Week Four: Engaging Students in the Learning Process

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Welcome, Bienvenido, مرحبا

Teaching Academy
Part Four:
Engaging Students in the Learning Process

Today’s Big Idea

I hear and I forget.
I see and I remember.
I do and I understand.

Therefore . . . never do for
our students what they can
do for themselves.

Lesson Planning Revisited

TIG’s CD 2RTA
Tune: Frère Jacques
Pick your Topic, then Identify your purpose,
Gather info too, Create a plan.
Design yo-ur lessons, Rev-ew yo-ur plan,
Revise, Teach, Assess.
Revise, Teach, Assess.

Complex Learning Tasks

Smart Teachers Know . . .

- Acquiring component skills does NOT by itself prepare students to perform complex tasks
- Cognitive overload causes performance to degrade when you do too much at one time

Teach complex tasks by (1) reducing cognitive load and (2) providing time for students to practice individual component skills and in COMBINATION.
Understanding Inertia

- Ideas not well-formulated\(^1\) — not enough "think time"
- Think they don’t know enough about subject\(^1\)
- Didn’t do/understand reading or assigned problems
- Too many people—they’re afraid\(^2\)

\(^1\) Karp & Yoels, 1976; Howard, Short & Clark, 1996
\(^2\) McKeachie, 1999

Reducing Inertia

- Address social issues
  - use ice breakers
  - call students by name
  - sit in circle . . .
- Have students write down ideas first
- DO NOT ask questions with ONE correct answer
- Ask question at end of class, students respond in writing for next class
- Draw on fearful students’ areas of strength

Adapted from: McKeachie, 2006

Creating Critical Mass

Create a discussion “base” with a concrete, common experience . . .

- Find an interesting activity
- Show a YouTube video
- Demonstrate a concept
- Provide a brief reading
- Use a role play or short skit
- Involve students in a simulation

Just in Time Teaching (JiTT)

- Combines assigned reading with Web-based assignment & classroom activities
- Students respond to Web assignment on material not yet discussed in class
- Due a few hours before class — students must do readings to answer
- Instructor reads submissions “just in time,” adjusts class content and/or activities
JiTT Assignment Ideas

- Brief **essay question** asking students to apply concepts to real-world problems
- **Estimation problem** with key information missing—provides practice working with ill-defined problems
- **Multiple-choice questions** with array of likely answers, including common misconceptions
- **Students share** their thoughts—What reading didn’t make sense? What should we spend class time on? What was cool? Etc.

Information & examples at [http://www.jitt.org](http://www.jitt.org)

For Next Time

**DUE:** CATs Implementation Report

**Read:** Chapter 6, “Student Development & Course Climate”

**Extension:**
- Working Memory as a Bottleneck in Learning page on the “Exploring How Students Learn” website—see How to Manage Cognitive Load video
- “Applying the Science of Learning” - article in Change about teaching for long-term retention and transfer
- The Role of Questions in Teaching, Thinking and Learning web page from The Critical Thinking Community

**Important Dates**

- Idea for addressing a misconception or learning bottleneck due Wk. 6, Feb. 17 or 18
- Lesson plan needed Wk. 7, Feb. 24 or 25

Notes & Reflection