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To Flip or Not Flip? That is the Question.

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Overview:

In the field of education, we have many “buzz” words. One that we hear quite frequently in education is “Flipped Classrooms.” According to Berrett (2012), “flipping the classroom” means that students gain first exposure to new material outside of class, usually via reading or lecture videos, and then use class time to do the harder work of assimilating that knowledge, perhaps through problem-solving, discussion, or debates.

How Does Flipping Work?

Students are completing the lower levels of **cognitive** work (gaining knowledge and comprehension) outside of class and focusing on the higher forms of cognitive work (application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation) in class, where they have the support of their peers and instructor. Flipping contrasts from the traditional classroom model in which “first exposure” occurs via lecture in class, with students assimilating knowledge through homework; thus the term “flipped classroom.” In other words, students bring prior knowledge IMMEDIATELY to the topic and discussions.



When is Using a Flipped Classroom Appropriate?

Almost any content area can use a flipped classroom.

- There are no rules as to when you can flip instruction, but here are some ideal instructional situations where it can be most effective:
- Learning Modules in which prior readings will be required.
- Learning Modules in which students will collaborate with other class members in pairs, groups, or online discussions.
- Classrooms in which the instruction is blended or hybrid. Flipping gives more instructional time with the faculty member.

- Instruction that requires in-class activities that are active and hands-on such as clinical, role play, workshops, or labs.

Examples of Flipped Activities

Traditional Flipped- Students are assigned the “homework” of watching a video lecture(s) and reading any materials relevant to the next day’s class. During class time, students practice what they have learned through traditional schoolwork, with their teachers freed up for additional one-on-one time.

Discussion Flipped- Teachers assign lecture videos, as well as any other video or reading related to the day’s subject — think TED Talks, YouTube videos, and other resources. Class time is then devoted to discussion and exploration of the subject. This can be an especially useful approach in subjects where context is everything — think history, art, or English.

Demo Flipped- for those subjects that require students to remember and repeat activities exactly — think science and math class — it is most helpful to have a video demonstration to be able to rewind and re-watch. In this model, the teacher uses screen recording software to demonstrate the activity in a way that allows students to follow along at their own pace.

Group-Based Flipped- The class starts the same way others do, with lecture videos and other resources shared before class. The shift happens when students come to class, teaming up to work together on that day’s assignment. This format encourages students to learn from one another and helps students to not only learn what the right answers are but also how to explain to a peer why those answers are right.

Virtual Flipped Classes- *(this works great for Hybrid/Blended or Online courses)* For older students, and in some courses, the flipped classroom can eliminate the need for classroom time at all. Some schools now share lecture video for student viewing, assign and collect work via online learning management systems, and simply require students to attend office hours or other regularly scheduled time for brief one-on-one instruction based on that individual student’s needs.

Flip the Teacher- NO it isn’t painful... All the videos created for a flipped classroom doesn’t have to begin and end with the teacher. Students too can make use of video to better demonstrate proficiency. Assign students to groups to their practice role-play activities to show competency or ask each to video themselves presenting a new subject or skill as a means to “teach the teacher.”

If you are interested in flipping some of the content in your courses, there are many resources available to assist you with ideas, instructional methodology, and activities. *To Flip or Not to Flip? That is the Question.*

Happy Flipping!

Berrett, D. (2012). How flipping the classroom can improve the traditional lecture. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 12 February 2012. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/How-Flipping-the-Classroom/130857>

Bergmann, J. & Sams, A. Flip your classroom: Reach every student in every class every day. *Eugene: International Society for Technology in Education*, 2012. Print.