

START: Characteristics of Effective Instruction



- Student Centered
- Teaching for Understanding
- Assessment for Learning
- Rigor and Relevance
- Teaching for Learner Differences

RAFT: Role, Audience, Format, & Topic

Why: Deepens and expresses learning

When: Closure activity, summative assessment piece

Planning: Determine *topic* criteria and prepare one or more examples of *role*, *audience*, *format*, and *topic*

Moves:

- Negotiate *topic* ideas based on criteria, record on board or chart
- Explain and model selection of *role*, *audience*, and *format*, being sure to point out the need for the format to suit the audience
- Class brainstorms ideas for *role*, *audience*, and *format* and record on the board or chart
- Small groups discuss as each individual or group makes its selection(s)
- Research
- Draft and revise, formative assessment
- Edit
- Publish



Written Conversation

Why: Motivates, engages all students with ideas, consolidates learning

When: Replaces or precedes whole class discussion

Planning: Select engaging or dense text or subject matter and write one or more prompt(s) that allows higher order thinking, deepening of learning, various points of view

Moves:

- Make sure students have paper and pencils
- After engaging with text or subject matter, provide students with prompt
- Students write for 1-3 minutes
- Students exchange papers and read
- Students write responses to partners
- Students may re-engage with text before next prompt
- After several exchanges, this can be moved to class discussion



Variations:

- Do at the end of class, students will respond to their partners as homework
- Do as on-going Written Conversation with teacher as partner
- Do as collaborative group around piece of writing on poster paper

Exit Slips



Why: Consolidates thinking

When: End of a class period

Planning: Decide what to assess (i.e. comprehension, collaboration, skills, meta-cognition) and write one or more prompt(s) to elicit specific information or higher-order thinking

Moves:

- Have small cards available
- During the last 3-5 minutes of class:
 - Pose the prompt(s)
 - Students write
- Collect cards as students exit the room
- Review prior to next day's class period
- At the beginning of the next day, address misconceptions, items of interest, humor

Writing Breaks

Why: Enhances retention (70-90% range); expresses and deepens learning

When: During presentation, reading, or discussion

Planning:

- Decide when to insert Writing Breaks
 - During lecture or large group discussion, every 10-12 minutes
 - During film, every 15-20 minutes
 - During in-class reading, find frequent natural breaks, every 10-20 minutes
 - After studying diagram, graph, or chart
- Write prompts that are engaging and elicit specific or higher-order thinking

Moves:

- Organize students into pairs prior to lesson
- Pause at the pre-planned spots and give prompts
- Students write for brief period
- Students trade papers with their partners and read silently
- Cruise the room to read over shoulders; use formatively
- Follow with brief partner talk
- Conclude with brief large group sharing
- Before moving on, address any misinformation or confusion



The Most Important Thing

Why: Asks students to synthesize information and identify main ideas, serves as an effective summarizing tool. Demonstrates understanding.

When: After new content is shared

Planning: When introducing this strategy, read portions of The Important Book by Margaret Wise Brown.

Moves:

- Model an example and complete template together before assigning as partner or individual work
- Share new content
- Provide students with “The Most Important Thing” template
- Ask them to revisit content and identify main ideas
- Students complete template
- Writing may be shared aloud or just with the teacher
- The completed template can be the beginnings of a formal/published piece of writing



Bio Poems, “I Am…” Poems, and Diamante Poems

Why: Allows writers to synthesize what they have learned about a person, place, thing, concept, or event in a poetic format; demonstrates understanding

When: After content is shared

Planning: Decide on content to reinforce

Moves:



- Model an example and complete a poem together before assigning to groups, partners, or individuals
- Decide on content about which students need to think more deeply
- Provide template to students
- Students write poem, using the provided template as a guide
- Writing may be shared aloud or just with the teacher
- The completed poems can be the beginnings of a formal/published piece of writing

Admit Slips

Why: Consolidates thinking, provides discussion prompts

When: Assigned as homework or may begin class period

Planning: Decide what to assess or what thinking to deepen and write prompt to elicit specific information or higher-order thinking

Moves:

- Pose or hand out the prompt at the end of class as homework
- Collect as students enter class the next day
- Read through quickly for themes, interesting points of view, common misunderstandings or concerns
- Share several for clarification or discussion



Drawing and Illustrating

Why: To help students better understand and remember complex ideas

When: Before, during, or after a lesson

Planning:

- Decide purpose of strategy (examples: review previous content, note taking, consolidate learning, check for understanding)
- Decide at what point in lesson strategy will be used

Moves:



- Model what drawing and illustrating might look like; explain that it can include words
- Preface the activity with the insignificance of artistic ability
- Students may work as a class, in small groups, or individually, depending on purpose
- Cruise the room while students draw and address any misconceptions
- Students explain drawings to a partner, group, or the whole class
- Illustrations may be kept and used as a study aide

Writing Frames

Why: Supports differentiation in writing; provides students with the amount of scaffolding they need to complete pieces of writing

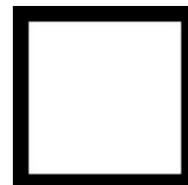
When: When students are writing very little or need help organizing their thoughts

Planning:

- Select text and/or subject matter.
- Decide to what degree students need support.
- Create writing frames to provide scaffolding at a variety of levels

Moves:

- Assign text
- Hand out writing frames to students (students get the writing frame that best meets their needs)
- Students complete writing frame after reading
- Writing is shared with teacher
- Amount of teacher writing is reduced as student writing improves



Double Entry Journal



Why: Enhances retention, expresses learning

When: Any time students need to organize ideas, deepen understanding, show thinking, compare

Planning: Select text or subject matter and decide on headings to elicit specific information or thinking processes

Moves:

- Students fold paper hotdog style to form two columns
- Students write headings (examples):
 - Computation Explanation
 - Opinion Proof
 - Quote from text Connection
 - Notes Interpretation
 - Observation Inference
- Model first part of the note-taking
- Tell students ultimate assignment for notes (discussion, writing, homework)
- Assign in-class text (may all be the same, or may be different)
- Cruise the room to support students; may even pull small groups
- Students share their notes with partner or small group; compare, and return to the text for clarification
- Follow with small group or whole class discussion or assignment

Line of Learning

Why: To monitor students' thinking and changing ideas throughout a unit of study

When: At strategic times throughout a unit

Planning: Decide on learning goals for unit to be monitored

Moves:

Line of Learning Steps:

- Students write their thinking about a key concept or topic
- Draw a line below what they wrote and record the date
- Return to their thinking at strategic times throughout the unit



Revisiting the Line of Learning:

- Learners reread previous response(s)
- Consider how their ideas are changing by citing specific evidence regarding how the learning experiences have (a) reinforced something they thought of before, or (b) changed something they thought before, or (c) caused them to think something they have never thought before
- Update line of learning citing evidence gained from the learning activities

P-M-I (Pluses, Minuses, and Interesting)

Why: A summarization tool that allows students to carefully analyze content

When: During/after instruction

Planning: Choose a content-related statement for students to analyze



Moves:

- Provide students with a P-M-I chart or have them set one up
- Give students a content-related statement to consider
- Independently complete chart
- Share responses with a partner or small group
- Add/revise ideas based on others' thinking if needed

Technology Tools for Collaborative Writing

Why: Motivates, engages all students with rich ideas, enhances retention, consolidates learning

When: When students need to consolidate ideas or information they have gathered

Planning: Set up an online tool for students to contribute their work

Moves:

- Students have gathered information
- Model use of the tool
- Guided practice
- As students work, cruise the room to support and coach

Possible Tools:

- Etherpad-- <http://www.etherpad.com>
- Blogger-- <https://www.blogger.com/start?pli=1>
- Poll Everywhere -- <http://www.polleverywhere.com>
- Google Docs -- <http://docs.google.com>
- Wikispaces-- <https://www.wikispaces.com/>
- Acrobat.ComLabs-- <https://labs1.acrobat.com/#1>
- Webspiration-- <http://mywebspiration.com/>
- National Writing Project: Digital Toolbox-- <http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/2795>

