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ABSTRACT

From a psychological perspective, it is important that teachers establish a classroom atmosphere that encourages mutual support and caring and creates a sense of community. Such an atmosphere can play a key role in preventing learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems. This training tutorial is designed with self-directed opportunities for more in-depth learning about enhancing student learning through classroom changes. It is divided into three sessions on rethinking what is possible in the classroom, understanding student motivation, and general classroom practices. The tutorial is organized topically, with readings and related activities for preparation, active learning, and follow-up. (GCP)

A Center Training Tutorial . . .

CLASSROOM CHANGES TO ENHANCE & RE-ENGAGE STUDENTS IN LEARNING

This document is a hardcopy version of a resource that can be downloaded at no cost from the Center's website http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu.
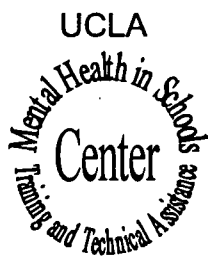
This Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspice of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA. Center for Mental Health in Schools, Box 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 (310) 825-3634 Fax: (310) 206-8716; E-mail: smhp@ucla.edu Website: http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HRSA
Health Resources and Services Administration
Maternal and Child Health Bureau

CMHS
Center for Mental Health Services
SAMHSA
Substance Abuse & Mental Health
Services Administration

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The *Center for Mental Health in Schools* operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project at UCLA.* It is one of two *national centers* concerned with mental health in schools that are funded in part by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration -- with co-funding from the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Project #U93 MC 00175).

The UCLA Center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. In particular, it focuses on comprehensive, multifaceted models and practices to deal with the many external and internal barriers that interfere with development, learning, and teaching. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter marginalization and fragmentation of essential interventions and enhance collaboration between school and community programs. In this respect, a major emphasis is on enhancing the interface between efforts to address barriers to learning and prevailing approaches to school and community reforms.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Continuing Education Modules & Training Tutorials:
Self-directed opportunities to learn

In addition to offering *Quick Training Aids*, the Center's *Continuing Education Modules* and *Training Tutorials* are designed as self-directed opportunities for more in-depth learning about specific topics. These resources provide easy access to a wealth of planfully organized content and tools that can be used as a self-tutorial or as a guide in training others. As with most of our resources, these can be readily downloaded from our website – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu – see Center Materials and scroll down to VI.

In the coming years, the Center will continue to develop a variety of continuing education modules and training tutorials related to the various topics covered by our Clearinghouse. In all its work, the Center tries to identify resources that represent "best practice" standards. We invite you to browse through this first set of modules and tutorials, and if you know of better material, please provide us with feedback so that we can make improvements.

CONTINUING EDUCATION MODULES

• *Addressing Barriers to Learning: New Directions for Mental Health in Schools.*

• *Mental Health in Schools: New Roles for School Nurses*

• *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling* (has an accompanying set of readings & tools)

TRAINING TUTORIALS

• *Classroom Changes to Enhance and Reengage Students in Learning*

• *Support for Transitions*

• *Home involvement in Schooling*

• *Community Outreach*

• *Crisis/Emergency Assistance and Prevention*

• *Student and Family Assistance*

• *Creating an infrastructure for an Enabling (Learning Support) Component to address barriers to student learning*

-i-

Using the Modules and Tutorials to Train Others

A key aspect of building capacity at schools involves ongoing staff and other stakeholder learning and development.* Those who are responsible for facilitating the training of others can use the Center's Continuing Education Modules and Training Tutorials to upgrade their repertoire and as resources in providing stakeholder training opportunities. With respect to training others, below are a few general reminders.

- *Start where they're at.* Good learning and teaching experiences are built on the concept of a good "match" (or "fit"). This involves both capabilities *and* interest (e.g., motivational readiness). From this perspective, it is essential to work with learner perceptions about what they want to learn and how they want to learn it. Thus, you might begin by finding out from those at the school:

    ✓ What are their most pressing concerns (e.g., what range of topics are of interest, and within a broad topic, what subtopics would be a good starting point)?

    ✓ How deeply do they want to cover a given subject (e.g., brief overview or in-depth)?

    ✓ How would they like to organize learning opportunities?

    Also, in terms of a good match, it is invaluable to capitalize on "teachable moments." Occurrences frequently arise at a school that result in the need for staff to learn something quickly. These teachable moments provide opportunities to guide staff to the type of resources included in the Continuing Education Modules and Training Tutorials. These resources can be drawn upon to create displays and provide handouts and then following-up by engaging staff in discussions to explore relevant experiences and insights.

- *"Preheat" to create interest.* Do some "social marketing." Put up some displays; provide prospective learners with a few interesting fact sheets; hold a brief event that focuses on the topic.

- *Active Learning.* Although reading is at the core of the modules and tutorials, active learning and doing is essential to good learning. Active learning can be done alone or in various group configurations. The point is to take time to think and explore. Study groups can be a useful format. Individual and group action research also provides application opportunities.

- *Follow-up for ongoing learning.* Provide information on resources for ongoing learning. Plan ways to offer follow-up discussions and exploration in general and in personalized ways with those who want and need more.

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*There is a great deal of material discussing ways to pursue effective staff development in schools. An organization that is devoted to this arena is the National Staff Development Council (NSDC). It's library of information (see – http://www.nsdc.org/educatorindex.htm) provides guidelines, tools, and access to the *Journal of Staff Development*. The organization's emphasis is on a "how-to" format, offering a variety of effective, step-by-step models developed by practitioners who base their methods on research and real-world experiences.

TRAINING TUTORIAL

The Center's Training Tutorials are organized topically, with readings and related activities for "preheating," active learning, and follow-up. All readings and activity guides are available on the website of the national *Center for Mental Health in Schools* at UCLA.

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

CLASSROOM CHANGES TO ENHANCE &
REENGAGE STUDENTS IN LEARNING

Overview Guide   Page

Learning Sessions

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Follow-up for Ongoing Learning

(1) The **Quick Finds** section of the Center website offers topic areas that are regularly updated with new reports, publications, internet sites, and centers specializing in the topic. Stakeholders can keep current on *Creating an Enabling Component* by visiting topic areas such as:

>Classroom Focused Enabling
>Dropout Prevention
>Environments that support learning
>Mentoring
>Model Programs
>Motivation
>Peer relationships and peer counseling

>Prevention for students "at risk"
>Resilience and protective factors
>Social Promotion
>Technology as an intervention tool
>Tutoring
>Volunteers in Schools

(2) Consider forming ongoing study groups.

(3) Request ongoing inservice training on related matters.

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Initial Resources to "Preheat" Exploration of this Matter
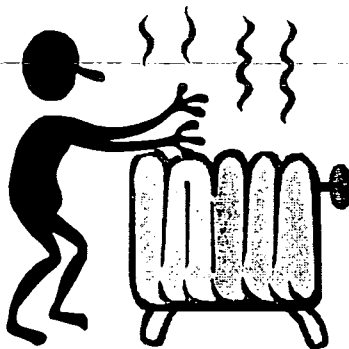
The following materials provide a brief introduction
and overview to the ideas covered by the tutorial:

In readying others for training in this matter, display the
attached flyer and the above article on a training bulletin
board and provide copies to interested staff.

Re-engaging Students in Classroom Learning
(Tutorial flyer)

1

Addressing Barriers to Learning

New ways to think . . .

Better ways to link

It seems that the most important influences in the prosocial development of children are the experiences that form the foundation of caring -- receiving nurturance and empathy and being given the opportunities for mastery.

Chaskin & Rauner, 1995

Enabling Learning in the Classroom: A Primary Mental Health Concern

Over half my class needs special help!
What's a teacher to do?

For many, when any student is not doing well, the trend is to refer them directly for counseling or for assessment in hopes of referral for special help -- perhaps even special education assignment. In some schools and some classrooms, the number of referrals is dramatic. Where special teams have been established to review teacher requests for help, the list grows as the year proceeds. The longer the list, the longer the lag time for review -- often to the point that, by the end of the school year, the team only has reviewed a small percentage of those on the list. And, no matter how many are reviewed, there are always more referrals than can be served.

One solution might be to convince policy makers to fund more services. However, even if the policy climate favored expanding public services, more health and social services alone are not a comprehensive approach for addressing barriers to learning. More services to treat problems certainly are needed. But so are prevention and early-after-onset programs that can reduce the numbers teachers send to review teams.

Contents

Helping Teachers Assist Identified Students: *Classroom-Focused Enabling*

When a teacher encounters difficulty with a youngster, a first step is to try addressing the problem in the regular class. This usually means enhancing the teacher's ability to prevent and respond to learning and behavior problems. In developing a school's *Enabling Component* (see box on p. 2), this area is one of six clusters of programmatic activity and is called *Classroom-Focused Enabling*.

A key facet of Classroom-Focused Enabling is personalized on-the-job education. The aim is to increase a teacher's array of strategies for working with a wide range of individual differences and creating a caring context for learning. Such strategies include ways to accommodate and also teach students to compensate for differences, vulnerabilities, and disabilities. In this context, special attention is given to targeting how paid assistants, peers, and volunteers are used to enhance social and academic support.

Another aspect of Classroom-Focused Enabling involves restructuring the functions of student support staff so they play a greater role in directly assisting the teacher *in the classroom*. This calls for redesigning the job descriptions and staff development of resource and itinerant teachers, counselors, and other pupil services personnel so they are able to work closely with teachers and students in the classroom and on regular activities.

Classroom-Focused Enabling requires programs and systems for

* personalized professional development of teachers and support staff

* developing the capabilities of paraeducators and other paid assistants, and volunteers.

* temporary out of class assistance for students

* expanding resources.

(See the survey in the *Ideas into Practice* section on pages 7-9).

Through a programmatic approach for *Classroom-Focused Enabling*, teachers increase their ability to address problems as they arise. In turn, this can increase the effectiveness of regular classroom programs, support inclusionary policies, and reduce the need for specialized services.

A Caring Context for Learning

From a psychological perspective, it is important that teachers establish a classroom atmosphere that encourages mutual support and caring and creates a sense of community. Such an atmosphere can play a key role in preventing learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems. Learning and teaching are experienced most positively when the learner *cares* about learning and the teacher *cares* about teaching.

Moreover, the whole process benefits greatly when all the participants *care* about each other.

Caring has moral, social, and personal facets. And when all facets of caring are present and balanced, they can nurture individuals and facilitate the process of learning. At the same time, caring in all its dimensions should be a major focus of what is taught and learned. That is, the classroom curriculum should encompass a focus on fostering socio-emotional and physical development.

Caring begins when students (and their families) first arrive at a school. Classrooms and schools can do their job better if students feel they are truly welcome and have a range of social supports.

Why Schools Need an Enabling Component

No one is certain of the exact number of students who require assistance in dealing with the many factors that can interfere with learning and performance. There is consensus, however, that significant barriers are encountered by many, especially those from families that are poor. Schools committed to the success of all children must be designed to *enable learning* by addressing barriers to learning.

Enabling is defined as "providing with the means or opportunity; making possible, practical, or easy; giving power, capacity, or sanction to." The concept of an *enabling component* is formulated around the proposition that a *comprehensive, multifaceted, integrated continuum of enabling activity* is essential in addressing the needs of youngsters who encounter barriers that interfere with their benefitting satisfactorily from instruction.

Turning the concept into practice calls for weaving together school and community resources to address problems experienced by students and their families. Included are programs to promote healthy development and foster positive functioning as the best way to prevent many learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems and as a necessary adjunct to correcting problems. An *enabling component* encompasses six programmatic areas of activity designed to (1) enhance classroom-based efforts to enable learning, (2) provide prescribed student and family assistance, (3) respond to and prevent crises, (4) support transitions, (5) increase home involvement in schooling, and (6) outreach to develop greater community involvement and support (including recruitment of volunteers).

The concept of an *enabling component* provides a broad unifying notion around which those concerned with restructuring education support programs and services can rally. At a fundamental policy level, the concept paves the way for understanding that restructuring should encompass three primary and complementary components: *instruction/curriculum, enabling,* and *governance/management.* The message for policy makers is:

> For school reform to produce desired student outcomes, *school and community reformers must expand their vision beyond restructuring instructional and management functions and recognize there is a third primary and essential set of functions involved in enabling teaching and learning.*

References

Adelman, H.S. (1996). *Restructuring support services: Toward a comprehensive approach.* Kent, OH: American School Health Association.

Adelman, H.S., & Taylor, L. (1997). Addressing barriers to learning: Beyond school-linked services and full service schools. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 67,* 408-421.

A key facet of welcoming encompasses effectively connecting new students with peers and adults who can provide social support and advocacy. On an ongoing basis, caring is best maintained through use of personalized instruction, regular student conferences, activity fostering social and emotional development, and opportunities for students to attain positive status. Efforts to create a caring classroom climate benefit from programs for cooperative learning, peer tutoring, mentoring, advocacy, peer counseling and mediation, human relations, and conflict resolution. Clearly, a myriad of strategies can contribute to students feeling positively connected to the classroom and school.

Given the importance of home involvement in schooling, attention also must be paid to creating a caring atmosphere for family members. Increased home involvement is more likely if families feel welcome and have access to social support at school. Thus, teachers and other school staff need to establish a program that effectively welcomes and connects families with school staff and other families to generate ongoing social support and greater participation in home involvement efforts.

Also, just as with students and their families, school staff need to feel truly welcome and socially supported. Rather than leaving this to chance, a caring school develops and institutionalizes a program to welcome and connect new staff with those with whom they will be working. And it does so in ways that effectively incorporates newcomers into the organization. (For more on this, see the *Lessons Learned* section on pages 10-11.)

Expanding the Context

Learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in classrooms. It occurs whenever and wherever the learner interacts with the surrounding environment. All facets of the community (not just the school) provide learning opportunities. *Anyone in the community who wants to facilitate learning might be a contributing teacher.* This includes aides, volunteers, parents, siblings, peers, mentors in the community, librarians, recreation staff, etc. They all constitute what can be called *the teaching community.* When a classroom successfully joins with its surrounding community, everyone has the opportunity to learn and to teach.

> **What is a psychological sense of community?**
>
> People can be together without feeling connected or feeling they belong or feeling responsible for a collective vision or mission. At school and in class, a psychological sense of community exists when a critical mass of stakeholders are committed to each other *and* to the setting's goals and values *and* exert effort toward the goals and maintaining relationships with each other.
>
> A perception of community is shaped by daily experiences and probably is best engendered when a person feels welcomed, supported, nurtured, respected, liked, connected in reciprocal relationships with others, and a valued member who is contributing to the collective identity, destiny, and vision. Practically speaking, such feelings seem to arise when a critical mass of participants not only are committed to a collective vision, but also are committed to being and working together in supportive and efficacious ways. That is, a conscientious effort by enough stakeholders associated with a school or class seems necessary for a sense of community to develop and be maintained. Such an effort must ensure effective mechanisms are in place to provide support, promote self-efficacy, and foster positive working relationships.
>
> There is an obvious relationship between maintaining a sense of community and sustaining morale and minimizing burn out.

Most schools do their job better when they are an integral and positive part of the community. Unfortunately, schools and classrooms often are seen as separate from the community in which they reside. This contributes to a lack of connection between school staff, parents, students, and other community residents and resources. For schools to be seen as an integral part of the community, steps must be taken to create and maintain collaborative partnerships.

A good place to start is with community volunteers. Greater volunteerism on the part of parents, peers, and others from the community can break down barriers and helps increase home and community involvement in schools and schooling. Thus, a major emphasis in joining with the community is

establishment of a program that effectively recruits, screens, trains, and nurtures volunteers. In addition, we all must work toward increased use of school sites as places where parents, families, and other community residents can engage in learning, recreation, enrichment, and find services they need.

Teachers Working and Learning Together in Caring Ways

Increasingly, it is becoming evident that teachers need to work closely with other teachers and school personnel, as well as with parents, professionals-in-training, volunteers, and so forth. Collaboration and teaming are key facets of addressing barriers to learning. They allow teachers to broaden the resources and strategies available in and out of the classroom to enhance learning and performance.

As Hargreaves (1984) cogently notes, the way to relieve "the uncertainty and open-endedness" that characterizes classroom teaching is to create

communities of colleagues who work collaboratively [in cultures of shared learning and positive risk-taking] to set their own professional limits and standards, while still remaining committed to continuous improvement. Such communities can also bring together the professional and personal lives of teachers in a way that supports growth and allows problems to be discussed without fear of disapproval or punishment.

Collaboration and collegiality are fundamental to morale and work satisfaction and to transforming classrooms into caring contexts for learning. Collegiality, however, cannot be demanded. As Hargreaves stresses, when collegiality is *mandated*, it can produce what is called *contrived collegiality* which tends to breed inflexibility and inefficiency. Contrived collegiality is compulsory, implementation-oriented, regulated administratively, fixed in time and space, and predictable. In contrast, *collaborative cultures* foster working relationships which are voluntary, development-oriented, spontaneous, pervasive across time and space, and unpredictable.

In many ways, the success of *Classroom-Focused Enabling* depends on the school's ability to organize itself into a learning community that personalizes inservice teacher education. Such "organizational learning" requires an organizational structure

'where people continually expand their' capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision and improve shared mental models' [Senge, 1990] by

engaging in different tasks, acquiring different kinds of expertise, experiencing and expressing different forms of leadership, confronting uncomfortable organizational truths, and searching together for shared solutions (Hargreaves, 1994).

Finally, we all must acknowledge that problems related to working relationships are a given -- even in a caring environment. A common example that arises in such situations is rescue dynamics. These dynamics occur when caring and helping go astray, when those helping become frustrated and angry because those being helped don't respond in desired ways or seem not to be trying. To minimize such dynamics, it is important for all concerned to understand interpersonal dynamics and barriers to working relationships and for sites to establish effective problem solving mechanisms to eliminate or at least minimize such problems.

Additional discussion of working relationships is available in several works prepared by our center. (As noted on p.3 of this newsletter, some of these works are already or soon will be accessible through the Internet.)

Some Relevant References

Chaskin, R.J. & Rauner, D.M. (eds.) Youth and caring. A special section of the May 1995 issue of the *Phi Delta Kappan*.

Fowler, R.C., & Corley, K.K. (1996). Linking families, building communities. *Educational Leadership, 53*, 24-26.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Kruse, S. & Louis, K.S. (1995). Teacher teaming -- opportunities and dilemmas. *Brief to Principals*, No. 11. Published by the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, Univ. of Wisconsin, 1025 W. Johnson St., Madison, WI 53706.

Sarason, S. (1996). *Revisiting "The culture of school and the problem of change."* New York: Teachers College Press.

Addressing Barriers

New ways to think...

Better ways to link

to Learning

I suspect that many children would learn arithmetic, and learn it better, if it were illegal.
John Holt

Opening the Classroom Door

*N*o one likes it when achievement test scores are low. It is unfortunate when youngsters must be referred for special assistance because they are not doing well academically and/or are misbehaving in class. Few who work in schools or closely with schools believe these problems will be solved simply by formulating higher standards, aligning them with assessment and accountability or by providing inservice for teachers that mainly focuses on curriculum/instruction along with a small dose of how to control students or by enacting policies for ending social promotion and pursuing zero tolerance. What is widely acknowledged and hardly ever addressed in fundamental ways is how inadequate these "reforms"are in helping many students who manifest *commonplace* behavior, learning, and emotional problems.

If you are a support service professional employed by a school district, you know there are many more youngsters with behavior, learning, and emotional problems than you can hope to help. If you are a professional from outside of schools who has found your way inside, you quickly realize you can only meet with a few of the many in need. If you are a teacher, you are plagued with the awareness of how many students are not responding well to your best teaching efforts.

Contents

What's to be done about all this?

One line of thought proposes adding more service personnel and offering more services. More would be helpful, but the costs make it unlikely that many more will appear, and it's probably not the best way to meet the learning needs of many students who are performing poorly.

Another line of thought proposes using current service staff to offer more teacher consultation on what to do when a student performs poorly. This could have some benefits. Unfortunately, in too many instances, service professionals often know less than the teachers with respect to engaging and *re*engaging students in classroom learning. As a result, they lean toward consulting about classroom management (social control) strategies that, in some instances, can be counterproductive to the instructional agenda. Thus, this form of teacher consultation, while well-intentioned, is unlikely to stem the tide of referrals for out-of-classroom help.

> *What could stem the tide is inservice instruction focused on practices that enable teachers to engage and reengage students in classroom learning.*

As is widely recognized, preservice education only prepares a person to be a beginner in the complex system and culture that is a school. Teachers are among the first to acknowledge that preservice education didn't prepare them adequately for students who manifest behavior, learning, and emotional problems. And, the service professionals who consult with teachers are among the first to acknowledge their limitations with respect to their own training and experience as classroom teachers.

If all students are to have equal opportunity for success at school, teachers, administrators, and education support staff must learn (a) what should go on in a classroom to address common behavior, learning, and emotional problems and (b) how to help make this happen everyday in every class. Basic to all this is opening the classroom door.

At some time or another, most students bring problems with them to school that affect their learning and perhaps interfere with the teacher's efforts to teach. In some geographic areas, many youngsters bring a wide range of problems stemming from restricted opportunities associated with poverty and low income, difficult and diverse family circumstances, high rates of mobility, lack of English language skills, violent neighborhoods, problems related to substance abuse, inadequate health care, and lack of enrichment opportunities.

Such problems are exacerbated as youngsters internalize the frustrations of confronting barriers and the debilitating effects of performing poorly at school. In some locales, the reality often is that over 50% of students manifest forms of behavior, learning, and emotional problems. And, in most schools in these locales, teachers are ill-prepared to address the problems in a potent manner. Thus, when a student is not doing well, the trend increasingly is to refer them directly for counseling or for assessment in hopes of referral for special help – perhaps even special education assignment.

In some schools and classrooms, the number of referrals is dramatic. Where special teams have been established to review teacher requests for help, the list grows as the year proceeds. The longer the list, the longer the lag time for review – often to the point that, by the end of the school year, the team only has reviewed a small percentage of those on the list. And, no matter how many are reviewed, there always are more referrals than can be served.

What Should Go on in the Classroom?

Curriculum content is learned as a result of transactions between the learner and environment. The essence of the teaching process is that of creating an environment that first can mobilize the learner to pursue the curriculum and then can maintain that mobilization, while effectively facilitating learning.

Mobilizing learners. No one has control over all the important elements involved in learning. Teachers actually can affect only a relatively small segment of the physical environment and social context in which learning is to occur. Because this is so, it is essential that they begin with an appreciation of what is likely to affect a student's positive and negative motivation to learn. This means, for example, paying particular attention to the following points:

▾ Optimal performance and learning require motivational readiness. Readiness should be understood in the contemporary sense of establishing environments that are perceived by students as caring, supportive, and stimulating places – places that offer vivid, novel, challenging, valued, and doable activities.

▾ Practices must not only aim at increasing motivation – especially intrinsic motivation – but must also avoid decreasing motivation. (This includes not overrelying on extrinsics to entice and reward because to do so may decrease intrinsic motivation.)

▾ Motivation represents both a process and an outcome concern. Programs must be designed to maintain, enhance, and expand intrinsic motivation for pursuing learning activities and for learning beyond the lesson.

▾ Increasing intrinsic motivation involves affecting thoughts, feelings, and decisions. In general, this calls for practices that have the potential to reduce negative and increase positive feelings, thoughts, and coping strategies with respect to learning. For students with learning and behavior problems, this means especially identifying and minimizing experiences that maintain or may increase avoidance motivation.

The last point, minimizing experiences that maintain or may increase avoidance motivation, deserves special emphasis. Students who manifest problems may have developed extremely negative perceptions of school staff and programs. In such cases, they are not likely to be open to people and activities that look like "the same old thing." Major changes in approach are required if such students are even to perceive that something has changed in the situation. Minimally, exceptional efforts must be made to have these students (1) view teachers and other school staff as supportive (rather than controlling and indifferent)

(cont. from page 2)

and (2) perceive content, outcomes, and activity options as personally valuable and obtainable.

In marked contrast to students who have developed negative attitudes, those who are intrinsically motivated tend to seek out challenges related to classroom learning and do more than what is required. In doing so, they tend to learn more and learn more deeply than do classmates who are extrinsically motivated.

Enabling learning. When a classroom teacher encounters difficulty in working with a student, the first step is to see whether there are ways to address the problem within the classroom and perhaps with added home involvement. To this end, it is essential to equip teachers with more than social control ("classroom management") strategies for responding to mild-to-moderate behavior, learning, and emotional problems.

The focus should be on the many ways to enable the learning of the diverse range of students found in classrooms. A few prominent examples of effective practices are: strategies to engage student interest and attention, one-to-one or small group instruction (e.g., tutoring, cooperative learning groups), enhancing protective factors and resiliency, and assets building (including use of curriculum-based approaches for promoting social emotional development), as well as a variety of special assistance strategies.

All this expands definitions of good teaching to encompass practices that enable learning and enhance effectiveness for a wide range of students. From such a perspective, good teaching begins with a caring context for learning, includes development of a classroom infrastructure that transforms a big class into a set of smaller units, and uses school and home strategies that prevent problems and address a wide range of problems when they arise.

To these ends, all teachers, administrators, and education support staff need to be taught an array of strategies for accommodating and teaching students in ways that compensate for differences, vulnerabilities, and disabilities. Teachers need to learn how to use paid assistants, peer tutors, and volunteers to enhance social and academic support and to work in targeted ways with students who manifest problems. Strategies must be developed that enable resource and itinerant teachers, counselors, and other student support staff to work closely with teachers and students *in the classroom* and on regular activities.

In practice, the adage: "Good teaching meets learners where they are" usually is interpreted as a call for *matching* a student's current *capabilities* (e.g., knowledge and skills). However, matching *motivation* also is essential. Such a motivational emphasis encompasses concerns about *intrinsic* motivation and overcoming *avoidance* motivation (see pages 10 and 11).

It is clear that the emphasis on matching capabilities is the prevalent orientation in the literature on teaching. Motivational considerations often are given short shrift. The irony, of course, is that most teachers recognize that motivational factors often play a key role in accounting for poor instructional outcomes. One of the most common laments among teachers is: "They could do it, if only they *wanted* to!" Teachers also know that good abilities are more likely to emerge when students are motivated not only to pursue class

assignments, but also are interested in using what they learn in other contexts.

Classrooms must be designed in ways that (a) stress the necessity of matching both motivation and capabilities and (b) encompass both regular instruction and specialized assistance. They must reflect an appreciation that learning and teaching are dynamic and nonlinear processes, that some learners experience problems that require use of something more than the best personalized instruction offers, and an appreciation of the importance of a caring context. The design must also be built with the recognition that teaching and enabling learning are not the teacher's responsibility alone. Good teaching requires collaboration among teachers and other staff at the school and is fostered or hindered by what takes place outside the school.

Ultimately, any definition of good teaching must include the ability to make instruction fit all students and address a wide-range of problems within the regular classroom.

All students need instruction that is a good match for both their motivation and capabilities (e.g., teaching that accounts for interests, strengths, weaknesses, and limitations; approaches that overcome avoidance motivation; structure that provides personalized support and guidance; instruction designed to enhance and expand intrinsic motivation for learning and problem solving). Some students also require added support, guidance, and special accommodations.

Classrooms that can do these things help reduce the need for specialized services and enhance the promise of inclusionary policies. Accomplishing all of the above requires rethinking pre and inservice education for teachers, administrators, and support staff, as well as for paraeducators and other paid assistants, and volunteers.

As long as school reforms fail to address such matters, especially in schools where large proportions of students are not doing well, it will remain a myth to think that achievement test score averages can be meaningfully raised.

Making it Happen:
Opening the Classroom Door

New teachers need a considerable amount of on-the-job training.

All teachers and support staff need to learn more about mobilizing and enabling learning in the classroom.

Opening the classroom door is essential for enhancing the learning of teachers and other staff and increasing the productivity of classroom instruction. The crux of the matter is to ensure that effective mentoring and collegial practices are used.

Learning effectively from colleagues is not just a talking game. It involves opportunities for mentors to model and guide change (e.g., demonstrate and discuss new approaches, guide initial practice and eventual implementation, and follow-up to improve and refine). Depending on practicalities, such modeling could take place in a teacher's own classroom or be carried out in

colleagues' classrooms. Some of it may take the form of team teaching. Videotapes of good practices also can be used in a variety of ways to enrich collegial sharing.

Another arrangement is for schools to use specialist personnel (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, special education resource teachers) to mentor and demonstrate rather than pursuing traditional consultant roles. That is, instead of telling teachers what they might do to address student learning, behavior, and emotional problems, specialists could be trained to go into classrooms to model and then guide teachers in implementing new practices to engage and reengage students in learning.

As has been stressed, opening the classroom door also allows for the addition of a variety of forms of assistance and useful partnerships. Student learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in classrooms. It occurs whenever and wherever the learner interacts with the surrounding environment. All facets of the community (not just the school) provide learning opportunities. Anyone in the community who wants to facilitate learning might be a contributing teacher. This includes aides, volunteers, parents, siblings, peers, mentors in the community, librarians, recreation staff, etc. They all constitute what can be called the teaching community.

When a classroom successfully joins with its surrounding community, everyone has the opportunity to learn and to teach. Indeed, most schools do their job better when they are an integral and positive part of the community. The array of people who might be of assistance are:

- ▼ Aides and a variety of volunteers
- ▼ Other regular classroom teachers
- ▼ Family members
- ▼ Students
- ▼ Specialist teachers and support service personnel
- ▼ School administrators
- ▼ Classified staff
- ▼ Teachers-in-training and other professionals-in-training

Increasingly, it is becoming evident that teachers need to work closely with other teachers and school personnel, as well as with parents, professionals-in-training, volunteers, and so forth. Collaboration and teaming are key facets of mobilizing and enabling learning. These practices allow teachers to broaden the resources and strategies available in and out of the classroom to enhance learning and performance.

Examples of Opening the Door to Assistance and Partnerships*

Using Aides and Volunteers in Targeted Ways

Chronically, teachers find classroom instruction disrupted by some student who is less interested in the lesson than in interacting with a classmate. The first tendency usually is to use some simple form of social control to stop the disruptive behavior (e.g., using proximity and/or a mild verbal intervention). Because so many students today are not easily intimidated, teachers find such strategies do not solve the problem. So, the next steps escalate the event into a form of Greek tragedy. The teacher reprimands, warns, and finally sends the student to "time-out" or to the front office for discipline. In the process, the other students start to titter about what is happening and the lesson usually is disrupted.

In contrast to this scenario, teachers can train an aide (if they have one) or a volunteer who has the ability to interact with students to work in ways that target such youngsters. The training of such individuals focuses on what the teacher wants them to do when a problem arises and what they should be doing to prevent such problems. In reaction to a problem, the aide or volunteer should expect the teacher to give a sign to go and sit next to the designated youngster. The focus is on re-engaging the student in the lesson. If this proves undoable, the next step involves taking the student for a walk outside the classroom. It is true that this means the student won't get the benefit of instruction during that period, but s/he wouldn't anyway.

Using this approach and not having to shift into a discipline mode has multiple benefits. For one, the teacher is able to carry out the day's lesson. For another, the other students do not have the experience of seeing the teacher having a control contest with a student. (Even if a teacher wins such contests, it may have a negative effect on how students perceive the teacher; and if the teacher somehow "loses it," that definitely conveys a wrong message. Either outcome can be counterproductive with respect to a caring climate and a sense of community.) Finally, there has not been a negative encounter with the targeted student. Such encounters build up negative attitudes on both sides which can be counterproductive with respect to future teaching, learning, and behavior. Because there has been no negative encounter, the teacher can reach out to the student after the lesson is over and start to think about how to use an aide or volunteers to work with the student to prevent future problems.

Team Teaching

The obvious point here is that partnering with a compatible colleague enables team members to complement each others' areas of competence, provide each other with nurturance and personal support, and allow for relief in addressing problems.

Collaborating with Special Educators and other Specialists

Almost every school has some personnel who have special training relevant to redesigning the classroom to work for a wider range of students. These specialists range from those who teach music or art to those who work with students designated as in need of special education. They can bring to the classroom not only their special expertise, but ideas for how the classroom design can incorporate practices that will engage students who have not been doing well and can accommodate those with special needs.

*From the Center's continuing education curriculum: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling*

Creating a Caring Context

From a psychological perspective, it is important that teachers establish a classroom atmosphere that encourages mutual support and caring and that creates a sense of community. Such an atmosphere can play a key role in preventing learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems. Learning and teaching are experienced most positively when the learner cares about learning and the teacher cares about teaching.

Stated simply, the whole process benefits greatly when all the participants care about each other.

Caring has moral, social, and personal facets. And when all facets of caring are present and balanced, they can nurture individuals and facilitate the process of learning. At the same time, caring in all its dimensions should be a major focus of what is taught and learned. That is, the classroom curriculum should encompass a focus on fostering socio-emotional and physical development.

Caring begins when students (and their families) first arrive at a school. Classrooms and schools can do their job better if students feel they are truly welcome and have a range of social supports. A key facet of welcoming encompasses effectively connecting new students with peers and adults who can provide social support and advocacy.

On an ongoing basis, caring is best maintained through use of personalized instruction, regular student conferences, activity fostering social and emotional development, and opportunities for students to attain positive status. Efforts to create a caring classroom climate benefit from programs for cooperative learning, peer tutoring, mentoring, advocacy, peer counseling and mediation, human relations, and conflict resolution. Clearly, a myriad of strategies can contribute to students feeling positively connected to the classroom and school.

Given the importance of home involvement in schooling, attention also must be paid to creating a caring atmosphere for family members. Increased home involvement is more likely if families feel welcome and have access to social support at school. Thus, teachers and other school staff need to establish a program that effectively welcomes and connects families with school staff and other families to generate ongoing social support and greater participation in home involvement efforts.

Also, just as with students and their families, school staff need to feel truly welcome and socially supported. Rather than leaving this to chance, a caring school develops and institutionalizes a program to welcome and connect new staff with those with whom they will be working. And it does so in ways that effectively incorporates newcomers into the organization.

An Inservice Curriculum

To fill the critical void highlighted in this article related to inservice education, our Center has developed a curriculum entitled: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling.* The set of modules covers how regular classrooms and schools should be designed to ensure *all* students have appropriate opportunities to learn effectively.

Our aim is to place the curriculum in the hands of school administrators, teacher educators, teachers, school support staff, those who train pupil service personnel, community members, and others.* The material is directly available to everyone interested in independent learning through the Center's website (or a hard copy can be ordered).

Module I provides a big picture context for understanding the problems schools face and why every school must develop a component to address barriers to learning. This component encompasses six programmatic areas. One of these areas is designated as *Classroom-Focused Enabling* – which is designed to enhance classroom teachers' capacity to address problems and foster social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development.

Module II focuses on the nuts and bolts of Classroom-Focused Enabling – covering how to transform the larger class by developing small learning groups and independent learning options in order to enhance student engagement, facilitate positive learning, prevent problems, and provide special assistance.

Module III explores the role teachers can take in ensuring their schools provide a context that supports and enhances classroom learning.

An accompanying document contains brief, related readings and a set of "tools" that expand on the topics discussed – providing indepth ideas and practices.

*We are exploring various ways to design and deliver this inservice curriculum. If you have ideas about these matters, please let us know (see newsletter insert).

A Caring Context for Learning and Healthy Development*

Learning community

Learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in classrooms. It occurs whenever and wherever the learner interacts with the surrounding environment. All facets of the community (including the school) provide learning opportunities – thus the term learning community.

Teaching

Whenever a surrounding environment tries to facilitate learning, the process can be called teaching. Teaching occurs at school, at home, and in the community at large. It may be formalized or informally transmitted. Teaching happens most positively when the learner wants to learn something and the surrounding environment wants to help the learner do so. That is, positive learning is facilitated when the learner *cares* about learning and the teacher *cares* about teaching. The whole process undoubtedly benefits greatly when all the participants *care* about each other.

Caring has moral, social, and personal facets

All facets need to be addressed. When all facets of caring are present and balanced, they can nurture individuals and facilitate the process of learning. At the same time, caring in all its dimensions should be a major focus of what is taught and learned.

Teachers are all who want to facilitate learning

This includes professional teachers, aides, volunteers, parents, siblings, peers, mentors in the community, librarians, recreation staff, etc. They all constitute what can be called *the teaching community*.

Everyone is a learner and may be teachers

In the learning/teaching community, all are learners and probably play some role as teachers.

Teaching benefits from organizational learning

Organizational learning requires an organizational structure "'where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision and improve shared mental models' [Senge] by engaging in different tasks, acquiring different kinds of expertise, experiencing and expressing different forms of leadership, confronting uncomfortable organizational truths, and searching together for shared solutions" (Andy Hargreaves).

Communities of colleagues

In schools, as Andy Hargreaves has stressed, the way to relieve "the uncertainty and open-endedness in teaching" is to create "communities of colleagues who work collaboratively [in cultures of shared learning and positive risk-taking] to set their own professional standards and limits, while still remaining committed to continuous improvement. Such communities can also bring together the professional and personal lives of teachers in a way that supports growth and allows problems to be discussed without fear of disapproval or punishment."

*From the Center's continuing education curriculum: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling.*

Flyer

Re-engaging Students in Classroom Learning

It's one thing to engage a student. . .

*it's quite another thing to have to re-engage
a youngster who has become "turned-off"*

Want to learn more?

See the brief articles that have been posted_____.

Join in a tutorial on:

Classroom Changes to Enchance & Reengage Students in Learning

Time:

Place:

Topic 1: Getting out of the box: Rethinking what's possible in the classroom

Reading & Activity

Reading. From: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling*(Module II, Unit A) 15

Activity. Use the various attached materials as stimuli and tools to focus application of what has been read

(1)*Outline What Has Been Learned so Far* - Use the attached worksheet to develop a brief outline of what seem to be the most important features of good teaching. 38

(2) *Discussion Session Exploring the Outlined Features* – See the attached guide sheet for ideas about forming an informal discussion and/or a formal study group. 39

(3) *Outline revision* (see the attached guide for suggestions about making ongoing revisions in the outline) 40

(4) *Review the self-study survey entitled: Classroom-Focused Enabling* 41

Mental Health in Schools
Center
Training and Technical Assistance

Excerpt From

Continuing Education

Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling

February, 2001

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

HRSA
Health Resources and Services Administration
Maternal and Child Health Bureau

CMHS
Center for Mental Health Services
SAMHSA
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

Module II
Enabling *All* Students to Succeed:
What's a Teacher to Do?

> Good teachers want to do their best for *all* students. This, of course,
> reflects our society's commitment to equity, fairness, and justice. But,
> if this commitment is to be meaningful, it cannot be approached
> simplistically. (It was said of the legendary coach Vince Lomardi that
> he was always fair because he treated all his players the same -- like
> dogs!) For schools and teachers to be equitable, fair, and just involves
> designing instruction in ways that accounts for a wide range of
> individual differences and circumstances.

Good teachers are always learners. They are keenly interested in what others have
found works well. This leads most teachers to be rather eclectic in their daily
practice.

Because there is so much to learn about effectively teaching students who manifest
learning, behavior, and/or emotional problems, eclecticism can be a healthy
alternative to fads, fancies, and dogmaticism. But care must be taken to avoid naive
forms of eclecticism. Naive eclecticism is the tendency to grab hold of almost every
new idea one learns about. (If it looks appealing, it is adopted – regardless of
whether it is valid or consistent with other practices the teacher is using.)

No one should use a casual and undiscriminating approach to teaching. And, no one
should think there is a "magic bullet" that will solve the many dilemmas a teacher
encounters every day.

The way to avoid naive eclecticism is to build one's approach to teaching on a
coherent set of

- underlying concepts

- a set of practice guidelines that reflect these concepts

- best practices that are consistent with the guidelines.

These considerations guide the following discussion which focuses on "classroom-
focused enabling" as a critical aspect of efforts to assure that all students have an
equal opportunity to succeed at school.

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In many schools, when students are not doing well, the trend is to refer them directly for assessment in hopes of referral for special help – perhaps even assignment to special education. In some schools and classrooms, the number of referrals is dramatic. Where special teams exist to review students for whom teachers request help, the list grows as the year proceeds. The longer the list, the longer the lag time for review – often to the point that, by the end of the school year, the team has reviewed just a small percentage of those referred. And, no matter how many are reviewed, there are always more referrals than can be served.

One solution might be to convince policy makers to fund more remediation and related services at schools. However, even if the policy climate favored more special programs, such interventions alone are not a comprehensive approach for addressing barriers to learning. More services to treat problems certainly are needed. But so are prevention and early-after-onset programs that can reduce the number of students teachers send to review teams.

> No one is certain of the exact number of students who require assistance in dealing with factors that interfere with classroom learning. There is consensus, however, that significant barriers are encountered by many, especially those from poor families. Because of societal inequities, teachers in large urban and poor rural schools usually tell us that over 50% of their students are manifesting learning, behavior, and emotional problems. In public schools serving more affluent families, the proportion of students experiencing such problems is smaller, but it is a rare school that does not have more problems than it can handle effectively. (Findings from the National Assessment of Education Progress indicate that 40 percent of nine-year-olds in the U.S. are reported as scoring poorly.)

As discussed in Module I, schools committed to the success of all children must be redesigned to *enable learning* by addressing barriers to learning. A key element of an enabling component involves building the capacity of classrooms to enhance instructional effectiveness. We call this classroom-focused enabling. A key facet of classroom-focused enabling is personalized instruction that accounts for motivational and developmental differences.

Based on our analyses of the "best practice" literature, we have designed this module to address the following topics, which are key to preventing problems and maximizing learning in the classroom:

Unit A: What is Good Teaching?
   1) Principles, Guidelines, and Characteristics of Good Schools and Good Teaching
   2) Underlying Assumptions and Major Program Elements of a Personalized Program
   3) A Collaborative and Caring Classroom: Opening the Classroom Door
       a) Opening the Door to Enhance Teacher Learning
       b) Opening the Door to Assistance and Partnerships
       c) Creating a Caring Context for Learning
A Few Related References

Unit B: Engaging Students (and their Families) in Learning: Real and Valued Options and Decision Making
   1) About Motivation
       a) Motivation and Learning
       b) Two Key Components of Motivation: Valuing and Expectations
       c) Overreliance on Extrinsics: A Bad Match
   2) Options
   3) Learner Decision Making
   4) Research on Preferences, Choice, Control, and Student Engagement
A Few Related References

Unit C: General Strategies for Facilitating Motivated Performance and Practice
   1) Creating a Stimulating and Manageable Learning Environment
       a) Designing the Classroom for Active Learning
       b) Grouping Students and Turning Big Classes into Smaller Units
   2) Providing Personalized Structure for Learning
   3) Instructional Techniques
       a) Using Techniques to Enhance Motivation
       b) Using Techniques to Support and Guide Performance and Learning
   4) Turning Homework into Motivated Practice
   5) Assessing Student Learning to Plan Instruction and Providing Nurturing Feedback
       a) Planning Instruction
       b) Providing Nurturing Feedback
   6) Conferencing as a Key Process
   7) Volunteers as an Invaluable Resource
A Few Related References

(cont.)

Unit D: Special Classroom Assistance to Engage, Guide, and Support Those
        Students Who Need More
   1) Levels of Special Assistance
   2) Level A – Special Assistance in the Classroom to Engage and Accommodate Students
      in Age Appropriate Life Tasks
           a) Adding Learning Options and Individual Accommodations
           b) About Addressing Behavior Problems
   3) Level B – Special Assistance in the Classroom to Develop Prerequisites
   4) Level C – Special Assistance in the Classroom to Address Factors
      Interfering with Learning
           a) Classroom Instruction at Level C
           b) A Note About Inclusion
   5) Sequencing Special Assistance
   6) Referral When Necessary
   A Few Related References

Unit E: Capitalizing on Technology
   1) Technology in the Classroom – A Big Picture Overview
   2) Applications and Benefits of Technology in the Classroom
           a) Uses and Benefits
           d) Caveats and Cautions
   3) Supporting Special Assistance
   4) Access to and By the Home
   5) Some Websites for Classroom Resources and
       a Few References on Using Technology

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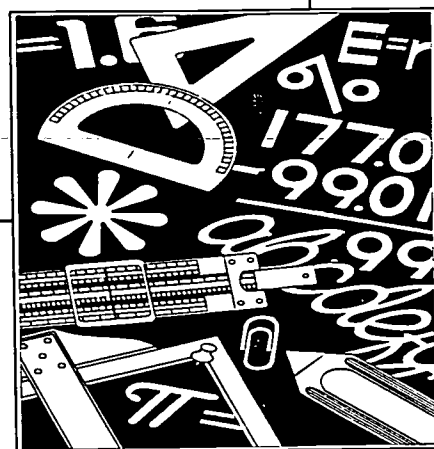
Unit A

Objectives

The intent in this Unit is to help you learn more about:

(1) *principles, guidelines, and characteristics of good schools and good teaching* (After going over the material, be sure you can identify at least three principles or characteristics of good teaching.)

(2) *underlying assumptions and major program elements of a personalized program* (After going over the material, be sure you can identify three program elements.)

(3) *what is involved in "opening up the classroom door"* (After going over the material, be sure you can discuss two basic features involved in creating a collaborative and caring classroom).

Kids need us most,
when they're at their worst.

Unit A: What is Good Teaching?

We believe the strength in education resides in the intelligent use of [the] powerful variety of approaches – matching them to different goals and adapting them to the student's styles and characteristics. Competence in teaching stems from the capacity to reach out to different children and to create a rich and multidimensional environment for them. Curriculum planners need to design learning centers and curricula that offer children a variety of educational alternatives . . . . The existing models of teaching are one basis for the repertoire of alternative approaches that teachers, curriculum makers, and designers of materials can use to help diverse learners reach a variety of goals . . . . We believe the world of education should be a pluralistic one – that children and adults alike should have a "cafeteria of alternatives" to stimulate their growth and nurture both their unique potential and their capacity to make common cause in the rejuvenation of our troubled society.

Bruce Joyce & Marsha Weil

Most public school curriculum guides and manuals reflect efforts to prepare youngsters to cope with what may be called *developmental* or *life tasks*. Reading, math, biology, chemistry, social studies, history, government, physical education, sex education – all are seen as preparing an individual to take an appropriate role in society as a worker, citizen, community member, and parent.

Most teachers, however, also want to foster individual well-being, talents, and personal integrity.

Thus, good teaching is not simply a matter of conveying content and mastering instructional techniques. Underlying any discussion of *What is good teaching?* is a *rationale* regarding what constitutes the right balance between societal and individual interests.

The rationale we have adopted here is that good teaching in the context of society's institutions for educating the young requires adoption of a coherent approach to accomplishing society's intentions in ways that promote the well-being of youngsters. On top of this, good teaching requires the ability to execute such a balancing act while achieving explicit outcomes related to both societal and individual goals.

Because of the importance of the rationale adopted by teachers, we begin this module with a quick summary of principles, guidelines, and characteristics that have been synthesized over the years. They warrant more discussion, but we must leave that to you.

The main focus in this module is on processes for effective instruction and creating a caring environment – which are essential facets of good teaching. From this perspective, we can begin with the old adage:

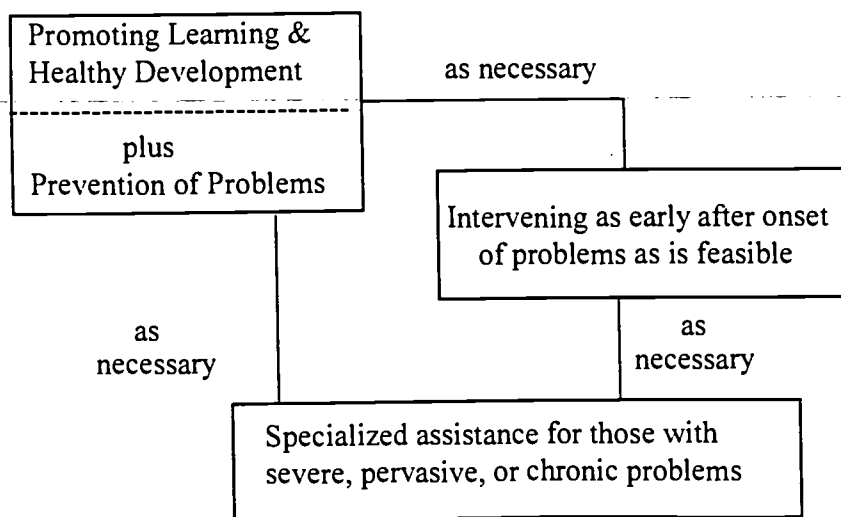*Good teaching meets learners where they are.*

In practice, this adage usually is interpreted as a call for *matching* a student's current *capabilities* (e.g., knowledge and skills). However, matching *motivation* also is essential. Such a motivational emphasis encompasses concerns about *intrinsic* motivation and overcoming *avoidance* motivation.

It is clear that the emphasis on matching capabilities is the prevalent orientation in the literature on teaching. Motivational considerations often are given short shrift. The irony, of course, is that most teachers recognize that motivational factors often play a key role in accounting for poor instructional outcomes. One of the most common laments among teachers is: "They could do it, if only they *wanted* to!" Teachers also know that good abilities are more likely to emerge when students are motivated not only to pursue class assignments, but also are interested in using what they learn in other contexts.

Our intent here is to outline an orientation to teaching that (a) stresses the necessity of matching both motivation and capabilities and (b) practices that encompass both regular instruction and specialized assistance (see the Figure below). The ideas presented in this module reflect both an appreciation that learning and teaching are dynamic and nonlinear processes and that some learners experience problems that require use of something more than the best personalized instruction offers. The discussion also reflects an appreciation for the importance of a caring context.

Finally, it is recognized that teaching and enabling learning are not the teacher's responsibility alone. Good teaching requires collaboration among teachers and other staff at the school and is fostered or hindered by what takes place outside the school. These are matters covered in Modules I and III.

Building Assets & Addressing Barriers to Learning and Development

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┌────────────────────────┐
│ Promoting Learning &   │         as necessary
│ Healthy Development     │─────────────────────────────┐
├─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┤                              │
│        plus            │                              │
│ Prevention of Problems │          ┌───────────────────┴──────────┐
└──────────┬─────────────┘          │ Intervening as early after onset │
           │                        │  of problems as is feasible      │
           │                        └────────────────┬─────────────┘
        as │                                      as │
   necessary│                               necessary│
           │    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐ │
           └────┤ Specialized assistance for those with │
                │ severe, pervasive, or chronic problems │
                └────────────────────────────────────┘
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1) Principles, Guidelines, and Characteristics of Good Schools and Good Teaching

Over many years of study, consensus is emerging about what constitutes effective schools and effective classrooms. On the following pages are a series of syntheses that encapsulate some of the best thinking about these matters. These probably will seem rather general and maybe a bit abstract and overwhelming on first reading. Take some time to reflect on them – perhaps a few at a time. Such reflection is an essential part of thinking out your philosophy about what schools should be about and your understanding of what good teaching is.

Obviously, some ideas require school-wide and even community-wide action; these represent objectives you will want to work with other stakeholders to achieve over time. We discuss your role related to such systemic changes in Module III. Other ideas represent classroom practices that you will learn more about in this module and, hopefully, through other inservice efforts at your school and on-the-job.

Stop, think, discuss

After reading and thinking a bit about the principles, guidelines, and characteristics on the following pages: If you haven't done so, you will find it helpful to form a study group to discuss the various points and their implications for daily practice.

(1)   Find a good time and place for the group to meet.

(2)   Clearly, you won't have time to discuss many of the items in detail, so:

    a.   begin the discussion with a brief exchange of what each member thinks are the most important guidelines and characteristics

    b.   discuss items anyone thinks should be deleted and/or added

    c.   choose a few items that the group wants to talk about in detail and spend about 10 minutes discussing each

Exhibit

Principles/Guidelines Underlying Good Instructional Practice

The following are widely advocated guidelines that provide a sense of the philosophy guiding efforts to address barriers to development and learning and promote healthy development.

Good instructional practice

- facilitates continuous cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development,

- is comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated (e.g., extensive and intensive enough to ensure that students have the opportunity to develop fully),

- makes learning accessible to all students (including those at greatest risk and hardest-to-reach),

- ensures the same high quality for all,

- is user friendly, flexibly implemented, and responsive,

- is guided by a commitment to social justice (equity) and to creating a sense of community,

- uses the strengths and vital resources of all stakeholders to facilitate student learning and development,

- deals with students holistically and developmentally, as an individual and as part of a family, neighborhood, and community,

- is planned, implemented, evaluated, and evolved by highly competent, energetic, committed and responsible stakeholders,

- is tailored to fit distinctive needs and resources and to account for diversity,

- is tailored to use interventions that are no more intrusive than is necessary in meeting needs (e.g., the least restrictive environment),

- is staffed by stakeholders who have the time, training, skills and institutional and collegial support necessary to create an accepting environment and build relationships of mutual trust, respect, and equality,

- is staffed by stakeholders who believe in what they are doing,

- is staffed by stakeholders who pursue continuing education and self-renewal.

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Exhibit

A Synthesis of Characteristics of Effective Schools and Classrooms that Account for *All* Learners*

Effective Schools

- Commitment to shared vision of equality
  >High expectations for student learning
  >Emphasis on academic work that is meaningful to the student

- Daily implementation of effective processes
  >Strong administrative leadership
  >Alignment of resources to reach goals
  >Professional development tied to goals
  >Discipline and school order
  >A sense of teamwork in the school
  >Teacher participation in decision making
  >Effective parental outreach and involvement

- Monitoring student progress through measured indicators of achievement
  >Setting local standards
  >Use of national standards
  >Use of data for continuous improvement of school climate and curricula

- Optimizing school size through limited enrollment, creation of small schools within big schools (e.g., academies, magnet programs), and other ways of grouping students and staff

- Strong involvement with the community and with surrounding family of schools
  >Students, families, and community are developed into a learning community
  >Programs address transitions between grades, school, school-to-career, and higher education

Effective Classrooms

- Positive classroom social climate that
  >personalizes contacts and supports
  >offers accommodation so all students have an equal opportunity to learn
  >adjusts class size and groupings to optimize learning
  >engages students through dialogue and decision making
  >incorporates parents in multiple ways
  >addresses social-emotional development

- Designing and implementing quality instructional experiences that
  >involve students in decision making
  >contextualize and make learning authentic, including use of real life situations and mentors
  >are appropriately cognitively complex and challenging
  >enhance language/literacy
  >foster joint student products
  >extend the time students engage in learning through designing motivated practice
  >ensure students learn how to learn and are prepared for lifelong learning
  >ensure use of prereferral intervention strategies
  >use advanced technology to enhance learning

- Instruction is modified to meet students' needs based on ongoing assessments using
  >measures of multiple dimensions of impact
  >students' input based on their self-evaluations

- Teachers collaborate and are supported with
  >personalized inservice, consultation, mentoring, grade level teaming
  >special resources who are available to come into the classroom to ensure students with special needs are accommodated appropriately

*Synthesized from a variety of sources, including *High Schools of the Millennium, American Youth* Policy Forum, 2000; *Assessing the Progress of New American Schools,* Rand, 1999; *Benchmarking Best Practices in Accountability Systems,* American Productivity and Quality Center, 2000; Elmore & Associates, 1990; Schlecty, 1990; Edmonds, 1979, 1981; Good & Brophy, 1986; Phi Delta Kappa, 1980; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rutter, 1981; Brookover, Ready, Flood, Schweitzer & Wisenbaker, 1979; Purkey & Smith, 1985; Walberg, 1991; Witte & Walsh, 1990; Adelman and Taylor, 1993.

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2) Underlying Assumptions and Major Program Elements of a Personalized Program

Underlying Assumptions. In Module I, we outlined the following basic assumptions that we see as underlying personalized programs.

* Learning is a function of the ongoing transactions between the learner and the learning environment (with all it encompasses).
* Optimal learning is a function of an optimal match between the learner's accumulated capacities and attitudes and current state of being and the program's processes and content.
* Matching both a learner's motivation and pattern of acquired capacities must be primary procedural objectives.
* The learner's perception is the critical criterion for evaluating whether a good match exists between the learner and the learning environment.
* The wider the range of options that can be offered and the more the learner is made aware of the options and has a choice about which to pursue, the greater the likelihood that he or she will perceive the match as a good one.
* Besides improved learning, personalized programs enhance intrinsic valuing of learning and a sense of personal responsibility for learning. Furthermore. such programs increase acceptance and even appreciation of individual differences, as well as independent and cooperative functioning and problem solving.

Program elements. As we delineate throughout this Module, the major elements of personalized programs include:

* regular use of informal and formal conferences for discussing options, making decisions, exploring learner perceptions, and mutually evaluating progress
* a broad range of options from which the learner can make choices with regard to learning content, activities, and desired outcomes
* a broad range of options from which the learner can make choices with regard to facilitation (support, guidance) of decision making and learning
* active decision making by the learner in making choices and in evaluating how well the chosen options match his or her current levels of motivation and capability
* establishment of program plans and mutual agreements about the ongoing relationships between the learner and the program personnel
* regular reevaluations of decisions, reformulation of plans, and renegotiation of agreements based on mutual evaluations of progress, problems, and current learner perceptions of the "match"

3) A Collaborative and Caring Classroom: Opening the Classroom Door

In some schools, it seems that teachers and
students enter their classrooms ready to do battle.
And at the end of the class, whoever is able to walk
out "alive" is the winner.

This, of course, is a gross exaggeration. . . . .   Isn't it?

For a long time, teachers have gone into their classrooms and figuratively and often literally have shut their doors behind them. As a result, for better and worse, they have been on their own. On the positive side, the closed door limits outside meddling and inappropriate monitoring. The downside is that, in too many instances, teachers are deprived of opportunities to learn from colleagues and too often the isolation from others leads to feelings of alienation and "burn out." Moreover, students are cut off from a variety of resources and experiences that appear essential to ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to learn.

Because the negatives outweigh the potential gains, there are increasing calls for "opening the classroom door" to enhance collegial collaboration, consultation, mentoring, and greater involvement of expert assistance, volunteers, family members, and the community-at-large. Such fundamental changes in the culture of schools and classrooms are seen as routes to enhancing a caring climate, a sense of community, and teaching effectiveness. These changes are especially important for *preventing* commonplace learning, behavior, and emotional problems and for responding *early-after-onset* when a problem does arise.

Some of these matters were discussed briefly in Module I. The exhibit on the next page and the discussion on the pages following it offer some additional details to consider.

Exhibit

What's involved in working together?

Collaboration and collegiality

As Hargreaves and others have noted, these concepts are fundamental to improving morale and work satisfaction and to the whole enterprise of transforming schools to meet the needs of individuals and society. *Collaborative cultures* foster collaborative working relationships which are spontaneous, voluntary, development-oriented, pervasive across time and space, and unpredictable. When collegiality is *mandated*, it often produces what has been called *contrived collegiality* which tends to breed inflexibility and inefficiency. Contrived collegiality is administratively regulated, compulsory, implementation-oriented, fixed in time and space, and predictable.

Teacher collaboration and teaming

Increasingly it is becoming evident that teachers need to work closely with other teachers and school personnel as well as with parents, professionals-in-training, volunteers, and so forth. Collaboration and teaming are key facets of addressing barriers to learning. They allow teachers to broaden the resources and strategies available in and out of the classroom to enhance learning and performance.

Welcoming for new staff and ongoing social support for all staff

Just as with students and their families, there is a need for those working together at a school to feel they are truly welcome and have a range of social supports. Thus, a major focus for stakeholder development activity is establishment of a program that welcomes and connects new staff with others with whom they will be working and does so in ways that effectively incorporates them into the community.

Barriers to working together

Problems related to working relationships are a given. To minimize such problems, it is important for participants to understand barriers to working relationships and for sites to establish effective problem solving mechanisms to eliminate or at least minimize such barriers.

Rescue dynamics

A special problem that arises in caring communities are rescue dynamics. Such dynamics arise when caring and helping go astray, when those helping become frustrated and angry because those being helped don't respond in desired ways or seem not to be trying. It is important to minimize such dynamics by establishing procedures that build on motivational readiness and personalized interventions.

a) Opening the Door to Enhance Teacher Learning

New teachers need as much on-the-job training as can be provided.

All teachers need to learn more about classroom-focused enabling.

In opening the classroom door to enhance teacher learning, the crux of the matter is to ensure that effective mentoring and collegial practices are used. Learning effectively from colleagues is not just a talking game. It involves opportunities for mentors and colleagues to model and guide change (e.g., demonstrate and discuss new approaches, guide initial practice and eventual implementation, and follow-up to improve and refine). Preferably, the modeling would take place in a teacher's own classroom. However, if the school can arrange it, the process also can be carried out in colleagues' classrooms. Also, videotapes of good practices in colleagues classrooms can be used in a variety of ways to enrich collegial sharing.

One type of arrangement that can facilitate shared learning is team teaching with a mentor or a colleague. (Team teaching is covered in Unit C.)

Another arrangement is for the school to use its specialist personnel (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, special education resource teachers) in providing mentoring and demonstrations rather than as "consultants." That is, rather than telling teachers what they might do to address student learning, behavior, and emotional problems, specialists should be trained to go into classrooms to model and then guide teachers as they begin to practice and implement what they are learning.

MATT'S ALWAYS BOTHERING ME DURING CLASS. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

HE JUST WANTS ATTENTION. IT'S BEST TO IGNORE HIM.

PSYCHOLOGIST

I'VE TRIED THAT. NOW HOW DO I GET HIM TO. LET GO OF MY LEG?
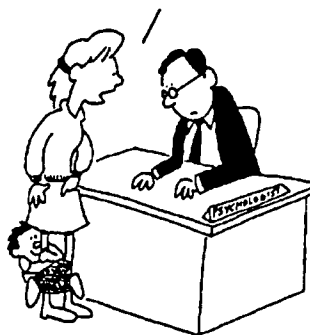
b) Opening the Door to Assistance and Partnerships

> As Hargreaves cogently notes, the way to relieve the uncertainty
> and open-endedness that characterizes classroom teaching is to
> create communities of colleagues who work collaboratively [in
> cultures of shared learning and positive risk-taking] to set their
> own professional limits and standards, while still remaining
> committed to continuous improvement. Such communities can
> also bring together the professional and personal lives of teachers
> in a way that supports growth and allows problems to be discussed
> without fear of disapproval or punishment.

Besides enhancing teacher learning, opening the classroom door allows for the
addition of a variety of forms of assistance and useful partnerships.

Increasingly, it is becoming evident that teachers need to work closely with other
teachers and school personnel, as well as with parents, professionals-in-training,
volunteers, and so forth. Collaboration and teaming are key facets of addressing
barriers to learning. They allow teachers to broaden the resources and strategies
available in and out of the classroom to enhance learning and performance.

Student learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in
classrooms. It occurs whenever and wherever the learner interacts with the
surrounding environment. All facets of the community (not just the school)
provide learning opportunities. Anyone in the community who wants to facilitate
learning might be a contributing teacher. This includes aides, volunteers, parents,
siblings, peers, mentors in the community, librarians, recreation staff, etc. They all
constitute what can be called the teaching community. When a classroom
successfully joins with its surrounding community, everyone has the opportunity
to learn and to teach. Indeed, most schools do their job better when they are an
integral and positive part of the community. The array of people who might be of
assistance are:

- Aides and a variety of volunteers
- Other regular classroom teachers
- Family members
- Students
- Specialist teachers and support service personnel
- School administrators
- Classified staff
- Teachers-in-training and other professionals-in-training

A few examples are highlighted in the Exhibit on the next page; others will be
stressed in the remaining units of this module.

Exhibit
Examples of Opening the Door to Assistance and Partnerships

Using Aides and Volunteers in Targeted Ways

Chronically, teachers find classroom instruction disrupted by some student who is less interested in the lesson than in interacting with a classmate. The first tendency usually is to use some simple form of social control to stop the disruptive behavior (e.g., using proximity and/or a mild verbal intervention). Because so many students today are not easily intimidated, teachers find such strategies do not solve the problem. So, the next steps escalate the event into a form of Greek tragedy. The teacher reprimands, warns, and finally sends the student to "time-out" or to the front office for discipline. In the process, the other students start to titter about what is happening and the lesson usually is disrupted.

In contrast to this scenario, you can train your aide (if you have one) or a volunteer who has the ability to interact with students to work in ways that target such youngsters. The training of such individuals focuses on what you want them to do when a problem arises and what they should be doing to prevent such problems. In reaction to a problem, the aide or volunteer should expect you to give a sign to go and sit next to the designated youngster. The focus is on re-engaging the student in the lesson. If this proves undoable, the next step involves taking the student for a walk outside the classroom. It is true that this means the student won't get the benefit of instruction during that period, but s/he wouldn't anyway.

Using this approach and not having to shift into a discipline mode has multiple benefits. For one, you are able to carry out your lesson plan. For another, the other students do not have the experience of seeing you having a control contest with a student. (Even if you win such contests, it may have a negative effect on how students perceive you; and if you somehow "lose it," that definitely conveys a wrong message. Either outcome can be counterproductive with respect to a caring climate and a sense of community.) Finally, you have not had a negative encounter with the targeted student. Such encounters build up negative attitudes on both sides which can be counterproductive with respect to future teaching, learning, and behavior. Because there has been no negative encounter, you can reach out to the student after the lesson is over and start to think about how you can use your aide or volunteers to work with the student to prevent future problems.

Team Teaching

The obvious point here is that partnering with a compatible colleague enables the two of you to complement each others' areas of competence, provide each other with nurturance and personal support, and allow for relief in addressing problems. (See Unit C)

Collaborating with Special Educators and other Specialists

Almost every school has some personnel who have special training relevant to redesigning the classroom to work for a wider range of students. These specialists range from those who teach music or art to those who work with students designated as in need of special education. They can bring to the classroom not only their special expertise, but ideas for how the classroom design can incorporate practices that will engage students who have not been doing well and can accommodate those with special needs.

c) Creating a Caring Context for Learning

As suggested in Module I, from a psychological perspective, it is important that teachers establish a classroom atmosphere that encourages mutual support and caring and creates a sense of community. Such an atmosphere can play a key role in preventing learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems. Learning and teaching are experienced most positively when the learner cares about learning and the teacher cares about teaching.

> *Moreover, the whole process benefits greatly when all the participants care about each other.*

Caring has moral, social, and personal facets. And when all facets of caring are present and balanced, they can nurture individuals and facilitate the process of learning. At the same time, caring in all its dimensions should be a major focus of what is taught and learned. That is, the classroom curriculum should encompass a focus on fostering socio-emotional and physical development.

Caring begins when students (and their families) first arrive at a school. Classrooms and schools can do their job better if students feel they are truly welcome and have a range of social supports. A key facet of welcoming encompasses effectively connecting new students with peers and adults who can provide social support and advocacy.

On an ongoing basis, caring is best maintained through use of personalized instruction, regular student conferences, activity fostering social and emotional development, and opportunities for students to attain positive status. Efforts to create a caring classroom climate benefit from programs for cooperative learning, peer tutoring, mentoring, advocacy, peer counseling and mediation, human relations, and conflict resolution. Clearly, a myriad of strategies can contribute to students feeling positively connected to the classroom and school.

Given the importance of home involvement in schooling, attention also must be paid to creating a caring atmosphere for family members. Increased home involvement is more likely if families feel welcome and have access to social support at school. Thus, teachers and other school staff need to establish a program that effectively welcomes and connects families with school staff and other families to generate ongoing social support and greater participation in home involvement efforts.

Also, just as with students and their families, school staff need to feel truly welcome and socially supported. Rather than leaving this to chance, a caring school develops and institutionalizes a program to welcome and connect new staff with those with whom they will be working. And it does so in ways that effectively incorporates newcomers into the organization.

Edith
2

A new girl came to my class. I said hello to her with a smile. I became friends with her saying hello and eating lunch with her. I played games with her and we played at recess and lunch I also played with her at P.E and after school.

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Exhibit

A Caring Context for Learning

Learning community

Learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in classrooms. It occurs whenever and wherever the learner interacts with the surrounding environment. All facets of the community (including the school) provide learning opportunities -- thus the term learning community.

Teaching

Whenever a surrounding environment tries to facilitate learning, the process can be called teaching. Teaching occurs at school, at home, and in the community at large. It may be formalized or informally transmitted. Teaching happens most positively when the learner wants to learn something and the surrounding environment wants to help the learner do so. That is, positive learning is facilitated when the learner *cares* about learning and the teacher *cares* about teaching. The whole process undoubtedly benefits greatly when all the participants *care* about each other.

Caring has moral, social, and personal facets

All facets need to be addressed. When all facets of caring are present and balanced, they can nurture individuals and facilitate the process of learning. At the same time, caring in all its dimensions should be a major focus of what is taught and learned.

Teachers are all who want to facilitate learning

This includes professional teachers, aides, volunteers, parents, siblings, peers, mentors in the community, librarians, recreation staff, etc. They all constitute what can be called *the teaching community*.

Everyone is a learner and may be teachers

In the learning/teaching community, all are learners and probably play some role as teachers.

Teaching benefits from organizational learning

Organizational learning requires an organizational structure "'where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision and improve shared mental models' [Senge, 1990] by engaging in different tasks, acquiring different kinds of expertise, experiencing and expressing different forms of leadership, confronting uncomfortable organizational truths, and searching together for shared solutions" (Hargreaves, 1994).

Communities of colleagues

In schools, as Hargreaves has stressed, the way to relieve "the uncertainty and open-endedness in teaching" is to create "communities of colleagues who work collaboratively [in cultures of shared learning and positive risk-taking] to set their own professional standards and limits, while still remaining committed to continuous improvement. Such communities can also bring together the professional and personal lives of teachers in a way that supports growth and allows problems to be discussed without fear of disapproval or punishment."

Stop, think, discuss

Now that you've covered Unit A, what's your answer to the question:

What is Good Teaching?

(1) Make a brief outline of what you see as the most important points.

(2) Discuss them with your study group or other friends and colleagues.

(3) After the discussion, decide how you might revise your outline.

If you want to read more about the idea of a collaborative classroom and creating a climate for diversity, see two brief readings that have been in included in the accompanying materials.

A Few Related References*

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Deci, E.L. & Ryan, R.M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self determination in human behavior.* New York: Plenum Press.

Desforges, C., Ed. (1995). *An Introduction to Teaching: Psychological Perspectives.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Educational Commission of the States (2000). *Environment as an Integrating Context for Learning (EIC).* http://www.ecs.org

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Joyce, B., & Weil, M. (1996). *Models of teaching.* 5th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Sapon-Shevin, Mara. (1996). Celebrating diversity, creating community: Curriculum that honors and builds on differences. In S. B. Stainback, & W.C. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators.* Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co: Baltimore, MD.

*In addition, go to the Quick Find and other search features on the Center's website, and you will find many relevant resources to topics discussed in this Unit. From the Center website, you can also access the ERIC system and other resource centers through the feature "A Gateway to a World of Resources."

Outline What Has Been Learned So Far

Use this worksheet to develop a brief outline of what seem to be the most important features of good teaching.

(1) Probably the easiest way to begin is with a straightforward list. Write down what you recall and then go back over the reading and add to your list.

(2) Look over the table of contents for the reading and use it as a way to begin to organize your list into an outline.

(3) Revise the outline in any way that improves how you want to organize your thinking about "good teaching."

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Discussion Session to Explore
the Outlined Features

One of the best ways to explore what you are learning is to discuss it with others. Although this can be done informally with friends and colleagues, a regular study group can be a wonderful learning experience – if it is properly designed and facilitated.

Below are a few guidelines for study groups involved in pursuing a Training Tutorial.

(1) Put up a notice about the Training Tutorial, along with a sign up list for those who might be interested participating in a study group as they pursue the tutorial. On the sign-up list, offer several times for a meeting to organize the group.

(2) Inform interested parties about the where and when of the meeting to organize the group.

(3) Group decides on the following:

    (a) meeting time, place, number and length of sessions, amenities, etc.

    (b) how to handle session facilitation (e.g., starting and stopping on time, keeping the group task-focused and productive)

(4) All group members should commit to keeping the discussion focused as designated by the tutorial content and related activities. If the discussion stimulates other content, set up a separate opportunity to explore these matters.

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Outline Revision

What is Good Teaching?

✔ *What more has been learned?*

✔ *What major shifts have occurred in thinking?*

After any discussion and as other aspects of the tutorial are explored, it is important to revisit the list of "What is Happening and What is Needed?" and consider what revisions may be in order.

Because of the fundamental nature of the topic, we recommend creating a personal journal in which new ideas and insights are regularly recorded related to the question of "What is Good Teaching?" A periodic review of the journal provides an ongoing process for considering revision in the ever-developing outline that reflects your ongoing learning.

Also, if feasible, it is useful to pull together the study group periodically to discuss any major changes in thinking.

Review the Self-Study Survey Entitled:

Classroom -Focused Enabling

Attached is a self-study survey. For purposes of this tutorial, just read ov er the items. These provide a sense of what might take place in a classroom designed to ensure that all students hav e an equal opportunity to succeed.

The survey itself can be used at school in a num ber of ways (see the introductory page entitled: "About the Self-Study Process to Enhance the Com ponent for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning").

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Mental Health in Schools
Center
Training and Technical Assistance

Excerpt From

From the Center's Clearinghouse ... *

A Resource Aid Packet on

Addressing Barriers to Learning:
A Set of Surveys to Map What a School
Has and What it Needs

HRSA

CMHS
Center for Mental Health Services
SAMHSA

ERIC
Full Text Provided by ERIC

Surveying and Planning to Enhance Efforts to Address Barriers to Learning at a School Site

The following resource aides were designed as a set of self-study surveys to aid school staff as they try to map and analyze their current programs, services, and systems with a view to developing a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to addressing barriers to learning.

In addition to an overview Survey of System Status, there are status surveys to help think about ways to address barriers to student learning by enhancing

- classroom-based efforts to enhance learning and performance of those with mild-moderate learning, behavior, and emotional problems

- support for transitions

- prescribed student and family assistance

- crisis assistance and prevention

- home involvement in schooling

- outreach to develop greater community involvement and support-- including recruitment of volunteers

- Finally, included is a special survey focusing on School-Community Partnerships.

About the Self-Study Process to Enhance
the Component for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning

This type of self-study is best done by teams.

However, it is *NOT* about having another meeting and/or getting through a task!

It is about moving on to better outcomes for students through

- working together to understand what is and what might be

- clarifying gaps, priorities, and next steps

Done right it can

- counter fragmentation and redundancy
- mobilize support and direction
- enhance linkages with other resources
- facilitate effective systemic change
- integrate all facets of systemic change and counter marginalization of the component to address barriers to student learning

A group of school staff (teachers, support staff, administrators) could use the items to discuss how the school currently addresses any or all of the areas of the component to address barriers (the enabling component). Members of a team initially might work separately in responding to survey items, but the real payoff comes from group discussions.

The items on a survey help to clarify
- what is currently being done and whether it is being done well and
- what else is desired.

This provides a basis for a discussion that

- analyzes whether certain activities should no longer be pursued (because they are not effective or not as high a priority as some others that are needed).

- decides about what resources can be redeployed to enhance current efforts that need embellishment

- identifies gaps with respect to important areas of need.

- establishes priorities, strategies, and timelines for filling gaps.

The discussion and subsequent analyses also provide a form of quality review.

Classroom-Focused Enabling

The emphasis here is on enhancing classroom-based efforts to enable learning by increasing teacher effectiveness for preventing and handling problems in the classroom. This is accomplished by providing personalized help to increase a teacher's array of strategies for working with a wider range of individual differences (e.g., through use of accommodative and compensatory strategies, peer tutoring and volunteers to enhance social and academic support, resource and itinerant teachers and counselors in the classroom). Through classroom-focused enabling programs, teachers are better prepared to address similar problems when they arise in the future. Anticipated outcomes are increased mainstream efficacy and reduced need for special services.

Please indicate all items that apply.

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. What programs for *personalized professional development* are currently at the site?				
1. Are teachers clustered for support and staff development?	___	___	___	___
2. Are models used to provide demonstrations?	___	___	___	___
3. Are workshops and readings offered regularly?	___	___	___	___
4. Is consultation available from persons with special expertise such as				
a. members of the Student Success Team?	___	___	___	___
b. resource specialists and/or special education teachers?	___	___	___	___
c. members of special committees?	___	___	___	___
d. bilingual and/or other coordinators?	___	___	___	___
e. counselors?	___	___	___	___
f. other? (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
5. Is there a formal mentoring program?	___	___	___	___
6. Is there staff social support?	___	___	___	___
7. Is there formal conflict mediation/resolution for staff?	___	___	___	___
8. Is there assistance in learning to use advanced technology?	___	___	___	___
9. Other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
B. What supports are available in the classroom to help students identified as having problems?				
1. Are "personnel" added to the class (or before/after school)?	___	___	___	___
If yes, what types of personnel are brought in:	___	___	___	___
a. aides (e.g., paraeducators; other paid assistants)?	___	___	___	___
b. older students?	___	___	___	___
c. other students in the class?	___	___	___	___
d. volunteers?	___	___	___	___
e. parents?	___	___	___	___
f. resource teacher?	___	___	___	___
g. specialists?	___	___	___	___
h. other? (specify)_____	___	___	___	___
2. Are materials and activities upgraded to				
a. ensure there are enough basic supplies in the classroom?				
b. increase the range of high-motivation activities (keyed to the interests of students in need of special attention)?	___	___	___	___
c. include advanced technology?	___	___	___	___
d. other? (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
3. Are regular efforts to foster social and emotional development supplement?	___	___	___	___

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?

C. What is done to assist a teacher who has difficulty with limited English speaking students?

1. Is the student reassigned? — — — —
2. Does the teacher receive professional development related to working with limited English speaking students? — — — —
3. Does the bilingual coordinator offer consultation? — — — —
4. Is a bilingual aide assigned to the class? — — — —
5. Are volunteers brought in to help (e.g., parents, peers)? — — — —
6. Other? (specify) _____

D. What types of technology are available to the teachers?

1. Are there computers in the classroom? — — — —
2. Is there a computer lab? — — — —
3. Is computer assisted instruction offered? — — — —
4. Are there computer literacy programs? — — — —
5. Are computer programs used to address ESL needs? — — — —
6. Does the classroom have video recording capability? — — — —
7. Is instructional TV used in the classroom?
   c. videotapes? — — — —
   d. PBS? — — — —
8. Is there a multimedia lab? — — — —
9. Other? (specify) _____

E. What curricular enrichment and adjunct programs do teachers use?

1. Are library activities used regularly? — — — —
2. Is music/art used regularly? — — — —
3. Is health education a regular part of the curriculum? — — — —
4. Are student performances regular events? — — — —
5. Are there several field trips a year? — — — —
6. Are there student council and other leaders opportunities? — — — —
7. Are there school environment projects such as
   a. mural painting? — — — —
   b. horticulture/gardening? — — — —
   c. school clean-up and beautification? — — — —
   d. other? (specify) _____
8. Are there special school-wide events such as
   a. clubs and similar organized activities? — — — —
   b. publication of a student newspaper? — — — —
   c. sales events (candy, t shirts)? — — — —
   d. poster contests? — — — —
   e. essay contests? — — — —
   f. a book fair? — — — —
   g. pep rallies/contests? — — — —
   h. attendance competitions? — — — —
   i. attendance awards/assemblies? — — — —
   j. other? (specify) _____
9. Are guest contributors used (e.g., outside speakers/performers)? — — — —
10. Other (specify)? _____

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?

F. What programs for temporary out of class help are currently at the site?

1. Is there a family center providing student and family assistance? — — — —
2. Are there designated problem remediation specialists? — — — —
3. Is there a "time out" room? — — — —
4. Other? (specify) _____ — — — —

G. Are there school-wide approaches for
1. Creating and maintaining a caring and supportive climate? — — — —
2. Supporting high standards for positive behavior? — — — —

H. What programs are used to train aides, volunteers, and other "assistants" who come into the classrooms to work with students who need help?

_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____

I. Which of the following can teachers request as special interventions?

1. Family problem solving conferences — — — —
2. Exchange of students as an opportunity for improving the match and for a fresh start — — — —
3. Referral for specific service — — — —
4. Other (specify) _____ — — — —

J Is there ongoing training for team members concerned with the area of Classroom-Focused Enabling? — — — —

K. Please indicate below any other ways that are used at the school to assist a teacher's efforts to address barriers to students' learning.

_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____

L. Please indicate below other things you want the school to do to assist a teacher's efforts to address barriers to students' learning.

_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____

Topic 2 : Engaging and Re-engaging Students in Classroom Learning: Understanding Student Motivation

Reading & Activity

		Page
Reading.	From: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling*(Module II, Unit B)	49
Activity.	Use the various attached materials as stimuli and tools to focus application of what has been read	
	(1 *Write and discuss: Engaged and unengaged learning -* (use the attached worksheet as guide)	72
	(2) *Classroom observation - Engaged learning* (see attached guide)	73

Excerpt From

Continuing Education

Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling

February, 2001

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

HRSA
Health Resources and Services Administration
Maternal and Child Health Bureau

CMHS
Center for Mental Health Services
SAMHSA
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

Unit B

Objectives

The intent in this Unit is to help you learn more about:

(1)   *two key components of motivation and their
      implications for teaching* (After going over the
      material, be sure you can state why overreliance on
      extrinsic reinforcement is not a good approach to
      instruction.)

(2)   *the motivational implications of instructional
      options and student decision making* (After going
      over the material, be sure you can discuss at least
      one positive outcome of enabling students to make
      decisions about their classroom program and at least
      one negative outcome of not doing so.)

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Outline for Unit B

1) About Motivation
   a) Motivation and Learning
   b) Two Key Components of Motivation: Valuing and Expectations
   c) Overreliance on Extrinsics: A Bad Match
2) Options
3) Learner Decision Making
4) Research on Preferences, Choice, Control, and Student Engagement
A Few Related References

> I find the great thing in this world
> is not so much where we stand,
> as in which direction we are moving.
> Oliver W. Holmes

Unit B
Engaging Students (and their Families) in Learning:
Real and Valued Options and Decision Making

Once upon a time, the animals decided that their lives and their society would be improved by setting up a school. The basics identified as necessary for survival in the animal world were swimming, running, climbing, jumping, and flying. Instructors were hired to teach these activities, and it was agreed that all the animals would take all the courses. This worked out well for the administrators, but it caused some problems for the students.

The squirrel, for example, was an A student in running, jumping, and climbing but had trouble in flying class, not because of an inability to fly, for she could sail from the top of one tree to another with ease, but because the flying curriculum called for taking off from the ground. The squirrel was drilled in ground-to-air take-offs until she was exhausted and developed charley horses from overexertion. This caused her to perform poorly in her other classes, and her grades dropped to D's.

The duck was outstanding in swimming class -- even better than the teacher. But she did so poorly in running that she was transferred to a remedial class. There she practiced running until her webbed feet were so badly damaged that she was only an average swimmer. But since average was acceptable, nobody saw this as a problem -- except the duck.

In contrast, the rabbit was excellent in running, but, being terrified of water, he was an extremely poor swimmer. Despite a lot of makeup work in swimming class, he never could stay afloat. He soon became frustrated and uncooperative and was eventually expelled because of behavior problems.

The eagle naturally enough was a brilliant student in flying class and even did well in running and jumping. He had to be severely disciplined in climbing class, however, because he insisted that his way of getting to the top of the tree was faster and easier.

It should be noted that the parents of the groundhog pulled him out of school because the administration would not add classes in digging and burrowing. The groundhogs, along with the gophers and badgers, got a prairie dog to start a private school. They all have become strong opponents of school taxes and proponents of voucher systems.

By graduation time, the student with the best grades in the animal school was a compulsive ostrich who could run superbly and also could swim, fly, and climb a little. She, of course, was made class valedictorian and received scholarship offers from all the best universities.

(George H. Reeves with giving this parable to American educators.)

I suspect that many children would learn arithmetic,
and learn it better, if it were illegal.
John Holt

Curriculum content is learned as a result of transactions between the learner and environment. The essence of the teaching process is that of creating an environment that first can mobilize the learner to pursue the curriculum and then can maintain that mobilization, while effectively facilitating learning.

Of course, no teacher has control over all the important elements involved in learning. Indeed, teachers actually can affect only a relatively small segment of the physical environment and social context in which learning is to occur. Because this is so, it is essential that teachers begin with an appreciation of what is likely to affect a student's positive and negative motivation to learn. For example, they should pay particular attention to the following points:

- Optimal performance and learning require motivational readiness. Readiness should not be viewed in the old sense of waiting until an individual is interested. Rather, it should be understood in the contemporary sense of establishing environments that are perceived by students as caring, supportive places and offering stimulating activities that are perceived as vivid (and at times novel), challenging, valued, and doable.

- Teachers must not only try to increase motivation -- especially intrinsic motivation -- but must also avoid practices that decrease motivation. For example, they must be careful not to overrely on extrinsics to entice and reward because to do so may decrease intrinsic motivation.

- Motivation represents both a process and an outcome concern. For example, the program must be designed to maintain, enhance, and expand intrinsic motivation for pursuing current learning activities and learning beyond the lesson.

- Increasing intrinsic motivation involves affecting a student's thoughts, feelings, and decisions. In general, the intent is to use procedures that have the potential to reduce negative and increase positive feelings, thoughts, and coping strategies with respect to learning. With specific respect to learning and behavior problems, this means especially identifying and minimizing experiences that maintain or may increase avoidance motivation.

The point about minimizing experiences that maintain or may increase avoidance motivation deserves special emphasis. Students who manifest learning, behavior, and/or emotional problems may have developed extremely negative perceptions of teachers and programs. In such cases, they are not likely to be open to people and activities that look like "the same old thing." Major changes in approach are required if the student is even to perceive that something has changed in the situation. Minimally, exceptional efforts must be made to have these students (1) view the teacher as supportive (rather than controlling and indifferent) and (2) perceive content, outcomes, and activity options as personally valuable and obtainable.

In marked contrast to students who have developed negative attitudes, those who are intrinsically motivated tend to seek out challenges related to classroom learning and do more than what is required. In doing so, they tend to learn more and learn more deeply than do classmates who are extrinsically motivated.

Outline for this Unit

1) About Motivation
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2) Options

3) Learner Decision Making

4) Research on Preferences, Choice, Control, and Student Engagement

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Stop, think, discuss

Observe a group of students who are involved in the same classroom activity. Identify one who appears highly engaged in learning and one who seems very bored. After observing for a while, write down your views about why each of the students is responding so differently to the same activity.

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1) About Motivation

> *External reinforcement may indeed get a particular act going*
> *and may lead to its repetition, but it does not nourish, reliably,*
> *the long course of learning by which [one] slowly builds in*
> *[one's] own way a serviceable model of what the world is and*
> *what it can be.*
>
> Jerome Bruner

Maria doesn't want to work on improving her reading. Not only is her *motivational readiness* for learning in this area low, but she also has a fairly high level of *avoidance motivation* for reading.

In contrast, David is motivationally ready to improve reading skills, but he has very little motivation to do so in the ways his teacher proposes. He has high motivation for the *outcome* but low motivation for the *processes* prescribed for getting there.

Matt often gets very motivated to do whatever is prescribed to help him learn to read better, but his motivation starts to disappear after a few weeks of hard work. He has trouble maintaining a sufficient amount of ongoing or *continuing motivation*.

Helena appeared motivated to learn and did learn many new vocabulary words and improved her reading comprehension on several occasions over the years she was in special school programs. Her motivation to read after school, however, has never increased. It was assumed that as her skills improved, her attitude toward reading would too. But it never has.

No one expected James to become a good reader because of low scores on tests related to phonics ability and reading comprehension in 2nd grade. However, his teacher found some beginning level books on his favorite sport (baseball) and found that he really wanted to read them. He asked her and other students to help him with words and took the books home to read (where he also asked an older sister for some help). His skills started to improve rapidly and he was soon reading on a par with his peers.

As noted in the report on *High Schools of the Millenium:*

Many students say that high schools are not working. They feel their classes are irrelevant and boring, that they are just passing time until they can graduate to do something meaningful, such as go to work or college. . . .

Many students also are not able to connect what they are being taught with what they feel they need for success in their later life. This disengagement from the learning process is manifested in many ways, one of which is the lack of student responsibility for learning. In many ways the traditional educational structure, one in which teachers "pour knowledge into the vessel" (the student), has placed all responsibility for learning on the teacher, none on the student. Schools present lessons neatly packaged, without acknowledging or accepting the "messiness" of learning-by-doing and through experience and activity. Schools often do not provide students a chance to accept responsibility for learning, as that might actually empower students. Students in many schools have become accustomed to being spoon-fed the material to master tests, and they have lost their enthusiasm for exploration, dialogue, and reflection -- all critical steps in the learning process.

a) Motivation and Learning

What the preceding examples show is that

- motivation is a prerequisite to learning, and its absence may be a cause of learning problems, a factor maintaining such problems, or both

- individuals may be motivated toward the idea of obtaining a certain learning outcome but may not be motivated to pursue certain learning processes

- individuals may be motivated to start to work on overcoming their learning problem but may not maintain their motivation

- individuals may be motivated to learn basic skills but maintain negative attitudes about the area of functioning and thus never use the skills except when they must

- motivated learners can do more than others might expect

Obviously, motivation must be considered in matching a learner with a learning environment. What's required is

- developing a high level of motivational readiness for overcoming the learning problem (including reduction of avoidance motivation) -- so the learner is mobilized

- establishing processes that elicit, enhance, and maintain motivation for overcoming the problem -- so the learner stays mobilized

- enhancing motivation as an outcome so that the desire to pursue a particular area, such as reading, increasingly becomes a positive intrinsic attitude that mobilizes learning outside the teaching situation

An increased understanding of motivation clarifies how essential it is to avoid processes that make students feel controlled and coerced, that limit the range of options with regard to materials, and that limit the focus to a day-in, day-out emphasis on the problem to be remedied. From a motivational perspective, such processes are seen as likely to produce avoidance reactions among students and thus reduce opportunities for positive learning and for development of positive attitudes.

b) Two Key Components of Motivation: Valuing and Expectations

Two common reasons people give for not bothering to learn something are "It's not worth it" and "I know I won't be able to do it." In general, the amount of time and energy spent on an activity seems dependent on how much the activity is valued by the person and on the person's expectation that what is valued will be attained without too much cost.

About Valuing. What makes something worth doing? Prizes? Money? Merit awards? Praise?

Certainly!

We all do a great many things, some of which we don't even like to do, because the activity leads to a desired reward. Similarly, we often do things to escape punishment or other negative consequences that we prefer to avoid.

Rewards and punishments may be material or social. For those with learning problems, there has been widespread use of such "incentives." Rewards often have taken the form of systematically giving points or tokens that can be exchanged for candy, prizes, praise, free time, or social interactions. Punishments have included loss of free time and other privileges, added work, fines, isolation, censure, and suspension. Grades have been used both as rewards and punishments.

Because people will do things to obtain rewards or avoid punishment, rewards and punishment often are called *reinforcers*. Because they generally come from sources outside the person, they often are called *extrinsics*.

Extrinsic reinforcers are easy to use and can have some powerful immediate effects on behavior. Therefore, they have been widely adopted in the fields of special education and psychology. Unfortunately, the immediate effects are usually limited to very specific behaviors and often are short-term. Moreover, as discussed in the next section, extensive use of extrinsics seems to have some undesired effects. And sometimes the available extrinsics simply aren't powerful enough to get the desired results.

Although the source of extrinsic reinforcers is outside the person, the meaning or value attached to them comes from inside. What makes some extrinsic factor rewarding to you is the fact that you experience it as a reward. And what makes it a highly valued reward is that you highly value it. If you don't like candy, there is not much point in our offering it to you as a reward.

Furthermore, because the use of extrinsics has limits, it's fortunate that we sometimes do things even without apparent extrinsic reason. In fact, a lot of what we learn and spend time doing is done for intrinsic reasons. Curiosity is a good example. Our curiosity leads us to learn a great deal. Curiosity seems to be an innate quality that leads all of us to seek stimulation and avoid boredom.

We also pursue some things because of what has been described as an innate striving for competence; people seem to value feeling competent. We try to conquer some challenges, and if none are around, we usually seek one out. Of course, if the challenges confronting us seem unconquerable or make us too uncomfortable (e.g., too anxious or exhausted), we try to put them aside and move on to something more promising.

Another important intrinsic motivator appears to be an internal push toward self-determination. People seem to value feeling and thinking that they have some degree of choice and freedom in deciding what to do.

And people seem to be intrinsically moved toward establishing and maintaining relationships with others. That is, people tend to value feelings of being inter-personally connected.

About Expectations. We may value something a great deal; but if we believe we can't do it or can't obtain it without paying too great a personal price, we are likely to look for other valued activities and outcomes to pursue. Expectations about these matters are influenced by previous experiences.

Areas where we have been unsuccessful are apt to be seen as unlikely paths to valued extrinsic rewards or intrinsic satisfactions. We may perceive past failure as the result of our lack of ability; or we may believe that more effort was required than we were willing to give. We may also feel that the help we needed to succeed was not available. If our perception is that very little has changed with regard to these factors, our expectation of succeeding at this time will be rather low.

> *Learning environments that provide a good match increase expectations of success by providing a learner with the support and guidance he or she wants and needs.*

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In general, then, what we value interacts with our expectations, and motivation is one product of this interaction.

Motivation theory captures the sense of this as follows:

$$E \times V$$

Can you decipher this? (Don't go on until you've tried.)

Hint: the "x" is a multiplication sign.

In case the equation stumped you, don't be surprised. The main introduction to motivational thinking that most teachers have been given in the past involves some form of reionforcement theory (which essentially deals with extrinsic motivation). Thus, all this may be new to you, even though motivational theorists have been wrestling with it for a long time, and intutively, you probably understand much of what they are talking about.

$$E \times V = M$$

The E deals with an individual's expectations about outcome (in school often this is about expectations of success or failure). The V deals with valuing, with valuing influenced by both intrinsic values and extrinsic reinforcers, albeit in a somewhat less than intutive way as we shall cover shortly. Thus, in general terms, motivation can be thought of in terms of expectancies times valuing.

Such theory recognizes that human beings are thinking and feeling organisms and that intrinsic factors can be powerful motivators. This understanding of human motivation has major implications for learning, teaching, and parenting.

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Within some limits (which we need not discuss here), high expectations and high valuing produce high motivation, while low expectations (E) and high valuing (V) produce relatively weak motivation.

David greatly values the idea of improving his reading. He is unhappy with his limited skills and knows he would feel a lot better about himself if he could read. But, as far as he is concerned, everything his reading teacher asks him to do is a waste of time. He's done it all before, and he *still* has a reading problem. Sometimes he will do the exercises, but just to earn points to go on a field trip and to avoid the consequences of not cooperating. Often, however, he tries to get out of doing his work by distracting the teacher. After all, why should he do things he is certain won't help him read any better.

$$\text{Expectancy} \times \text{Valuing} = \text{Motivation}$$
$$0 \quad \times \quad 1.0 \quad = \quad 0$$

High expectations paired with low valuing also yield low approach motivation. Thus, the oft-cited remedial strategy of guaranteeing success by designing tasks to be very easy is not as simple a recipe as it sounds. Indeed, the approach is likely to fail if the outcome (e.g., improved reading, learning math fundamentals) is not valued or if the tasks are experienced as too boring or if doing them is seen as too embarrassing. In such cases. a strong negative value is attached to the activities, and this contributes to avoidance motivation.

$$\text{Expectancy} \times \text{Valuing} = \text{Motivation}$$
$$1.0 \quad \times \quad 0 \quad = \quad 0$$

Throughout this discussion of valuing and expectations, the emphasis has been on the fact that motivation is not something that can be determined solely by forces outside the individual. Others can plan activities and outcomes to influence motivation and learning; however, how the activities and outcomes are experienced determines whether they are pursued (or avoided) with a little or a lot of effort and ability. Appropriate appreciation of this fact is necessary in designing a match for optimal learning (see Exhibit on next page).

Exhibit

Is It Worth It?

In a small town, there were a few youngsters who were labeled as handicapped. Over the years, a local bully had taken it upon himself to persecute them. In one recent incident, he sent a gang of young ragamuffins to harass one of his classmates who had just been diagnosed as having learning disabilities. He told the youngsters that the boy was retarded, and they could have some fun calling him a "retard."

Day after day in the schoolyard the gang sought the boy out. "Retard! Retard!" they hooted at him.

The situation became serious. The boy took the matter so much to heart that he began to brood and spent sleepless nights over it. Finally, out of desperation, he told his teacher about the problem, and together they evolved a plan.

The following day, when the little ones came to jeer at him, he confronted them saying,

"From today on I'll give any of you who calls me a 'retard' a quarter."

Then he put his hand in his pocket and, indeed, gave each boy a quarter.

Well, delighted with their booty, the youngsters, of course, sought him out the following day and began to shrill, "Retard! Retard!"

The boy looked at them -- smiling. He put his hand in his pocket and gave each of them a dime, saying, "A quarter is too much -- I can only afford a dime today."

Well, the boys went away satisfied because, after all, a dime was money too.

However, when they came the next day to hoot, the boy gave them only a penny each.

"Why do we get only a penny today?" they yelled.

"That's all I can afford."

"But two days ago you gave us a quarter, and yesterday we got a dime. It's not fair!"

"Take it or leave it. That's all you're going to get."

"Do you think we're going to call you a 'retard' for one lousy penny?"

"So don't."

And they didn't.

(Adapted from a fable presented by Ausubel, 1948)

c) Overreliance on Extrinsics: A Bad Match

A growing appreciation of the importance of a learner's perceptions has led researchers to a very important set of findings about some undesired effects resulting from overreliance on extrinsics.

Would offering you a reward for learning this material make you more highly motivated? Maybe. But a reward might also reduce your motivation for pursuing the topic in the future. Why might this happen?

You might perceive the proposed reward as an effort to control your behavior. Or you may see it as an indication that the activity needs to be rewarded to make you want to do it. Such perceptions may start you thinking and feeling differently about what you have been doing. For example, you may start to resent the effort to control or bribe you. Or you may begin to think there must be something wrong with the activity if someone has to offer a reward for doing it. Also, later you may come to feel that the topic is not worth pursuing any longer because no reward is being offered.

Any of these thoughts and feelings may cause you to shift the intrinsic value you originally placed on learning about the topic. The point is that extrinsic rewards can undermine intrinsic reasons for doing things (see the Exhibit on the preceeding page). Although this may not always be a bad thing, it is an important consideration to think about in deciding to rely on extrinsic reinforcers (see Exhibit on the next page).

You might want to think about how grades affect your motivation. In the past:

> Have good grades tended to increase your motivation?
> Have poor grades increased or decreased your motivation?
> Did you feel you were working for a grade or to learn?
> If you ever took a course on a pass/fail basis, instead of for a grade,
>   did it affect your motivation?

How would the offer of bonus pay for teachers who bring test scores up to some standard effect your motivation and that of colleagues?

Because of the prominent role they play in school programs, grading and other performance evaluations are a special concern in any discussion of the overreliance on extrinsics as a way to reinforce positive learning. Although grades often are discussed as simply providing information about how well a student is doing, many, if not most, students perceive each grade as a reward or a punishment. Certainly, many teachers use grades to try to control behavior -- to reward those who do assignments well and to punish those who don't. Sometimes parents add to a student's perception of grades as extrinsic reinforcers by giving a reward for good report cards.

Exhibit

Rewards -- To Control or Inform?

As Ed Deci has cogently stressed:

Rewards are generally used to control behavior. Children are sometimes rewarded with candy when they do what adults expect of them. Workers are rewarded with pay for doing what their supervisors want. People are rewarded with social approval or positive feedback for fitting into their social reference group. In all these situations, the aim of the reward is to control the person's behavior -- to make him continue to engage in acceptable behaviors. And rewards often do work quite effectively as controllers. Further, whether it works or not, each reward has a controlling aspect. Therefore, the first aspect to every reward (including feedback) is a controlling aspect.

However, rewards also provide information to the person about his effectiveness in various situations. When Eric received a bonus for outstanding performance on his job, the reward provided him with information that he was competent and self-determining in relation to his job. When David did well at school, his mother told him she was proud of him, and when Amanda learned to ride a bike, she was given a brand new two-wheeler. David and Amanda knew from the praise and bicycle that they were competent and self-determining in relation to school and bicycling. The second aspect of every reward is the information it provides a person about his competence and self-determination.

When the controlling aspect of the reward is very salient, such as in the case of money or the avoidance of punishment, [a] change in perceived locus of causality . . . will occur. The person is `controlled' by the reward and s/he perceives that the locus of causality is external.

We all have our own horror stories about the negative impact of grades on ourselves and others. In general, grades have a way of reshaping what students do with their learning opportunities. In choosing what to study, students strongly consider what grades they are likely to receive. As deadlines for assignments and tests get closer, interest in the topic gives way to interest in maximizing one's grade. Discussion of interesting issues and problems related to the area of study gives way to questions about how long a paper should be and what will be on the test. None of this is surprising given that poor grades can result in having to repeat a course or being denied certain immediate and long-range opportunities. It is simply a good example of how systems that overemphasize extrinsics may have a serious negative impact on intrinsic motivation for learning.

And if the impact of current practices is harmful to those who are able learners, imagine the impact on students with learning and behavior problems!

The point for emphasis here is that learning involves matching motivation. Matching motivation requires an appreciation of the importance of a learner's perceptions in determining the right mix of intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for learning. It also requires understanding the key role played by expectations related to outcome.

When a good match is achieved, negative attitudes and behaviors tend to decrease. They are replaced by an expanding interest in learning, new feelings of competence and self-determination, and an increase in the amount of risk taken in efforts to learn.

Three major implications of the above are that a program must provide for

- a broad range of content, outcomes, and procedural options -- including a personalized structure to facilitate learning

- learner decision making

- ongoing information about learning and performance

Such procedures are seen as fundamental to mobilizing and maintaining learner motivation in classroom programs.

In the next section, we briefly explore the first two of these matters.

---

2) Options

If the only decision Maria can make is between reading book A, which she hates, and reading book B, which she loathes, she is more likely to be motivated to avoid making any decision than to be pleased with the opportunity to decide for herself. Even if she chooses one of the books over the other, the motivational effects the teacher wants are unlikely to occur. Thus:

Choices have to include valued and feasible options.

Maria clearly doesn't like to work on her reading problem at school in any way. In contrast, David wants to improve his reading, but he just doesn't like the programmed materials the teacher has planned for him to work on each day. James would rather read about science than the adventure stories his teacher has assigned. Matt will try anything if someone will sit and help him with the work. Thus:

Options usually are needed for (a) content and
outcomes and (b) processes and structure.

Every teacher knows a classroom program has to have variety. There are important differences among students with regard to the topics and procedures that currently interest and bore them. And for students with learning, behavior, and/or emotional problems, more variety seems necessary.

As will be stressed in Unit D, a greater proportion of individuals with avoidance or low motivation for learning at school are found among those with learning, behavior, and/or emotional problems. For these individuals, few currently available options may be appealing. How much greater the range of options needs to be depends primarily on how strong avoidance tendencies are. In general, however, the initial strategies for working with such students involve

- further expansion of the range of options for learning (if necessary, this includes avoiding established curriculum content and processes)

- primarily emphasizing areas in which the student has made personal and active decisions

- accommodation of a wider range of behavior than usually is tolerated (e.g., a widening of limits on the amount and types of "differences" tolerated)

I KNOW YOU LIKE LUNCH-TIME BEST,
BUT THERE MUST BE SOMETHING ELSE
YOU'D LIKE TO DO AT SCHOOL!

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3) Learner Decision Making

From a motivational perspective, one of the most basic instructional concerns is the way in which students are involved in making decisions about options. Critically, decision-making processes can lead to perceptions of coercion and control or to perceptions of real choice (e.g., being in control of one's destiny, being self-determining). Such differences in perception can affect whether a student is mobilized to pursue or avoid planned learning activities and outcomes.

People who have the opportunity to make decisions among valued and feasible options tend to be committed to following through. In contrast, people who are not involved in decisions often have little commitment to what is decided. And if individuals disagree with a decision that affects them, besides not following through they may react with hostility.

Thus, essential to programs focusing on motivation are decision-making processes that affect perceptions of choice, value, and probable outcome. Optimally, the hope is to maximize perceptions of having a choice from among personally worthwhile options and attainable outcomes. At the very least, it is necessary to minimize perceptions of having no choice, little value, and probable failure.

Three special points should be noted about decision-making.

- Decisions are based on current perceptions. As perceptions shift, it is necessary to reevaluate decisions and modify them in ways that maintain a mobilized learner.

- Effective and efficient decision making is a basic skill, and one that is as fundamental as the three Rs. Thus, if an individual does not do it well initially, this is not a reason to move away from learner involvement in decision making. Rather, it is an assessment of a need and a reason to use the process not only for motivational purposes, but to improve this basic skill.

- Among students manifesting learning, behavior, and/or emotional problems, it is well to remember that the most fundamental decision some of these individuals have to make is whether they want to participate or not. That is why it may be necessary in specific cases temporarily to put aside established options and standards. Before some students will decide to participate in a proactive way, they have to perceive the learning environment as positively different -- and quite a bit so -- from the one in which they had so much failure.

4) Research on Preferences, Choice, Control, and Student Engagement

As noted earlier in this unit, student disengagement in classroom learning is widespread. Why is this the case?

In their book *Making it Happen: Student Involvement in Education Planning, Decision Making, and Instruction* (1998; Paul Brookes Publisher) Wehmeyer and Sands state:

> *Getting students involved in their education programs is more than having them participate; it is connecting students with their education, enabling them to influence and affect the program and, indeed, enabling them to become enwrapped and engrossed in their educational experiences.*

Reviews of the literature on human motivation stress that providing students with options and involving them in decision making is an effective way to enhance their engagement in learning and improve their learning and performance (e.g., see the Wehmeyer & Sands book, read the Exhibit on the following pages, and the readings related to this unit). For example, numerous studies have shown that opportunities to express preferences and make choices lead to greater motivation, academic gains, increases in productivity and on-task behavior, and decreases in aggressive behavior. Similarly, researchers report that student participation in goal setting leads to more positive outcomes (e.g., higher commitment to a goal and increased performance).

> *Simply put, people who have the opportunity to make decisions among valued and feasible options tend to be committed to following through.*

Conversely, studies indicate that student preferences and involvement tend to diminish when activities are chosen for them.

> *That is, people who are not involved in decisions often have little commitment to what is decided.*

Moreover, if individuals disagree with a decision that affects them, besides not following through they may react hostilely.

> *The implications for the classroom of all the research in this area seem evident: students who are given more say about what goes on related to their learning at school are likely to show higher degrees of engagement and academic success. Optimally, this means that ensuring decision-making processes maximize perceptions of having a choice from among personally worthwhile options and attainable outcomes. At the very least, it is necessary to minimize perceptions of having no choice, little value, and probable failure.*

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Exhibit

Meaningful, Engaged Learning

(excerpted from article on NCREL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory)

In recent years, researchers have formed a strong consensus on the importance of engaged learning in schools and classrooms. This consensus, together with a recognition of the changing needs of the 21st century, has stimulated the development of specific indicators of engaged learning. Jones, Valdez, Nowakowski, and Rasmussen (1994) developed the indicators described below . . . .

1. Vision of Engaged Learning

Successful, engaged learners are responsible for their own learning. These students are self-regulated and able to define their own learning goals and evaluate their own achievement. They are also energized by their learning, their joy of learning leads to a lifelong passion for solving problems, understanding, and taking the next step in their thinking . . . .

2. Tasks for Engaged Learning

In order to have engaged learning, tasks need to be challenging, authentic, and multidisciplinary. Such tasks are typically complex and involve sustained amounts of time. They are authentic in that they correspond to the tasks in the home and workplaces of today and tomorrow. Collaboration around authentic tasks often takes place with peers and mentors within school as well as with family members and others in the real world outside of school. These tasks often require integrated instruction that incorporates problem-based learning and curriculum by project.

3. Assessment of Engaged Learning

Assessment of engaged learning involves presenting students with an authentic task, project, or investigation, and then observing, interviewing, and examining their presentations and artifacts to assess what they actually know and can do. This assessment, often called performance-based assessment, is generative in that it involves students in generating their own performance criteria and playing a key role in the overall design, evaluation, and reporting of their assessment. The best performance-based assessment has a seamless connection to curriculum and instruction so that it is ongoing. Assessment should represent all meaningful aspects of performance and should have equitable standards that apply to all students.

4. Instructional Models & Strategies for Engaged Learning

The most powerful models of instruction are interactive. Instruction actively engages the learner, and is generative. Instruction encourages the learner to construct and produce knowledge in meaningful ways. Students teach others interactively and interact generatively with their teacher and peers . . . .

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Meaningful, Engaged Learning *(cont.)*

5. Learning Context of Engaged Learning

For engaged learning to happen, the classroom must be conceived of as a knowledge-building learning community. Such communities not only develop shared understandings collaboratively but also create empathetic learning environments that value diversity and multiple perspectives. These communities search for strategies to build on the strengths of all of its members . . .

6. Grouping for Engaged Learning

Collaborative work that is learning-centered often involves small groups or teams of two or more students within a classroom or across classroom boundaries. Heterogeneous groups (including different sexes, cultures, abilities, ages, and socioeconomic backgrounds) offer a wealth of background knowledge and perspectives to different tasks. Flexible grouping, which allows teachers to reconfigure small groups according to the purposes of instruction and incorporates frequent heterogeneous groups, is one of the most equitable means of grouping and ensuring increased learning opportunities.

7. Teacher Roles for Engaged Learning

The role of the teacher in the classroom has shifted from the primary role of information giver to that of facilitator, guide, and learner. As a facilitator, the teacher provides the rich environments and learning experiences needed for collaborative study. The teacher also is required to act as a guide--a role that incorporates mediation, modeling, and coaching. Often the teacher also is a co-learner and co-investigator with the students.

8. Student Roles for Engaged Learning

One important student role is that of explorer. Interaction with the physical world and with other people allows students to discover concepts and apply skills. Students are then encouraged to reflect upon their discoveries, which is essential for the student as a cognitive apprentice. Apprenticeship takes place when students observe and apply the thinking processes used by practitioners. Students also become teachers themselves by integrating what they've learned . . . .

Reference:

Jones, B., Valdez. G, Nowakowski, J., & Rasmussen, C. (1994). *Designing Learning and Technology for Educational Reform.* Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

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Stop, think, discuss

Think about the bored student whom you observed (or another one you have tried to teach).

a. Begin the group discussion with a brief exchange of what each member thinks causes students not to be engaged in a classroom learning activity.

b. Then, discuss ideas for increasing the likelihood that such students will be engaged in learning.

If you want to read more about addressing motivational differences, developing intrinsic motivation, and options and decision making to enhance motivation and learning, see four brief readings that have been included in the accompanying materials.

77

A Few Related References*

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Wehrmeyer, M. L. & Sands, D. J. (1998). *Making it Happen: Student Involvement in Education Planning, Decision Making, and Instruction.* Paul Brookes Publishing Co.

Weiner, B. (1985). *Human motivation.* New York: Springer-Verlag.

*In addition, go to the Quick Find and other search features on the Center's website, and you will find many relevant resources to topics discussed in this Unit. From the Center website, you can also access the ERIC system and other resource centers through the feature "A Gateway to a World of Resources."

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## Write and Discuss

First, use this page to make some notes about what you have learned about the following two matters:

(1) What causes a student not to be engaged in a classroom learning activity?

(2) What works best to engage or reengage students in learning?

After making your notes, share your thinking and elicit reactions and other ideas w ith friends, colleagues, or a study group.
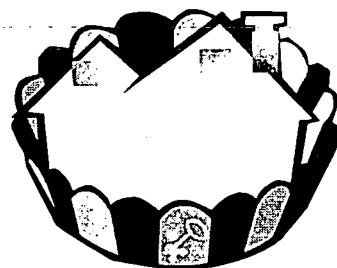
Classroom Observation

Observe a classroom using the attached Exhibit entitled *Meaningful, Engaged Learning* as a guide. (This exhibit is from the Module II, Unit B.) Note whether students appear engaged and how well the classroom reflects the ideas outlined in the Exhibit.

In making observations, it is important to understand the difference betw een the behavior that can be observed and the impressions or judgm ents at which observers arrive. Therefore, use the following two column format in writing down what you "see".

(A) Describe the behavior in as straightforward a manner as you can. (Avoid statements that conclude things were good or bad, more or less, etc.)	(B) What are your judgments/conclusions? (Indicate good-bad impressions, etc.)

Topic 3: Engaging and Re-engaging Students in Classroom Learning: General Classroom Practices

Reading & Activity

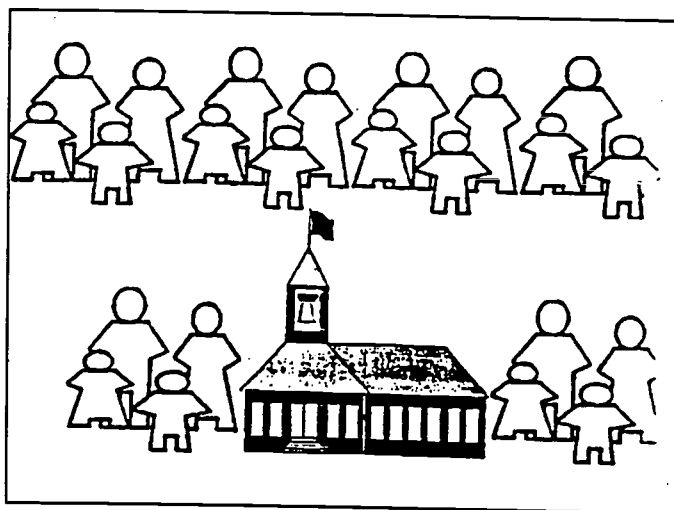|		Page
Reading.	From: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling*(Module II,Unit C)	75
Activity.	Use the various attached materials as stimuli and tools to focus application of what has been read	
	(1) *Lesson Plan* - Facilitating Motivation (see attached guide)	130

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Excerpt From

Continuing Education

Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling

February, 2001
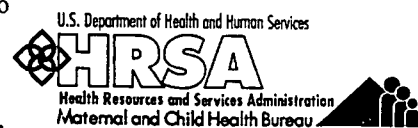
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Health Resources and Services Administration
Maternal and Child Health Bureau

CMHS
Center for Mental Health Services
SAMHSA
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

Unit C

Objectives

The intent in this Unit is to help you learn more about:

(1) *creating a stimulating and manageable learning environment* (After going over the material, be sure you can discuss at least three general strategies you plan to use in enabling active learning in the classroom.)

(2) *classroom structure* (After going over the material, be sure you can discuss the concept of personalized structure for learning and how you will implement such an approach in the classroom.)

(3) *how instructional techniques are used to (a) enhance motivation and (b) support and guide performance and learning* (After going over the material, be sure you can identify at least two techniques related to each area that you will use in the classroom.)

(4) *turning homework into motivated practice* (After going over the material, be sure you can list at least five examples that you will use in developing student homework activities.)

(5) *assessing learning to plan instruction and provide feedback in a nurturing way* (After going over the material, be sure you can discuss the concept of authentic assessment and how you will use such an approach.)

(6) *conferencing as a key process* (After going over the material, be sure you can discuss the importance of regular dialogues with students and how you will include conferencing as a regular facet of your classroom program.)

(7) *volunteers as an invaluable resource* (After going over the material, be sure you can list at least five ways volunteers could help enable the learning and performance of students who are not responding as you would like during a particular activity.)

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Outline for Unit C

1) Creating a Stimulating and Manageable Learning Environment
    a) Designing the Classroom for Active Learning
    b) Grouping Students and Turning Big Classes into Smaller Units
2) Providing Personalized Structure for Learning
3) Instructional Techniques
    a) Using Techniques to Enhance Motivation
    b) Using Techniques to Support and Guide Performance and Learning
4) Turning Homework into Motivated Practice
5) Assessing Student Learning to Plan Instruction and Providing Nurturing Feedback
    a) Planning Instruction
    b) Providing Nurturing Feedback
6) Conferencing as a Key Process
7) Volunteers as an Invaluable Resource
A Few Related References

Unit C
General Strategies for Facilitating Motivated Performance and Practice

*T*eaching is a fascinating and somewhat mysterious process.
Is it an art, or is it an activity that most people can learn to do?

According to Anatole France:

> *Teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards.*

Art or not, people do it everyday. Helping someone grow, develop, and learn is one of the most basic forms of human interaction. In some form, we've all been taught. And we've all experienced satisfaction when we succeed in helping others learn and frustration when they don't "get it."

> Frustration is a common feeling when teaching and learning don't go smoothly. The frustration often leads to a conclusion that something is wrong with the students – a lack of effort ("They would have learned it if they had really been trying.") – or a lack of ability ("They would have learned if they were smarter or not handicapped by a disability.").

Sometimes the frustration isn't just with a particular individual; it is with the poor school performance of large numbers of children and adolescents and with the vast amount of adult illiteracy. Such frustration leads to conclusions that something is wrong with the schools ("Teachers need to get *back to basics!*" "Teachers need to be held accountable."), or with certain groups of people ("These youngsters do badly because their parents don't value education."), or with both.

> The frustration is more than understandable. And where there is frustration, it is not surprising that there are accusations and blaming. But blaming, of course, does not solve the problem.

> *A significant part of the solution is to change the ways in which classrooms are operated so that teachers can effectively pursue the art and craft of teaching.*

The focus throughout this unit is on general strategies for enhancing classroom operations and instruction to mobilize active learning.

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"Let the main object . . . be as follows: To seek and to find a method of instruction, by which teachers may teach less, but learners learn more; by which schools may be the scene of less noise, aversion, and useless labour, but of more leisure, enjoyment, and solid progress. . . .

Comenius (1632 A.D.)

We all recognize the importance of designing classroom instruction to be a good fit with the current capabilities of a given student. Often, however, the same degree of emphasis is not given to individual differences in motivation. In Unit B, we discussed the primary importance of addressing student motivation. From the standpoint of designing classroom instruction, there are four types of motivational considerations.

- *Motivation is a readiness concern.* That is, it is a prerequisite to classroom performance and learning. Poor motivational readiness may be (a) a cause of problems, (b) a factor maintaining problems, or (c) both. Thus, if a student does not have an appropriate level of motivational readiness, strategies must be planned and implemented to develop such readiness (including strategies for reducing avoidance motivation).

- *Motivation is a key ongoing process concern.* Many students are caught up in the novelty of beginning to learn a subject but after a few lessons interest often wanes. Similarly, a student may value the idea of becoming a good reader but may not like the ongoing processes involved in classroom reading lessons and thus may not pay attention or may try to avoid them. Strategies must be designed to elicit, enhance, and maintain motivation so that a student stays mobilized.

- *Minimizing negative motivation and avoidance reactions are process and outcome concerns.* Sometimes students perceive instructional activities and classroom structure as unchallenging, uninteresting, overdemanding, overwhelming, overcontrolling, nonsupportive, or even hostile. When this happens, a student is likely to develop negative attitudes and avoidance behaviors related to the immediate situation. Over time, this can develop into negative motivation and avoidance related to school and all it represents. Thus, care must be taken to avoid or at least minimize conditions that produce negative motivation.

- *Enhancing intrinsic motivation is a basic outcome concern.* Achieving such an outcome involves use of strategies that do not over rely on extrinsic rewards and that do enable students to play a meaningful role in making decisions related to valued options.

In general, our emphasis in this unit is on strategies you can use to design classroom instruction to be a good match with the current motivation and capabilities of a given student. The key to a good fit, of course, is ensuring procedures are *perceived by learners* as good ways to reach their goals.

For motivated learners, facilitating learning is a fairly straight forward matter. The focus is on helping establish ways for learners to attain their goals by maintaining and possibly enhancing their motivation so that they learn effectively, efficiently, and with a minimum of negative side effects. Although the process involves knowing when, how, and what to teach, it also involves knowing when and how to structure the situation so that people can learn on their own.

Sometimes all that is needed is to help clear the external hurdles to learning. At other times, facilitating their learning requires leading, guiding, stimulating, clarifying, and supporting.

It is useful to think about all this in terms of a set of procedural objectives. General strategies involve:

• establishing and maintaining an appropriate working relationship with students (for example, through creating a sense of trust, open communication, providing support and direction as needed)

• clarifying the purpose of learning activities and procedures, especially those designed to help correct specific problems

• clarifying the reasons procedures are expected to be effective

• clarifying the nature and purpose of evaluative measures

• building on previous learning

• presenting material in ways that focus attention on the most relevant features of what is to be learned (modeling, cueing, scaffolding)

• guiding motivated practice (for instance, suggesting and providing opportunities for meaningful applications and clarifying ways to organize practice)

• providing continuous information on learning and performance

• providing opportunities for continued application and generalization (for example, concluding the process by addressing ways in which the learner can pursue additional, self-directed learning in the area, or can arrange for additional support and direction)

These matters are covered in this unit under the following headings: (1) creating a stimulating and manageable learning environment, (2) providing a personalized structure for learning, (3) using instructional techniques that enhance motivation and guide performance and learning, (4) turning homework into motivated practice, and (5) assessing student learning to plan instruction and provide nurturing feedback.

1) Creating a Stimulating and Manageable Learning Environment

Every teacher knows that the way the classroom setting is arranged and instruction is organized can help or hinder learning and teaching. The ideal is to have an environment where students and teachers feel *comfortable, positively stimulated, and well-supported* in pursuing the learning objectives of the day.

Approached from the perspective of intrinsic motivation, a classroom environment benefits from

- ensuring available options encourage active learning (e.g., authentic, problem-based, and discovery learning; projects, learning centers, enrichment opportunities)

- grouping students in ways that turn big classes into smaller learning units and that enhance positive attitudes and support for learning

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Stop, think, discuss

Make a list of what you would want to have in a classroom so that students would find it an appealing place to learn.

Make another list of the types of activities you would want to have available for students to engage them in learning.

Education is not the filling of a pail, but lighting of a fire.
William Butler Keats

It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy to creative expression and knowledge.
Albert Einstein

a) Designing the Classroom for Active Learning

Teachers are often taught to group instructional practices under topics such as direct instruction, indirect instruction, interactive instruction, independent study, and experiential learning (see Exhibit below).

A document entitled *Instructional Approaches: A Framework for Professional Practice* published by the Curriculum and Instruction Branch of the Saskatchewan Education department in Canada offers the following categorization of instructional strategies:

- **Direct Instruction** (structured overviews; explicit teaching; mastery lectures; drill and practice; compare and contrast; didactic questions; demonstrations; guides for reading, listening, and viewing)

- **Indirect Instruction** (problem solving; case studies; inquiry; reading for meaning; reflective study; concept formation: concept mapping; concept attainment; close procedure)

- **Interactive instruction** (debates; role playing; panels; brainstorming; peer practice; discussion; laboratory groups; cooperative learning groups; problem solving; circle of knowledge; tutorial groups; interviewing)

- **Independent study** (essays; computer assisted instruction; learning activity packages; correspondence lessons; learning contracts; homework; research projects; assigned questions; learning centers)

- **Experiential learning** (field trips; conducting experiments; simulations; games; focused imaging; field observations; role playing; model building; surveys)

See – http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/policy/approach/copyright.html

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All these forms of instruction are relevant. However, *teaching* strategies must always have as their primary concern producing effective *learning*. Effective learning requires ensuring that the student is truly engaged in learning. This is especially important in preventing learning, behavior, and emotional problems, and essential at the first indications of such problems.

Thus, the focus here is on discussing the concept of *active learning*. In doing so, we will discuss examples of instructional approaches that are designed to enhance learner motivation to learn.

Simply stated, active learning is *learning by doing, listening, looking, and asking;* but it is not just being active that counts. It is the mobilization of the student to seek out and learn (see Exhibit on the following page). Specific activities are designed to capitalize on student interests and curiosity, involve them in problem solving and guided inquiry, and elicit their thinking through reflective discussions and specific products. Moreover, the activities are designed to do all this in ways that not only minimize threats to feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to others, but enhance such feelings.

There are many examples of ways to promote active learning at all grade levels. It can take the form of class discussions, problem-based and discovery learning, a project approach, involvement in "learning centers" at school, experiences outside the classroom, and independent learning in or out of school . For example, students may become involved in classroom, school-wide, or community service or action projects. Older students may be involved in "internships." Active learning methods can be introduced gradually so that students can be taught how to benefit from them and so that they can be provided appropriate support and guidance.

Active learning in the form of interactive instruction, authentic, problem-based, discovery, and project-based learning does much more than motivate learning of subject matter and academic skills. Students also learn how to cooperate with others, share responsibility for planning and implementation, develop understanding and skills related to conflict resolution and mediation, and much more. Moreover, such formats provide a context for building collaborations with other teachers and school staff and with a variety of volunteers.
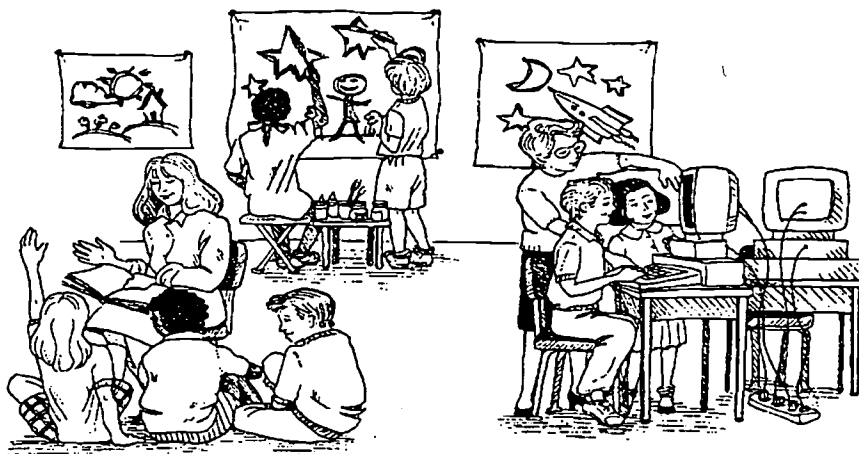
Exhibit
Active Learning

As presented by Fred Newmann, Helen Marks, & Adam Gamoran (in a 1996 *American Journal of Education* article entitled "Authentic Pedagogy and Student Performance"):

Active learning is "... students actively constructing meaning grounded in their own experience rather than simply absorbing and reproducing knowledge transmitted from subject-matter fields ...."

Examples are ...

- Small group discussions
- cooperative learning tasks
- independent research projects
- use of hands on manipulatives, scientific equipment, and arts and crafts materials
- use of computer and video technology
- community-based projects such as surveys, oral histories, and volunteer service.

Components of Active Learning in the Classroom are...

- *Higher-order thinking* – Instruction involves students in manipulating information and ideas by synthesizing, generalizing, explaining, hypothesizing, or arriving at conclusions that produce new meanings and understandings for them.

- *Substantive conversation* – Students engage in extended conversational exchanges with the teacher and/or their peers about subject matter in a way that builds an improved and shared understanding of ideas or topics.

- *Deep knowledge* – Instruction addresses central ideas of a topic or discipline with enough thoroughness to explore connections and relationships and to produce relatively complex understandings.

- *Connections to the world beyond the classroom* – Students make connections between substantive knowledge and either public problems or personal experiences.

On this and the following pages we offer brief overviews of a variety of approaches that encompass strategies for actively engaging students in learning and practicing what has been learned. Included are discussions of interactive instruction, authentic learning, problem-based and discovery learning, project-based learning, learning centers, and enrichment activity.

Interactive Instruction. One of the most direct ways in which teachers try to engage students is through class discussion and sharing of insights related to what they have been learning, often bringing in their own experiences and personal reactions. A variety of topics can also be introduced as a stimulus for discussion. Discussion not only helps them practice and assimilate what they have been learning, it adds opportunities to learn more (e.g., from teacher clarifications and peer models). And, of course, it is the most direct way to practice and enhance such discussion skills as organizing and orally presenting one's ideas. Discussions also can provide an impetus for further independent learning.

For students who are just learning to engage in discussion or who have an aversion to such a format, it is important to keep discussions fairly brief and pursue them with small groups. If a student who wants to participate but is having trouble doing so, it will be important to take some individual time away from the group to help them develop essential readiness skills (e.g., listening, organizing one's thoughts, interacting appropriately with others).

Whole class discussion is reserved for occasions when all those in the class are particularly interested in some event that has occurred or a topic that affects them all. These are invaluable opportunities to enhance a sense of community.

As guidelines for effective discussions, it is usually suggested that teachers:

- use material and concepts familiar to the students

- use a problem or issue that does not require a particular response

- stress that opinions must be supported

- provide some sense of closure to the discussion (e.g., a summary of what was said, insights and solutions generated, any sense of consensus) and elaborate on implications for the students lives now and in the future.

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Authentic Learning. Authentic learning (sometimes called genuine learning) enables teachers to facilitate active learning by connecting the content, process, and outcomes to real-life experiences. The concept encompasses the notion of having students learn in authentic contexts outside of the classroom (e.g., around the school, in the neighborhood, at home).

The intent is to enhance student valuing of the curriculum by having students work on somewhat complex problems and tasks/projects they naturally experience in their daily lives or will experience later in the world of work.

The emphasis is on learning activities that have genuine purpose, such as focusing on current problems or controversies affecting the students, projects that create products that students value. They can range from simple activities such as groups writing letters to the local newspaper to more complex projects such as cross-subject thematic instruction, science and art fairs, major community service projects, and a variety of on-the-job experiences. (Specific examples include: developing a classroom newspaper or multimedia newscast on a controversial topic, carrying out an ecological project, developing a display for the school regarding the neighborhood's past, present and future, planning a city of the future, developing a school website or specific sections of the school's web site.)

Often, the activity can be pursued in a variety of ways. And the process results not simply in acquisition of academic knowledge and skills.

Good authentic tasks involve

>locating, gathering, organizing, synthesizing, >making collaborative decisions and interpreting information and resources

>problem solving   >elaborating   >explaining   >evaluating

The process also usually involves public exhibiting of products and related presentations to others outside the class.

Properly implemented, authentic learning activity helps develop

- inquiry (learning to ask relevant questions and search for answers)
- critical and divergent thinking and deep understanding
- judgment
- general decision making and problem solving capability
- performance and communication skills.

Such an approach also can contribute to enhancing a sense of community.

> *The key to properly implementing authentic learning activity*
> *is to minimize "busy work" (e.g., simply doing things) and*
> *ensure the major learning objectives are being accomplished.*

Problem-Based and Discovery Learning. Problem-based and discovery learning processes are built around a series of active problem-solving investigations. These approaches overlap with the concept of authentic learning; at their root is the notion of active learning.

It is assumed that, with appropriate guidance and support, students will be motivated by the defined problem and by the process of discovery and will use their capabilities to make pertinent observations, comparisons, inferences, and interpretations and arrive at new insights.

In general, the approach begins with the teacher raising a question or series of questions and leading a discussion to identify a problem to be explored. Students decide how to investigate the problem, and then, working individually and/or in small groups, they conduct "investigations" (e.g., manipulate phenomena, make observations, gather and interpret data, and draw inferences). Based on all this, they draw conclusions (e.g., answers) and make generalizations.

Exhibit
Problem-Based Learning
From: PBL Overview http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/pbl/info.html

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a term that some have adopted for one type of authentic learning. It is described as a "total approach to education .... PBL is both a curriculum and a process. The curriculum consists of carefully selected and designed problems that demand from the learner acquisition of critical knowledge, problem solving proficiency, self-directed learning strategies, and team participation skills. The process replicates the commonly used systemic approach to resolving problems or meeting challenges that are encountered in life and career ....

In problem-based learning, the traditional teacher and student roles change. The students assume increasing responsibility for their learning, giving them more motivation and more feelings of accomplishment, setting the pattern for them to become successful life-long learners. The faculty in turn become resources, tutors, and evaluators, guiding the students in their problem solving efforts."

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Project-based learning. This approach is designed as a alternative to overreliance on textbooks. As with authentic learning, it is built on the assumption that student interest (intrinsic motivation) and effort is mobilized and maintained and learning is enhanced when students engage in meaningful investigation of interesting problems. The process also draws on the motivational benefits of having students work and learn cooperatively with each other to develop the project, share learning strategies and background knowledge, and communicate accomplishments.

Exhibit
Project-Based Learning

As stated by Ralph Ferretti and Cynthia Okolo, "Project-based learning offers an intrinsically interesting and pedagogically promising alternative to an exclusive reliance on textbooks. When students have the opportunity to engage in meaningful investigation of interesting problems for the purpose of communicating their findings to others, their interest in learning is enhanced . . . . Increased interest can yield significant cognitive benefits, including improved attention, activation and utilization of background knowledge, use of learning strategies, and greater effort and persistence . . . . Moreover, during project-based learning activities, students have the opportunity to cooperate and collaborate with peers."

Ferretti and Okolo outline five essential features of project-based instruction:

- An authentic question or problem provides a framework for organizing concepts and principles.
- Students engage in investigations that enable them to formulate and refine specific questions, locate data sources or collect original data, analyze and interpret information, and draw conclusions.
- These investigations lead to the development of artifacts that represent students' proposed solutions to problems, reflect their emerging understanding about the domain, and are presented for the critical consideration of their colleagues.
- Teachers, students, and other members of the community of learners collaborate to complete their projects, share expertise, make decisions about the division of labor, and construct a socially mediated understanding of their topic.
- Cognitive tools, such as multimedia technology are used to extend and amplify students' representational and analytic capacities . . . .

They also note with respect to their experiences: ". . . .we provide students with guidance and assistance in specific components of project construction, even though each group is responsible for the selection of information in its project. We rely on a combination of teacher-directed instruction and explicit modeling, dialogue with individuals and groups, and scaffolding through worksheets . . . . Thus, we have developed modules to teach students (specific skills, such as) how to read source materials with a partner . . . (and) we provide students with planning sheets that scaffold many of the activities they must utilize, such as taking notes or organizing information on a card . . . ."

From "Authenticity in Learning: Multimedia Design Projects in the Social Studies for Students with Disabilities" by Ralph Ferretti & Cynthia Okolo (1996). *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 29,* 450-460.

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With respect to implementation of project-based learning, various writers stress that students should be involved in choosing a topic, and the topic should be multifaceted enough to maintain student engagement over an extended period of time. Because of the scope of such projects, students must first learn how to work in a cooperative learning group and then how to share across groups.

Exhibit
More on Project-Based Learning

Lillian Katz and Sylvia Chard stress:

A main aim of project work in the early years it to strengthen children's dispositions to be interested, absorbed, and involved in in-depth observation, investigation, and representation of some worthwhile phenomena in their own environments.

From their perspective, among the factors to consider in selecting and implementing projects are: (1) characteristics of the particular group of children, (2) the geographic context of the school, (3) the school's wider community, (4) the availability of relevant local resources, (5) the topic's potential contribution to later learning, and (6) the teacher's own knowledge of the topic.

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING PROJECTS

- It is directly observable in the children's own environment (real world)
- It is within most children's experiences
- First-hand direct investigation is feasible and not potentially dangerous
- Local resources (field sites and experts) are favorable and readily accessible
- It has good potential for representation in a variety of media (e.g., role play, construction, writing, multi-dimensional, graphic organizers)
- Parental participation and contributions are likely, and parents can become involved
- It is sensitive to the local culture as well as culturally appropriate in general
- It is potentially interesting to many of the children, or represents an interest that adults consider worthy of developing in children
- It is related to curriculum goals and standards of the school or district
- It provides ample opportunity to apply basic skills (depending on the age of the children)
- It is optimally specific: not too narrow and not too broad

Excerpted from "Issues in Selecting Topics for Projects. ERIC Digest." Authors: L. Katz & S. Chard. ERIC Identifier: ED424031. Publication Date: 1998-10-00

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Learning Centers. The idea of learning centers has been around a long-time and is an especially useful strategy for mobilizing and maintaining student engagementt. goes well with the concept of authentic learning and processes such as discovery and problem-based learning. As Martha McCarthy noted decades ago,

> Many problems of motivation can be attributed to the fact that children are bored because the class is moving too slowly or too quickly. Also, some behavior problems arise because children are restless when they are required to sit still for long periods of time. These problems can be reduced by supplementing the regular classroom program with learning-center activities... The learning center tries to deal with the reality that pupils learn at different rates, have different interests and needs, and are motivated when they are permitted to make choices based on these unique needs and interests. Learning centers are not a panacea for all the problems that confront education today, but well-planned centers can enhance the learning environment.

Among the possible uses of learning centers, she discusses:

1. Total learning environment – The entire instructional program is individualized for each child. Pupils engage in small-group and individual activities at various learning stations throughout the room. Teacher-conducted learning activities are kept at a minimum and are used only when adult leadership is necessary.

2. Remedial work – Pupils who have not mastered basic skills are assigned to learning centers to work intensively on those skills. Pupils work with audio-visual materials and individualized-instruction programs or help one another as peer tutors.

3. Drill work – To reinforce knowledge or skills learned in regular classroom instruction, pupils are assigned to learning centers equipped with materials for drill work.

4. Interest activities – At specific times during the day, pupils are assigned to areas of their choice to work on activities they enjoy such as arts and crafts, games, puzzles, science experiments, or cooking. Pupils who have earned free time or pupils who need a change of pace can be assigned to these areas.

5. Enrichment activities – Pupils who are fast learners are assigned to a learning-center activity designed to enhance their recent learning and to challenge them to go beyond the material presented to the entire class. Each teacher should carefully decide how the learning centers can most profitably be designed to meet the unique needs of the children in his or her classroom. In short, the types of activities offered in the centers should be determined by careful diagnosis of the pupils' needs. Although learning centers are usually associated with self-directed activities for pupils, centers are not limited to this approach. If all the pupils are engaging in center activities simultaneously, one or more stations may be teacher directed. Also, paraprofessionals, volunteers, or pupils who have specific talents could direct centers at various times. If the purpose of learning centers is to offer more options to the pupils, provisions should be made for differences in learning styles as well as differences in academic levels and interests.

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Exhibit
Establishing Learning Centers

The departure from total-class, teacher-directed activities to individualized center activities creates more pupil options and involvement, but also requires more organization on the part of the teacher. In addition, the implementation of learning centers demands extra work, at least initially. Several considerations require attention if the learning centers are to be successful:

1. There must be a clearly stated purpose for the centers, one that is fully understood by the teacher and the pupils.

2. Pupils must be familiar with all activities in the centers and understand the mechanics of working in centers. Practice sessions during which the entire class explores each activity and learns how to record the work alone are essential before the pupils participate in the rotation of activities...

3. The teacher should give responsibility to the pupils gradually and reinforce each small step pupils take toward assuming responsibility for their own progress. The teacher should work on pupil accountability in large-group, teacher-directed activities for some time before expecting pupils to be in self-directed learning centers. It is critical for pupils to master prerequisite skills before moving to a more difficult stage. When the pupils are ready to work in centers, more structure should be provided than is desired as a final goal. The teacher may want to start with three centers and have every child attend each center for a certain period of time daily. For a while, the options in each center should remain limited. Later, the child can be allowed to choose the center he or she wants to attend and decide how long to stay there...After pupils become accustomed to working in centers, they could fill out individual contracts that would designate center activities to be pursued according to prespecified criteria. Thus, the activities schedule would become totally individualized.

4. Pupils need to know exactly what options are available to them, and they must be accountable for their activities. Walking around the room and fighting should not be options! To monitor pupils individual name tags can be used. Each pupil would place his tag on a tag board at the center he is attending. At a glance at the tag boards, the teacher would know where each pupil should be working. A wall chart could also be used for this purpose, or each child could fill out a simple form showing his center schedule for the day. Pupil contracts can also be useful, and they can become extremely sophisticated. At first, however, contracts should be kept simple with limited options. Initially, the pupil should concentrate on completing the activity he has contracted to do. Later, the contract can emphasize mastery of a certain skill or group of skills and offer several options as means of accomplishing that goal.

5. Pupil accountability must be emphasized at all levels. Pupils can be expected to assume increased responsibility for their own learning only after they have mastered the required skills. At the basic level of accountability, the pupil learns to be responsible simply for attending to some task. At the next level, the pupil is accountable for choosing tasks that are appropriate to his or her needs, level, or interest (depending on the purpose of the centers). At the third level, the pupil is accountable for each activity pursued while at the center. Some method of reporting work must accompany each activity. The child may be required to fill out a brief form, complete an answer sheet, show written work, or prepare a simple report on a game played. Each child needs to be able to look back over the time spent at the center and review accomplishments. Also, this record is essential if the teacher is to keep abreast of pupils' progress and needs. Accountability cannot be shifted to the pupils immediately. The teacher must be certain that requisite skills are mastered before the pupil is expected to assume self-direction in centers. Activities that require cooperative behavior (games, for example) should be placed in centers only after pupils have demonstrated that they can handle such activities. The teacher should continually reinforce the pupils' progress in accepting new levels of responsibility. There are almost no limits as to how far pupils can go if the teacher works with them patiently and consistently. As pupils feel that they are expected to assume more accountability, they will feel more self-worth and seek additional responsibility.

6. A variety of options should be available at the centers. Activities should fit into various levels and learning styles. Some activities might involve movement, some manipulation, some group work, and some independent quiet activity. However, the teacher should not go overboard with the quantity of activities before he or she or the pupils have adapted to using centers. It is important to address quality before quantity. The teacher will be wise to start with a few well-planned activities so that pupils can adjust to the mechanics of using centers...

7. All activities in the learning center should have objectives, directions for use, and a record-

keeping system easily understood by the pupils. Color coding can be used for pupils who cannot read. Attractive posters with reminders of directions can help pupils and enhance the classroom environment. If a pupil does not understand directions for activities or the system of keeping records, he will feel that the teacher and the environment are disorganized. Frustration and apathy toward the centers will result. Once a poor attitude is established, it is extremely difficult to change, even if the situation improves. Hence, time spent in planning the transition into centers is *much* more valuable than corrective measures later.

8. The change to centers should be an exciting adventure for the pupils. Participation in centers should be seen as a rewarded privilege that pupils have earned by reaching a certain level of growth in becoming responsible members of the group.

9. Standards of behavior must be established and agreed on by the total group. These standards should be posted in the room and enforced.

10. Procedures should be established to make it possible for pupils at the centers to signal for assistance without causing a major classroom disturbance. One technique is to have pupils raise flags or signs when assistance is needed. The signs might read "Help," "Work check," or "Unit test." Another technique is to use peer tutors. Pupils who demonstrate competency in performing certain activities can serve as helpers for their classmates.

11. Pupil-teacher conferences are a must. Ideally an adult should meet with each pupil weekly for a brief conference on his or her progress in the centers. A pupil's work for the week can be pulled from his folder, future goals set, and guidance for the next week's choices given. If pupils never get feedback or reinforcement for their work, the centers can quickly lose their meaning.

12. Centers should be attractive and appropriately arranged. If the pupils need to do seatwork, space should be provided close to the center. If cooperative activities are used, pupils should be able to pull several chairs together or have space on the floor to engage in the activity where it will not distract other pupils who are working independently. Quiet activities should be placed in a specified section of the room. Ditto sheets and books can be stored in magazine racks. Cushions and rug samples add to reading corners, and for certain listening activities cubicles are needed. In deciding where to place various centers, the teacher should consider the layout of the room, the flow of traffic, and the layout of the electrical outlets. Visual barriers (screens, bookcases, and dividers) seem to reduce distractions considerably.

From: "The How and Why of Learning Centers" by Martha M. McCarthy (1977). *Elementary School Journal, 77,* 292-299.

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Tips for Teachers Re. Learning Centers See: http://vpsd6.vrml.k12.la.us:8000/~monah/ Centers.htm

"Centers can be the hub of a classroom with students rotating through them for lessons all day or centers can be a time allotted to work on skills that need to be redefined and aligned! Centers can also be the time that you individualize your curriculum."

Mona Herbert

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Examples of Types of Centers

Single-Subject Centers

1. Reading Center
2. Math Center
3. Science Center
4. Writing/Spelling/Handwriting Center
5. Social Studies Center
6. Foreign Language Center

Remedial Learning Centers

7. Any of the subjects listed above

Enrichment Centers

8. Library Center
9. Computer Center
10. Art/Music Center
11. Activities and Game Center
12. Listening Center

Independent-Study Centers

13. Research Center
14. Discovery Center
15. Invention Center

Enrichment Activity. The richer the environment, the more likely students will discover new interests, information, and skills. Enrichment comprises opportunities for exploration, inquiry, and discovery related to topics and activities that are not part of the usual curriculum. Opportunities are offered but need not be taken. No specific learning objectives may be specified. It is assumed that much will be learned and, equally as important, there will be a greater sense of the value and joy of pursuing knowledge.

Enrichment activities often are more attractive and intriguing than those offered in the developmental curriculum. In part, this is because they are not required, and individuals can seek out those that match their interests and abilities. Enrichment activities also tend to be responsive to students; whatever doesn't keep their attention is replaced.

Here is an example of one school's way of organizing enrichment offerings:

1. Arts: stained glass, raku, ceramics, pottery, painting, junk art, maskmaking, puppetry, jewelry-making, basket weaving, air brushing, silkscreening, photography, drama, street dancing, line dancing, folk dancing, hula, creative movement, video/filmmaking, card making, tile mosaics

2. Science/Math: Dissection, kitchen physics, kitchen chemistry, marine biology, rocketry, robotics, K-nex, string art, math games and puzzles, science and toys, boatmaking, Hawaiian ethnobotany, and laser/ holography

3. Computer: computer graphics, internet, computer simulations, computer multimedia, and computer Lego logo

4. Athletics: basketball, baseball, volleyball, football, soccer, juggling, unicycling, golf

5. Others: cooking, magic, clowning around, French culture, Spanish culture, Japanese culture, board games

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Because so many people think of enrichment as a frill, it is not surprising that such activities may be overlooked – especially for youngsters who manifest learning and behavior problems. After all, these persons are seen as needing all the time that is available for "catching up." This view is unfortunate. The broader the curriculum, the better the opportunity for creating a good motivational match and for facilitating learning throughout an important range of developmental tasks and remedial needs.

Enrichment should be an integral part of daily classroom time. It should be part of school-wide opportunities during the day and after school. After school programs not only enable schools to stay open longer to provide academic support and safe havens, drug and violence prevention, and various services such as counseling, they also provide opportunities for youngsters to participate in supervised recreation, chorus, band, the arts and to use the internet. All this allows youngsters to learn skills that often are not part of the school's curricula, such as athletic and artistic performance skills. In some cases, these experiences lead to lifelong interests or careers. But, perhaps just as importantly, youngsters are able to enhance their sense of competence and affiliation.

Independent Study

Independent learning has implications for responsible decision-making, as individuals are expected to analyze problems, reflect, make decisions and take purposeful actions. To take responsibility for their lives in times of rapid social change, students need to acquire life-long learning capability. As most aspects of our daily lives are likely to undergo profound changes, independent learning will enable individuals to respond to the changing demands of work, family and society. (Saskatchewan Education, 1988; see: http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/policy/approach/copyright.html)

The term *Independent Study* covers a variety of learning activities. Certainly, students at every grade who can and want to function independently of the teacher in pursuing aspects of the school agenda should be provided opportunities to do so. This is not only important for them, but also allows the teacher more time for those students who need it. Other independent study activities are designed to foster the student's ability to function autonomously, as well as enhancing their intrinsic motivation to do so. Some of this activity may involve some partnering with one or more peers. All the activity is monitored by the teacher to ensure it is appropriate and being pursued effectively. As always, when it is evident a student is not functioning effectively, the teacher will want to take time to find out whether the problem is attitudinal or related to skill deficits and take steps to address the matter.

All the above strategies engage students in learning by accounting for individual differences in current interests and capabilities. More specifically, the strategies

- *provide a wide variety of stimulating and often novel activities*

- *enable student decision making among valued options and ones they can expect to reach desired outcomes*

- *enable teachers to create cooperative and caring contexts for learning by establishing a learning environment where students work together in small groups, as well as independently*

A Few Other Examples of Activities That Can Be Used Regularly to Engage Learners and Enrich Learning

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library activities; music/art/drama; student exhibitions & performances; outside speakers & performers; field trips;	mentoring & service learning; clubs; special interest groups; recreation & similar organized activities; school-wide activities such as student council and other leadership opportunities;	athletics; school environment projects (e.g. mural painting, gardening, school clean-up and beautification); poster/essay contests sales events (e.g. candy, t-shirts);	book fairs; health fairs; student newspapers/ magazines

Block Scheduling – When More Time is Needed

Active learning can benefit from instructional periods that range up to two hours. Advocates suggest that such a period of time encourages in-depth instruction and may be helpful in preparing students for exit exams. The extended time is seen as enabling teachers to devote more time to core subjects and to assist students who need extra help.

In secondary schools, the prototype for block scheduling is combining two classes (e.g., English and social studies) and using the combined time (e.g., 95 minutes) to focus on one or the other on alternate days. With the widespread use of exit exams, the approach is gaining new popularity. Over 40% of California high schools report using some form of block scheduling and the trend is growing.

Of course, the longer periods require considerable attention to student engagement when planning lessons. In particular, the strategies discussed throughout this module reflect the type of approach that makes block scheduling worth doing. Available studies indicate that, done appropriately, block scheduling can improve student achievement.

More generally, block scheduling has been described as the key to quality teaching and learning time. It provides a way to deal with class size and accommodating differences in students' rates of learning.

See *Block Scheduling: The Key to Quality Learning Time* by R. Canady & M. Rettig in NAESP's Principal Magazine (Jan. 2001). On line at: www.naesp.org/comm/p0101c.htm
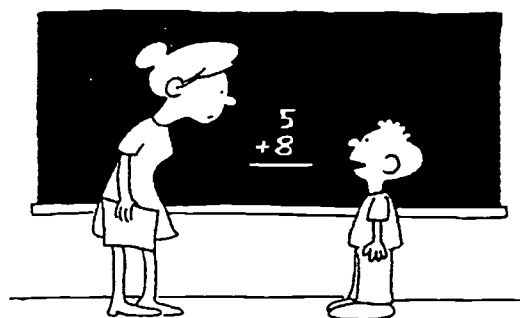
GOSH, MRS. THOMPSON. I WAS READY TO LEARN MATH YESTERDAY. TODAY I'M READY TO LEARN TO READ.

b) Grouping Students and Turning Big Classes into Smaller Units

In their report entitled *High Schools of the Millennium*, the workgroup states:

> The structure and organization of a High School of the Millennium is very different than that of the conventional high school. First and foremost, [the school] is designed to provide small, personalized, and caring learning communities for students .... The smaller groups allow a number of adults . . . to work together with the students . . . as a way to develop more meaningful relationships and as a way for the teachers to better understand the individual learning needs of each student. ...
>
> Time is used differently . . . . Alternatives schedules, such as a block schedule or modified block schedule, create longer class periods that allow students to become more actively engaged in their learning through more in-depth exploration . . . . The longer instructional times also allow for multiple learning activities that better meet the different learning styles of students.

Grouping. Aside from those times when a learning objective is best accomplished with the whole class, it is important to think of creating small classes out of the whole. This involves grouping students in various ways, as well as providing opportunities for individual activity.

> *Clearly, no one should be grouping students in ways that harm them. This applies to putting students in low ability tracks or segregating students who are behavior problems.*

But grouping is essential for effective teaching. *Appropriate* grouping facilitates student engagement, learning, and performance. Besides enhancing academic learning, it can increase intrinsic motivation by promoting feelings of personal and interpersonal competence, self-determination, and positive connection with others. Moreover, it can foster autonomous learning skills, personal responsibility for learning, and healthy social-emotional attitudes and skills.

Done appropriately, students are grouped and regrouped flexibly and regularly by the teacher based on individual interests, needs, and for benefits to be derived from diversity. When teachers team teach or collaborate in other ways, such grouping can be done across classrooms. Small learning groups are established for cooperative inquiry and learning, concept and skill development, motivated practice, peer- and cross-age tutoring, and other forms of activity that can be facilitated by peers, aides, and/or volunteers.

In a small group (e.g., two to six members) students have more opportunities to participate. In heterogeneous, cooperative learning groups, each student has an interdependent role in pursuing a common learning goal and can contribute on a par with their capabilities. All groups provide opportunities to enhance interpersonal functioning and an understanding of working relationships and of factors effecting group functioning.

Carol Ann Tomlinson in her 1999 book *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* delineates ways to minimize whole-class instruction through use of *flexible small group teaching* and facilitating independent learning. She notes that nearly all educators agree with the goal of differentiating instruction, but teachers may lack strategies for making it happen. To avoid lockstep instruction, she suggests strategies such as using *stations* (setting up different spots where students work on various tasks simultaneously) and *orbital studies* (with guidance and support, students are involved in short term – 3-6 week – independent investigations related to a facet of the curriculum). Tomlinson stresses that differentiated instruction is not a form of tracking – just the opposite. it enables teachers to give every child access to the curriculum and ensures that each makes appropriate progress.

A well-designed classroom enables a teacher to spend most of the time (1) working directly with a group while the rest of the students work in small groups and on independent activities or (2) rotating among small groups and individual learners. Effective grouping is most likely when teachers have adequate resources (including space, materials, and access to additional bodies). The key is teaching youngsters to work well with each other, with other resource personnel, and at times independently.

Types of Groupings

Needs-Based Grouping: **Short-term** groupings are established for students with similar learning needs (e.g., to teach or reteach them particular skills and to do so in keeping with their current interests and capabilities).

Interest-Based Grouping: Students who already are motivated to pursue an activity usually can be taught to work together well on active learning tasks.

Designed-Diversity Grouping: For some objectives, it is desirable to combine sets of students who come from different backgrounds and have different abilities and interests (e.g., to discuss certain topics, foster certain social capabilities, engender mutual support for learning).

In all forms of grouping, approaches such as cooperative learning and computer-assisted instruction are relevant, and obviously, it helps to have multiple collaborators in the classroom. An aide and/or volunteers, for example, can assist with establishing and maintaining well-functioning groups, as well as providing special support and guidance for designated individuals. As teachers increasingly open their doors to others, assistance can be solicited from tutors, resource and special education teachers, pupil services personnel, and an ever widening range of volunteers (e.g., Reading Corps tutors, peer buddies, parents, mentors, and any others who can bring special abilities into the classroom and offer additional options for learning). And, of course, team teaching offers a potent way to expand the range of options for personalizing instruction.

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Exhibit

Differentiated Instruction and Making Smaller Units out of Larger Classes:
Elementary School Examples

In the Winter 2000 issue of Curriculum, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development provides the following descriptions of how teachers are using strategies to differentiate instruction and make smaller units out of larger classes.

"First grade teachers Gail Canova and Lena Conltey ... use supported reading activities to help young learners of various abilities strengthen reading skills. On Mondays, (they) read stories to the entire class but break the class into groups according to challenge levels for the next three days. On Fridays, the whole class reviews the story once more to measure improvements and reinforce learning. To help students of differing abilities improve writing skills, (they) have established peer tutoring groups. In the groups, children read their work aloud and help one another with spelling and editing as they create their own books." . . .

"Pat Rutz, a 1st and 2nd grade teacher ..., differentiates for avanced learners by using curriculum compacting. If some of her students have mastered the concept of place value, for example, they can pursue higher-level math work independently while she works with the rest of the class.... To be ready for young learners whose abilities outrun the rest of the class or who need extra help, (she) has prepared 'math boxes' that offer activities aimed above and below grade-level expectations for each math concept. During any lesson, 'everyone's doing the same work ... but at different levels of complexity.'" . . .

"...4th grade teacher Laurie Biser differentiates math lessons according to processes. Some work better with paper and pencils, some need manipulatives, and some learn best at the computer." For example, to account for differences related to memorizing multiplication tables, she asks students, "How do you think you could learn this best?" She finds that students choose the activities that let them learn best (e.g., using flash cards with a partner, writing, drawing, creating three-dimensional models).

"...Penny Shockly ... uses tiered assignments to engage her 5th graders at all levels of ability. When she begins the unit on perimeter, area, and volume, (she) first presents a short, hands-on lesson that defines the whole-class objective and lays the foundation for individual practice. Togther, she and the students measure various sizes of cereal boxes so that everyone is clear about definitions and processes. Then, in groups of two, students receive activity packets. The more concrete learners receive packets with worksheets that direct them to measure their own desks and classroom furniture. In this highly structured activity, students practice calculating the perimeters, areas, and volumes of things they can actually see and touch. Shockley is on hand to offer help and to extend the activity, for those who are ready, by helping students find a way to arrange the desks so that they have the smallest possible perimeter. Other students with greater abstract reasoning skills receive packets that direct them to design their own bedrooms and to create scale drawings. They also calculate the cost and number of five-yard rolls of wallpaper borders needed to decorate their rooms. From catalogs, they select furniture and rugs that will fit into their model rooms. These details provide extensive practice, beginning with such tasks as determining how many square feet of floor space remain uncovered. This open-ended assignment offfers higher-ability students an opportunity to extend their learning as far as they want to take it."

Exhibit

Differentiated Instruction and Making Smaller Units out of Larger Classes:
Secondary School Examples

In the Winter 2000 issue of Curriculum, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development provides the following descriptions of how teachers are using strategies to differentiate instruction and make smaller units out of larger classes.

Middle school teacher Wendy Raymond ". . . asks her students to select one of 30 thematically related books .... Then she groups students who are interested in the same titles, usually about four or five students per group, and teaches them how to function as a literature circle -- students learn the roles of discussion directors, connectors (students who make connections to things in the real world), illustrators, literary luminaries (students who point out great figurative language), and vocabulary enrichers (those who identify words that most students might not know). With each new book, students regroup and jobs rotate, but each group sets its own schedule for discussions and assignments. When (they) come together for whole-class activities, they explore themes common to all of the books, followed by assignments that might require students to create their own short literary work that typifies the genre they have just studied."

Rob Frescoln, a 7th grade science teacher, has students whose reading levels range from 2nd through beyond 7th grade. "To help all his students succeed with research papers, (he) provides science texts at several reading levels and uses mixed-ability groupings. Each of five students in a mixed-ability group might research a different cell part by gathering information from books at her own reading level. Then groups split up so that all students with the same cell assignment compare notes and teach one another. Finally, students return to their original groups so that every member of each group can report to the others and learn about the other cell parts. 'It's the coolest thing in the world to see a lower ability kid teaching a higher-ability kid what he's learned,' says Frescoln."

In Michigan, 8th grade science teacher Marie DeLuca offers tiered assignments in helping her students learn the concept of density. "To start everyone off on the same foot, (she) uses an introductory lab activity that allows the whole class to compare the differing weights of identical volumes of sand and oil. The object is to determine whether a ship could carry the same amount of sand as it could oil, and how this manifests the property of density. (Then, she) assigns students an internet activity that explores the causes of the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald -- but at different levels of synthesis and analysis, depending on student ability. Homework assignments ask higher-ability students to design cargo boats, grade-level students to float an egg, and below-level students to determine which is more dense: a can of Classic Coke or a can of Diet Coke. They must perform a water displacement experiment to come up with the correct answer."

A high school social studies teacher, Leon Bushe uses mock trials to differentiate instruction according to interest, task, and readiness. "Dividing his class of 30 into three groups of 10, (he) gives each a court case involving a legal concept such as *beyond reasonable doubt.* Students choose whether to be lawyers, witnesses, or defendents -- whichever they feel most comfortable with. Every student has at least two roles because each trial group also serves as the jury for another trial group. To prepare for their roles, students must complete individualized reading and writing assignments, but they all learn the basics of trial by jury. One factor ... that heightens interest is that each jury deliberates in a fishbowl environment -- that is, the rest of the class gets to observe the deliberations but may not speak or interfere."

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Recognizing and Accommodating Diversity. Diversity arises from many factors: gender, ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, religion, capability, disability, interests, and so forth. Thus, every classroom is diverse to some degree. In grouping students, it is important to do so in a way that draws on the strengths of whatever diversity is present in the classroom. For example, a multi-ethnic classroom enables teachers to group students across ethnic lines to bring different perspectives to the learning activity. This allows students not only to learn about other perspectives, it can enhance critical thinking and other higher order conceptual abilities. It also can foster the type of intergroup understanding and relationships that are essential to establishing a school climate of caring and mutual respect. In this respect, of course, the entire curriculum and all instructional activities must incorporate an appreciation of diversity, and teachers must plan in ways that make appropriate accommodations for individual and group differences.

Collaborative or Team Teaching. Not only can teacher collaboration benefit students, teaming with a colleague whom you like and respect can be one of the greatest boons to the teachers involved. A good collaboration is one where colleagues mesh professionally and personally. It doesn't mean that there is agreement about everything, but there must be agreement about what constitutes good teaching and effective learning.

Collaborations can take various forms. The core of the process involves two or more teachers teaming to share the instructional load in any way they feel works. Sometimes this involves:

- Parallel Teaching – team members combine their classes and teach to their strengths. This may involve specific facets of the curriculum (e.g., one teacher covers math, another reading; they cover different aspects of science) or different students (e.g., for specific activities, they divide the students and work with those to whom they relate best).

- Complementary Teaching – one teacher takes the lead with the initial lessons and another facilitates the follow-up activity.

- Special Assistance – while one team member provides basic instruction, another focuses on those students who need special assistance (more on this in Unit D).

In all forms of teacher teaming, others are involved in the collaborative effort. Teachers deploy aides, volunteers, and designated students to help in creating small groupings for teaching and learning. And, with access to the Internet and distance learning, the nature and scope of collaborative teaching has the potential to expand in dramatic fashion.

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Student Helpers. Besides the mutual benefits students get from cooperative learning groups and other informal ways they help each other, formal peer programs can be invaluable assets. Students can be taught to be peer tutors, group discussion leaders, role models, and mentors. Other useful roles include: peer buddies (to welcome, orient, and provide social support as a new student transitions into the class and school), peer conflict mediators, and much more.

Student helpers benefit their peers, themselves, and the school staff, and enhance the school's efforts to create a caring climate and a sense of community.

Clearly, when it is done appropriately, grouping has many benefits. At a fundamental level, grouping is an essential strategy in turning classrooms with large enrollments into a set of simultaneously operating small classes. Just as it is evident that we need to turn schools with large enrollments into sets of small schools, we must do the same in the classroom everyday.

Grouping in the bad old days!
Is this what they mean when they say: We have to get back to basics?
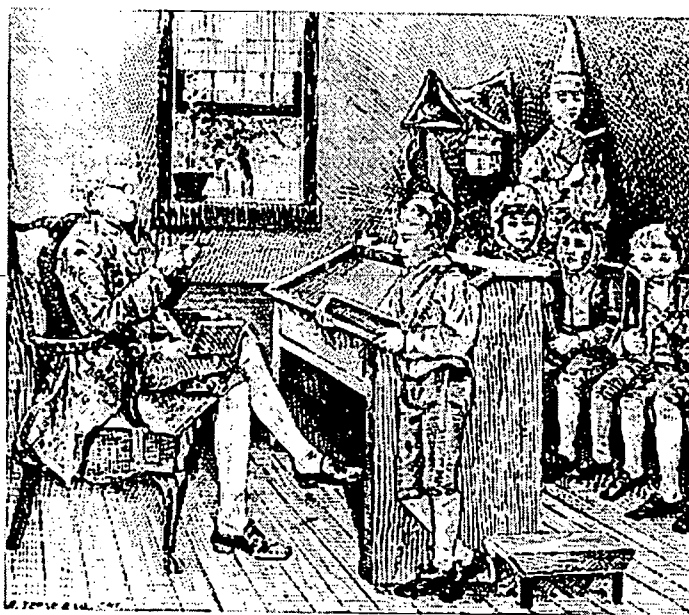
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2) Providing Personalized Structure for Learning

In talking about classroom structure, some people seem to see it as all or nothing (i.e., the instructional activity is either structured or unstructured). Moreover, there is a tendency to equate structure simply with limit setting and social control. Indeed, there appears to be a belief among some teachers that a tight and controlling structure must prevail for students to learn. This view is caricatured by the teacher's maxim "Don't smile until Christmas!"

Such practices tend to produce vicious cycles. The teacher's emphasis on control can have a negative impact on student motivation, which makes it harder to teach and control them. This leads the teacher to push, prod, and punish. As long as a student does not value the classroom, the teacher, and the activities, the teacher is likely to believe that the student requires a great deal of control.

The view of structure as social control is particularly prevalent in responding to the problem of student misbehavior. In such cases, it is common for observers to say that the youngster needs "more structure." Sometimes the phrase used is "clearer limits and consequences," but the idea is the same. The youngster is seen as being out of control, and the need perceived by the observer is for more control.

Most teachers wish it were that easy. Obviously, it is not possible to facilitate the learning of youngsters who are out of control. Equally obvious, however, is the reality that some procedures used to control behavior also interfere with efforts to facilitate learning. A teacher cannot teach a youngster who is suspended from school, and the youngster may be less receptive to the teacher when the suspension ends.

Efforts to use external means to control behavior (e.g., isolating a student in a "time out" situation, sending the student for discipline) tend to be incompatible with developing the type of working relationship that facilitates learning. Using the term *structure* to describe extreme efforts to control behavior fails to recognize that the objective is to facilitate learning and performance, not just control behavior.

Good teaching involves a definition of structure that goes well beyond how much control a teacher has over students. As stressed by Adelman and Taylor in their work related to personalized instructions, Structure must be viewed as

> *the type of support, guidance, and direction provided the learner, and encompasses all efforts to clarify essential information – including communication of limits as necessary.*

Structure can be *personalized* by varying it to match a learner's current motivation and capabilities with respect to a specific task and related circumstances.

The type and degree of structure offered should vary with the learner's needs at the moment. It is important to allow students to take as much responsibility as they can for identifying the types and degree of structure they require. Some activities can be pursued without help, and should be, if the learner is to attain and maintain independence. Other tasks require considerable help if learning is to occur. A personalized approach to structure enables students to take as much responsibility as they are ready for. Some students request a great amount of direction; others prefer to work autonomously. Some like lots of help on certain tasks but want to be left alone at other times. Although teachers are the single most important source of support and guidance in classrooms, aides, other students, and volunteers all can help approximate the ideal of varying structure to meet learners' needs.

Good structure allows for active interactions between students and their environment, and these interactions are meant to lead to a relatively stable, positive, ongoing working relationship. How positive the relationship is depends on how learners perceive the communications, support, guidance, direction, and limit setting. In providing communication, it is important not only to keep students informed but also to interact in ways that consistently convey a sense of appropriate and genuine warmth, interest, concern and respect. The intent is to help students "know their own minds," make their own decisions, and at the same time feel that others like and care about them. Obviously, if the interactions are perceived negatively, motivation for classroom learning is affected and what may evolve in place of a positive working relationship is avoidance behavior.

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Figuring out the best way to provide personalized structure is one of the most important problems a teacher faces in building a working relationship with a student. The problem is how to make the structure neither too controlling and dependency-producing nor too permissive. The teacher does not want to create an authoritarian atmosphere, and no teacher wants to be pushed around. Most teachers find that a positive working relationship requires mutual respect; a warm working relationship requires mutual caring and understanding.

In designing classroom structure, a teacher must plan to provide a great deal of support and guidance for students when they need it and must avoid creating a classroom climate that is experienced by students as tight and controlling. Some students – especially those who are very dependent, uninterested, or who misbehave – do need a great deal of support and guidance initially. However, it is essential to get beyond this point as soon as possible.

For instance, it is clear that when a student misbehaves, the teacher must respond immediately – but the emphasis needs to be on enhancing personalized structure rather than simply on punishment. Yes, the student has gone beyond allowable limits; there must be some logical and reasonable consequence for doing so. At the same time, the intent should be not simply to reemphasize limits (e.g., the rules) and enforce them; the intent should be to handle the situation in ways that avoid increasing student disengagement with school learning and, even better, the focus should be on enhancing engagement. This requires handling the immediate problem in the most positive and matter-of-fact way. The first step is to enhance the amount of support, guidance, and direction being provided to the student in ways that keep the focus on learning (often using a volunteer or aid to sit down immediately to engage the student). Then, as soon as feasible, the teacher confers with the student about *why* the misbehavior occurred and what needs to be done to prevent a future occurrence (including decisions about consequences now and in the future). None of this is done with rancor or condemnation. The message is: *We all make mistakes at times; we just need to find a way to make things better.* The tone is: *We can still respect and like each other and work together after we do a bit of problem solving.*

Unit D provides further discussion about responding to behavior problems.

3) Instructional Techniques
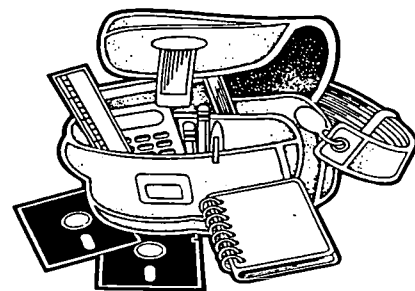
Some degree of structure is inherent in all planned activities. To enhance student engagement and guide learning and performance, teachers often want to make activities more attractive and accessible and to minimize interfering factors (factors that lead to avoidance and distraction). This is accomplished through various techniques.

> *Techniques* alter the structure provided for an activity. The same activity can be pursued under different degrees of support and direction by varying the amount of cueing and prompting given to the learner. Some variations are "built in" at the time an activity is developed (such as special formatting in published materials); others are added as the activity is pursued.

The amount of structure offered during the pursuit of learning activities is especially important when providing support and direction to facilitate learning. Practice activities present a special concern because they often involve the type of drill that people find dull and prefer to avoid.

From a psychological perspective, techniques are intended to enhance

- motivation (attitudes, commitment, approach, follow-through),

- sensory intake (perceptual search and detection),

- processing and decision making (evaluation and selection), and

- output (practice, application, demonstration).

For our purposes here we will group them into sets of techniques to (a) enhance motivation and (b) guide performance and learning.

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BOY IS MY TEACHER DUMB.

WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?

SHE SPENDS THE WHOLE DAY ASKING US QUESTIONS.
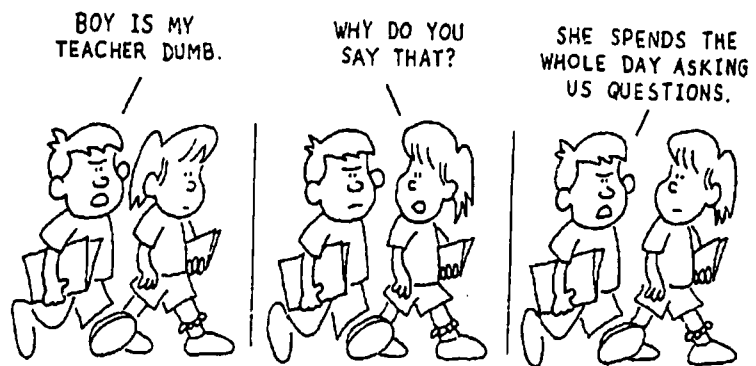
a) Using Techniques to Enhance Motivation

The foundation for enhancing student motivation is establishing a classroom climate that students experience as caring, supportive, and interesting – a place where they feel competent, valued, and respected. This involves

- a degree of nurturance on the part of teachers

- creating an atmosphere that encourages exploration and change

- ensuring a sense of protection related to such exploration and change.

It also involves providing support and guidance that facilitates effectiveness.

In designing learning activities, the emphasis is on creating a good "fit" or "match" between the activity and the learner (as described in the discussion of personalized instruction). From a motivational perspective, tasks must be perceived as valued and achievable.

In terms of valuing, the focus can be on what is of intrinsic or extrinsic value. However, care must be taken related to over relying on extrinsics because, in some circumstances, they can decrease intrinsic motivation. Efforts to enhance relevance (e.g., making tasks authentic, stressing personal meaning and value of specific tasks to students) are consistent with an emphasis on intrinsic motivation, as are strategies that emphasize use of novelty to stimulate curiosity.

The exhibit on the next page provides some specific examples of techniques that can be used to enhance motivation.

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Exhibit

Some Techniques that Nurture, Encourage Exploration, and Protect Learners

A. *Nurturing Learning* (including positive regard, acceptance and validation of feelings, appropriate reassurance, praise, and satisfaction)
Specific examples:
   • eliciting and listening to problems, goals, and progress
   • making statements intended to reassure students that change is possible
   • increasing the number of interpersonal, but nonauthoritarian and nonsupervisary, interactions
   • increasing the frequency of positive feedback and positive public recognition
   • reducing criticism, especially related to performance
   • avoiding confrontations

B. *Creating an Atmosphere for exploration and change* (including encouragement and opportunity)
Specific examples:
   • increasing availability of valued opportunities
   • establishing and clarifying appropriate expectations and "set"
   • modeling expression of affect (self-disclosing) when relevant
   • encouraging pursuit of choices and preferences
   • reducing demand characteristics such as expanding behavioral and time limits, reducing the amount to be done

C. *Ensuring a Sense of Protection for exploration and change* (including principles and guidelines – rights and rules – to establish "safe" conditions)
Specific examples:
   • reducing exposures to negative appraisals
   • providing privacy and support for "risk taking"
   • making statements intended to reassure learners when risk taking is not successful
   • reducing exposure to negative interactions with significant others through eliminating inappropriate competition and providing privacy
   • establishing nondistracting and safe work areas
   • establishing guidelines, consistency, and fairness in rule application
   • advocating rights through statements and physical actions

Also important, of course, are techniques that provide support and guidance to facilitate effectiveness. Such techniques are discussed in the next section.

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b) Using Techniques to Support and Guide Performance and Learning

In designing curricula and instruction, techniques are used to support and guide performance and learning by enhancing *sensory intake, processing, decision making, and output.* This is accomplished through techniques that

>stress meaning   >provide appropriate structure
>encourage active contact and use   >offer appropriate feedback.

The exhibit on the next page highlights some specifics.

The concept of *scaffolding* provides a good example of combining several techniques to guide and support student performance and learning. Kathleen Hogan and Michael Pressley describe instructional scaffolding as follows: "A teacher who stops by a student's desk to ask questions and determine her progress, and then provides hints, subtle suggestions, and guidance to move the student along, is using instructional scaffolding. Scaffolding means providing support to allow a child to think for him or herself. The more advanced partner, or scaffolder, is supportive without being overly directive. A good scaffolder looks for the point where a student can go it alone, and allows the individual to proceed on his or her own initiative." Wood, Bruner, and Ross describe scaffolding as "...controlling those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capability.... As the teacher ... creates a supporting structure that can initiate and sustain interest, the students become involved. As the students gradually gain control of the task, they take over more of the responsibility. When the assumption of responsibility and control occurs, the teacher removes the scaffolding."

- Scaffolding requires the teacher to be aware of the student's current cognitive and affective state of being and their capabilities. The objective is to match learner capabilities and their current motivation.

- Scaffolding encompasses offering explanations, inviting student participation (often using a Socratic style of interaction), verifying and clarifying student understandings, modeling and coaching of thinking processes and desired behaviors, inviting students to contribute clues through use of cues and prompts, and providing feedback in ways that nurture students and encourage them to summarize what they have learned and to self-evaluate regarding progress.

Clearly, scaffolding is a tool for improving the match (enhancing "fit," working in the "zone of proximal development"), thereby enabling the teacher to personalize instruction.

> *All techniques to enhance motivation and guide and support learning must be used in ways that maximize a student's feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness and minimize threats to such feelings. This means ensuring that teachers work closely with students whenever the need is evident, encourage cooperative group learning as indicated, and allow students to pursue learning activity independently as often as it is feasible and appropriate.*

Exhibit
Some Techniques that Help Guide and Support

A. *Meaning* (including personal valuing and association with previous experiences)
   Specific examples:
- using stimuli of current interest and meaning
- introducing stimuli through association with meaningful materials, such as analogies and pictorial representation of verbal concepts, stressing emotional connections
- presenting novel stimuli
- participating in decision making

B. *Structure* (including amount, form, sequencing and pacing, and source of support and guidance)
   Specific examples:
- presenting small amounts (discrete units) of material and/or information
- increasing vividness and distinctiveness of stimuli through physical and temporal figure-ground contrasts (patterning and sequencing), such as varying context, texture, shading, outlining, use of color
- varying levels of abstraction and complexity
- using multisensory presentation
- providing models to emulate, such as demonstrations, role models
- encouraging self-selection of stimuli
- using prompts, cues, and hints, such as color coding, directional arrows, step-by-step directions
- using verbally mediated "self"-direction ("stop, look, and listen")
- grouping material
- using formal coding and decoding strategies such as mnemonic devices, word analysis and synthesis
- rote use of specified study skill and decision-making sequences
- allowing responses to be idiosyncratic with regard to rate, style, amount, and quality
- reducing criteria for success
- using mechanical devices for display, processing, and production, such as projectors, tape recorders, and other audio visual media, typewriters, calculators, computers
- using person resources such as teachers, aides, parents, peers to aid in displaying, processing, and producing

C. *Active contact and use* (including amount, form, and sequencing, and pacing of interaction with relevant stimuli)
   Specific examples:
- using immediate and frequent review
- allowing for self-pacing
- overlearning
- small increments in level of difficulty, such as in "errorless training"
- using play, games, and other personally valued opportunities for practice
- role playing and role taking
- using formal reference aids, such as dictionaries, multiplication charts
- using mechanical devices and person resources to aid in interactions

D. *Feedback* (including amount, form, sequencing and pacing, and source of information/ rewards)
   Specific examples:
- providing feedback in the form of information/rewards
- immediate feedback provided related to all processes and/or outcomes or provided on a contingency basis (reinforcement schedules or need)
- peer and/or self-evaluation
- using mechanical monitoring and scoring

4) Turning Homework into Motivated Practice

Most of us have had the experience of wanting to be good at something such as playing a musical instrument or participating in a sport. What we found out was that becoming good at it meant a great deal of practice, and the practicing often was not very much fun. In the face of this fact, many of us turned to other pursuits. In some cases, individuals were compelled by their parents to labor on, and many of these sufferers grew to dislike the activity. (A few, of course, commend their parents for pushing them, but be assured these are a small minority. Ask your friends who were compelled to practice the piano.)

Becoming good at reading, mathematics, writing, and other academic pursuits requires practice outside the classroom. This, of course, is called *homework*. Properly designed, homework can benefit students. Inappropriately designed homework, however, can lead to avoidance, parent-child conflicts, teacher reproval, and student dislike of various arenas of learning. Well-designed homework involves assignments that emphasize motivated practice.

As with all learning processes that engage students, motivated practice requires designing activities that the student perceives as worthwhile and doable with an appropriate amount of effort. In effect, the intent is to personalize in-class practice and homework. This does not mean every student has a different practice activity. Teachers quickly learn what their students find engaging and can provide three or four practice options that will be effective for most students in a class.

The idea of motivated practice is not without its critics.

> *I don't doubt that students would prefer an approach to homework that emphasized motivated practice. But – that's not preparing them properly for the real world. People need to work even when it isn't fun, and most of the time work isn't fun. Also, if a person wants to be good at something, they need to practice it day in and day out, and that's not fun! In the end, won't all this emphasis on motivation spoil people so that they won't want to work unless it's personally relevant and interesting?*

We believe that a great deal of learning and practice activities can be enjoyable. But even if they are not, they can be motivating if they are viewed as worthwhile and experienced as satisfying. At the same time, we do recognize that there are many things people have to do in their lives that will not be viewed and experienced in a positive way. How we all learn to put up with such circumstances is an interesting question, but one for which psychologists have yet to find a satisfactory answer. It is doubtful, however, that people have to experience the learning and practice of basic knowledge and skills as drudgery in order to learn to tolerate boring situations.

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Also in response to critics of motivated practice, there is the reality that many students do not master what they have been learning because they do not pursue the necessary practice activities. Thus, at least for such individuals, it seems essential to facilitate motivated practice.

Minimally, facilitating motivated practice requires establishing a variety of task options that are potentially challenging -- neither too easy nor too hard. However, as we have stressed, the processes by which tasks are chosen must lead to perceptions on the part of the learner that practice activities, task outcomes, or both are worthwhile -- especially as potential sources of personal satisfaction.

The examples in the following exhibit illustrate ways in which activities can be varied to provide for motivated learning and practice. Because most people have experienced a variety of reading and writing activities, the focus here is on other types of activity. Students can be encouraged to pursue such activity with classssmates and/or family members. Friends with common interests can provide positive models and support that can enhance productivity and even creativity.

Research on motivation indicates that *one of the most powerful factors keeping a person on a task is the expectation of feeling some sense of satisfaction when the task is completed.* For example, task persistence results from the expectation that one will feel smart or competent while performing the task or at least will feel that way after the skill is mastered.

Within some limits, the stronger the sense of potential outcome satisfaction, the more likely practice will be pursued even when the practice activities are rather dull. The weaker the sense of potential outcome satisfaction, the more the practice activities themselves need to be positively motivating.

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Exhibit
Homework and Motivated Practice

Learning and practicing by

(1) doing
- using movement and manipulation of objects to explore a topic (e.g., using coins to learn to add and subtract)
- dramatization of events (e.g., historical, current)
- role playing and simulations (e.g., learning about democratic vs. autocratic government by trying different models in class; learning about contemporary life and finances by living on a budget)
- actual interactions (e.g., learning about human psychology through analysis of daily behavior)
- applied activities (e.g., school newspapers, film and video productions, band, sports)
- actual work experience (e.g., on-the-job learning)

(2) listening
- reading to students (e.g., to enhance their valuing of literature)
- audio media (e.g., tapes, records, and radio presentations of music, stories, events)
- listening games and activities (e.g., Simon Says; imitating rhymes, rhythms, and animal sounds)
- analyzing actual oral material (e.g., learning to detect details and ideas in advertisements or propaganda presented on radio or television, learning to identify feelings and motives underlying statements of others)

(3) looking
- directly observing experts, role models, and demonstrations
- visual media
- visual games and activities (e.g., puzzles, reproducing designs, map activities)
- analyzing actual visual material (e.g., learning to find and identify ideas observed in daily events)

(4) asking
- information gathering (e.g., investigative reporting, interviewing, and opinion sampling at school and in the community)
- brainstorming answers to current problems and puzzling questions
- inquiry learning (e.g., learning social studies and science by identifying puzzling questions, formulating hypotheses, gathering and interpreting information, generalizing answers, and raising new questions)
- question-and-answer games and activities (e.g., twenty questions, provocative and confrontational questions)
- questioning everyday events (e.g., learning about a topic by asking people about how it effects their lives)

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5) Assessing Student Learning to Plan Instruction and Providing Nurturing Feedback

Assessment is used for a variety of purposes in schools. It may be used to screen and identify those who need special assistance; it may be used to help make decisions about a special placement for a student; it may be used to evaluate programs and personnel. But, from a teacher's perspective the main use is to help plan instruction and provide feedback in ways that enhance learning.

a) Planning Instruction

Different views about how to design instruction for specific learners lead to divergent assessment perspectives. For instance, concern has been raised that assessment for individualized as contrasted with personalized instruction results in an inadequate instructional design.

To clarify the point, *individualization* typically emphasizes detecting a student's deficiencies by monitoring daily performance on learning tasks and then modifying instruction to address the deficiencies. In addition, some approaches, such as dynamic assessment, attempt to assess the best teaching approach for a given child. In most cases, however, a major shortcoming of assessment guided by the concept of individualized instruction is that it overemphasizes developmental deficiencies and underemphasizes the importance of assessing motivation, especially intrinsic motivation. This is not surprising given how little systematic attention researchers and practitioners have paid to the concept of intrinsic motivation as it relates to the causes and correction of learning and behavior problems.

In contrast, the concept of *personalization* broadens the focus of assessment. Personalization can be viewed as encompassing individualization. The concept stresses the importance of designing interventions to match not only current learner capabilities but also levels of motivation, especially intrinsic motivation. This latter emphasis is seen as critical given the degree to which intrinsic motivation can profoundly affect current, as well as long-term performance and learning. Thus, a major implication of the concept of personalization for assessment is that formal and systematic procedures are needed to address motivation.

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More generally, *all* formal and informal procedures used to assess and prescribe specific instructional plans (e.g., tests, observations, interviews, trial teaching) raise basic concerns. Many experts suggest that among those not doing well in school, a person's poor performance often is due to low motivation or high anxiety. When this is the case, the findings are "contaminated." Under such circumstances, it is impossible to know whether failure to demonstrate an ability or skill represents a real deficiency in a particular area of development. And, under such circumstances, it is easy to misprescribe treatment. It is easy, for example, to make the mistake of planning to teach skills that a person has already acquired – instead of helping the individual overcome psychological problems interfering with the demonstration of what she or he knows and can do.

Given teacher needs for good assessment of both current motivation and capabilities, there has been a considerable amount of effort in recent years to explore how to address these needs. In a recent article, Lorrie Shepard noted:

> . . . *a broader range of assessment tools is needed to capture important learning goals and processes and to more directly connect assessment to on going instruction. The most obvious reform has been to devise more open-ended performance tasks to ensure that students are able to reason critically, to solve complex problems, and to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts. . . . In order for assessment to play a more useful role in helping students learn it should be moved into the middle of the teaching and learning process instead of being postponed as only the end-point of instruction.*

In terms of broadening the range of tools, she stresses inclusion of observations, interviews, open discussion ("instructional conversations"), reflective journals, projects, demonstrations, collections of student work, and students' self evaluations.

Beyond tools is the matter of how assessment is pursued. In designing instruction, teachers need assessment that reflects student learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes on instructionally-relevant classroom activities. One of the best ways to think about pursuing such assessment is to view it as an *interactive* process.

As captured by the notion of "dynamic" assessment, an interactive assessment process involves the teacher not only in reviewing products, but in clarifying, through observation and discussion, the learner's responses to specific efforts to guide and support performance and learning.

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As a special approach to assessing complex performance, a trend has evolved toward what is called "authentic" assessment. The focus of this trend is on performance-based evaluation using such procedures as essays, open-ended responses, responses to computer simulations, interview data, and analyses of student journals and work that is accumulated over time in a "portfolio." The information garnered from such assessments helps to design both what and how to teach as next steps in personalizing instruction.

Authentic assessment can be used to address a wide range of student outcomes. For example, it can be especially useful in assessing concerns about transfer of learning (e.g., how well a student is acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes that they generalize across tasks, settings, and over time). To this end, observations and student reports related to daily activity can provide a wealth of data clarifying the degree to which a student is applying and adapting what has been learned (e.g., in new situations; to novel tasks; to solve problems in new and creative ways).

Authentic assessment also has potential for enhancing the sense of partnership and trust among students and teacher and for countering many of the negative aspects of other forms of evaluating student progress.

See the Exhibit on the next page for more on authentic assessment in the classroom.

Exhibit

Authentic Assessment in the Classroom

Authentic assessment (also called "performance," "appropriate," "alternative," or "direct" assessments) includes written products, solutions to problems, experiments, exhibitions, performances, portfolios of work and teacher observations, checklists and inventories, and cooperative group projects. For example: Reading among young students is readily assessed when a student reads aloud and the performance can be tape recorded for further analysis; moreover, with any student, instructional conversations and related writing activity yield data on reading comprehension and critical thinking. With respect to writing, any student's work can be gathered into a portfolio. In math, student responses to open-ended mathematics questions are used to clarify how a student thinks through a problem, thereby indicating ability to use math. For history/social studies, performance and products related to group projects provide authentic assessment data on how well concepts about history and democratic processes are being learned. Such performance and products can be analyzed in terms of strengths and weaknesses and the strategies used to learn and solve problems and judgements about learning and future instructional planning can be made with reference to subject area, student age, and prior performance.

"Authentic assessment was developed in the arts and in apprenticeship systems, where assessment has always been based on performance. It is impossible to imagine evaluating a musician's ability without hearing her sing or play an instrument, or judging a woodworker's craft without seeing the table or cabinet the student has built. It is also impossible to help a student become a better woodworker or musician unless the instructor observes the student in the process of working on something real, provides feedback, monitors the student's use of the feedback, and adjusts instruction and evaluation accordingly. Authentic assessment extends this principle of evaluating real work to all areas of the curriculum. . . .

(Authentic) assessments can be designed to closely follow the curriculum. They provide continuous, qualitative data that can be used by teachers to help instruction. They can be used by students, who can learn to assume responsibility for their portfolios and records and thereby engage in regular self analysis of their work and progress. They provide a direct measure of achievement and therefore are worth the time spent preparing for and doing them. They also encourage an intelligent, rich curriculum rather than the dumbed-down, narrow curriculum fostered by teaching to and coaching for multiple-choice tests.

From "Authentic Assessment of Educational Achievement" a FastFacts excerpted from the FAIRTEST Examiner, The National Center for Fair & Open Testing (1991).
http://www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass/achieve/docs/auth_ass.htm

b) Providing Nurturing Feedback

As anyone who has been evaluated knows, feedback can enhance one's sense of well-being, but too often it is devastating. Relatedly, when rewards and punishment are tied to feedback they can complicate the situation greatly and in both cases can have a negative impact (e.g., too great an emphasis on extrinsic rewards and punishment can be counterproductive to maintaining and enhancing intrinsic motivation).

For these reasons, great care must be taken in developing procedures for providing students with information on their progress.

As much as is feasible, information must be provided that highlights success. Feedback, however, also should stress effectiveness in making decisions and the relationship of outcomes to the student's intrinsic reasons for learning. And, with a view to enhancing positive attitudes, it should be conveyed in ways that nurture the student's feelings about her/himself, learning, school, and the teacher.

> *Handled well, the information should contribute to students'*
> *feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness and*
> *should clarify directions for future progress.*

A good context for providing feedback is a formal and informal student conference. At such times, products and work samples can be analyzed; the appropriateness of current content, outcomes, processes, and structure can be reviewed; and agreements and schedules can be evaluated and revised if necessary.

Regardless of the format in which feedback is given, the emphasis should be on information clarifying progress and effectiveness; procedures that may be perceived as efforts to entice and control should be avoided. Special attention must be paid to balancing the need to maintain student motivation and feelings of well-being while providing appropriate information to improve learning. For students who tend to make many errors, this means providing support and guidance that anticipates and strives to prevent certain errors and also being selective about feedback on errors. In this last respect, it is essential to differentiate those errors that must be reviewed because they are most relevant to planning the next instructional encounter, as contrasted with errors that can be ignored at this time because it is premature to focus on them. In all this, student self-monitoring and record keeping are seen as especially helpful; close supervision and external rewards are seen as procedures to be used sparingly.

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Teacher-student dialogues and group open-discussions are the easiest and most direct way to know about learners' views of the match between themselves and the program. Many students are ready to evaluate and say what's working well for them and what isn't.

Some students, of course, have yet to develop the ability to self-evaluate to a satisfactory degree; others are motivated to make excuses, to overstate how well they are doing, or to avoid discussing the matter at all. The presence of students who have trouble with self-evaluation is not a reason to return to procedures that stress close supervision and decision-making by others. Rather, the problems these students are experiencing become an important focus for intervention.

When students are not motivated to be appropriately self-evaluative and self-directive, they need opportunities to find out how personally valuable these "basic skills" can be to them. Sometimes all they need is to feel that it's safe to say what's on their minds. If they already feel safe and just haven't acquired the skills, self-monitoring and regular record keeping provide a good framework for learning such competence.

See the Exhibit on the next page for more on evaluative feedback.

I TOLD HER THE DOG ATE MY
HOMEWORK. SO SHE GAVE MY DOG AN F.

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Exhibit
Evaluative Feedback and Variations in Perception

Why do people arrive at different conclusions about progress and about the reasons for ongoing problems? Sometimes because they perceive events differently.

For example, social psychologists interested in the "attributions" people make about the causes of behavior have stressed that there are some systematic ways that people differ in their perceptions. Research has shown that there is a general tendency for observers to perceive the behavior of others in terms of internal dispositions or traits. "He failed the test because he's lazy (or stupid)." "She's a success because she works very hard (or because she's very smart)." Referring to the same actions, the people carrying out the behavior have a tendency to blame problems they experience on factors in the environment (e.g., poor teaching, hard tasks, bad luck) and to credit their successes to their effort or ability.

Why? Theorists suggest that sometimes it is because people are operating on the basis of different information. This is especially true when one person has information not available to the other, as is often the case for observers as contrasted to those who are actively involved in an event. For instance, when you do poorly on a test because you didn't have time to study, you may be the only one who knows the reason. Others may think it was because you didn't care to put in the time or that you have difficulty understanding the material. In this instance, the observers lack a key bit of information.

However, the different information affecting perceptions may also be due to the perceiver's level of competence and particular philosophical or political interests. That is, people often are selective in what they see because of their motivation or their capacity to understand.

In general, then, differences in evaluation of progress and problems may reflect differences in the information that is actually available to the decision makers or differences in what information they choose to notice and stress. Understanding such factors can be helpful.

Let's take an example.

> Matt wants to improve his spelling. From various options, he has chosen to learn five interesting words each day, which he will pick for himself from his experiences at school or at home. He agrees to bring a list of his five chosen words to school each day.

> On the first day, Matt shows up without his list. "I lost it," he explains. The next day, still no list. "We had to go visit my grandmother she's sick."

> Naturally, Ms. Evans, his teacher, is suspicious. She knows that many students with learning problems use elaborate excuses and blame everything but themselves for their poor performance. Her first thought is: Matt is telling tales. He really doesn't want to work on his spelling. He's lazy. Probably I should assign his spelling words.

> But then she thinks: Suppose he's telling the truth. And even if he isn't, what will I accomplish by accusing him of lying and by going back to procedures that I know were unsuccessful in working with him before. I must work with what he says and try to help him see that there are other ways to cope besides saying he will do something and then giving excuses for not following through.

> Ms. Evans tells Matt: "I want you to think about your program. If you don't want to work on spelling, that's O.K. Or if you want to choose another way to work on it, we can figure out a new way. I won't check up on what you do. When we meet, you can just let me know how you're doing and what help you want."

> Matt seemed greatly relieved by this. The next day he told Ms. Evans that he'd decided to find his five words at school each day, and he'd like some help in doing so.

6) Conferencing as a Key Process

The ability to talk *with* rather than *at* a student is at the core of successful teaching. Talking *with* involves a true dialogue – which, of course, depends on each participant truly listening to and hearing the other. Personalized instruction is built on a base that appreciates what a student is thinking and feeling, and carrying on an ongoing dialogue with a student offers the best opportunity to learn about such matters.

The mechanism for carrying on dialogues often is called a *conference*. However, a term such as *conference* does not convey the full sense of what is involved and at times is interpreted in ways contrary to the meaning used here.

From a motivational perspective, conferences should be nurturing experiences designed to give, share, and clarify information seen as potentially useful as teacher and student plan the next steps for learning in the classroom.

Conferences provide a time and context for

- exploring progress and problems

- clarifying and sampling options for pursuing next steps for learning and solving problems

- mutual planning and decision making

- modifying previous decisions whenever necessary.

The importance of the dialogue as a two-way process cannot be overemphasized. A conference should be a time for persons to say what they need, want, and are hoping for from each other. When problems exist, time should be devoted to problem solving. Conferences vary in length, depending first on how much time is available and second how much time is needed by a specific student. Even when a teacher can carve out 30-40 minutes for an individual conference, one conference often is insufficient for arriving at a full-blown plan and related decisions. Therefore, the process of conferencing is ongoing and not always done in a formal manner. Indeed, some of the best dialogues are spontaneous (e.g., occur when a teacher takes time to sit down next to a student during class for an informal chat). For some students, several informal chats need to occur each day backed up by a formal conference every few days. Such impromptu conferences are particularly feasible when the classroom is designed to maximize use of small group and independent learning activities.

Conferencing is especially important to enhancing student engagement in learning. Through talking with a student, a teacher has the opportunity to convey a sense of positive regard and to gain a richer understanding of the status and bases for a student's current levels of motivation and capability. For example, dialogues yield information on motivational factors (e.g., student hopes, goals, desires, interests, attitudes, preferences, expectations, concerns) which should be considered in planning ways to pursue next steps for learning and solving problems. Dialogues also provide other information about who the student is as an individual (e.g., personal and family background and/or current life events that have relevance to current behavior and learning).

Participating in conferences can enhance a student's feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness to the teacher. That is, properly conducted conferences convey to a student the teacher's positive regard, valuing of the student's perspective, and belief that the student should play a meaningful role in defining options and making decisions. Conferences also are one of the best contexts for providing feedback in a nurturing way and for conveying the teacher's sincere desire to help the student succeed.

With respect to scheduling conferences, each day the teacher plans to meet formally with about five individuals. The list for the day is generated as a combination of students who request a meeting and students with whom the teacher asks to meet. Sometimes the teacher may decide to hold a group conference when the focus is on matters that can benefit from a group discussion. Students are asked to sign-up for specific times and to take responsibility for preparing for and coming to the designated place for the conference.

Students can be encouraged to keep *dialogue journals* as an aid for conferencing. Usually, a dialogue journal is a bound composition book in which the student carries on a private conversation with the teacher. They write each other, often every day, in a direct and informal manner about matters of mutual concern relevant to making learning in the classroom better. This mechanism not only can facilitate communication, it provides students with practice related to basic writing and reading skills and encourages self-evaluation and critical reflection. Dialogue journals also encourage development of coherent self-expression and use of the personal voice -- aspects of writing that can be lost in formal composition writing. (At the same time, because the purpose is to encourage students to communicate, the journals should not be subjected to feedback about writing and spelling errors.)

Another variation of conferencing, particularly for secondary level, focuses on the student's full schedule of classes (rather than a given class) and uses a "conferencing teacher" for a group of students. Every teacher on the faculty is assigned a set of students (not necessarily ones they teach). They conference with these students every two weeks to review how their entire schedule is working out, review work samples (portfolios), and record progress.

Periodically, teacher-student conferences should involve parents or parent surrogates. Here, too, care must be taken to ensure true dialogues take place and that mutual sharing, planning, and decision making are intended. These conferences can take place at designated times and as needed. Because face-to face conferences are costly and difficult to arrange, phone and email exchanges need to become the rule rather than the exception. Although not always feasible, conferences with family members should include the student. Indeed, a recently introduced idea is that of student-led parent-teacher conferences.

A few guidelines for conferencing are:

- Start out on a positive note: Ask about what the student currently likes at school and in the class and clarify areas of strength. (During first conferences, ask about outside interests, hobbies, areas of success.)
- In exploring current progress, be certain to ask the student about the reasons for their successes.
- In exploring current problems, be certain to ask the student about the reasons for the problems (including what aspects they don't like about school and the class). Clarify details about these matters (e.g. Are assignments seen as too hard? Is the student embarrassed because others will think s/he does not have the ability to do assignments? Do others pick on the student? Are the assignments not seen as interesting? No support at home? Are there problems at home?)
- When necessary, use some of the time to analyze academic abilities and learning styles (e.g., listen to the student read aloud, review and discuss the work in a student's portfolio).
- Explore what the student thinks can be done to make things better (e.g., different assignments, extra support from a volunteer/peer, etc.).
- Arrive at some mutual agreements that the student values and expects to be able to do with a reasonable amount of effort.

See the Exhibit on the next page regarding student-led conferences.

Exhibit

Student-Led Parent-Teacher Conferences

The intent of student-led parent conferences is to enhance the value of such interchanges. Rather than pro forma discussions of the student's progress and/or problems, the emphasis is on creating a forum for a student to share her experiences and work at school and engage her parents and teachers in a discussion of next steps.

Ideally, the student plans, prepares, conducts and evaluates the conference. This may include writing an invitation to family members and helping to ensure the meeting site is in order. Obviously, all this requires taking time to teach the student the skills involved (including providing time for role playing practice sessions).

The roles of the teacher in such conferences varies from participating in the conference when it is the only one scheduled to rotating from conference to conference when several are scheduled at the same time.

Optimally, student-led conferences enable a student to brag a bit and to take responsibility for what s/he is doing at school. The conference can range from discussion of grades and work habits and a review of a portfolio of her work to establishing goals for the next month. Properly done, the discussion can enhance a student's ability to organize, communicate openly and honestly, engage family members in a dialogue, and self-evaluate. It can also encourage increased family attendance at conferences.

Good teaching is not easy. With respect to differentiated instruction, Patricia Woodin-Weaver states:

> There's no question that it's a big challenge, but there's no bigger challenge than trying to insert kids in a one-size-fits-all [classroom] and then having to deal with the spillover of emotional and behavioral reactions. If kids are not in a place where they can learn, they let us know loud and clear.

Or as one wag has put it: "Kids would rather look bad than stupid!"

7) Volunteers as an Invaluable Resource

As noted throughout and as summarized in the following Exhibit, volunteers can be a multifaceted resource in a classroom and throughout a school. For this to be the case, however, the school staff must value volunteers and learn how to recruit, train, nurture, and use them effectively. When implemented properly, school volunteer programs can enable teachers to individualize instruction, free teachers and other school personnel to meet students' needs more effectively, broaden students' experiences through interaction with volunteers, strengthen school-community understanding and relations, enhance home involvement, and enrich the lives of volunteers. In the classroom, volunteers can provide just the type of extra support teachers need for conferencing and working with students who require special assistance.

Volunteers may help students on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Group interactions are especially important in enhancing a student's cooperative interactions with peers. One-to-one work is often needed to develop a positive relationship with a particularly aggressive or withdrawn student and in fostering successful task completion with a student easily distracted by peers.

Volunteers can help enhance a student's motivation and skills and, at the very least, can help counter negative effects that arise when a student has difficulty adjusting to school. They can be especially helpful working under the direction of the classroom teacher to establish a supportive relationship with students who are having trouble adjusting to school.

Volunteers Helping with Targeted Students

Every teacher has had the experience of planning a wonderful lesson and having the class disrupted by one or two unengaged students. Properly trained volunteers are a great help in minimizing such disruptions and reengaging an errant student. When a teacher has trained a volunteer to focus on designated students, the volunteer knows to watch for and move quickly at the first indication that the student needs special guidance and support. The strategy involves the volunteer going to sit next to the student and quietly trying to reengage the youngster. If necessary, the volunteer can take the student to a quiet area in the classroom and initiate another type of activity or even go out for a brief walk and talk if this is feasible. None of this is a matter of rewarding the student for bad behavior. Rather, it is a strategy for avoiding the tragedy of disrupting the whole class while the teacher reprimands the culprit and in the process increases that student's negative attitudes toward teaching and school. This use of a volunteer allows the teacher to continue teaching, and as soon as time permits, it makes it possible for the teacher to explore with the student ways to make the classroom a mutually satisfying place to be. Moreover, by handling the matter in this way, the teacher is likely to find the student more receptive to discussing things than if the usual "logical consequences" have been administered (e.g., loss of privileges, sending the student to time-out or to the assistant principal).

Exhibit

The Many Roles for Volunteers in the Classroom and Throughout the School

I. Welcoming and Social Support

    A. In the Front Office
        1. Greeting and welcoming
        2. Providing information to those who come to the front desk
        3. Escorting guests, new students/families to destinations on the campus
        4. Orienting newcomers

    B. Staffing a Welcoming Club
        1. Connecting newly arrived parents with peer buddies
        2. Helping develop orientation and other information resources
           for newcomers
        3. Helping establish newcomer support groups

II. Working with Designated Students in the Classroom

    A. Helping to orient new students

    B. Engaging disinterested, distracted, and distracting students

    C. Providing personal guidance and support for specific students in
       class to help them stay focused and engaged

III. Providing Additional Opportunities and Support in Class and on the
     Campus as a Whole

   Helping develop and staff additional

    A. Recreational activity

    B. Enrichment activity

    C. Tutoring

    D. Mentoring

IV. Helping Enhance the Positive Climate Throughout the School --
     including Assisting with "Chores"

    A. Assisting with Supervision in Class and Throughout the Campus

    B. Contributing to Campus "Beautification"

    C. Helping to Get Materials Ready

Volunteers can be recruited from a variety of sources: parents and other family members; others in the community such as senior citizens and workers in local businesses; college students; and peers and older students at the school. *Schools committed to enhancing home and community involvement in schooling find that an effective volunteer program is an excellent element in their efforts to do so.*

To amplify a bit on a few of the functions outlined in the preceding Exhibit:

Tutoring. One of the most direct and effective ways to provide extra instructional assistance is through individual and small group tutoring. Volunteer tutors (including peer tutors and cross-age tutors) provide a way to make such assistance feasible on a large scale. Volunteers who are bi-lingual provide a special resource for student with limited English skills. They not only can help students with lessons but also can assist with development of English language skills, and can help the teacher communicate with family members. In the case of students tutoring other students, various benefits may accrue for the tutor in terms of enhanced knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior.

Planning and Implementing Instruction. As the teacher develops lesson plans and prepares instructional activities, volunteers can help gather resources and contribute any special knowledge and skills they have acquired. During class, they can help support and guide the work of small groups.

Social support. Throughout any school day and at critical times throughout the school year, students require social as well as academic support. Who needs social support? New students and their families; students who are shy; those who are uncertain about how to make friends; those who feel alienated; those experiencing temporary emotional upsets; those who misbehave; students making the transition to a new grade and classroom; students transitioning back from special education; and many others. Here, too, peer volunteers can be used. For example, trained "peer buddies" may commit to a buddy for several weeks -- eating lunch together, participating in various activities, and facilitating connections with other students.

Mentoring. It is well known that a good relationship with a caring adult is a fundamental ingredient in helping children succeed. In one form or another, all children need role models and advocates. Ideally, family members fulfill this role; teachers and others who work with young people can do so as well. To expand the range of role models and to ensure all youngsters do have an advocate, volunteers can be recruited as mentors. Mentoring is another tool in efforts to provide social support and a sense of future options and hope, develop positive behavior and skills, increase engagement in school and life, and reduce school dropout.

Few teachers have the time to recruit and train a cadre of volunteers. Teachers can work with the school administration and support service staff to set up a volunteer program for the school. Initially, a small group of volunteers can be recruited and taught how to implement and maintain the program (e.g., recruit a large pool of volunteers, help train them, nurture them, work with them to recruit replacements when they leave).

The cost of volunteer programs is relatively small compared to the impact they can have on school climate and the quality of life for students and school staff.

Stop, think, discuss

Write out a plan for a lesson that incorporates the strategies for facilitating motivated performance and practice that you have learned in this Unit.

If you want to read more about enabling active learning, team teaching, engaging students in conferences, authentic assessment, and celebrating diversity in the classroom, see the brief readings that have been in included in the accompanying materials.

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*In addition, go to the Quick Find and other search features on the Center's website, and you will find many relevant resources to topics discussed in this Unit. From the Center website, you can also access the ERIC system and other resource centers through the feature "A Gateway to a World of Resources."

Lesson Plan

(1) Write out a plan for a lesson that incorporates strategies for facilitating m otivated performance and practice.

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