

FIGURE 2.1
(Continued)

Comparing didactic and constructivist instruction.

Educational Component	ASSESSMENT	
	Didactic Curriculum	Constructivist-Based Curriculum
Student role as a learner	Listener (often passive). Quiet, well behaved. Raises hand when prepared to respond to a teacher's question. Studies directed toward passing tests and completing required work.	Collaborator, teacher, peer evaluator, sometimes expert. Actively engaged. Active learning. Problem poser. Active seeker after knowledge. Students learn as they help each other learn.
Demonstration of success	Quantity and speed of recall. Ability to do well on standard tests.	Quality of understanding. Ability to transfer knowledge and skills to new and novel settings.
Use of technology during assessment	Allows simple tools, such as paper, pencil, and ruler. Sometimes allows calculator.	Students assessed in environment in which they learn.
Student work-products	Most student work-products are written and private, shared only with the teacher. Occasional oral presentation.	Most student work-products are public, subject to review by teachers, peers, parents, and others. Multiple forms of products.
Assessment	Norm referenced. Objective and short answer. Focus on memorization of facts. Discipline specific. Lower-order thinking skills.	Criterion referenced. Authentic assessment of products, performances, and presentations. Portfolio. Self-assessment. Peer assessment.

Activities

1. Select an example of PBL you have experienced as a student or facilitated as a teacher. Describe this example and analyze it from the point of view of the student-oriented and teacher-oriented characteristics of IT-assisted PBL described in this chapter. What are its strengths and weaknesses?
2. Analyze your own teaching from a didactic versus constructivist point of view. From your point of view, what are the strengths and weaknesses of these two approaches to teaching? In your teaching, how do you capitalize on these strengths and avoid the weaknesses?
3. Analyze your current curriculum, instruction, and assessment in terms of how well they contribute to your students learning to function well in a P/T Team environment. Suggest some changes that might contribute to your students gaining increased knowledge and skills in solving problems and accomplishing tasks in this environment.