

# Australian Journal of Educational & Developmental Psychology (AJEDP)

Volume 2 2002

---

## Assessing students' conceptions of learning

Nola Purdie  
School of Learning and Development  
Queensland University of Technology, Australia

John Hattie  
School of Education  
University of Auckland, NZ

### Abstract

This study describes the development of an instrument designed to assess student's conceptions of learning. The Conceptions of Learning Inventory (COLI) was developed from qualitative data obtained from Australian and Japanese high school students. Six conceptions of learning were identified. The COLI was used to compare the conceptions of learning of groups of students from Australia (Indigenous and non-Indigenous), Malaysia, and America (Caucasian and African American). The self-rated academic achievement of students who endorsed all six conceptions of learning was higher than that of students who endorsed fewer conceptions of learning. There was little support for the existence of the two qualitatively different conceptions that are commonly identified (a surface conception involving the acquisition, storage, reproduction, and use of knowledge; and a deep conception involving the construction of meaning and personal change).

[Link to full text paper pdf](#) (117KB)

*Uploaded: 4 October 2002*

---