

Climb the Mountain of Learning

Month: Oct.

Week #: 9

Day: d. Thur. Time: 30 min.

Haste Makes Waste

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

The students will: learn the wisdom behind the saying 'haste makes waste' and the folly behind the saying 'the end justifies the means.'

Materials

rope or hose (if you decide not to use students to make the mountain)

Illustration

This is Jane. She's looks rather upset with herself. Making it to the top of the Mountain of Learning as fast as possible, any way she could, was her goal. I wonder what happened?

Background

Many students are not conscious of the consequences of rushing through a task. They do not realize that by rushing, the quality of the work suffers, the long term retention of the concept or skill decreases, and time is lost when the work needs to be redone. In general, rushing can make learning an exercise in frustration.

An inherent value in this activity is the idea that the process of learning is just

as important, if not more important, then the completed work. In the final analysis, it is the actual learning that takes place that is the most important value. Additionally, the belief that 'the end justify the means' is also fraught with negative consequences, especially when these actions take the form of cheating or plagiarizing.



Group Activity

1. Directions for play set up:

- Setting: Arrange all but four of the students into the shape of a mountain. Or you can take a long rope or hose and make an outline of the mountain on the floor. Have the video game console and the three actors at the base of the mountain at stage left.

- Actors:

Video Game Console - sits and holds up thumb to simulate the joystick; the students face is the monitor screen

Suzy - successfully climbs the Mountain of Learning; works in a methodical way doing her best job possible on each task; begins play by lying down, asleep at the base of the mountain

Harry - remains at home and becomes a 'couch potato;' plays video games all the time; begins play by lying down, asleep at the base of the mountain

Jane - hurries up the Mountain of Learning, often rolls back down because the work is sloppy, takes shortcuts (plagiarizes, cheats), does not learn the material, forgets to turn in homework, etc.; begins play by lying down, asleep at the base of the mountain

Group Activity (continued)

Note: You can choose any names for the actors, just not one of the student's names. You now can choose less experienced/younger actors since they got to observe the previous day's play. Instruct the actors that they will be 'people puppets,' meaning you will give them the words to say and tell them what to do. Tell them to try and copy the inflections in your voice. Encourage older, experienced actors to ad-lib, but stay within the context of the story. Remind the actors that they are portraying fictitious (pretend) people, and that the actions of the characters in no way reflect upon who they really are.

2. The play:

Haste Makes Waste

Ad-lib a play similar to the original "Climb the Mountain of Learning." This time however make several distinct variations:

- Instead of a student (Mary in the previous play) that watches T.V. all the time, have Harry constantly play video games.
- Have Jane rushing up the mountain encountering all of the associated consequences of this erroneous action. You can use the metaphors of rolling back down, rock slides, falling into crevasses, etc. to further illustrate the consequences. Also try to highlight the negative consequences of her mistaken belief that the end justifies the means.
- Have Suzy be the model student that makes steady progress up the mountain. It's still good to have her struggle occasionally so that she doesn't appear 'too perfect.'

Group Discussion Questions

1. How was Harry similar/different than Mary in the previous play?
A: They both turned into couch potatoes.
A: Harry played too much video games while Mary watched too much T.V.
2. What mistakes did Jane make in her trip up the mountain?
A: She cheated, which caused her additional difficulties (e.g. got in trouble, did not learn)
A: She rushed which caused her all sorts of frustration (e.g. did not learn, had to redo work)
3. What mistaken goals or beliefs did Jane have?
A: That the end justifies the means.
A: That getting the task done was more important than the quality of the work or the actual learning that took place.

Variations/Extensions

1. Ask if there are any students that would like to write their own Mountain of Learning story and present it on Friday.

Conclusion

Say, "Raise your hand if you think 'haste makes waste'. Yes, if you rush through your work, you can end up wasting a lot of your valuable learning time. Raise your hands if you think it's okay to cheat or plagiarize to get your work done. No, the end does not justify the means. Cheating and plagiarizing only hurt yourself in the end because you don't learn and it damages your self integrity."

Oct. 9 d. Thur.

Climb the Mountain of Learning: Haste Makes Waste



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