The 3P's Theory for Insight-Full Programs

The 3P's: Product, Plan, and Perception

Product: the end goal, or solution of an activity

Plan: the strategy, pattern, recipe, directions, or process for engaging with the activity

Perception: the information gathered from the parameters and resources incorporated in the activity.

The Theory

By obscuring, hiding, or making less clear one of the 3P's, educators can engage participants in an interesting and curious activity with a revelatory insight hidden within, increasing the odds of an "AHA moment". Depending on how each is employed, campers ought to find themselves encouraged to make connections, identify or consider seeming contradictions, or identify assumptions / leverage points.

How do we obscure?

Product: by forming an activity whose solution is nothing like one would expect it to be (10-inch nails).

Strategy for use: The challenge here is to consider a cool creation, a unique structure, something seemingly impossible (14 nails on one) or literally fantastical (unreal, magical), and determine the easiest way to procure it. Then, consider how to introduce the activity such that again, it seems nearly impossible, but you are able to provide enough time to turn it over and consider it (magic card tricks, science experiments, riddles / puzzles, and the teaching of them work for this as well). One may either present it (if it's a magic trick) to engage, or describe it (if it shouldn't / can't be seen like the nails solution or something magical).

Plan: by forming an activity where the process, or the steps to accomplish on the way to a clear goal are quite unclear, and could even appear to be impossible (Traffic Jam). Perhaps the most difficult of the 3.

Strategy for use: Consider any kind of endpoint (from simple to complex) or product for an activity (similar to Product but *not* seemingly impossible, think how Traffic Jam's product is just people switching sides, or standing on squares, doesn't have to be interesting), and determine the easiest way to procure it. Then, consider each step, each part of the process, and consider how you can make each step less clear, more hidden, or possibly discoverable throughout the activity (a great example here are awareness games such as Whose Triangle is It, Green Glass Door, The Stick Dance, etc.). The obscuring needs to be something that can be slowly revealed (such as the facilitator providing the hint: "if you ever have 3 people from the same side in a row after they have moved once, you have already lost" in Traffic Jam). This requires that the facilitator know the activity incredibly well.

Perception: by forming an activity where the instructions or objects appear to be saying one thing, but in fact are communicating something quite unexpected (Hoops of Awareness).

Strategy for use: Most likely the easiest of the 3, this can be done by imagining any activity, and either concealing various needed objects / tools / information needed for completion (you're all on one team in Hoops of Awareness). Must be done carefully however, as if you misspeak, the activity may become impossible, and the participants upset and distrusting rather than inspired.