



## SESSION II: Instruction For All Students

### OBJECTIVES:

Staff will be able to plan meaningful instruction by structuring lessons effectively, by grouping students according to learning goals, and by using effective strategies to increase student achievement.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What are some of the components of an effective lesson? What is the rationale behind some of these components?
- What are different types of grouping you can use with your students? How can they be used to support different learning goals?
- What are some successful teaching strategies that can help increase student achievement?

### OVERVIEW

#### STRUCTURING A LESSON

Research shows that the more time students spend learning, the more they'll achieve. A well-planned and well-structured lesson will have students working on task for almost the entire lesson. Students are more likely to stay on task if they are familiar with how you will present a lesson, and what is expected of them.

Most lessons have a beginning, middle and end. The beginning part of the lesson establishes a purpose for learning, gets the students ready to learn, and attracts the students' interest. The middle part of the lesson provides opportunities for students to learn and practice the content, processes and skills of the lesson. Finally, the end of the lesson is when students apply their learning in meaningful ways. There are different activities for different parts of the lesson.

Once you've established your learning objective and generated some interest in your topic, many experts recommend presenting an **advance organizer** for your topic. An advance organizer is a tool to help focus students on what is to be learned, and includes incorporating students' previous knowledge. There are many different types of advance organizers, such as Venn diagrams, web charts, data charts, summaries, pictures or graphic representations. What type of advance organizer you use depends on your students' age, their knowledge, and the lesson you are trying to teach.

The next step is to **model, role play and teach** the new concept, information or skill. When you demonstrate a skill or concept to students, it clarifies for them what they are expected to accomplish and learn. Modeling and role playing are particularly important for children learning a new language and for younger children.

The next step is to provide **guided practice** for your students. This can take many forms, depending on what you are teaching. In the elementary grades, some teachers plan several activities that students cycle through—all dealing with the concept or skill in a different way. They may use centers to help elementary students practice the skill from the lesson. Centers also provide an opportunity for group or individual work; they foster independence in the young student; and can be a time for social development. When you provide varied learning opportunities for students, you're also creating opportunities for students who have different learning styles and special needs. If your students are older, guided practice might involve the use of a study guide or a packet. To answer the questions, students must demonstrate knowledge of the new concept, and may also be asked to use higher level thinking skills, such as evaluating, analyzing, comparing or summarizing.

**Feedback** is an important component of your lesson. Research shows that the sooner you provide students with feedback on their work, the more it improves their learning. This is especially true if the activity students are performing is complex. Many teachers use rubrics as feedback. Rubrics define clearly to students what they have to accomplish and how they will be evaluated. A rubric is generally criterion referenced, or based on specific tasks students must perform or knowledge they must master.

**Homework** is another way to provide guided practice for students. A well-designed homework assignment reinforces the concepts or skills taught in school, helps keep parents informed about what their children are learning, and establishes good study habits.

**Assessment**, or how you evaluate your students' performance, is the last component of a well-planned lesson—although many teachers begin with the assessment and then plan backwards. Ideally, you are informally assessing your students and providing feedback throughout the cycle of the lesson. Assessment should be clearly tied to the students' learning objectives. There are many different ways to assess students' performance: tests, written assignments, writing samples, reports, student self-assessment and portfolios. Let students know in advance how you will be evaluating them and encourage them to self-monitor their progress.

## **GROUPING**

Grouping is a way of managing the instructional environment so that students will learn more. There are many different ways to group students and each serves a different purpose. How you group your students should be based on your learning objectives. In a typical classroom, students are grouped and regrouped several times during the day in what is called flexible grouping. In addition to facilitating learning objectives, grouping can contribute to a positive learning environment, as students collaborate together.

**Whole-class instruction**, or teacher-led instruction, can be used for introducing a new concept or skill to an entire class. You can also use whole-class instruction if students are presenting a report, for general information, for unit overviews, or to provide a shared experience as a foundation for later learning. Whole-group instruction builds a sense of community in your classroom, since students are all sharing the same experience. Whole-class instruction can be followed by small-group work.

**Teacher-led small groups** can be used to work with a particular group of students for a specific purpose. For instance, a few students may need extra help in a specific area, such as guided reading. How you group your students depends on your learning objectives. Many teachers group students of the same ability together for guided reading, while they mix students of different abilities for other small group work. You can also use teacher-led small groups for enrichment purposes, with children who share the same interests, or for students who need to learn the same skills, content or strategies.

**Cooperative learning groups** are another type of grouping. Typically, this is a group of four to five heterogeneously mixed students working together to accomplish specific learning objectives. Research shows that there are many benefits to cooperative grouping. Cooperative grouping builds collaborative relationships between students and helps them develop communication skills. Another important aspect to cooperative grouping is student accountability to the group, as well as to the learning task. In cooperative grouping, students learn from each other, and also learn to evaluate how they've performed in a group. Cooperative grouping also promotes teamwork, problem-solving and joint decision-making.

You can also group students in **pairs**. Some tasks students can perform in pairs are: peer editing, playing a skills-based game, reading to each other, tutoring each other, or performing a task that requires only two people.

There should be time in your lesson for students to work **individually**. Often students need to process information alone. This also gives you the opportunity to check on individual students and to give one-on-one instruction.

## **EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES**

Good teaching engages students and motivates them to learn. When you vary your teaching strategies, you provide learning opportunities for students with different learning styles.

**Problem-based learning** enlists students to use critical thinking skills, fosters group communication and decision-making skills, and provides opportunities for all students to participate in a meaningful way, regardless of their ability. The goal in problem-based learning is for a group of students to solve a real-world problem. In doing so, they develop problem-solving skills, use their creativity, analyze new information, generate hypotheses, test different solutions, and choose the best solution to the problem.

Effective **questioning** is another strategy to engage students and improve learning. Since research shows that 35-80% of instructional time is spent on teacher questioning, it is important to learn to pose questions so that students both retain knowledge and increase their higher level thinking skills. Questions can be used through the course of the lesson in different ways and for different purposes. **In the beginning of a lesson**, questions are a good way to elicit prior knowledge, to get students focused, and to prepare students for the learning task. Students can also generate questions about what they would like to learn. When students generate pre-instruction questions and set objectives for the lesson, they become more vested in the learning experience. Try to use Bloom's taxonomy to generate questions that will elicit a range of thinking skills: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. **During instruction**, effec-

tive questions inspire students to think analytically, to analyze information and to identify patterns. After the lesson, your questions can help students synthesize, summarize, draw conclusions and reflect on what they've learned. Good questions help students learn to think.

In addition to planning effective lessons, try to evaluate how you use questions, what your **wait time** is, and how you respond to students' answers. Research shows that teachers wait an average of 1 second before they answer the question themselves. Try to wait 10-15 seconds before redirecting a question. Increased wait time gives students more time to think, increases participation from shy students or English language learners, discourages students from interrupting each other and improves the learning environment in general. If a student doesn't answer a question correctly, ask the question in a different way or redirect the question to another student.

Here are some questions to ask yourself as you plan your lessons and use different groupings and strategies to increase student learning:

- Do my lessons follow a format, and have a beginning, middle and end?
- For the most part, do my lessons include:
  - an advance organizer
  - modeling, role playing and teaching
  - guided practice
  - feedback
  - homework
  - assessment?
- Does how I group students match my instructional goals?
- Do I use varied strategies, such as problem-based learning and questioning?



## **SESSION II:** Instruction For All Students Discussion/Activity

Divide into several groups, and pick one of the following activities. Ideally, each group will perform a different activity, or you may want to combine the activities. Share your results with the whole group when you are done.

### **I. Structuring a lesson**

Using the learning objective your group wrote during the last session (or one your group comes up with now), write a complete lesson plan based on the model shown in the videotape/DVD. Include all components if you can:

- using an advance organizer
- modeling, role playing and teaching
- guided practice
- feedback
- homework
- assessment

### **II. Grouping**

Using the learning objective your group wrote during the last session (or one your group comes up with now), decide as a group what type of grouping(s) you will use. You may use several different types of grouping for different stages of the lesson. Explain why you have chosen that type of grouping, and what you expect students to do.

- Whole-class instruction
- Teacher-led small groups
- Cooperative learning groups
- Pairs
- Students working individually

### **III. Problem-based learning**

Write a lesson using problem-based learning. Decide how you will assign students to their groups, what resources you will need to make available to them, what outcomes you expect from them at the end of the assignment, how you will evaluate the students, and how long it might take students to complete the task.

### **IV. Effective questioning**

Using the learning objective your group wrote during the last session (or one your group comes up with now), write questions for the beginning, middle and end of a lesson. Try to use Bloom's taxonomy of learning in your questioning to foster higher-level thinking skills.

## **TEST FOR SESSION II: INSTRUCTION FOR ALL STUDENTS**

1. Identify a few components of an effective lesson.
2. List several types of advance organizers.
3. Briefly explain when it would be appropriate to use each type of student grouping.
4. Why is problem-based learning an effective strategy to use with students?
5. What are some guidelines for using questions effectively?

# STANDARDS CORRELATIONS

Objectives for Session II: Instruction for all Students	INTASC STANDARDS	ACEI/NCATE STANDARDS	NBPTS STANDARDS
<p><b>Structure a well-planned lesson</b></p>	<p><b>Principle 1-Making content meaningful</b>-The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he/she teaches and can create learning experiences that make aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.</p> <p><b>Principle 8-Assessment</b>-The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner.</p>	<p><b>Standard 2-Central concepts, tools of inquiry and structures of content</b>-Candidates know the central concepts, tools of inquiry and structures of content across the grades and can create meaningful learning experiences that develop students' competence in subject matter and skills for various developmental levels.</p> <p><b>Standard 4-Assessment for instruction</b>-Candidates know, understand and use formal and informal assessment strategies to plan, evaluate and strengthen instruction that will promote continuous intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of each student.</p>	<p><b>Standard 1-Knowledge Standard 7-Multiple paths to knowledge</b>-Accomplished teachers provide students with multiple paths needed to learn the central concepts in each school subject, explore important themes and topics that cut across subject areas and build overall knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><b>Standard 8-Assessment</b>-Accomplished teachers understand the strengths and weaknesses of different assessment methods, base their instruction on ongoing assessment, and encourage students to monitor their own learning.</p>
<p><b>Group students based on learning goals</b></p>	<p><b>Principle 3-Learning styles/diversity</b>-The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.</p>	<p>(Standard 2 above)</p>	<p>(Standard 7 above)</p>
<p><b>Use effective strategies to increase student achievement</b></p>	<p><b>Principle 4-Instructional strategies/problem solving</b>-The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage student's development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.</p>	<p><b>Standard 3.3- Development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills</b>-Candidates understand and use a variety of teaching strategies that encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills</p>	<p>(Standard 7 above)</p>

# **ANSWER KEY FOR TEST FOR SESSION II: INSTRUCTION FOR ALL STUDENTS**

(Answers will vary)

## **1. Identify a few components of an effective lesson.**

- Using advance organizers (to focus student's attention and to incorporate previous knowledge)
- Model, demonstrate and teach the concept or skill (demonstrates to students what they are to learn)
- Guided practice (reinforces concepts, themes or skill)
- Feedback (informs students about their performance)
- Homework (provides guided practice, keeps parents in the loop, good for study habits)
- Assessment (evaluates student performance)

## **2. List several types of advance organizers.**

- Webs, data charts, Venn diagrams, summaries, pictures or graphic representations.

## **3. Briefly explain when it would be appropriate to use each type of student grouping.**

- Whole-class instruction is useful when you want to introduce a new concept or skill to the entire class.
- Teacher-led small groups can be used to work with a particular group of students for a specific purpose, such as guided reading or enrichment purposes.
- Cooperative learning groups are useful for problem-solving activities, when a task involves 4-5 people, and to promote teamwork, problem-solving and decision-making.
- Pairs are useful for peer editing, playing a game, reading to each other or tutoring each other.
- Students working alone—this is when students can process information individually.

## **4. Why is problem-based learning an effective strategy to use with students?**

Problem-based learning promotes critical thinking skills and creativity, fosters group communication and decision-making skills, and provides opportunities for all students to participate in a meaningful way.

## **5. What are some guidelines for using questions effectively at different stages of a lesson? How long is it appropriate to wait for students to answer questions?**

- Use questioning in the beginning of the lesson to elicit prior knowledge and to get students focused for the learning task; in the middle of the lesson use questions to help students think analytically, to analyze information and to identify patterns; at the end of the lesson use questions to help students synthesize, summarize, draw conclusions and reflect on what they've learned.
- Extend your wait time to 10-15 seconds after you ask a question. If a student doesn't answer correctly, rephrase the question in a different way or redirect your question to another student.

## RESOURCES

American Federation of Teachers  
<http://aft.org/>

Association for Childhood Education International  
<http://www.acei.org/>

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
<http://www.ascd.org/>

ERIC (Education Resource Information Center)  
<http://www.eric.ed.gov/>

International Reading Association  
<http://www.reading.org/>

Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium  
<http://www.ccsso.org/>

National Association for the Education of Young Children  
<http://www.naeyc.org>

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards  
<http://www.nbpts.org/>

National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing  
<http://www.cresst.org/>

National Central Regional Educational Laboratory  
<http://ncrel.org/>

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education  
<http://www.ncpie.org/>

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education  
<http://www.ncate.org/>

National Education Association  
<http://www.nea.org/>

National Parent Teacher Organization  
<http://www.pta.org/>

Teachers.Net  
<http://www.teachers.net/>

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