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RESEARCH FINDINGS: Effective teachers use a number of techniques to present a lesson that can enhance pupil achievement. These teaching practices encompass five critical skills: eliciting frequent responses, maintaining an appropriate pace during the lesson, maintaining attention, monitoring student responses and adjusting the lesson, and ensuring all students an equal chance to learn. **ELICITING FREQUENT**

RESPONSES: A strong positive correlation has been found between student achievement and the amount of time spent in question-answering interactions.

Students, continually asked to respond, tend to be more attentive during instruction. The teacher, continually receiving feedback, is able to adjust the lesson to provide better

instruction.

Responses may be verbal or written. Students may respond in unison or individually. Unison responses are best used when the response is short and all students are likely to use the same wording. For example, the teacher may ask "What word?" "Count by 7's". Individual responses are best requested when the desired answer is long or the question would probably generate different wording from different students. For example, a "Why?" question is best answered by an individual student. Individual responses also can be used to verify individual understanding.

Generally a teacher should call on non-volunteers to ensure active involvement of all students and accurate feedback to the teacher on students' knowledge. Responses could be elicited by ordered turns or in random order. Each has advantages and disadvantages. **MAINTAINING AN APPROPRIATE PACE:** An appropriate pace helps maintain the attention of the learners and also increases the amount of content coverage. Effective teachers maintain an appropriate pace by being well prepared for the lesson, eliciting many responses from students, and moving quickly to the next question or teacher input.

If pace is too slow, students get off-task and incorrect responses may actually increase. If the pace is too fast, errors may occur or the lesson may take on an artificial tone. **MAINTAINING STUDENT ATTENTION:** Mildly handicapped students often have more difficulty than other students attending to critical variables within instructional lessons. However, the teachers can systematically adjust their teaching practices to increase student attention.

If attention wanes, teachers can elicit more responses from students, move closer to the students who are not attending, or gain eye contact. **MONITORING STUDENT RESPONSES AND ADJUSTING INSTRUCTION:** A high percentage of correct answers in both guided practice and independent work is positively related to achievement gains. Various researchers have found critical success rates to be from 80% to 90%. Rates of less than 75% result in lower achievement. This is true for low-achieving and special education students as well as normal-achieving students.

Correct answers given immediately should be acknowledged and then the teachers should move on quickly to new input. **ENSURING ALL STUDENTS AN EQUAL CHANCE TO LEARN:** A number of teaching practices may easily discriminate against the lower performing student. For example, calling on high performance students more frequently, giving them more eye contact, and waiting longer for their responses tends to discourage the participation of the slower learner.

Effective teachers ensure that all students are called upon, not just those who volunteer; provide good eye contact to all students; and allow an adequate amount of time for all students to formulate answers.

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