A Rationale for using Data Bases

Data bases are wonderful learning tools because they embody so much of the learning process. Once teachers begin to understand how to apply this technology to curricular projects, learning truly becomes a process of give and take. Here are some of the highlights of that exciting experience.

1. Obtaining Background: Students need to read or research designated curricular topics. This includes going on field trips, watching videos, and listening to visitors to the classroom.

2. Planning: Students participate in brainstorming that gives them the opportunity to recall large amounts of data. Recalling data also serves to develop concepts.

3. Organizing: Students learn and apply organizational skills when they plan a data base.

4. Gathering Facts: Students extend their research skills as they fit facts into categories.

5. Using Tools: Students learn to [create and use a data base](#) to store data in an organized, efficient manner.

6. Questioning: Students learn to formulate questions that result in the extraction of information from the data base.

7. Hypothesizing: Students learn to state and test their own hypotheses.

8. Analyzing: Students quickly understand associations and relationships within the data base.

9. Evaluating: Students understand the difference between data and information.

Using a data base as a teaching tool is quite different from using word processors in the classroom. Just as the use of word processing requires planning, the use of the data base as a tool requires strategies that go beyond a few afternoon sessions in the computer lab. It is important, therefore, to incorporate the Inductive Strategy of Hilda Taba into the learning process in order to succeed in integrating data bases with the curriculum.

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