

Learning Theory: Concrete Examples

Definition: Taking an abstract concept and creating an example based off real-life experiences to solidify the meaning of the concept. For example, a “quarter” could be thought of as taking one slice of pizza out of four equally sized slices.

Effect: Presenting students with concrete examples can significantly enhance conceptual learning for declarative concepts.

Why it works:

Research: [The Power of Examples: Illustrative Examples Enhance Conceptual Learning of Declarative Concepts \(Rawson, Thomas, & Jacoby, 2014\)](#)

Key Points from the article:

- Providing illustrative examples enhances conceptual learning relative to providing concept definitions, as evidenced by more accurate classification of both studied and novel examples.
- Varying levels of familiarity may mediate the effect of illustrative examples. Lower-familiarity students achieved better classification accuracy in the definition-then-examples group than did those in the definitions-only group. There were minimal differences in achievement for higher-familiarity students.

Curricular Design Application at the Lerner: Students need to have a rich understanding of material that spans different topics. We structure pedagogy in a way that encourages using elaborative techniques so that students can create more durable memories and transfer and apply knowledge to new situations.

- 1. Vignette Style (Board Style) questions in assessments**
- 2. Incorporating patient experiences and stories in pre-clinical years**
- 3. Case-based learning sessions**

Other Resources: [Study Strategies - Concrete Examples](#)