

## COGNITIVE LEARNING STYLES

1978. Nebraska Educational Television Council for Higher Education (NETCHE), (Box 83111, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501).  $\frac{3}{4}$  videocassette or  $\frac{1}{2}$  reel, color sound. 31 minutes. Purchase \$225; rental \$35.

This program has many strengths: simple packaging; ease of use; clear, concise content that is free of "educationese"; and professional, attractive programming that compares favorably to the quality of commercial television. Cognitive style is discussed from several points of view in a dialogue between K. Patricia Cross and host, John Fowler. Their informal conversation provides the background for displaying examples or different styles in learning, teaching, testing, and group dynamics situations.

Cognitive learning style is defined as patterns or habits of learning. Three models of cognitive learning styles are introduced, explained, and demonstrated by examples or interactions. The models are (1) field dependent/field independent; (2) reflective/impulsive; and (3) perceptive/receptive with systematic/intuitive. Each model is explained succinctly and diagrammed. In addition, tests used to differentiate between the cognitive styles of each model are demonstrated and discussed. Examples of students using different styles in problem solving situations are analyzed.

The following points are made concerning the parameters of cognitive learning style: (1) Students demonstrate a range in cognitive learning styles in each model. (2) Cognitive learning style is a very stable attribute. (3) Cognitive learning styles do not relate to differences in learning ability, memory, or emotional stability. (4) Cognitive learning style is a value-free measure of cognitive processes and procedures. (5) The three models may not differentiate all types of cognitive learning styles.

The applicability of cognitive style to teaching and learning is emphasized in two ways. First, not all students have styles that match the traditional lecture-discussion-laboratory format. Second, certain teachers are more effective with certain students because they have "matching" cognitive styles. Efforts should be made, therefore, to ascertain cognitive styles, to match students and teachers with compatible styles, and to develop individualized materials appropriate for specific cognitive styles. The introduction of cognitive style as an instructional parameter is developed at the college level; however, it is applicable to the secondary and elementary levels as well.

There are only two obvious weaknesses. One is the lack of representative sample of the research in this area, some of which contradicts claims made in the program (the lack of correlation between IQ and certain cognitive styles, for example). The other is the absence of a user guide, bibliography, and tape script. The omission of these aids may interfere with the most effective use of the program, because there are no suggestions for effective presentation or for further study.

Nevertheless, this is an excellent program; it deals effectively and clearly with a complex topic. It is an excellent introduction to cognitive learning styles for inservice teacher workshops, for preservice teacher education classes, and for PTA meetings or other parent groups. I recommend it to all biology teachers who are concerned with student motivation and achievement, because its practical suggestions help translate the results of research into classroom practices.

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## FILMS FOR HUMANE EDUCATION.

1977. by Ronald Scott and Jean Stewart eds. Argus Archives (228 East 49th Street, New York 10017). 92 p. \$2.50.

This manual contains much more than a listing of 46 films dealing with animal welfare. It is a compilation of in depth evaluation by the Argus staff and a selected audience. Each evaluation contains the following information:

I. Film Title: Gives year of release, length, whether sound or silent, color or black and white, film size, released by and available through, and rental and purchase price.

II. Film Description: A brief annotation of the film.

III. Argus Audience Reaction: An evaluation of the film by an audience selected by Argus as being representative of individuals who would most likely use and view it. The viewers rated each film as Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. Percent responses are listed. A summary of audience comments and a list of suggested audiences are also given.

IV. Argus's Opinion: A statement by the Argus staff as to their thoughts concerning the film.

V. Possible Discussion Materials and/or Projects: Includes questions that would serve as examples of what may be used with the film.

The films are classified by subject. Ten of 25 possible subjects were used. Topics cover any situation that would involve animals and possible concern for their welfare.

Argus plans to issue supplements on a yearly basis. Pages are contained in a looseleaf binder that allows for the addition of new materials.

The topic of humane treatment of animals is important to every biology teacher. If one were interested in pursuing this topic and wanted to use films as a supplement, then this publication would be an excellent resource. A list of suggested readings is given at the end of each subject. These bibliographies alone justify serious consideration for adding this book to one's professional library.

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## TO HELP THEM LEARN.

1978. Association of Media Producers (1707 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036). 16 mm color-sound film. 21 minutes. Purchase \$75.

This film is one of the finest available to demonstrate to a general audience the value of media to the learning process. Unlike so many films on that topic, *To Help Them Learn* uses a terse, effective visual style to present a sane view of media usage in many curriculum areas.

The film opens with a striking, staccato comparison of social events occurring during the last century and the past two decades. Yet, what is obvious is that, for the same two periods, teaching methods did not change much. This dichotomy provides a perfect transition for seeing the merits of using media in classroom instruction.

To emphasize the constructive uses of media, the film relies on comments by experts, teachers, and students, as well as actual classroom situations. In the latter lies the major strength of the film. Certainly, one obviously realistic classroom example is worth ten lectures by "experts."

The leader's guide to the film is well thought out and helpful, yet not insulting to the professional user.

The target audience is the noneducator, lay public, although pre-service teachers and many in-service teachers would also benefit from this film. I highly recommend *To Help Them Learn* for school systems that wish to boost the credibility of media materials in the classroom with the voting public.

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