CONCEPT ATTAINMENT MODEL

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BACKGROUND

Our world is filled with an infinite number of objects, events, and ideas; yet, we manage to talk about them all with a few thousand words. What helps to make this possible is the process of concept attainment and development. Concept attainment is the process of defining concepts by determining the attributes that are absolutely essential to the meaning and disregarding those that are not. It also means learning to discriminate between what is and what is not an example of the concept.

Teaching concept attainment is very similar to the natural process of concept learning. Concepts are our tools for organizing information. The concept attainment model is designed to teach concepts and help students become more efficient at learning and creating concepts. It is effective in defining, comprehending, applying, and using concepts.

The Concept Attainment Model is based on the research efforts of Jerome Bruner. This model is designed to lead students to a concept by asking them to compare and contrast examples that contain the characteristics or attributes of the concepts with examples that do not contain these attributes. It is based on the assumption that one of the best ways to learn a concept is by observing examples of it.

A concept has 4 elements:

1. A name: dog
2. Examples: Poodle, Collie
3. Attributes: hair, 4 legs, tail, barks
4. Attribute Values (some are essential and some are non-essential)
   - bark is essential; friendly is non-essential

References:

- Skoog, G. and V. Lien. Strategies for Teaching Physical Science. TTU College of Education