What Can YOU Do to Improve Student Learning?

Looking to enhance learning environment in your classroom?
Read below and visit pages 3 and 4 for information and links about creating community

**Seeking more support in aligning procedures and assessments with required standards?**
See page 2 and review unpacking standards to develop clear learning paths.

Working toward deepening student learning and showing evidence of rigor? View Marzano's 9 to the right, check out Questioning Techniques on page 3, and visit page 4 for some tech tips.

Context for Learning Data Drives Planning for Student Engagement

(OSTP 1)

In his work Visible Learning, John Hattie (2009) asserts that a classroom climate attuned to mastery learning is one that includes a warm socioemotional climate that fosters effort and engagement for students. This type of classroom environment is only possible when teachers believe that all students can learn. **Teachers who are change agents clearly communicate every student is capable of achievement by meeting students where they are and developing a climate of acceptance.** The greatest challenge in creating this learning environment is that each teacher needs to cultivate authentic, genuine care about learning for all students. Seeing every learner as one who deserves opportunity is essential. Check out this link for great, simple questions to support student - teacher rapport.
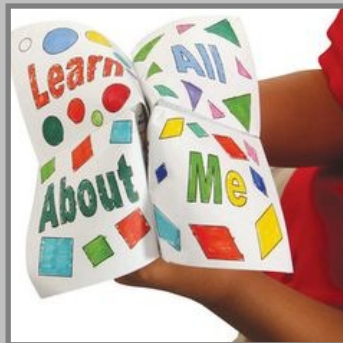
Marzano Breaks Down Strategies for Effective Instruction

(OSTP 4)

Marzano's 9 Effective Instructional Strategies

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9 Effective Instructional Strategies

Effective instruction is key to improving student learning. These 9 instructional strategies help students achieve at higher levels.

1 Identifying Similarities & Differences
The ability to break a concept into its similar and dissimilar characteristics allows students to understand complex problems by analyzing them in a more simple way.

2 Summarizing & Note Taking
These skills support increased comprehension by asking students to identify what's essential and then put it in their own words.

3 Reinforcing Effort & Providing Recognition
Teachers need to help students see the relationship between effort, achievement, and recognition.

4 Homework and Practice
Practice supports learning, homework needs to be intentional and have a specific goal or outcome.

5 Non-Linguistic Representations
Incorporate visuals, images, piktographs, and pantomimes to reinforce concepts and vocabulary.

6 Cooperative Learning
Research shows that organizing students into cooperative groups yields a positive effect on overall learning.

7 Setting Objectives & Providing Feedback
Set objectives that are adaptable to student learning goals & provide feedback toward those goals.

8 Generating & Testing Hypothesis
Have students predict and test hypothesis and explain the outcomes.

9 Questions, Cues, & Advance Organizers
Use questions, cues, and advance organizers to help students tap into their background knowledge to make sense of information.

Reference

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D.J., & Pollock, J.E. (2000). Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. J. (2003). What works in schools: Translating research into action. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

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Valued by many school districts, Marzano's research supports measurable gains in student achievement through these 9 strategies (see more here). Remember that strategies like summarizing and note taking are skills that need to be taught. Check out Cornell Notes for a reliable note taking method.

Foster Engagement by Developing Clear Learning Paths with Opportunities to "Check-in"

Unpacking Standards is a complicated process that involves breaking a standard down into student friendly language to create a learning target or "I Can" Statement to be used in a lesson.

This process is critical because it allows for evidence that students know what they are expected to know and be able to do at the end of a lesson, and it guides the instructor in creating assessments that measure the day's learning.

Follow this sample process and try to use a standard you are working with in your own classrooms to practice unpacking standards into "I can" statements.

1. Select the standard you are using in planning your lesson.
   - English Language Arts Standard 3 for Reading for Literature Grade 3 students states, "Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
2. Highlight the verbs in the standard: **Describe, explain**
3. Identify any academic vocabulary essential to the standard: traits, motivations, sequence of events
   - Remember that academic vocabulary is the language associated with the learning tasks. Learners need to know what a sequence of events is in order to explain how a character's actions contribute to it.
   - Academic Language needs to be taught. A great technique to increase student use of academic language is to provide sentence starters.
4. Break down the standard into individual skills that can be measured. Remember to use student friendly language as you create "I can" statements.

Allow these "I can" statements to guide your planning process and assist you in creation of assessments. Each assessment that you facilitate should measure where your students are in relation to the learning target.**

- I can list qualities of a character.
- I can describe why individual characters make the choices they make.
- I can describe how a character is feeling in a story.
- I can examine how character actions connect to what happens in the story.

The root of the word "assessment" is from the Latin *assidere*, which means "*to sit beside*."
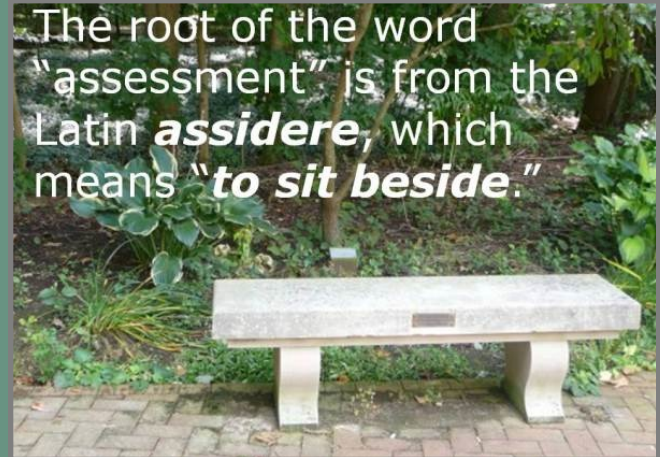
This is what allows you to develop formative assessments so that you can check in. Throughout teaching you have to measure student knowledge regarding the "I cans".

Formative Assessments are the most necessary steps in your procedures because they allow you to check in on the learning that is and is not occurring. They allow you to theoretically "sit beside" students and see where they are in their process. Dr. Justin Tarte says, "Formative assessments are a part of the learning process while summative assessments are an end to the learning process." Visit his website for a nice comparison model (click here).

**It would be highly unusual to have 4 "I can" statements in 1 lesson. This would likely be a unit that would span over a time set by you and your mentor teacher or by a district level pacing guide.

Reflection - Why is it valuable?

…the greatest effects on student LEARNing occur when the TEACHers become **LEARNers of their own TEACHing** and…

…when students become their **own TEACHers.**

John Hattie
– *Visible Learning (2009, p. 22)*

The current measurements of teacher performance (EdTPA, RESA, OTES) all value the ability to reflect, improve upon practice, and provide rationale for data driven decision making. A failed lesson is not the mark of a poor teacher. An inability to critically review one's own teaching is what presents an issue. Being a reflective practitioner requires one to invite feedback and to use it to improve future teaching and learning.

Brain Breaks and Minute Focus Activities 1

It is certainly not a secret that people need to move in order to keep their brains active.

According to William's Glasser's Choice Theory, all behavior is motivated by an individual's internal desire to satisfy basic physical and psychological needs. Essentially meaning, students often choose behaviors because their desire to satisfy a need outweighs their desire to choose another, perhaps more appropriate behavior.

The Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education is just one of many sources that indicate attention span is typically a learner's age + 1. However, the nature of classroom instruction often requires educators to ask students to be still for longer than what their attention span allows. Consider some activities to break up instruction in order to increase overall lesson engagement. Visit the links below to start brainstorming ideas.

20 Three- Minute Brain Breaks

Why it is so Hard for Children to Sit Still

Focus Activities

Pinterest Brain Breaks and Songs Board

Questioning Techniques Produce More Gains When Wait Time is Used

Questioning, one of the nine researched-based strategies suggested by Marzano's effective instructional strategies is most powerful when teachers build 3 - 5 seconds of wait time in before calling on students for an answer.

Although challenging for a teacher to incorporate and almost unnatural at first, Anthony D. Fredericks, author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Success as a Teacher* asserts, "Adding wait time to your teaching repertoire will, perhaps more than any other teaching strategy, have the greatest impact on student performance."

Some of these impacts include:
- The length and correctness of student response increases.
- The number of "I don't know" and no answer responses decreases.
- More students volunteer to answer questions and provide appropriate answers.
- There appears to be a correlation between increased wait time by teachers and higher scores on student achievement tests.
- Positive changes in teaching behaviors occur (Stahl 1994).

Skillful questioning in the classroom does require educators to ask a variety of question types typically associated with the hierarchy of Bloom's Taxonomy (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation). Also, consider the hierarchy of questioning developed in Costa's Levels (click here), and through Webb's Depth of Knowledge, also known as DOK (click here).
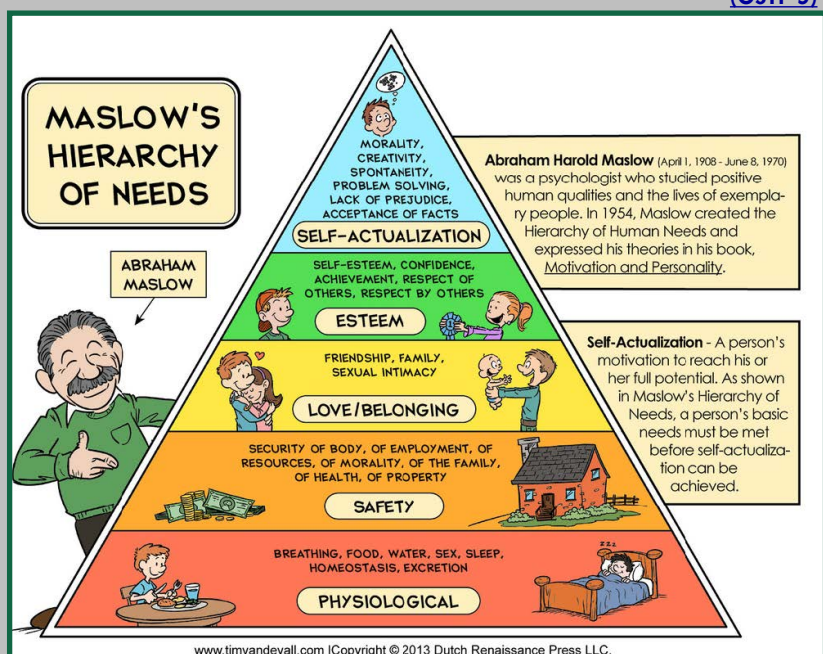
Stahl, Robert J. "Using "Think-Time" and "Wait-Time" Skillfully in the Classroom." ERIC Clearinghouse for social studies/social science Education. Bloomington, IN. (1994).

Does Safe Space and Community Impact Engagement ?

Teacher preparation programs and existing teacher evaluation tools in the state of Ohio require evidence of "a learning environment that challenges students." It is highly unlikely that a teacher will be able to build a learning environment "designed to promote and support student learning as opposed to managing student behaviors," (as stated in the edTPA Making Good Choices Support Guide page 17) without consideration of each student's basic needs as developed by Maslow's Hierarchy.

Lately the local news is giving us plenty of reason to question the safety of school settings and neighborhoods. Is there anything we can do to foster community and increase feelings of safety for our students? **We don't control the outside world, but we do have more control over the climate of our classrooms.** Respect, acceptance, humanism, kindness valuing individuals goes a long way in the process of creating community. Allow your classroom to be a sanctuary for your students. See the links on page 3 for support in building a safe classroom community.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

ABRAHAM MASLOW

MORALITY, CREATIVITY, SPONTANEITY, PROBLEM SOLVING, LACK OF PREJUDICE, ACCEPTANCE OF FACTS
SELF-ACTUALIZATION

SELF-ESTEEM, CONFIDENCE, ACHIEVEMENT, RESPECT OF OTHERS, RESPECT BY OTHERS
ESTEEM

FRIENDSHIP, FAMILY, SEXUAL INTIMACY
LOVE/BELONGING

SECURITY OF BODY, OF EMPLOYMENT, OF RESOURCES, OF MORALITY, OF THE FAMILY, OF HEALTH, OF PROPERTY
SAFETY

BREATHING, FOOD, WATER, SEX, SLEEP, HOMEOSTASIS, EXCRETION
PHYSIOLOGICAL

Abraham Harold Maslow (April 1, 1908 - June 8, 1970) was a psychologist who studied positive human qualities and the lives of exemplary people. In 1954, Maslow created the Hierarchy of Human Needs and expressed his theories in his book, Motivation and Personality.

Self-Actualization - A person's motivation to reach his or her full potential. As shown in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a person's basic needs must be met before self-actualization can be achieved.

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As educators who are trained and required to track data supporting student learning, we sometimes see an unmet need manifest in inappropriate behaviors. Often as Maslow tells us, we need to first address the need before we admonish the behavior.

Building a SAFE Classroom Community

2 Easy Ways to Build Rapport with Your Students

A Fun Way to Assess Your Class, Have a Good Laugh, and Build Everlasting Rapport

Why Rules and Consequences Aren't Enough

The Only Classroom Rules You'll Ever Need

Love the One You're With: Creating a Classroom Community

Concentric Circles

Regularly ask your students to consider the following questions and make sure you read and remember their answers!
- What do you want?
- What are you doing to achieve what you want?
- Is it working?
- What are your plans or options?

Using Technology to Enhance Learning

When Technology only serves the purpose of checking the "Technology Utilized" box on an evaluation, it likely won't engage students anymore than a lecture from a sage will.

Moving from using technology as direct substitution of lecture or other forms of teacher led instruction, to using technology as innovation in the classroom allows teachers to engage and empower 21st centuries learners on a new level.

The Bloom's Taxonomy for iPads pictured to the left provides ideas for ways to go deeper in learning and allow students to get to a higher level of critical thought.

As you are working on building lessons and enhancing engagement, explore some of the apps pictured and visit the links below for additional ideas.

The real power of technology in teaching is to allow students to individualize their learning and perform at a higher level. Work through Bloom's in using tech in order to deepen student learning.

Additional Resources to Support Increased Student Achievement

Engaging Students in Social and Emotional Learning

Kids Speak Out on Student Engagement

The 8 minutes that Matter Most - Hook and Closure

Promoting Student Engagement and Cultivating Classroom Equity

Teaching that Emphasizes Active Engagement from the NEA

Peardeck - a tool allowing teachers to collect real-time formative assessment data.

Plickers - another tool allowing teachers to collect real-time formative assessment data

Kahoot - Kahoot is a free, game-based learning platform

Kahnacademy

Khan Academy is a free online resource for students, teachers, parents, and really anyone wanting to learn.

Flipped Classroom: Beyond the Videos

Apps for Struggling Readers and Writers