

If student practice is to be used effectively, before the activity starts:

- The students must have been adequately introduced to the activity, so that they understand the aim of the work they have been set.

They must be fully aware of 'doing-detail' (what they are expected to do and how best to do it).

They will also need to know why things are done this way.

- The activities must be at the right level for all the students.

(This might involve different activities, or different expectations, for different students – for example, stretching activities for students who finish early.)

- Students should have had the opportunity to ask questions about the activity.
- If the activity consists of a series of tasks, these should usually be available to the students in a written form, and broken down into subtasks.

For example,

‘When you have finished, write a report’ may be too vague for many students; try itemising subtasks – for example, what the report should contain. Alternatively, get students to devise such subtasks themselves – for example, by action-planning before they start.

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Reluctant learners

Try:

When you have finished down to question 4, let me know and I will mark it for you straight away.

Instant knowledge of results like this is very motivating, even for students whose work rate is usually very low; mark with the student present, and find something to praise if possible.

Students enjoy your undivided attention as much as the marking.

If the class is large, then offer to mark part of the work on the spot, but all the work of those who are least motivated.

How do you deal with students whose work rate is low because of low motivation?

- Check work rate often. You may need to make a mental, or even a written, note of where students have 'got up to' in their work at the beginning of the work session.
- Use eye contact between checks.
- Praise what you can in their work.
- Set targets: 'I'll come back in five minutes, and I'll expect to see question 4 completed.' Make sure your targets are realistic, that you remember to check whether they have been met, and that you praise their achievement.
- In extreme cases, put students 'on report' – that is, they must bring their work to you at the end of each lesson.
- Read the chapters on motivation and praise and criticism in Part 1!

In general, when correcting students' work, try to get them to do as much of the correcting as possible:

- Ask if they have any questions or difficulties, and listen carefully to their reply.
- Try to get the students to recognise the root cause of their difficulty, using questioning if necessary.
- Having discovered the problem, ask them if they can see the solution.
- Only when this fails should you explain and demonstrate how the error should be corrected.

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ကျေးဇူးတင်: မှားဝါ အလုပ်ကို ပြန်ဆောင်စေ အစီအစဉ် ဖြစ်နိုင်သော အခါ-ကို ပြန်ဆောင် လို
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Worksheets

Worksheets are usually a series of exercises or practical tasks for the students, but they may also include summarised notes.

When writing your own worksheets:

- Graduate the work very carefully. Students need more than one question to practise a difficult idea, and they like to climb one step at a time.
- Make the first few questions very simple to give confidence.
- Whenever possible, break tasks down into subtasks, giving each a unique question number. Order tasks with great care.
- Worksheets should give students the opportunity to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have been learning in a straightforward way. Don't aim to catch students out. Leave the more difficult questions until the basics have been well established and practised. Success is the key to motivation.
- Make at least the last question *open*, so that students who work quickly don't end up with nothing productive to do.
- Consider student relevance, human interest puzzles, challenges, etc.
- Make your worksheets as attractive and interesting as you can. Type them; include diagrams and photographs; don't cram too much into them. (Look carefully at commercially produced worksheets and see how they do them.)

Discussions are generally considered to be of value in the following situations:

1 Where the students' opinions and experiences need to be known by the lecturer, or are valuable and interesting to the other students in the group.

For example:

- in a workshop where experienced health workers are evaluating old methods of working and considering new methods
- in a personal and social education (PSE) class discussing bullying.

2 Where the topic involves values, attitudes, feelings and awareness, rather than exclusively factual material. For example:

- while exploring sex-stereotyping
- while trying to develop or change attitudes to safety in an engineering workshop.

3 Where it is necessary to give students practice in forming and evaluating opinions. For example:

- discussing the character of Hamlet in an English literature class
- discussing some effects of unemployment in a sociology class.

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In group work, students' opinions are being valued and accepted; in teacher talk they are being ignored.

This has important implications for all teachers, but especially those who are teaching professional people, or those trying to change attitudes, values or prejudices. The 'hidden curriculum' underlying group discussion, as against that for teacher talk, was examined in the previous chapter on class discussion.

During my schooldays, learning was regarded as a serious and difficult process; if laughter ever burst from a classroom, passing teachers would peer in with anger and suspicion.

Yet games can produce intense involvement, and a quality of concentration no other teaching method can match.

What is more, the increase in interest and motivation produced by a short session of game-playing can produce positive feelings towards the subject (and the teacher) which last for weeks.

Role-play is very useful for developing the 'interpersonal skills' of learners – for example, for training in the caring professions, the police, the retail trades, or for management training, and so on. It gives learners an opportunity to practise skills in a risk-free environment.

Other uses include sex and relationships education; indeed any situation where students must learn to negotiate in an assertive yet respectful manner.

As well as helping students to develop social skills, role-play can help students explore emotive issues. (The last role-play activity bullet point above is an example of this.) Other examples might include teen pregnancy, smoking, puberty or the Factory Acts.

Several groups of students can carry out the same role-play activity simultaneously, as in the case of the first bullet point above. This has the advantage that it allows every member of the class to practise the social skill. It also reduces stage fright!

However, it is not suitable for repeated performance of these role-plays to the whole class, as the repetition becomes too tedious.

If the ability to recall given information is seen as a skill, then the learner's needs for corrected practice apply:

- *Explanation*. In order to remember, we must first understand. Otherwise, recall can only be achieved with very great difficulty, and what is recalled is of little use to the learner.
- *'Doing-detail'*. Students like to know exactly what they should be able to recall, and in what detail. This is obvious to you, but not to them.

They cannot be expected to recall every word you say, so key facts for learning must be limited and very carefully defined. Specific learning notes can provide this detail. Once key facts are recalled, they act as reminders for associated information.

- *Use*. Students must practice recalling. Many learners believe that reading and re-reading their notes is sufficient, but corrected practice of recall is vital.
- *Check and correct*. The recall must of course be checked for completeness and accuracy; if 'doing-detail' is carefully enough defined, this can be done by the learner.

The need for an *aide-memoire*, and for *review, evaluation and queries*, is self-evident.

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