

Intergenerational learning in a high school environment

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Abstract

Active living and continuing learning are important to the well-being of seniors. As the generation of so-called baby boomers approach retirement, the same public schools built to accommodate their compulsory schooling are now being considered as sites for intergenerational learning. This article explores one such project where seniors learning alongside adolescents work together in music performance, creating new types of relationships and learning practices.

Keywords

intergenerational
lifelong learning
social identity
community of practice
age stereotyping

Introduction

Intergenerational education programmes that bring young people together with older adults have been receiving greater attention in recent years yet limited systematic information is available on the experiences of participants and the potential benefits these programmes might provide (Dupuis 2002). Learning about oneself and about the conditions of life of an older or younger person are possible by-products of programmes that bring generations together. Additionally, these programmes seek to promote and enhance the learning of skills and the development of a body of knowledge by drawing on the fellowship fostered between younger and older persons to illuminate a particular subject matter (Manheimer 1997).

In January 1994, I initiated a music instruction programme for seniors (retired men and women) and middle-aged adults, teaching them to perform on woodwind, brass and percussion instruments in a concert band setting. The programme is housed at LaSalle Secondary School in Kingston, Ontario. The course runs for two hours each morning, five days a week for the entire school year and has been in continuous operation since its inception. There are over 70 adult students enrolled, most of whom are between the ages of 65 and 85. It is a fully funded programme sponsored by Ontario Ministry of Education through the local school board. The adults are registered as daytime high school students in the same manner as adolescent students. The curriculum of study is based on the same Ministry of Education guidelines that are in place for the delivery of performance based instrumental music courses at the high school level. Many of the adult learners start 'from scratch'. That is, they have never played the instrument that they are learning and/or they have never played any musical instrument. Those on the programme learn to read and apply music notation as well as develop competent practical skills on a wind instrument in the same manner as any adolescent would when enrolled on an instrumental music course. In addition to receiving

instruction, the class functions as a concert band which performs many concerts during the academic year. Many of the musicians continue to perform in this band during the summer months by meeting at another location outside of LaSalle School, and hiring a conductor to lead their rehearsals and summer concerts. The Adult Band (as it is known in the secondary school) frequently performs with the adolescent band in class and concert settings.

Throughout the history of the band it has included adolescent students both of LaSalle Secondary School and, on occasion, of other schools as part of the class. They play alongside their much older peers exchanging comments about fingerings and music as well as about clothing and even the occasional joke. Although the band runs from 9:45 to 11:45 each day, the high school students arrive and leave according to their class schedule, fitting naturally into the group. High school students may use the class for 'peer tutoring' credit or as a registered music student on the course. By their very presence as equal-valued group members, perhaps these adolescents no longer consider themselves 'outsiders' in a group of seniors and, in the same vein, the seniors no longer consider themselves outsiders in a high school of teens.

In this paper I will explore the literature relating to current intergenerational programmes and theories describing how the LaSalle programme relates to those theories and epitomizes in practice true intergenerational interaction.

Literature review and the LaSalle model

Jerry Loewen (1996) gave five examples of intergenerational programmes. Each type encompasses different intergenerational interactions. These are: curriculum-based; relationship-based; reciprocal relations; community-based and authentic work. He suggested that the more of these characteristics that are prominent in a particular intergenerational programme, the more successful and enriching the programme will be for its participants.

Curriculum-based interaction

Loewen explained that a key component of an intergenerational association in a classroom is the notion that a learning activity has value because it is recognized as a course. There is a perception that organized learning material delivered by a teacher gives greater value to the activities than if it were a group organized in a non-school-based programme. 'For better or for worse, the institutional value of student assessment is stamped in this project, thus legitimizing it in the same way as a unit in history, French or math' (Loewen 1996: 26). Whether the programme is interest-based, credit-based or non-credit-granting or even if a person is only auditing a programme, the structuring of the learning environment as a course gives an impression of importance and/or legitimacy.

As described in the introduction, the seniors are registered as students in the same manner as adolescents according to Ministry of Education guidelines. There are, however, not the same stringent academic requirements for the seniors because the courses are not used as a means for the attainment of a secondary school diploma. As with those seniors who audit courses in colleges or universities, it is the delivery of a course, in

an organized manner by a qualified/licensed teacher, having in attendance those students (adolescents/young adults) who are being granted credits for matriculation, which provides a legitimacy that otherwise would not be present, as in a community band for example. The interaction of the seniors as learners alongside adolescents as co-learners but with the added concern of credit and marks attainment, creates a classroom setting which is energetic, focused, and vibrant for both age cohorts.

Relationship-based interaction

Loewen described all learning as a relational endeavour between teacher/student and student/student.

The relationship with the teacher, mentor or fellow student may have far greater impact on one's motivation to learn. Therefore, intergenerational learning programs need to cultivate this necessity and take advantage of its growth. Caring relationships which can motivate learning by merely placing 'nice' adults and adolescents in the same room are unlikely to blossom without a structure and means to foster this goal.

(1996: 27)

What Loewen is arguing here is the notion that learning programmes need to be designed to encompass the interaction and association of multi-age groups which have all members as equals in a learning activity. In this way, more 'caring relationships' will be fostered, not only by the sharing of ideas through learning, but also socially through an increase in social contact of different-aged students.

In the intergenerational band class at LaSalle, students and seniors are involved in a collaborative music learning environment. The act of ensemble playing is the activity in which musicians strive collectively to ensure that the execution of a musical phrase or passage is done in conjunction with an awareness of the other musical parts being played by other musicians in the ensemble. This collaboration requires verbal interaction before, after and sometimes during the rehearsing of a certain passage. Sharing of ideas and thoughts through dialogue, about how a passage is to be played, and helping one another achieve the intended musical sound or phrase can only be done through intense collaborative relationships. Nel Noddings (1992) explained the necessity of dialogue in caring relationships in learning environments in this following passage:

Dialogue permits us to talk about what we try to show. It gives learners opportunities to question 'why,' and helps both parties arrive at well-informed decisions. ...It connects us to each other and helps to maintain caring relations. It also provides us with the knowledge of each other that forms a foundation for response in caring (23).

The intensity of this activity is marked by a sense of care: care about how one performs a passage and care about how one's performance fits into the ensemble. This caring relationship is fostered by the interactions of the musicians in dialogues with one another.

These dialogues can be musical, verbal and/or physical. The interaction of musician and conductor is an example of a physical dialogue. Eye contact and body gestures of both musician and conductor are needed for the interpretation of what should happen musically. These dialogues are also social interactions, which are initiated and supported by the curriculum-based design of a credit-oriented classroom music learning course.

Reciprocal relations interaction

Loewen made a clear distinction between community-based programmes and/or service learning programmes and intergenerational learning programmes. He suggested that community service and service learning programmes that featured intergenerational interaction were very often lacking in reciprocity. Loewen meant that the focus on one group over another group is evident. He viewed this lack of reciprocal interaction as a common failing feature in many intergenerational settings.

Taking ten middle school students to the soup kitchen or nursing home provides a service for the patrons while the students may or may not take some intangible lesson from the activity. The activity is primarily a one way venture. Just as adolescents need to be valued and seen as helpful, so too do the older people in these programmes. In the best programmes the lines between those served and those serving are blurred to the point of irrelevance. To achieve the greatest learning possible, both adults and adolescents can offer expertise and the need to acquire knowledge. The learning process needs to be as dynamic as possible.

(Loewen 1996: 29)

The intergenerational music learning programme at LaSalle supports reciprocity between generations. Each student, regardless of age, can act as teacher or learner by either receiving or giving help in the forms of musical knowledge and personal support. Even among professional musicians it is common for them to seek constructive criticism and advice from their musical colleagues in terms of solving technical and musical problems and discussion of musical ideas. In the band class at LaSalle, the sharing of musical knowledge among the musicians is an ongoing, constant and reciprocal process. The act of good music-making requires all participants to be continuously listening, analysing, and critiquing what they are doing musically, as well as what others are doing. In this way, the best possible collaboration can take place. In the intergenerational programme at LaSalle, musical collaboration is achieved through reciprocal relationships between generations who share common objectives: to learn and perform music.

Community-based interactions

Loewen explained that intergenerational learning programmes support a better understanding of the participants' community. When adolescents are involved with seniors in a learning activity, the classroom can be a forum for the sharing of the life experiences of the adults. 'After all, the adults with the most to offer about the real world are not in the schools, but out in the community' (1996: 30). For most adolescents, their involvement with adults in a school context is in the form of adults having

authoritative positions as teachers, disciplinarians, and role models. The interaction between adolescents and adults usually has the structure of adults having positions of authority and being focal points of knowledge, and the students receiving this knowledge. The exposure of adolescents in a public school system to an age group older than that of their teachers is very rare. In a non-school context the interactions of adolescents and seniors is also rare (Williams and Harwood 2004) which will be discussed later in this paper. Associations of multi-age cohorts in social and/or learning activities that do not have one group in an authoritative or leadership role over another group are not common.

The music programme at LaSalle that incorporates seniors and adolescents as equals in music learning activities seems to break down the student/teacher, adult/adolescent hierarchies that are common when interactions of multi-age cohorts occur, either inside or outside of school settings. At LaSalle, the involvement of seniors in a music classroom brings a view of the community that includes all ages. As an example, when the band prepares music for a Remembrance Day Ceremony (Canadian equivalent of Memorial Day), the elderly students are living witnesses to events that occurred in history. Even though the adult participants in the programme at LaSalle are learners on a school course with adolescents, the adults, by the very nature of their age and experience, bring into the classroom a broader range of life experiences.

This intergenerational learning programme can also be considered as a community of practice as described by Etienne Wenger. Wenger's social theory of learning describes four components that 'are necessary to characterize social participation as a process of learning and of knowing' (1998: 4). These components are: meaning; practice; community; and identity. Joan Russell summarized these four components.

Meaning refers to our experience of life and the world, and practice refers to our shared historical and social resources. Community refers to the social configurations in which our enterprises are defined as worth pursuing, and our participation is recognizable as competence. Identity has to do with the ways in which learning creates personal histories for us in our communities. 'Practice'—characterized by mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire— is the source of coherence of community.

(Russell 2002: 3)

Wenger's concept of a community of practice offers a suitable framework for interpreting community-based interaction. An intergenerational music learning programme can be recognized as having the necessary traits of Wenger's community of practice which are, in this site, centered around a performing music ensemble and classroom. Wenger gave examples of how communities of practice are everywhere. 'Communities of practice are an integral part of our daily lives. They are so informal and so pervasive that they rarely come into explicit focus, but for the same reasons, they are also quite familiar' (1998: 7). Wenger's notion of communities of practice comes from his research into interactions between people in work-related environments. He explained that 'workers organize their lives with their immediate colleagues to get their jobs done. In doing so, they develop or

preserve a sense of themselves they can live with, have some fun, and fulfill the requirements of their employers and clients' (1998: 6). He made the point that it is the workers' day-to-day associations with each other that form these communities of practice. Wenger described associations of people, either in families, clubs or schools, also as communities of practice. Russell adopted Wenger's notion of communities of practice as a framework for interpreting singing expertise in the Fiji Islands as a social learning phenomenon. She explained that the widespread ability to sing in harmony can be attributed largely to the support provided by communities of musical practice. She described this support as 'constellations of communities of musical practice' (2002: 5). Essentially, wherever there are people, there is song. On boats, in church, houses, schools, buses. As members of families, workers, students, each aspect of community provides support for song and the performance of music.

The intergenerational music programme at LaSalle can be described as a community of musical practice. This programme is a multi-layered collaborative learning site that promotes three major areas of interest regarding community, music learning and intergenerational issues.

Authentic work interaction

Loewen explained that

many intergenerational programs are content with bringing young and old together, hoping that a 'nice' relationship sprouts up and that both parties go away with a warm feeling in their hearts as the biggest thing to show for their efforts.

(1996: 32)

He did not negate the point that feeling good about an intergenerational association is important but he continued by saying that there has to be something that is directed toward a 'final "product" pertinent and worthy of great mental and physical energy' (1996: 32). He claimed that this authentic work is only achieved by the act of intergenerational interaction in a learning environment. Loewen cited 'Interlink' as an example of an intergenerational programme that he considered to achieve this level of authentic work. Interlink is a programme sponsored by the Canadian Mental Health Association which involves combining student and community choral groups together. In many cities in Canada, Interlink sponsors the intergenerational interactions of seniors and children by using choral music performance as the focal point of their associations. The choirs initially rehearse separately but each member is paired up with a person from the other choir and letter writing is encouraged as a form of introduction and a means of fostering familiarity among choir members.

Preparation and rehearsals take place separately at first with much written correspondence (in the form of pen-pal type letter writing) between the young and elderly choral members taking place. At the point at which joint rehearsals seem appropriate and productive, the groups come together. A public concert and a series of smaller performances are conducted by this combined group.

(1996: 27)

Loewen described this type of intergenerational activity as ‘authentic work’ by saying it is the act of performance which provides an added sense of connection and meaning in this intergenerational programme. The Interlink choir as a working model of Loewen’s concept of authentic work is an appropriate conceptual framework for intergenerational music learning at LaSalle.

The major positive difference between the Interlink and the LaSalle programmes is the increased frequency of communication between age groups, rehearsing of the ensembles, and a larger number of performances. The LaSalle programme offers multi-aged cohorts the chance to collaborate as learners and socialize on a daily basis. The ultimate goal of all the efforts of musicians and music learning groups is to perform. We learn, practise what we have learned, rehearse as an ensemble what we have learned, and then we perform in concert what we have learned. Then the process starts again. We learn from our performance, share our learned experiences, practise what we learned, and then perform another concert. The necessity for an ensemble to perform for an audience is a very important part of how we learn the art of music, and performance is the reason we rehearse as a group and practise as individuals.

Studies of intergenerational interaction, association and communication

A relatively new area of interest in developing an understanding of age, ageism and age stereotyping is that of intergenerational association. Williams and Jake Harwood (2004), suggested that intergenerational contact on a regular basis appears to be relatively rare. They and other researchers have been compelled to create situations and administer questionnaires generating information about age stereotypes and social interaction. They have attempted to discover variations in the ways that young and old people talk and act with each other. The authors used the term ‘accommodation’ as a way of describing whether or not each age cohort alters their choice of words, volume and inflection when speaking with a person of a different age group. Williams and Harwood explained that because there are so few natural areas that have persons of vast age differences conversing and interacting with each other outside of family relationships, little research has been carried out to investigate how different age groups communicate with each other. ‘Communication Accommodation Theory’ (CAT) (Giles, Coupland and Coupland 1991) explored how different age groups adapt their use of language between different age groups in family and non-family multi-generational settings. CAT stated that individuals use language in different ways, depending upon the age group of the persons with whom they are conversing. Adolescents, for example, tend to alter their language as a way of being more polite to seniors by actively trying to use fewer colloquialisms, speaking more slowly, or speaking louder. The challenge that researchers face is finding a naturalistic setting where a combination of the old and young age groups (seniors and teens) interact on a more or less equal footing in terms of an activity so that their interactions can be observed in a natural setting with neither group considered to be dominant. Williams and Jon F. Nussbaum (2001) stated

that because familial and institutional contact between generations are the most common sites of interactions they are also the most often used for researching intergenerational behaviours, attitudes, and trends. One feature of familial and institutional settings is that one group is in a dominant role. In most families, for example, seniors (generally grandparents) are in an authoritative position relative to the position of the younger family members. In an old age home, the teens are most often present in a caring, volunteering role and are seen as supporters of seniors, both physically and socially. In this circumstance, the teens are in a dominant position as members of the home's support staff. These sites are unlikely to foster a truly intergenerational collaboration as they do not naturally allow each group to act as equals, socially in a naturalistic setting.

Although 'the degree and nature of community-based non-familial contact between other age groups and seniors has not been systematically studied' (Williams and Nussbaum 2001: 39) some studies that encourage the association of young people and seniors have been undertaken for research purposes. One such study (Williams 1992) involved a group of college students on a California campus. The students engaged in conversations and activities with elderly people (approximately age 70) who were not related to the students. The students were asked to report on the frequency of contact, the location, and the topic(s) of the conversation. The results of the quantitative study showed that on average, these college students spent less than 4.5% of their time interacting with people over 65 years of age and their level of personal knowledge of the seniors with whom they had contact was very superficial. Would the uniting of students and seniors in a learning environment, where all participants had shared goals, increase the frequency of their interactions and foster greater communication and a better understanding between the two age groups?

At LaSalle, both age groups are involved in learning something new together. Their commonality is their inexperience as performing musicians. In the LaSalle context, intergenerational learning occurs in an environment that supports the development of communication and social interaction between two distinctly different age groups through the common objectives of learning to play an instrument, to read music, to follow a conductor's gestures and to perform in concerts.

Another important contextual factor in the support of a naturalistic study is frequency of contact. The 'Intergenerational Solidarity Theory' of Vern L. Bengtson, Edward B. Olander and Anees A. Haddad (1976), suggested that child/parent/grandparent relationships remain strong when they are in regular contact with one another. These relationships may be viewed more positively than those with elder strangers, but the relationships also require constant maintenance and management. Williams and Harwood also suggested that both young and old persons in families know what topics not to discuss with the different age group. Williams and Harwood surmised that:

in many cases that [grandchildren], adult children and elderly parents exercise a form of accommodative censorship that protects the solidarity of

the relationship. Each party knows what topics not to discuss in front of the other and in this way a protective veneer of consensus is created and sustained.

(2004: 128)

In order to understand the ways in which different age groups interact with each other, it is important to review literature that has addressed how one age group perceives another age group and also, how each group acts towards the other. If we socialize often with people of similar ages and less often with people of different generations, then what are the outcomes of this engagement in regard to our personal identity and social identity? John Turner (1999) posited a Social Identity Theory (SIT) that explains that an individual's self-concept is made up of two parts: 'personal identity' and 'social identity' (see Tajfel and Turner 1986; Williams and Harwood 2004). Personal identity is that part of the self that includes personal characteristics, likes and dislikes, and idiosyncrasies. Social identity, however, is our identity as members of particular social groups. These social groups can also be age-categorized as well, so teens (grandchildren) are identified with each other and by those who are not teens by way of certain social characteristics, manners of dress, style, taste in music etc. Seniors (grandparents) are also identified by the sameness that they visibly show through manners of dress, style, language usage etc.

Williams and Harwood (2004) reviewed the evidence for considering 'age groups' as social categories as they investigated some of the challenges of having different age groups interact and communicate with each other with the ideas of 'social identity' of persons and their own age groups in mind. They examined how age is at the forefront of the ways in which a person is engaged by another person of the same age cohort or of a different age cohort. It seems that age, as an identifier (whether it comes with negative or positive stereotypes and attitudes), is the first level of interaction between people. While not all members of each age group dress distinctly or act with exactly pre-determined manners on the basis of their age, there is some notion that those of similar age groups can be clearly related to others of similar vintage. Age is also used as a way of self-categorization and provides us with a comfort zone of identity as to who we are through our inclusion in a larger group of people of similar visible traits as the primary identifier. If one is to enter an environment that is predominantly populated by people who are visibly identified by a biological age that is largely different from our age, we may first feel 'out-of-place'. Being identified as 'not one of the group' simply because of our visible age may produce feelings of anxiety.

Observing seniors at the LaSalle Secondary School site as they negotiate the hallways before class provides an example of this. The halls are crowded, busy and loud with adolescent activities. Students are at their lockers getting books, talking and laughing with each other. 'Young lovers' are kissing each other like they are departing forever; locker doors are slamming, and students are whizzing past the slower, older persons who are trying to either get to the music room or to the washroom. Surely, this is a very exciting but also a very different, even frightening environment as compared to a seniors' activity centre, for example. The school is

a site which is designed for and occupied by an adolescent age group. If an adult or senior is not accustomed to this setting, he/she can easily feel out of place and overly noticed by virtue of being so visibly different. Many examples of our own experiences in life of feeling uncomfortable or standing out can be analysed. However, if one has the opportunity to have repeated contact with a different age cohort, it may become less of an issue in terms of how we feel about age differences and/or how we are perceived by different age groups.

Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Research

Clearly, the LaSalle model has all the ingredients of a successful and enriching intergenerational programme with a high degree of curriculum-based, relationship-based, reciprocal relations, community-based and authentic work interactions. The programme itself is recognized as a course in which the seniors are registered as students in the same manner as adolescents and the members of this multi-age group form a community of practice, learning collaboratively as equals. Their many performances provide an added measure of authentic work with a very real and pertinent goal while the daily nature of their interaction changes their entire concepts of personal and social identity. This programme is one step towards an intergenerational education paradigm shift that is beginning to happen.

Williams and Nussbaum describe how public education in Western societies has heretofore been an intergenerational endeavour. The older, more experienced people, were the 'teachers' and the younger-aged cohorts were the 'learners'. 'Intergenerational contact within education has traditionally been one way. Adults, historically, have taught children in order to provide society with a literate and skilled workforce' (Williams and Nussbaum 2001: 211). By 'one way', Williams and Nussbaum mean that if we consider the ages of learners versus teachers, we find that for the most part in any given educational environment, the teachers are usually older than the learners. In this respect, the formal curriculum, as taught in classrooms, has usually been from an older person to a younger person. However, the role of education is changing. New learning programmes must be put in place to meet the demands of providing new skills to individuals changing careers during their lives. Adults are returning to schools for training and the attainment of new skills. If older people are involved in learning environments, there is a good chance that the people who are teaching them will be from a younger age cohort than their own. Education and learning have also become leisure activities for many retired persons (Stebbins 1998). Again this environment lacks reciprocal interactions. Robert Stebbins' model of intergenerational interaction is similar to other models where children visit an old age home to offer services (Loewen 1996) placing an age group providing the services in a dominant role over the other. Williams and Nussbaum (2001) address two main questions facing educational establishments: 'Is education and, therefore, learning, a lifelong phenomenon?' and 'Can education help to bridge the gap between generations?' They answer the first question by stating that much literature exists that supports a 'life-span view of learning' (213). However, they make the point that public financing of

education is still primarily focused on skills and knowledge acquisition for employment rather than the benefits of learning as a lifelong social and intellectual pursuit/endeavour. Therefore, the answer to their second question may not be easily attained, or the benefits witnessed, unless education opens its doors to an older age cohort of learners who can sit side-by-side with adolescents and young adults. The following excerpt from Williams and Nussbaum summarizes their position and responds to their second question.

The potential within higher education to promote intergenerational communication rests with the expansion of the traditional classroom to include students beyond those in their teens and 20s. The changing economy, the fact that fewer young adults will be available to attend college, along with the fact that each individual will pursue many different jobs, if not careers, during his or her lifetime is forcing educational administrators to expand their vision of a traditional student. The opportunity for students to learn within an intergenerational classroom will increase for the foreseeable future. The success of these classrooms will be dependent on successful intergenerational communication. Both students and teachers must cope and adapt to a classroom full of stereotypes and myths of aging. The pitfalls of intergenerational communication ... will be part of any classroom with students of various ages. Neither instructional communication scholars nor interpersonal communication scholars have provided empirical evidence to inform us whether or not the intergenerational-communication difficulties found with interaction will adversely affect classroom learning.

The intergenerational classroom will, at the very least, provide the forum of individuals from various cohorts to interact and to observe one another. The mere fact that individuals with diverse life experiences are entering a learning environment for an extended period of time can itself be enlightening.

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The intergenerational music classroom at LaSalle will 'provide the forum of individuals from various cohorts to interact and to observe one another.' Even though Williams and Nussbaum focus on college-level education as the site for intergenerational learning, interest-based courses at the high school level are also a viable forum for adolescent/adult/senior reciprocal interactions.

Were we using a different theoretical perspective we might say that the seniors are involved in 'serious leisure' (Stebbins 1992) while the adolescents are involved in traditional musical education. The interesting thing is that the 'activity' is the same but the benefits are different – at least at this stage in each of their lives. When the groups learn together, there is an interaction effect that may enhance the experience for both.

The capability of older persons to continue to learn new things and not have the decline of their mental learning abilities with increased age be viewed as inevitable has been supported in many recent studies (Schaie 1990). Also, as Frank Glendenning (2004) points out 'there is now general agreement that both physical and mental activities are essential ingredients for quality of life as we grow older' (523). As many authors

argue, (see, for example, Belsky 1988, 1990; Dychtwald 1990; Evans, Goldacre, Hodkinson, Lamb, and Savory 1992; Groombridge 1989; Shaw 1991), the physical and intellectual active engagement of seniors is becoming generally recognized as worthwhile and beneficial.

The 'communication that transpires between young and old within health care interactions and educational interactions has the potential to produce significant, life-maintaining, and enhancing outcomes' (Williams and Nussbaum 2001: 201). Outcomes could include issues about how different generations work, learn and socialize with each other in order to develop better understandings of who we are as social beings by better knowing other age groups. Interactions between older patients and younger physicians as an example in the health care sector will be of great benefit to the development of greater knowledge of intergenerational contact and communication by the very nature of intergenerational association.

Finally, a learning environment in which seniors and adolescents learn music together on a daily basis could also be a site for the study of intergenerational interpersonal interaction and communication. If teens learn and associate with seniors on a daily basis in an environment in which all are learning together and have common goals, how will it influence their attitudes about 'old people'? How does the interaction between old and young in a learning environment differ from that of familial associations of grandchildren and grandparents? By utilizing the concepts of curriculum, relationship, reciprocal relations, community and authentic work-based interactions, will it aid us in exploring the benefits of intergenerational learning and associations?

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