Activity from Chapter 10 - Social Constructivist Approaches

How do you understand Social Constructivist Approaches to teaching?

Elliot Aronson calls humans "the social animal". It is true, without social interactions and society in general we as a species couldn't survive. These social interactions intertwine all aspects of our lives. Teaching and learning are no exception. Collaboration and situated cognition are key words in this field. According to social constructivist approaches to teaching, knowledge develops as a result of social interaction and is therefore shared, rather than an individual experience.

How do teachers and peers contribute to students' learning?

There are four tools with the help of which teachers and peers can contribute to students' learning.

1) Changing the level of support over the course of a teaching session (scaffolding); 2) An expert stretches and supports a novice's understanding and use of a culture's skill (cognitive apprenticeship); 3) Cognitive apprenticeship between an expert and a novice (tutoring); 4) Students learn in small groups to help each other learn (cooperative learning).