

Strategies and Techniques for Best Practices and High Achievement

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Strategies from Cognitive Science Neo-Cortex (Logic/Reasoning and Intellectual) Area of Brain	Strategies from Social Context Mammalian/Limbic (Emotional and Nurturing) Area of Brain	Strategies from Behavioral Area Mammalian/Limbic and Reptilian (basic needs and survival) Area
<p>Teacher knows his/her Teaching Style and can adapt to others</p> <p>Teacher knows Student Expectations (SE) in TEKS and can transfer to students so they know objective</p> <p>Identify Prior Knowledge (at-risk students often lack much background , which means we must bring to the lesson)</p> <p>Goal-setting activities (short-/long-term)</p> <p>Discovery – looking and finding <i>AND/OR</i></p> <p>Inquiry – step-by-step formal method that includes in-depth research (discovery vs. inquiry depends on specific lesson and child’s maturity level – goal is to eventually do Inquiry-based lessons in all grade levels and content areas)</p> <p>Concept Attainment – Introduction taught, engaging students by their Learning Styles</p> <p>Concept Formation – Overarching Theme and concepts that fit under it</p> <p>Socratic Method 500 BC, which we call Accountable Talk™ (POL)</p> <p>Rigor in a Thinking Curriculum (POL) (high expectations with constant scaffolding)</p> <p>Synthesis across content areas Relevant to student’s life</p> <p>Teacher aware of learning difficulties and refers students to SST</p> <p>Close lesson properly and Assess</p>	<p>Cooperative Learning</p> <p>Think-Pair-Share</p> <p>Peer Teaching</p> <p>One-on-One</p> <p>Adventure and Learning Games, such as Spelling, Geography, Vocabulary, Multiplication “Bees”</p> <p>Socializing (POL)</p> <p>Learning Community (Faculty/Staff LC; Student LC) (POL)</p> <p>Self-assessment and reflection that fosters competing only against the self (I can do better today than I did yesterday) and helps student gain social interdependence while building academic (learning) independence</p> <p>Jurisprudence issues – what is fair</p> <p>Character building discussions and activities</p> <p>An environment of stress creates what I call the Stress Factor CeilingSM (amygdala creates affective filter of blockage) that keeps a student (or faculty/staff member) stuck here and prevents us from accessing the Neo-Cortex and building the axon pathways, dendrite connections, and myelin sheathing rings necessary for us to become academically successful. Dopamine , necessary for frontal lobe learning, is released most effectively when students feel safe and successful and are joyful</p>	<p>Safe environment</p> <p>Open communication</p> <p>Respect for Diversity and Acceptance of ALL students</p> <p>Self-Motivation</p> <p>Self-Management (POL)</p> <p>Clear Expectations for Individual success that student is capable of achieving</p> <p>Hands-On Activities that help open the gateways to Limbic part of brain and on to Neo-Cortex, where student can ARTICULATE activity</p> <p>Positive role-models that show adults have learned to ease conflicts in their own Limbic and Reptilian Brains and can bridge differences of opinion in a positive manner</p> <p>Teacher raises his/her awareness of which students may be stuck at these two brain areas because of trauma from violent, conflict-filled, and possibly abusive situations outside AND INSIDE (bullying) the classroom – neither teachers nor students should ever BULLY anyone! – Refer to Counselors any students that appear to be carrying the silent scars of trauma</p>

Difference between Strategy and Technique: We can use a strategy without any other resource, such as a guided lesson/instruction sheet, technological tool. Without any “things” we can provide instruction. Some strategies have been around for thousands of years.

Typically, techniques rely on “things” we use. We may change our techniques over time, but if the “way” we do something disappears, we still have strategies for getting the point across. In other words, strategies help us understand “what” we should do and techniques are “how” we can do it at this time and with the resources we have.

Techniques

Graphic Organizers aka Mind Maps aka Concept Maps; Thinking Maps are a little different, go to <http://www.thinkingmaps.com>

Student creates PowerPoint (PPT) and uses it to teach peers

Games, desktop such as bingo for content area (bingo is both cognitive and extremely social in nature because it appeals to child’s emotions – everyone has chance to win) or computer generated or CDs for Sony Playstations, etc.

Computers

Interactive technology, often used with Computer and LCD projector: SmartBoards, SchoolPads, 3-D Visual presenters

Teacher Self-Evaluation

Just as with our students, our goal is to do better today than yesterday.

Do my students feel safe and wanted in my classroom? Do I keep my lack of control to a MINIMUM? (we’re all works in progress and this is an ongoing goal for some of us, including me.

Are my lessons interesting and do they contain surprise, variations, novelty, and attractiveness for ALL students?

Do I know my students learning styles and can I effectively group students by style and provide the best instruction for that style?

Am I excited about learning and model this excitement for my kids? Or, is this just a job to me and I can’t wait to leave?

Am I using data to differentiate learning by the SE and TEKS?

Do I ask for help when I need it? Have I investigated staff development opportunities that could truly help me become more effective? Have I approached the principal with this idea AND with a bulleted talking points sheet to show Return on Investment (ROI)?

Am I planning effectively with my teams (horizontal and vertical)?

Am I leaving my problems and anxieties at the front door of the school and focusing on instruction during the day?

Even if I feel unsure of myself or intimidated, am I “rerouting” my brain so that, no matter how much stress there is, I can consciously keep information flowing so it penetrates the Stress Factor CeilingSM and moves to my Neo-Cortex, where my academic learning is?