



LEARN

Instructional Model

LINK: making connections to prior knowledge

ENGAGE: teacher presents a large group lesson

Activate: active learning, guided practice, group/individual work

REFLECT: processing and assessment

NEXT STEPS: where do we go next? Foreshadowing...

LINK: Making Connections to Prior Knowledge

- **Time Frame:** Approximately **10 minutes** in blocked class or **5 minutes** in a non-blocked class.
- **Purpose:** to “hook” your students or get them interested/excited about a topic
- **Format:** Largely Teacher-Driven, but allows for independent practice. (Clarify if the LINKAGE activity is opening a new lesson or serves to informally assess the previous lesson.)
- **Sample Activities:**
 - **News article or short video clip** – relate the topic to current events or give students a visual introduction
 - **Song or poem** – used to highlight a time period or concept or cultural issue
 - **Painting, Photograph, or Map** – use a visual as a discussion starter
 - **Primary Document** – letters or diary entries can introduce people and time periods
 - **Anticipatory Set** - give students some information about a topic and have them predict what happens next or what you will be studying in class
 - **Attitudes Survey** – works well for controversial issues; allows students to reflect on their own points of view
 - **Admit Slips/Warm-Up Activities** – these typically assess knowledge & can be used in a variety of ways:
 - Open-ended writing: Students can reflect on what they learned in a previous class
 - 1-3 short answer questions to check for understanding/emphasize key information
 - 3-2-1 questions
 - **Journal writings or Logs** – encourage students to write what they remember from a previous lesson or reflect on a new topic
 - **K-W-L** – another quick assessment of prior knowledge; can be done individually, in pairs, or as a whole class
 - **Political Cartoon** – assessment of both skills and knowledge
 - **Essential Terms &/or Questions** – can be used to start a discussion or for students to write about – what do they know?
 - **Fact or Fiction** – give students a list of facts and myths about a topic to help them differentiate popular beliefs from essential facts
 - **Making Connections** – using a Q&A approach, invite students to share connections they have made between what they have learned in class to what they have experienced in life

ENGAGE and Explain

- **Time Frame:** Approximately **20-30 minutes** in a blocked class or **10-15 minutes** in a non-blocked class.*
- **Purpose:** to build student knowledge
- **Format:** Largely Teacher-Centered (e.g. Teacher presents a large group lesson, explains essential questions based upon state/course/state objectives and student assessment information.)
 - Essentially didactic.
 - Teacher frames learning objectives, delivers instructions, introduces or reviews content.
- **Instructional strategies include:**
 - lecture,
 - dip-sticking,
 - explaining,
 - using exemplars,
 - transparencies, PowerPoint, or white board notes,
 - use of primary sources, video clips, short readings, visuals, and/or a guest speaker.
- Students “sponge” via note-taking, listening, questioning, discussing and Q & A with teacher.

ACTIVATE/ Active Learning

- **Time Frame:** Approximately **20-30 minutes** in blocked class or **10-15 minutes** in a non-blocked class.*
- **Purpose:** to focus on students’ application of knowledge and skills. Students work to know, understand, analyze and apply.
- **Format:** more student-centered than teacher-centered. Students work individually, in pairs, teams, or small groups, while teacher is facilitator focusing on the process and progress of student understanding and “doing.”
- **Sample Activities:** must have a purpose and be authentic; not limited to copying or filling in worksheets. Teacher, however, provides a variety of resources to meet the learning needs of all students (differentiates instruction). Activities need not be limited to the classroom. Teachers can make use of computer labs and media centers.

REFLECT

- **Time Frame:** Approximately **10-15 minutes** in blocked class and **5-10 minutes** in a non-blocked class (note: summative assessments will extend this as much as a full class period).*
- **Purpose:** Teacher provides **opportunities, orally or written, for each student to process** what he or she has learned based on desired outcomes and lesson objectives.
- **Format:** Teacher initiated (typically), but largely student-centered. Students reflect, synthesize and evaluate. This is the time to consider the “so-what?” questions associated with the topic.
- **Sample Activities/Strategies:** Students demonstrate mastery of knowledge via
 - pencil and paper quizzes,
 - free responses,
 - journal entries,
 - projects,
 - Foldables™,
 - graphic organizers,
 - simulations,
 - role-plays,
 - student reports and presentations.

Next Steps

- **Time Frame:** Approximately **5-10 minutes** in blocked class and approximately **5 minutes** in a non-blocked class.*
- **Purpose:** Teacher concludes the class/lesson by making connections to student’s prior and/or future learning.
- **Format:** Essentially didactic/teacher directed with some student responses to questions; in advanced classes this could be a rotating responsibility for one or two students.
- **Examples:** Teacher summarizes progress made, essential understandings gained, and previews the next class:
 - “Today we began by looking at...”
 - “ Amy and Omar shared their experiences similar to that of the famous person we studied...”
 - “During the class you read letters, saw a movie clip of our hero receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor...”

- “Next class we are going to learn about how this national hero...failed to accomplish... “
 - “. . . and the resulting consequences for the Republicans...”
 - “To better prepare for our consideration ofplease make sure you read the articles I have distributed and think about how you might write an editorial supporting or criticizing this individual.”
 - “Ask members of you family who remember this person to share their thoughts and memories with you. Bonus points for the student with the most intriguing personal connection to (national or historic figure).”
- **Teachers should ask students for what they think should be studied next or in conjunction with the unit.****

*Times are recommendations. In reality they will vary each day and with changes in focus and objectives. The point is that in a 45, 50, 60, or 90 minute class, over time, instructional planning should include the five elements of the LEARN instructional model. No one element should predominate. They are all key parts of the instructional symphony.