Implications of constructivism for teaching and learning

• Teachers act as facilitators, supports, guides and models of learning.
• Learning concerns adjusting our mental models to accommodate new experiences.
• Learning concerns making connections between information.
• Instruction should be built around more complex problems, not problems with clear, correct answers.
• Context and personal knowledge have high significance.
• Students should help establish the criteria on which their work is assessed.
• Teachers know more and shouldn’t let students muddle around.
• Student learning depends on background knowledge – that’s why teaching facts is so necessary (reversed).
• Student interest and effort are more important than textbook content.
• It is sometimes better for teachers, not students, to decide what activities are to be done.
• Sense making and thinking are most important, not knowing content.
• Experimentation replaces rote learning.
• Teaching utilises both skill-based and open-ended approaches.
• Motivation to learn is intrinsic rather than extrinsic (done for its own sake rather than for grades, test scores or rewards).
• Learners often produce unique and personal knowledge.
• Naïve beliefs are used as the starting point for further discussion, exploration and evaluation for development, rather than being discounted as ‘wrong’.
• Learning for transfer is important.
• Learners learn best through finding and generating their own knowledge.
• Discovery and guided discovery learning are important.
• Exploration and active learning are important.
• Learning is collaborative and cooperative, not just individual.
• Higher order thinking is significant.
• Classrooms become multidimensional, with different activities at different levels taking place simultaneously.