

Expanding the Situated Learning Environment

Characteristic of the constructivist epistemology and the pedagogical model of situated learning is the flexibility of the learning environment to expand to other student populations and/or content areas. In *Westward Expansion: Looking at the Past to Understand the Present* the online structure of presenting scenario challenges with supporting resources categorized by governmental, economic, geographic, and cultural factors lends itself to expansion to other societal development eras by changing the scenario and repopulating the resources with pertinent material. The communication tools, both synchronous and asynchronous, as well as the group workspace, remain fundamental to the students' ability to construct and reconstruct knowledge. The benefit of the structure of this SLE is that the students will internalize these factors to evaluate societal developmental anywhere, anytime. Students may not remember the Monroe Doctrine in ten years, but if you use this scaffolding throughout the course, they will remember that you cannot evaluate a society based on one factor alone.