Effective vs. Engaging

What Should Happen in the Classroom

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1 March 2018

The Excel Center

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Good Morning Class!

Today's Objective:

I can explain how helium physically affects an object.

The Challenge

Your team will be given a hula hoop filled with **helium**.

Using only your fingers, you will need to bring the hula hoop to the ground.

If someone's fingers come off the hula hoop at any moment, you have to start over.

Directions

Stand in a circle.

Stick your arms out in front of you.

Stick out your index fingers parallel to the ground with the fingernail pointing towards the ceiling.

DO NOT curl your finger. **DO NOT** point your finger upwards.

I will place a hula hoop on everyone's fingers.
You will have five minutes to get it on the ground without losing contact.
Don't start until I say go!

Check Mastery

I can explain how helium physically affects an object.

With your table, discuss this objective using evidence from the activity you just did.

How did the group activity help you master the objective?

ANSWER:

It did not.

The activity and the objective were only loosely connected. While engaging, this lesson was ineffective.

Today's (real) Objectives

1. Define "engaging lesson" and "effective lesson"

2. Explain the relationship between engagement and effectiveness

3. List several ways in which effective lesson planning can help teachers new to the Excel Center model

Definitions

An engaging lesson is…

active.

interactive.

challenging.

connected to student interests.

filled with practice.

facilitated by a teacher.

An effective lesson is…

designed to build and develop specific skills.

cycles through previously taught skills.

led by clear and measurable objectives.

connected to previous and upcoming lessons.

evaluated constantly by student performance.

adjusted when needed.

An engaging lesson is NOT always effective

BUT

An effective lesson is ALWAYS engaging

Coaching Teachers

Common statements made by teachers new to the Excel Center model

Examples of how focusing on effective lesson planning can help coach teachers in these situations

Teacher #1:

It is impossible to teach all of this in eight weeks.

Coaching Ideas

This teacher is feeling overwhelmed by standards and pacing

Write lesson plans that focus on the skills identified in the maps and unit tests

Use existing lesson plans for at least two terms

Focus on building a solid foundation and comfort level with the pacing

Teacher #2:

If I don’t use a PowerPoint, how else will I get this information to them?

Coaching Ideas

This teacher is stressed by the accelerated pace of an eight week course.

Introduce the idea of the "productive struggle"

Break up a lecture with small, engaging activities

Go back to the maps/tests -- does this content need covered in depth?

Teacher #3:

I can’t teach them if they aren’t here!

Coaching Ideas

This teacher is emphasizing being in class over mastering the content.

Establish routines for tracking, distributing, and grading make-up work

Use mastery trackers/handouts (Edulastic)

Focus on mastery; don't create artificial barriers for students

Teacher #4:

The unit (or state) tests are so difficult that my students stop coming to class.

Coaching Ideas

This teacher is feeling helpless.

Create small student mastery goals that align with the tests

Develop ways to celebrate small successes

Make students active participants in their mastery

Review Our Objectives

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THANK YOU!

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