21st Century Social Science Learning

Helping Students One Strategy at a Time

In years past, education was built around very specific skills for trades or professions. But globalization has brought us closer together across the world, and created a society where a variety of skills are needed each day. Throughout their adult life, students will need the ability to adapt and engage in new learning.

This is where 21st Century Learning instruction methods come into play. 21st Century Learning refers to core competencies such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. It also addresses digital literacy, civic awareness, and problem-solving.

Advocates of 21st Century Learning believe schools need to actively engage in these high-impact, evidence-based practices to help students thrive in today's world.

Icebreakers

Icebreaker activities that ask students to share personal interests and hobbies allow students to share things they have in common. These activities assist students in meeting classmates, as well as making friends. This camaraderie can lay the foundation of a trusting classroom environment (Cossar). Intentionally inviting classrooms assume positive intentions and seek to build relationships both with other students as well as the teacher (Fisher, Frey 6)
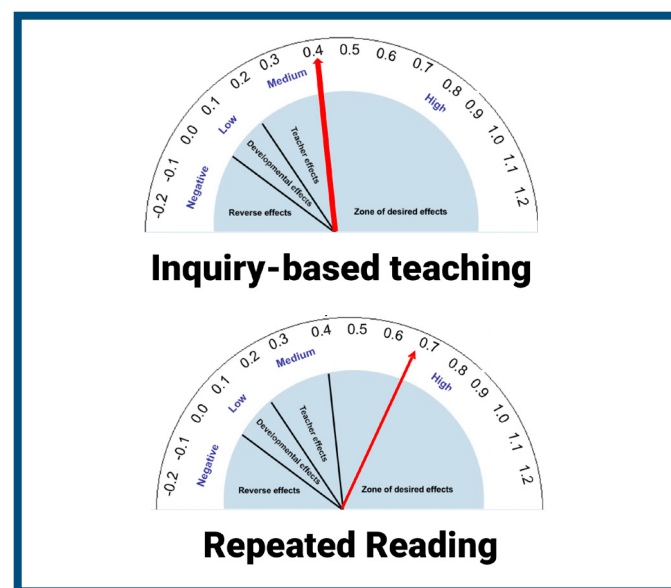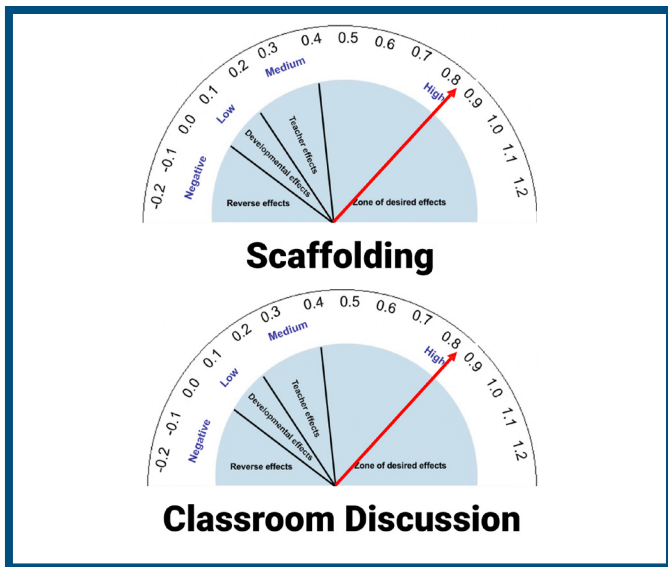
Visible Learning

John Hattie Ph.D. is an educational researcher and former Professor of Education at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. Currently, Hattie is director of the Melbourne Educational Research Institute at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Author of *Visible Learning* (2009) and *Visible Learning for Teachers* (2012), Hattie's work synthesized over 850 meta-studies that covered over 80 million students as to what works best for learning in schools.

To date, Hattie's study has grown to nearly 1,200 studies and over 300 million students. His work identifies "195 influences related to learning outcomes from very positive effects to very negative effects". (Visible-Learning.org).

Hattie's effect size measures and calculates the impact teaching has on student achievement. It is an essential tool in understanding the effectiveness of specific teaching strategies and interventions in the classroom. According to Hattie's study, an effect size of 0.40, which Hattie called the 'hinge point,' has a more significant impact than those strategies and interventions that are lower than 0.40" (Fisher, Frey, Hattie 9).

Inquiry-based teaching

Repeated Reading

Scaffolding

Classroom Discussion

The C3 Framework

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History developed over a period of three years.

At the heart of the C3 Framework is inquiry-based teaching and learning. "Its objectives are to a) enhance the rigor of the social studies disciplines; b) build critical thinking, problem solving, and participatory skills to become engaged citizens; and c) align academic programs to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies" (socialstudies.org/c3).

The Question Formulation Technique

The C3 Framework Inquiry Arc promotes academically rigorous and relevant compelling questioning in the history-social science classroom. Dan Rothstein and

Luz Santana in their book *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions* (2015), work with C3 teachers through their Right Question Institute developing strategies using the Question Formulation Technique as a regular process in C3 social science classrooms throughout the United States (rightquestion.org).

Strategies For Learning

The instructional practices highlighted below are a few of those practices that Hattie's research has shown to increase student learning wherever they are applied (High Impact Teaching Strategies 5).

Possible Sentences: Possible Sentences is a pre-reading vocabulary strategy that activates students' prior knowledge about content area vocabulary and concepts. Before reading, a list of preselected words/phrases from the text is given to students. Students then work in collaborative to groups to create a meaningful sentence using at least two words or phrase from the list. After reading the text, students check to see if their "possible sentences" were accurate or need revising (Beers, Probst).

See-Think-Wonder: See-Think-Wonder is used to help students engage with text by looking closely. It is an instructional practice designed to assist student's in close observation of texts in order to gain greater insight and interpretations (Richhart Et Al. 55).

Text Features: As students expand their reading to textbooks and informational text, they find the reading difficult or challenging due to more complex vocabulary and concept-dense content. Explicitly teaching students the text features of these expository assists in their comprehension of these texts (Kelley & Clausen-Grace, 2008; Spencer, 2003).

Chunking the Text: This instructional practice helps students engage in the reading of more complex text by exposing them to it several times. Text Chunking can be done in a variety of ways.

Chunking a piece of complex text involves breaking down the reading into manageable pieces and having students rewrite these "chunks" in their own words.

Addressing text in smaller chunks helps students identify key words and ideas. This process helps to develop the student's ability to paraphrase and summarize, making it easier for them to organize and synthesize information (facinghistory.org).

One Sentence Summary: When asking students to summarize they need to do so in a way that helps them discern the inherent structures in a text. If students are aware that a story or piece of expository text has a structure they are more likely to identify them. Summarizing of the main idea and supporting details into a one or two-word summarization is one practice that helps with comprehension (Kelley & Clausen-Grace, 2008; Spencer, 2003).

Collaborative Poster: This method provides students the opportunity to synthesize and extend their understanding of key ideas of a text, lesson, or unit of study. The practice asks students to collaboratively consolidate their understanding of the critical ideas in their learning and demonstrate that understanding using a visual representation, an original phrase and a direct quote that is critical to the understanding of the text (qtel.wested.org).

I Used to Think…, Now I Think…: The instructional practice of "I Used to Think…, Now I Think…" should be used when concluding a new learning or unit of study. The practice helps students reflect on new understandings by examining and explaining how their thinking has changed and helps to develop their metacognitive skill about one's thoughts and how those thoughts change and develop over time (Ritchhart Et Al. 154).

Teacher Efficacy: John Hattie's research has determined that one of the most significant influences on student learning is Collective Teacher Efficacy. With an effect size of d=1.57, Collective Teacher Efficacy is by far the most substantial influence when it comes to student achievement (visible-learning.org). Through collective actions, educators who demonstrate a willingness to try new teaching approaches, and attend to struggling students' needs can increase student achievement.

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