

Module 6: Reinforcement
Six Highly-Effective Teaching Strategies
Handout

This handout accompanies the module 6 video. You can use this handout to review information on the video and record your answers to discussion. Follow along as prompted during the video.

Section 1: Growth & Discussion

Discussion 1

What is something you're good at?

How did you become good at it?

Discuss this question with a partner, and then share with your entire faculty as you have time.

Discussion 2

If you were to learn the bible verse Ephesians 1: 11-12, what would it take to repeat that verse from memory again . . .

- a) in the next 10 minutes?
- b) tomorrow?
- c) next week?
- d) next year?

Discussion 3

Given that practice makes people more proficient and smarter and prevents forgetting, are some types of reinforcement activities more valuable than others?

- a. Make a t-chart.
- b. Work in groups of two or three to brainstorm a list of beneficial reinforcement activities and record them on the left side.
- c. Then brainstorm a list of classroom reinforcement activities that may be less beneficial.

Share your lists with the entire faculty and discuss areas where you may disagree.

Discussion 4

Work with a partner to create an appropriate assignment. Use the type of learning (fact, skill, concept), the homework purpose (preview, practice, check, or deepen), and the skill or content to determine the assignment.

Relationship Between Classroom Learning and Assignments			
Learning Type	Homework Purpose	Skill or Content	Assignment
Facts and Concepts	Preview Learning	Main ideas of chapter	
Facts and Concepts	Preview Learning	Vocabulary words and definitions	
Skill	Checking for Understanding	Reading Comprehension	
Skill	Checking for Understanding	Division of fractions	
Skill	Practice	Division of fractions	
Facts	Practice	Multiplication tables	
Concepts	Deepen Understanding	Chapter 5 – The Colonial Period	
Concepts	Deepen Understanding	Boston Tea Party	

Adapted from (Vatterott, 2009)

Discussion 5

In *Rethinking Homework*, Vatterott suggest a variety of ways that teachers can provide homework support. Look at this list, and a) note any that you might already be doing, b) note some that you might like to try, and c) share support strategies not included on this list.

1. Teach organizational skills.
2. Schedule specific times to check assignment books, organize folders, and clean out lockers/desks.
3. Use visual chart (without names) of completed homework.
4. Write assignments on the board and make sure all students write them down.
5. Limit homework to one assignment or subject / night.
6. Give students time to begin assignments in class so you can check to make sure everyone knows what to do.
7. Avoid giving assignments at the very end of the class.
8. Set a maximum time that students should work on an assignment.
9. Use peer tutors or study groups.
10. Have homework buddies who they can call about homework.
11. Provide homework packets of weekly or monthly homework tasks.
12. Establish intermittent due dates for parts of long-term assignments.
13. Make sure everyone has the necessary materials at home for homework.

Section 2: Planning and Implementation

You will teach a lesson in which you plan and use effective reinforcement. The reinforcement activity may be during the lesson, an assignment, or homework.

Note in your instructional plan the *purpose* of the reinforcement and how you are following *effective principles*.

Purposes: 1) Preview a lesson, 2) Reinforce a skill or concept, 3) Check for Understanding, 4) Deepen or extend understanding

Effective principles: 1) match to the learning target or objectives, 2) properly scaffold the activity, 4) provide meaningful feedback.

The reinforcement activity must include some observable data or artifact of learning. This may be an assignment or it may be a video-taped classroom activity. The data or artifact should help you reflect on the effectiveness, based upon student learning, of your reinforcement activity. Bring your student learning product to your next meeting and share with your colleagues.

1. Select an upcoming lesson you will teach.
2. Decide whether you will use an in-class reinforcement, an assignment, or homework activity.
3. Determine the purpose of the reinforcement activity.
4. Plan to follow the effective reinforcement principles.
5. Collect the observable data or artifact.

Use the following as your lesson preparation guide:

Lesson or Unit Topic: _____

Reinforcement Activity Purpose (circle one):

Preview Reinforce or practice Check for Understanding Deepen Understanding

Describe the reinforcement activity: _____

Explain how your reinforcement activity follows these effective principles:

Matches the learning target or objectives: _____

Provides proper scaffolding: _____

Provides meaningful feedback: _____

Section 3: Reflection and Revision

After you have taught your lesson(s) or unit using effective reinforcement, meet together and discuss how things went. Remember to bring some student work samples from that lesson that you can show your colleagues.

Use these questions as reflection prompts:

- How did your reinforcement foster student learning?
- What did the student data (video, work samples) demonstrate about their learning?

Section 4: Optional Extensions

Books

Vatterott, C. (2009) *Rethinking homework: Best practices that support diverse needs*. Alexandria VA. ASCD. <http://www.ascd.org/Publications/Books/Overview/Rethinking-Homework.aspx>

Articles

Willingham, D. (2004) Practice makes perfect—but only if you practice beyond the point of perfection. *American Educator*. Spring Issue. <http://www.aft.org/periodical/american-educator/spring-2004/ask-cognitive-scientist>

Gartner, N. (2017) Are common beliefs about homework wrong? *Issues in Lutheran Education*. February 28. <http://blogs.mlc-wels.edu/wels-educator/2017/02/28/are-common-beliefs-about-homework-wrong/>

Berger, B. (2014) Elementary students do not require homework. *Issues in Lutheran Education*. January 15. <http://blogs.mlc-wels.edu/wels-educator/2014/01/15/elementary-school-students-do-not-require-homework/>

Kock, D. (2013) Homework: Purpose, value, and teacher’s role. *Issues in Lutheran Education*. November 15. <http://blogs.mlc-wels.edu/wels-educator/2013/11/15/homework-purpose-value-and-the-teachers-role/>

Marzano, R. & Pickering D. (2007) Special topic: The case for and against homework. *Educational Leadership*. 64 (6). pp. 74-79. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar07/vol64/num06/The-Case-For-and-Against-Homework.aspx>

Videos

Efficient and Meaningful Homework Review: <https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/making-homework-meaningful>

Elements of Grading Part 2: Homework as Practice: <https://youtu.be/FSTJ7vRlnBw>

Providing Practice: https://youtu.be/T_KZaPUcdiA