

2 - Learning Science: Cognitive, Affective, and Social Aspects | Empirical

SP - (16054) - GASPS AND CHILLS: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF AWE IN SCIENCE INSTRUCTION

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Short Abstract

The world of science generates countless awe moments and recent research into the use of awe as a pedagogical tool has revealed the positive impacts awe can have on students, including enhanced memory, curiosity, and motivation to learn. To better understand how science teachers perceive awe and use awe in instruction we conducted semi-structured interviews with 34 science teachers (elementary school n=14, middle school = 20). Interview transcripts were analyzed for the incorporation of one or more of the six factors typically associated with awe (accommodation, vastness, physiological, connectedness, self- diminishment, and time dilation). Accommodation and vastness were the most frequently mentioned factors in teachers' responses, which according to previous studies, are the two most critical components of awe experiences. Participants also described awe moments their students had experienced during science lessons. The benefits of awe as a pedagogical strategy for science instruction are discussed in addition to suggestions for future research in this area.