

Scenarios in the AL Model

An overarching scenario is the glue that ties everything together in Actualized Learning's educational structure. A collection of thematic schemes will be tackled one after another throughout the year, with every facet of the school united by those common focal points. This is the third layer of meaning in AL's blueprint, which will blanket all the activities and goals. Sectors connect students to key arenas in their own lives, tying into schema and associating subject matter to one's priorities. Departments provide purposeful tasks that instill students with a personal sense of accomplishment. Scenarios bring an all encompassing purpose and direction to the learning process. In some ways they will be altruistic and concerned with the common good, but they will also involve significant issues that directly or indirectly affect the individual students. Scenarios will act as the beacons for learning. They can clarify goals and better define the activities in which students are involved.

Scenarios need to be pertinent and fascinating to the students, if they are to engage and motivate them. They should capture young people's imagination, inspire them, tap into their creativity, and breed hope. Those objectives can best be forwarded by realistic and poignant themes, based on real issues dominating the times and places in which the students live. They could be fanciful or whimsical, in order to captivate and excite, as long as they still represent actual situations that are relevant to the students. Most importantly the chosen topics should provide opportunities for our youth to shape the circumstances that will determine their own futures.

Illuminating the greater reasons for a pursuit can heighten relevancy and mobilize the student body in a common cause. Productively energizing young learners is often the greatest challenge facing educators. We can make significant headway toward overcoming apathy and resignation by giving our youth avenues for doing something to improve the world around them. Dealing with issues that affect both their present and future can go a long way to motivating people of any age. Collectively striving to achieve mutual goals can be very empowering, as it capitalizes on the exhilaration that arises from being part of something that transcends oneself. It taps into our social and spiritual identity and can be truly uplifting.

Sparking interest in learners is one of the most effective strategies for fostering engagement. By definition it arouses curiosity, concern or attention to something, and generates involvement or participation. Comprehensive interests can be durable, holding student engagement over extended periods of time. They draw pupils into the learning process and narrow their focus. That is in contrast to

so much of the content to which they have been subjected, which tends to repel them or lead to distracted behaviors. Students often fail to see the role academic subject matter plays in their lives, since it is usually presented in isolation, as something relevant unto itself, without connecting to what individuals perceive as important. The result is a resistant, apathetic audience.

The scenarios in general will predominantly answer the question why students are expected to do something. It will give them the intent that is so vital to learning; since, if one knows what they are trying to accomplish, they will have a clearer, more resolute approach to whatever task they undertake. In order to achieve something worthwhile, though, it is necessary to deeply and methodically investigate the causes, details of the condition or situation, and the variety of potential solutions. Departmental tasks will conduct that work within two overriding contexts, defined by the sectors and the scenarios.

One could look at the hierarchical structure of AL's plan as having three dimensions: scenarios acting as umbrellas of purpose; sectors approaching that purpose from different perspectives and relevancy; plus, departments carrying out the detailed work that develops understanding. In other words, scenarios will formulate the main thrust and focus of school-wide endeavors. The scenario themes would then be explored from different angles, supplied by sectors that represent important aspects of life. The departments would in turn utilize those contexts and objectives in the pursuit of content learning.

Such a configuration coordinates vertical & horizontal integration, and considerably curtails isolated learning. As students move from department to department and sector to sector, there would be a coherent experience that illuminates both the activities and the objectives. Hopefully, that would result in far less alienation, frequently caused by detached or myopic agendas. Furthermore, the struggle that establishing relevancy often entails could be substantially mitigated. This is yet another vehicle for applying content in appropriate ways, along with fostering flexibility and the transference of learning via multiple contexts.

As with all other aspects of AL's model, scenarios need to be designed for connecting education to the real world, broadening the learners' perspective, expanding the scope of teachable moments, generating interest and motivation, facilitating the mastery of content, exposing our youth to pertinent issues, and preparing them for life.