

What is Presuming Competence?

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PRESUMING COMPETENCE...it's a term that may be familiar to many of you, but what does it mean exactly, and where did it come from? It starts with the LEAST DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION, which is an INCLUSIVE approach to educational policy and PEDAGOGY (the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept). The least dangerous assumption states that, "in the absence of CONCLUSIVE data, educational decisions should be based on assumptions which, if incorrect, will have the least dangerous effect on the student".

Spell FAMILIAR

Spell EDUCATIONAL

Spell TEACHING

The Least Dangerous Assumption is an _____ approach to education policy.
INCLUSIVE

What word was used meaning the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept. PEDAGOGY

What does the least dangerous assumption state? IN THE ABSENCE OF CONCLUSIVE DATA EDUCATIONAL DECISIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON ASSUMPTIONS THAT WILL HAVE THE LEAST DANGEROUS EFFECT ON THE STUDENT

How would you define conclusive?

Name an academic subject.

What is an assumption that someone has made about you that was incorrect?

This concept was coined in 1984 by ANNE DONNELLAN, a RESEARCHER in special education. The principle is most closely associated with the area of communication disorders, although it can be applied more generally in the domain of learning, teaching, and beyond. In most contexts in which it is used the principle holds that one should, in the absence of EVIDENCE to the contrary, PRESUME COMPETENCE, rather than non-competence, in others. In Anne Donnelan's own words, "When professionals must make decisions about students' educational programs in the absence of clear evidence about their

Question Type Key

KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN - VAKT



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capabilities or the merits of various options, they should make the decision that would have the least dangerous CONSEQUENCES to the student, should that decision ever be proven wrong. In other words, we ought to assume that all students understand, that all students are capable of learning. To do the opposite risks GRAVE consequences.”

Spell PRINCIPLE Spell CONTRARY Spell PROGRAMS

Who coined the concept of the Least Dangerous Assumption? ANNE DONNELLAN

Anne Donnellan is a _____ in special education. RESEARCHER

How long ago did she coin the term? 2020 - 1984 = 36 YEARS AGO

Within what area is the principle most closely associated with? COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

In what areas can it be applied more generally? LEARNING, TEACHING AND BEYOND

In most contexts the principle holds that one should do what? PRESUME COMPETENCE IN OTHERS IN THE ABSENCE OF EVIDENCE

According to Anne Donnellan, to not assume that all students understand and are capable of learning risks _____. GRAVE CONSEQUENCES

Do you agree or disagree with Anne Donnellan? Why, or why not?

How would you explain presuming competence to someone in your own words?

Thinking about assumptions, what is another dangerous assumption to make about someone?

Presumption of competence can be regarded as the "least dangerous" assumption to make about a person because it is less DAMAGING to presume competence in another, and to be wrong, than it is to presume non-competence, or incompetence, in another, and to be wrong. Take the example of a teacher who is uncertain about the extent to which a given student with a communication impairment understands what is said to them. The principle holds that it is less dangerous to assume that the student understands everything that is said, and to be wrong about that, than to assume that the student understands nothing that is said, and to be wrong about that.

Spell EXAMPLE

SPELL UNCERTAIN

Spell UNDERSTANDS

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Presumption of competence can be regarded as the least dangerous assumption to make about a person because it is less _____ to presume competence in another and to be wrong than it is to presume incompetence and be wrong.

DAMAGING

OR

Why is presumption of competence regarded as the least dangerous assumption? IT IS LESS DAMAGING TO PRESUME COMPETENCE IN ANOTHER AND TO BE WRONG THAN IT IS TO PRESUME INCOMPETENCE AND BE WRONG

In the example given above about a student with a communication impairment, what is the least dangerous assumption? TO PRESUME THAT THE STUDENT UNDERSTANDS WHAT IS SAID

What is one word that you would use to describe how you feel when someone presumes competence in you?

What is one word that you would use to describe how you feel when someone does NOT presume your competence?

Without presumption of competence, one risk might be that a teacher teaches the student using SUBJECTS and MATERIALS that are beneath that which would be AGE-APPROPRIATE for the student. This is potentially 'dangerous' because it DEPRIVES the child of an age-appropriate education. When presuming competence, the risk is that the teacher teaches using age-appropriate materials that the student may not understand, which, ADVOCATES of this approach maintain, is less dangerous. The principle of presuming competence comes into play in educational policy and teaching practice under conditions of UNCERTAINTY, or when there is absence of conclusive data.

Spell RISK

Spell STUDENT

Spell APPROACH

Without presumption of competence, one risk might be that a teacher teaches the student using subjects and materials that are beneath that which would be _____ for the student. AGE APPROPRIATE

OR

According to the lesson, what is one risk of not presuming competence? THAT A TEACHER TEACHES THE STUDENT USING SUBJECTS AND MATERIALS

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THAT ARE BENEATH THAT WHICH WOULD BE AGE APPROPRIATE FOR THE STUDENT

This is potentially dangerous because it _____ child of an age-appropriate education. DEPRIVES

OR

Why is this dangerous? IT DEPRIVES THE CHILD OF AN AGE APPROPRIATE EDUCATION

_____ of this approach maintain that teaching using materials that the student may not understand is less dangerous. ADVOCATES

What is something that you would like to advocate for?

What is something else that is dangerous?

In the book “THE BEYOND ACCESS MODEL,” CHERYL JORGENSEN explains why presuming competence is the least dangerous option for students with disabilities. She makes several key points. To start, INTELLIGENCE is MULTIFACETED, and using a test as a sole measure of intelligence doesn’t really capture the full picture of a student’s capacity for learning. Additionally, for students with motor challenges, it’s difficult to accurately assess IQ scores, since all tests require MOTOR! Furthermore, When people with intellectual disabilities have high-quality instruction and an effective mode of communication, many demonstrate that they’re much more capable than originally presumed. The bottom line is that presuming INCOMPETENCE could result in harm to students if we’re wrong. And if it turns out we are wrong? Well, it’s okay, because we haven’t harmed the student. The potential consequences of NOT presuming competence are much more dangerous to the student, and that’s why it’s called the least dangerous assumption!

Spell DISABILITIES Spell MEASURE Spell CAPABLE

What is the book mentioned above called? THE BEYOND ACCESS MODEL

Who is the author of the book? CHERYL JORGENSEN

What does she explain in the book? WHY PRESUMING COMPETENCE IS THE LEAST DANGEROUS OPTION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

According to the lesson, intelligence is _____. MULTIFACETED

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Using a test as a sole measure of intelligence doesn't capture what? A STUDENT'S CAPACITY FOR LEARNING

What do all tests require? MOTOR

Creative Writing:

Which, if any of the key points made by Cheryl Jorgensen speak to you the most, and why?

PRESUMING COMPETENCE CHALLENGE! Help I-ASC create 100 ways to presume competence. What is one way in which you would like others to presume competence in you and/or other nonspeakers! Be specific so we can come with a helpful list. Think about ways to presume competence in your intelligence, your body, your overall abilities and beyond!

Sources:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Least_dangerous_assumption

<https://blog.brookespublishing.com/presuming-competence-what-it-is-what-it-looks-like/>

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