

Matt Andrews

TEPS Report

National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology

January 2-6, 2017

Dr. Hicks:

I recently returned from my TEPS professional improvement plan grant event. I was fortunate enough to attend the 39th annual National Institute on the Teaching of Psychology from January 2-6, 2017. The conference is the largest conference in the United States dedicated to improving the teaching of psychology at the high school and college levels. The opportunity was invaluable to me as the only teacher in the district who teaches or has taught AP Psychology.

I attended approximately fifteen sessions over the four-day conference many of which I will use to implement new teaching methods and procedures in my classroom either this year or next depending on where the topic falls in the year. Three of the sessions that I found particularly valuable were the teaching slam, "Creating Lectures That Tell a Story", and Roberta Golinkoff's presentation entitled: From The Classroom to the Living Room: Developmental Science Goes Live! While almost all of the sessions held value for me, these three were particularly helpful and will be impactful on my students in the classroom.

The teaching slam is a one hour and fifteen-minute session where eight different presenters present their best lesson on a topic in about 10 minutes. Of the eight lessons, I will be implementing at least four in my class this year, the most intriguing and useful of which was a lesson on teaching stereotypes, prejudices, and biases. The premise of the lesson is to have students split into equal groups and split the genders of the class equally in those groups. The groups then list stereotypes that are common for men and women. They also must choose a writer and a speaker for their group. The students believe that the lesson is about the list of stereotypes they have created when in actuality it is about the individuals they chose for the roles. In most cases they will choose a female writer and a male speaker. This then leads into a discussion of prejudices and stereotypes we use inherently in life and how that pushes the stereotype more. It is a fabulous introductory lesson for these topics and one I am sure my students would enjoy and learn from. I plan to use this lesson with a few modifications this year in my AP Psychology class.

"Creating Lectures That Tell a Story" was a session presented by Bridgette Martin Hard who is a professor at Stanford University and runs their Psych One program which is the introductory Psychology course taught at Stanford. Her presentation focused on telling a story inside of a lecture format and how to engage students in the story to help them better retain and retrieve the information in the future. For me this was particularly interesting because as a trained historian the storytelling aspect of teaching has always been important to me. She shared the types of stories she uses in her lectures, where she gets stories from, and how to hook students early on the story as to make it meaningful and memorable. What I took away was the importance of making lectures meaningful and memorable when you use them. I also thought of potentially changing the way I teach some subjects and going

away from the traditional PowerPoint lecture I sometimes use to a method where the students actually develop a story that relates to the topic and we share mini lecture stories by multiple students in the class to cover a specific topic. I believe the students will grab onto this idea and develop fabulous, meaningful, memorable stories. I will definitely be adapting some of the lectures I do to the model that was presented in this session.

Roberta Michnick Golinkoff's speech was a general lecture to the entire conference and was a wonderful modern pedagogical discussion on how to help children learn most effectively. She set forth a theory that she calls AMES plus 6 C's. AMES is an acronym that stands for Active learning, Meaningful learning, Engaged learning, and Social interaction. While the 6 c's refer to Collaboration, Communication, Content, Critical Thinking, Creative Innovation, Confidence. Each of these skills are vital to the future success of students and she believe and I agree that it is teacher's responsibility to encourage the use of these skills in as many activates as they can. This will be the biggest takeaway and impact on my classroom of the presentation. I have already looked at some activities I do in class and attempted to add in more of these components and make sure that I cover as many of them as possible as often as I can. I will continue to adapt many of my lessons with these pedagogical ideas in mind.

I attended many other sessions that were fabulous and will have a direct impact on my teaching including specific lessons I will implement and other theoretical discussions that will impact the structure and development of my lessons.

Overall, this was one of the finest conferences I have ever attended. I was able to interact with other professionals whose main focus is the teaching of psychology. I rarely have an opportunity to discuss ideas for teaching AP Psychology with anyone and this conference allowed me to discuss ideas with hundreds of colleagues who teach similar courses and have similar goals.

Thank you again for the opportunity to attend the conference, it was a great experience. If you need any further information feel free to contact me.

Matt Andrews