Psychology Paper details: Please answer each of the questions in paragraph form, single spaced. The answers can be found in the book How Children Learn (link below, just need to find the PDF through the list). Below is assignment descriiption. Consider four basic theories of education, all based in four distinct philosophies of education. It is now time to make this explicit and take it a step further. So far we have: Idealism: knowledge comes from within (intuitive/Plato/God) Empiricism: knowledge is the passive absorbing of information (Locke) Constructivism (Piagetian): Knowledge is active construction and problem solving Social Constructivism (Vygotsky): Knowledge is the active internalization of cultural tools. How do these apply to education? Q1: What would classrooms adopting each of these philosophies look like? If we looked around schools today we would probably see one variant dominate the others and that would be empiricism. We see it in testing, textbooks, lecturing, etc. Q2: Why do you suppose empiricism is the most widespread? Is this a good or bad thing? I suspect most teachers think this is a bad thing. Yet ironically it seems to be reproduced all over. My problem is the idea that one philosophy of education is bad. It is common in educational circles today to see lectures, textbooks and passive absorption as negative. I don't agree. We can consider it one type of pedagogy very useful for communicating certain types of knowledge. The problem is that if it is the exclusive ones then our students only learn to relate to knowledge passively. This, I believe, is the real problem. In America, we tend to have a strange relationship to authoritarian forms of knowledge (which empiricism can be as it comes from outside and is imposed). We hate it, perhaps due to our Protestant cultural heritage, yet we reproduce it all over. Perhaps only Freud can make sense of the strangely ambivalent and irrational relationship. If we actually look at how children learn in the world we discover that it is completely different from how we expect children to learn in school. According to Holt children seem to learn perfectly well before they get to school. Q3: He writes, if we taught children to speak they'd never learn. What does this mean? Q4: Do children "learn" to speak (or walk or joke) or do they create speaking? What is the difference? He cites Bruner making the point that much of school is about making children feel like things they thought they knew perfectly well, they never really did. Q5: Give an example of this. In school we believe that first one must learn the boring stuff (we call that the basics) and then one is ready for the interesting stuff (usually in Graduate School!). But oddly, that would never work for us in the world. If I am passionate about baseball but you forced me to memorize players statistics before I could actually watch the game, my passion would likely never endure. Q6: Give an example of something you learned recently where you felt passion. In what order did you engage it? On page 179 he talks about our naïve delusion around explanations. We teachers love to explain but it mostly doesn't work! Q7: what does mean? Give an example. Q8: Later he talks about "gaps" in our knowledge as motivators. What does he mean? In her article, Donaldson also argues that schools confuse children. Q9: What is the thrust of her argument? In the seven lesson school teacher Gatto argues that there is a hidden curriculum in education. Q10: What does he mean? Do you agree. Finally, we once again encounter Neil Postman. This time he will offer us an alternative to the four models of education we already encountered. We can create an education about language. Who gets to define the words we use? Where do those definitions come from? Who benefits from those definitions? How do metaphors shape our understanding of reality? And finally, by what means was this knowledge delivered to us and how did this change the nature of that knowledge. Discussion: Let's practice a critical education. Pick a topic that interests you, a real topic, not the boring topics we cover in our classroom. Something you are passionate that your students should know about. What are the words that this area depends on? Where do the definitions of these words come from?