Assets-Based Teaching: Reigniting the Joy for Learning

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

—Albert Einstein
Welcome and Connect
The Deficit Model

The deficit model is based on the norm of students whose homes and communities have prepared them for “schooling” before they enter school.

If it is evident that students have not been prepared well for “schooling,” what do schools do? Are the students made to feel that the schools value the “funds of knowledge” they bring from their homes, or do schools see only the deficits in the students?

Connect: Reflect and Share

How would you define Assets-Based Teaching?

Offer an example of Assets-Based Teaching in:
- Pre-assessing
- Formatively assessing
- Summatively assessing
- Lesson planning

For:
- English Language Learners
- Academic English learners
- Students with special needs
Outcomes – Participants will…

• Deepen understanding of how assets-based teaching can narrow the “success” gap

• Examine the importance of differentiating instruction to support all students in becoming college and career ready

• Learn effective strategies to support English Language Learners, Academic English learners, and students with special needs

• Share insights for application to individual contexts
Agenda

1. Welcome and Connect
2. Overview
3. Knowing Our Students — Beneath the Tip of the Iceberg
4. Teaching Our Students —
   a. Zone of Optimal Performance
   b. Six Strategies
5. Observing a Teacher and Students
6. Closure — Applying to Your Context
Knowing Our Students
Standard English Learners Defined

Students whose ancestral or home languages reflect unique cultural and linguistic histories other than English and differ in structure and form from mainstream standard American or academic English. Their languages incorporate English vocabulary while embodying phonology, grammar, and sentence structure rules transitioned from various indigenous languages including African, Native American, Hawaiian, and Latin American Spanish.

English Language Learners Defined

An English language learner (often capitalized as English Language Learner or abbreviated to ELL) is a person who is learning the English language in addition to his or her native language. The instruction and assessment of students, their cultural background, and the attitudes of classroom teachers towards ELLs have all been found to be factors in ELL student achievement. Some educational advocates, especially in the United States, prefer for a student learning any second language the term emergent bilingual.

From Wikipedia
Special Education

The purpose of special education is to provide equal access to education for children ages birth through 21 by providing specialized services that will lead to school success in the general curriculum.
Key Is Knowing Your Students Across Multiple Dimensions

• Teachers often learn only about their students’ academic test scores, etc. — these are just the *tip of the iceberg*

• Assets-based teaching requires teachers to know their students beneath the *tip of the iceberg*
Beneath the Tip: Personal Context

• Non-school literacies
• Home and community background
• Primary language
• Socio-cultural traditions
• Educational histories
• Perceptions
• Life experiences
Beneath the Tip: Individual Preferences

- Learning style preferences
- Multiple intelligences
- Interests and hobbies
- Aptitudes
- Optimal learning environment
- Emotional competence
Beneath the Tip:
Metacognitive Competence

• Study and learning skills
• Self-monitor behavior
• Self-assess
• Set and attain goals
• Manage time
• Ask questions
• Check for accuracy
• Revise
• Reflect
Formative Assessment: Knowing Students Across Multiple Dimensions

Think…Write…Share…

• How might you use pre- and formative assessment in your current role?

• What tools (e.g., surveys) do you know of that can help a teacher assess these dimensions of their students?
Teaching Our Students
Figure 7.4. The zone of proximal discomfort and the Yerkes-Dodson curve. The Yerkes-Dodson curve has been the subject of significant debate since its
Accelerating Academic Language Development – Six Key Strategies

1. Vocabulary and language development
2. Guided interaction
3. Metacognition and authentic assessment
4. Explicit instruction
5. Meaning-based context and universal themes
6. Modeling, graphic organizers, and visuals
1. Vocabulary and Language Development

• **Content knowledge**
  – Introduce new concepts via essential academic vocabulary
  – Connect student-accessible synonyms to essential vocabulary
  – Support distinguishing word meanings for subject-specific tasks

• **Academic language**
  – Beginning-level students use basic social and school vocabulary
  – Contextualize more complex language and uses
  – Respectfully distinguish differences in primary and standard academic English
2. Guided Interaction

• Content knowledge
  – Provide multiple opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions to learn content
  – Clarify expectations for flexible group activities
  – Allow for primary language to clarify concepts

• Academic language
  – Multiple opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions to increase speaking, listening
  – Review language forms
3. Metacognition and Authentic Assessment

- **Content knowledge**
  - Teach processes for metacognition: monitoring their own reading comprehension
  - Teach how to describe their thinking processes
  - Use a variety of tasks to check understanding

- **Academic language**
  - Make assessments appropriate to assessed language development level
  - Differentiate to provide ample time
4. Explicit Instruction

- **Content knowledge**
  - Essential grade-level concepts and background knowledge
  - Connect overarching ideas to students’ own applications

- **Academic language**
  - Teach essential language forms
  - Explicit modeling with practice
5. Meaning-Based Context and Universal Themes

• Content knowledge
  – Introduce new concepts through familiar resources and themes
  – Sustain motivation by linking to student interests and cultural background

• Academic language
  – Link language practice to school and community use
  – Respectfully compare and analyze language use and meaning to other cultures
6. Modeling, Graphic Organizers, and Visuals

• Content knowledge
  – Model how to complete tasks
  – Provide graphic organizers and visuals to support student recognition of information
  – Use graphic organizers to support understanding of tasks and academic language
  – Use advanced organizers to support metacognition

• Academic language
  – Use word banks, word walls to differentiate
  – Modulate language delivery (speed, enunciation) when modeling language, presenting content; repetition helps
Activity Instructions

1. Form groups of 6, and number off 1 – 6

2. Each person prepares to share key strategies/concepts that align with their number

3. Round robin: groups share key strategies
Observing
Activity Instructions — Video Observation

Using the Six Strategies Observation Tool (handout):

1. Observe the video, capturing any evidence of the strategies

2. Share at your table
### Six Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy:</th>
<th>What is the teacher saying or doing?</th>
<th>What are the students saying or doing?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary and Language Development</td>
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Closure: Applying to Your Context
Application: Reflect...Share

Reflect, then share your insights about what you can apply from this session to your own context.
THANK YOU!

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(Please submit your evaluation electronically!)