

# A Brief Summary of the Best Practices in College Teaching



## HALTING TIME

Present complex material or directions and then stop so learners have time to think or carry out directions. Visually c

heck to see whether the group appears to understand. If they do, continue.

## EXPLICATION DE TEXTE

By reading and analyzing passages from the text aloud, learners can see higher-order thinking skills, see criticism is an intellectual exercise, and experience how great writing can have a profound effect. A convention for doing this: the speaker reads the relevant portion of the text aloud to the group, paraphrases the meaning in her or his own words, and then expands upon the ideas and offers personal connections. The author becomes present as another speaker before the audience.

## GUIDED LECTURE

Learners listen to 15-20 minutes of lecture without taking notes. At the end of that time they spend five minutes recording all they can recall. The next step is offer them the time to meet together in small discussion groups to reconstruct the lecture conceptually, with supporting data and their own reflections, prepare notes, and return, if necessary, to the instructor to resolve questions that arise.

## IMMEDIATE MASTERY QUIZ

When a regular immediate mastery test is included in the last few minutes of the period, learners retain almost twice as much material, both factual and conceptual, than if they just pack up and leave.

## STORY TELLING

Stories, metaphor, and myth catch people within; no longer are listeners functioning as tape recorders subject to information overload limits. What human beings have in common is revealed; personal connection is possible. Stories allow the listener to seek an experience of being alive in their imagining and find clues to answers within themselves. The 10 to 20 minute limit for talking to passive listeners no longer applies. Deep joy and profound connection become possible.

## 2. GROUP DISCUSSION PROVOCATIONS

Effective ways to present a common experience to engage ~~group~~ in a discussion

Awareness of complexity and enhanced understanding results when learners discuss the meaning of events with each other. To be successful, however, groups need a common experience to draw

them into participation, establish a personal connection with the content, and provide a shared referent from which to frame their ideas. Understanding that disequilibrium or puzzles are essential to that engagement, here are nine choices to connect participants with the dimensions of the content and with each other.

## **SHORT READINGS**

One can offer brief texts to read in class and respond to. Most provocative are readings with contrasting viewpoints.

## **SEMINARING**

A seminar convention expands upon the short readings to take on a mutual examination of a text. Participants read an assigned portion of the text and make notes in the margins or elsewhere. If a participant wishes to contribute to the group discussion of the text, he or she refers the others to the page and paragraph and reads it aloud. Then the participant expresses in his or her own words what that passage means. At that point the discussion opens to questions, comments and conjectures. When that topic has taken its course, another participant can open a discussion in the same way.

## **FIRST PERSON EXPERIENCE**

Works written in a personal voice     autobiographies, biographies, oral histories, diaries, and memoirs

## **CASE STUDIES**

A case study is the factual account of human experience centered in a problem or issue faced by a person, group or organization. It can raise a variety of complex issues and stimulate discussions of alternative viewpoints. Typically, case studies are written objectively and include a brief overview of the situation, its context, and the major decisions that must be made. Rather than expecting learners to have any answer, learners are challenged to articulate their thoughts, frame problems, generate solutions, and evolve principles that may apply to other situations.

## **VISUAL STUDIES**

Seeing something first hand creates a common ground. Photographic essays, video programs, and personally made video recordings are examples of ways to bring into the classroom direct depictions of the concepts and complexities being discussed.

## **ROLE PLAY**

Learners explore human relations problems by enacting problem situations and then discussing the enactments. Together learners can explore feelings, attitudes, values, and strategies. Theater attempts to help individuals find personal meaning within their social world and resolve personal dilemmas with the assistance of the social group.

**3.**



## **PARALLEL PERSONAL COMMENT**

Without changing the topic or bending it in the slightest, talk about current feelings or a past experience

## NARRATION









continued engagement in the process of acquiring competence and self-confidence. It sequences the statements the educational leader makes by starting with least inferential and examining both an open-ended cycle is created where the teacher and the learner cooperatively examine both the performance.

Optimal correction is possible when both parties responsibly work for error detection at each level of inference before proceeding to the next. In other words, get the facts right first; then natural tendency to think of judgments and opinions first, this procedure holds them in abeyance.

## STEP 1. OBJECTIVE DESCRIPTION OF FACTS

State the facts as you see them:

D 3 7KHUH DUH PLVVSHOOHG ZRUGV KHUH ´  
E 3 6LQFH , DVVLJQHG WKH FODVV WKH WDVN \RX KDYH DV  
F 3 <RX S\RXO\W\HQJHU DW WKH SHUVRQ \RX DGGUHVHVG ´

Get agreement, for correcting errors may not be possible unless both parties agree to a common set of facts.

## STEP 2. CULTURALLY ACCEPTED (SOCIALLY-CONSTRUCTED) MEANING

Describe what a jury or group of informed, dispassionate observers would conclude:

D 3 , W KDVQ\FWK H\FNHQGV'SHOO  
E 3 <RX DUH XVLQJ PH DV WKH ILUVW UHVRXUFH QRW WKH  
F 3 7KDW\HQ\HQ JHVWXUH LPSOLHV DQ DGYHUVDULDO UDWK

Again, get agreement. Usually the learner will either justify or correct when the behavior is recognized as holding an accepted meaning. This level of inference is the same used by journalists and anthropologists to describe events and actions as viewed from a culturally specific viewpoint. That viewpoint, too, is also suspect and, to be fair, should be examined simultaneously

### STEP 3. JUDGMENTS AND PERSONAL OPINIONS

After the above have been discussed and agreed upon, the judgments of both parties can be stated without inducing animosity or defensiveness. At times it may be wise to check first with

D 37KDW PDQ\ PLVWDNHV LPSO\ D GLVUHJDUG IRU ZULWWH  
E 3, ZRXWR OEHNRX ILQG DQVZHUV LQGHSHQGHQWO\ '  
F 3, W LV PRUH HIIHFWLYH WR VSHDN DERXWR WJHWWOI DQG

## 11. CLIMATE SETTING

Care for the physical and mental climate

A large portion of teaching effectiveness involves setting the stage; solve comfort issues first and the learning path is smoother. Research shows that successful teachers spend 10% of classroom time optimizing the arrangement of the physical setting as well as the psychological setting a climate of collaboration, relative indefiniteness, playfulness, joy, belonging, wellness, trust, and participation.

### 0 (( 7 7 + ( / ( \$ 5 1 ( 5 ¶ BEDS FOR PHYSICAL COMFORT AND ACCESSIBILITY

Insure a comfortable environment where basic needs for all learners are met: warmth, comfort, sound levels, light levels, food, and arrangement of space.

### DEFINE NEGOTIABLE AND NON-NEGOTIABLE AREAS

essential procedures, external constraints, performance requirements (such as attendance, participation, timeliness), and summative evaluation. Clearly specify those aspects of the course that have mutual responsibility (such as seating arrangements, applications, group work) and formative evaluation which can be negotiable.

### CLARIFY THE INSTRUCT 2 5 ¶ 6 5 2 / ( \$ 6 / ( \$ ' OF THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

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