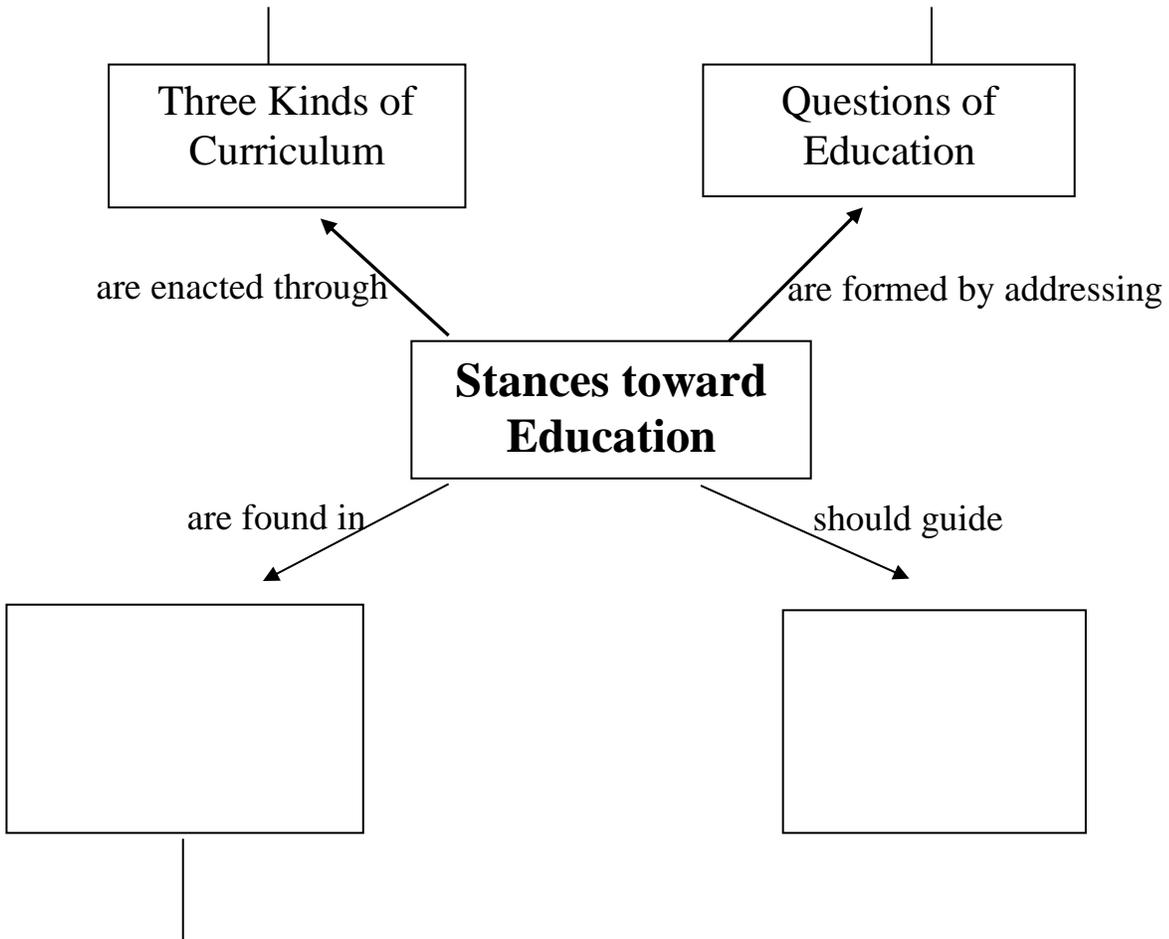
	Experiences	Methods	Assessment Instruments	Homework Assignments	Expectations for Parents
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • memorize • practice skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community projects • build decision-making skills in real settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group evaluations • judged for utility and appropriateness within social context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open-ended tasks that emphasize creativity and initiative, higher order thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pursue one's own search for individual meaning • assist students in their search for meaning
Rational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • few commonalities • must center on the needs of the individual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • train • provide information • use teacher-proof materials • behavioral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self assessments based upon personally relevant criteria • no formal assessments by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involvement in the community • gathering and making decisions about information from real issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extend learning opportunities for exemplars in the disciplines: museum visits, works of great literature
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solve non-routine problems • study the works of exemplars • individual projects in the disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • objectives provide study in the disciplines • Highlight how specialists think in the disciplines • Lecture, but show how ideas interrelate • Lead study of the great works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • objective items • standardized tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice of what was introduced at school • worksheets • rows of exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure children are ready to learn • reinforce concepts introduced at school
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group projects • problem-centered activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher is just one resource • open space and opportunities for students to explore personally meaningful issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subject-based portfolios • evaluations by expert judges who rely upon tacit knowledge of the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work at home should provide opportunities for pursuing personally meaningful topics, which may not be formal topics of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involve students in the life of the community • provide opportunities to understand democratic principles and activities

	Common Learning Experiences	Prevalent Teaching Methods	Assessment Instruments	Homework Assignments	Expectations for Parents
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solve non-routine problems • study the works of exemplars • individual projects in the disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community projects • build decision-making skills in real settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group evaluations • judged for utility and appropriateness within social context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open-ended tasks that emphasize creativity and initiative, higher order thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure children are ready to learn • reinforce concepts introduced at school
Rational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group projects • problem-centered activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • train • provide information • use teacher-proof materials • behavioral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self assessments based upon personally relevant criteria • no formal assessments by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice of what was introduced at school • worksheets • rows of exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involve students in the life of the community • provide opportunities to understand democratic principles and activities
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • memorize • practice skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher is just one resource • open space and opportunities for students to explore personally meaningful issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • objective items • standardized tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involvement in the community • gathering and making decisions about information from real issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pursue one's own search for individual meaning • assist students in their search for meaning
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • few commonalities • must center on the needs of the individual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • objectives provide study in the disciplines • Highlight how specialists think in the disciplines • Lecture, but show how ideas interrelate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subject-based portfolios • evaluations by expert judges who rely upon tacit knowledge of the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work at home should provide opportunities for pursuing personally meaningful topics, which may not be formal topics of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extend learning opportunities for exemplars in the disciplines: museum visits, works of great literature

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead study of the great works			
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Handout 2F
Blank graphic organizer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.



PORTFOLIO ENTRIES

1. Structure an entry around Figure 2.4 (Enacting My Stance Toward Education).
 2. Invite students to reflect on a real-school experience wherein the students did or did not enact their stance, or where students gained greater insight in enacting their stance. The reflection should make clear how the stance was or was not enacted or what the learning was. Remind students that even small school events, like lining students up for lunch, or taking roll, can enact a stance.
 3. After participating in activities that encourage them to develop and reflect upon their personal educational philosophy, have students create an artist trading card (ATC) symbolizing their core convictions regarding the field. (Artist trading cards are 2.5 by 3.5 inch pieces of art that can be traded and/or collected in baseball card sleeves. More information can be found about their use at www.atcsforall.com and www.studentatc.com.) This activity will ask them to identify who they are as an educator and find an artistic way to represent their philosophy. Have them hold onto this card and add onto their growing collection throughout the duration of the class. At the end of the course, they will have a portfolio of ATCs that show individual learning and reflection.
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ASSESSMENT TASKS

1. Direct students to complete Handout 2F to display their comprehension of the chapter. Alternatively, ask students to create their own diagram or map of the chapter. You may elect to provide key terms to get them started.
2. If they did not complete Figure 2.4 as a portfolio entry, direct students to complete one or more rows of the table to demonstrate their ability to analyze current practices in terms of prevalent stances and their own philosophy.

TRUE/FALSE. Write 'T' if the statement is true and 'F' if the statement is false.

- 1) Today's accountability climate greatly restricts the importance of teachers' formation of educational philosophies.
- 2) Given their advanced cognitive development, older children are the ones who primarily learn the implicit curriculum.
- 3) The implicit curriculum contains both negative and positive messages about life and about how students should behave.
- 4) The null curriculum includes messages that students learn because certain topics are unaddressed in schools.
- 5) The history of education in the United States has been marked by perpetual struggle with the question of the purpose of education.
- 6) Schooling is a subset of education.
- 7) A pervasive value of the macro-culture (dominant culture) in the United States is an emphasis on the good of the group over the good of the individual.
- 8) Given the tenets of philosophy, a good teacher must be a model of the good person.
- 9) The relationship between the school and society is one that was settled in U.S. society in the 1960's through the War on Poverty.
- 10) The influence of technology can be felt on all three curricula: explicit, implicit, and null.

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.

- 11) To Thomas Jefferson, education meant _____.
A) unity
B) prosperity
C) wisdom
D) freedom
- 12) Which of the following skill areas seems most likely to become part of the U.S. null curriculum?
A) two-place division
B) sewing
C) composition
D) literal comprehension
- 13) The _____ stance toward education leads students to think like specialists in the field, enjoying habits of mind and the structure of the discipline.
A) Personal
B) Rational
C) Social
D) Technical
- 14) The _____ stance toward education is most likely to suggest that formal schooling may be inappropriate for large numbers of citizens.
A) Personal
B) Rational
C) Technical
D) Social
- 15) The explicit curriculum is _____.
A) contestable in a court of law
B) comprised of the state standards
C) that which we purposely teach

D) all of the above

16) According to noted experts, schools are expected to solve problems that _____.

- A) are impossible, given the vast variety of human diversity in the United States
- B) are critical given our economic system
- C) are far broader and deeper than their resources allow
- D) are unique given our status as a wealthy nation

17) In today's accountability climate, which of the following is true about a well articulated stance toward education?

- A) The climate's educational mandates come to life only through the enactments of individual teachers.
- B) The stance helps teachers communicate with others who have different priorities.
- C) The stance helps set and view long term priorities.
- D) all of the above

18) Which of the following is NOT an enduring question of educational philosophy suggested by the chapter?

- A) Who should teach?
- B) What should we teach?
- C) What is the good society?
- D) Which of our methods are effective?

19) In considering what everyone should learn, the chapter argues that it is important to remember that _____.

- A) moral truths are basic
- B) what is considered basic is time and place bound
- C) reading and arithmetic are universal basics
- D) there can be no subject matter that everyone should learn

20) Technology brings which of the following issues to the explicit curriculum _____.

- A) accurate spelling
- B) national standards for technology performance
- C) vanishing subjects such as cursive penmanship
- D) generally accepted ideas of what is polite and rude

Answer Key

- 1) FALSE
- 2) FALSE
- 3) TRUE
- 4) TRUE
- 5) TRUE
- 6) TRUE
- 7) FALSE
- 8) FALSE
- 9) FALSE
- 10) TRUE
- 11) D
- 12) B
- 13) B
- 14) A
- 15) C
- 16) C
- 17) D
- 18) D
- 19) B
- 20) B