

Dialogue Education Essentials – Verbs in the Learning Tasks are for the Learner

by Jane Vella, PhD

My good friend Agnes took the course *Learning To Listen, Learning To Teach* years ago. She had a hard time, as a professor, moving from *telling* to *teaching*, using Dialogue Education. We walked around the lake in Raleigh N.C. many a time while I gave examples of learning tasks, explained what she was reading in my books, laughed with her about her keen sense of wanting to do this in her classroom and her frustration at not grasping it.

One spring afternoon, as we chatted amiably on our lake walk, Agnes stopped and turned to me. "Oh, Jane," she exclaimed, "I see! A learning task is a task for the learner!"

We danced the rest of the way around the lake to the tune of : By George, she's got it! from "My Fair Lady," with Rex Harrison.

One way to sure you've got it is to be certain that the verbs in your learning tasks are verbs for the learners; verbs that tell the learners what they are to do.



Here's a sample learning task – note that the verbs tell the learners what they are to do:

- Read and mark up the story on page 18
- Describe in pairs your best learning experience. Analyze it by telling one another what you think made it work for you
- Find a URL that will be useful in showing the form and functions of the amygdala
- Create - as a team of two - a four picture cartoon illustrating the importance of verbs for the learners.

Create. Find. Analyze. Describe. Read. Mark. All are verbs for the learners!

By George, she's got it!

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