<https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-focus-teaching-theories>

**Pedagogy Focus: Teaching theories**

In the latest instalment of Pedagogy Focus, we look at the rationale behind the most prominent philosophies in education

## What is a teaching theory?

A teaching theory is a proposed explanation of how we absorb, process and retain knowledge.

There are many theories about how we learn, and teachers can use these to assist with their planning and modify their approaches to teaching.

**Here are some of the most popular teaching theories:**

* [Bloom’s taxonomy](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-focus-blooms-taxonomy)
* [**Growth Mindset**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-focus-growth-mindset)
* [**Flipped learning**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-focus-flipped-learning)
* [**SOLO taxonomy**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-focus-solo-taxonomy)
* [**Philosophy for children**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-focus-philosophy-children)

**And here are some of the most influential teaching theorists:**

* [**Lev Vygotsky**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-lev-vygotsky)
* [**Jean Piaget**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-jean-piaget)
* [**Abraham Maslow**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-focus-maslow-profile)
* [**John Dewey**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-focus-john-dewey)
* [**Sir Ken Robinson​​​​​​​**](https://www.tes.com/news/pedagogy-ken-robinson)

## *When are teaching theories taught?*

Theories surrounding teaching and learning are taught during the initial teacher training period.

To obtain qualified teacher status, all trainees must show they are competent in a range of teaching standards, including having knowledge and understanding of various teaching and learning strategies.

Educational theory is also an important aspect of CPD, with teachers receiving training on new theoretical approaches to how students learn and how teaching can be improved.

## What are some of the most prominent education theories?

***Behaviourist***

This is based on the idea that all learning is a reaction to stimuli. In this sense, learning becomes a system of rewards and targets whereby students change their behaviour over time (indicating new learning) owing to positive and negative reinforcement.

Learners are thought to be more passive, and classroom practice centres on what the teacher does to impact on and influence their students.

***Cognitivism and constructivism***

These approaches are more concerned with how students think and process information. They suggest that learning happens as a result of reflecting on, thinking about and making connections to prior knowledge.

Learners are, therefore, active; using what is already known and stored in their memories to build further knowledge.

Constructivism focuses on how individual experiences affect learning and insists that students’ varying perspectives will mean that they approach new knowledge in different ways.

In principle, learning is a process of discovery where pupils are at the centre and use skills and knowledge already accessible to them.

***Social constructivism***

This theory places greater emphasis on the role of both the teacher and student, and sees learning as a collaborative process; learning happens through a shared experience of social interaction and language use.

Teachers should guide pupils and scaffold development through tasks and activities designed to bridge the gap between what is already known and can be done, and what is new, unfamiliar and to be learned.

scaffold development –основний (базовий) розвиток