

Decide what will occur in each episode: Step 3

These are the tactics or techniques that teachers use to ensure all students have the opportunity to achieve the learning intention/goal.

Tactics include:

- Chunking the learning into manageable bits and sequencing these bits
- Checking for understanding
- Considering pacing, timing and transitions
- Offering managed choice
- Questioning
- Feeding back to students

Chunking the learning into manageable bits and sequencing these bits

In terms of learning it is important to break the content into "bite sized bits" or manageable chunks so that students are not overwhelmed with too much new information all at once. Extraneous information that doesn't support the learning intention/goal or assist students in areas of need is not useful.

The manageable lesson chunks need to be sequenced so that the pieces of information flow in a logical, coherent sequence.

Checking for understanding

Traffic lighting – use of red, green, amber cards.

- Red = I don't understand
- Amber = I sort of understand but can we go over this bit again
- Green = I'm ready to move on.

Thumbs up, thumbs down, thumbs sideways – same as traffic lighting

Hinge questions – questions based on important concepts within a lesson – questions that are critical for students to understand before moving on.

No hands up – instead the teacher selects students to respond.

Wait time - wait at least 30 seconds after asking a question.

Considering pacing, timing and transitions

Pacing is the rhythm and timing of classroom learning experiences or lesson parts and the process of deciding that it is the right moment to change to another experience or part of the lesson. It is knowing when to move briskly and when to slow down. It also involves mixing up the learning experiences. Reading silently might be followed by Think, Pair, Share. A practical demonstration might be followed by recording a summarising statement or practising the demonstrated skill in pairs.

Timing refers to the way time is allocated to each experience or lesson part. It is important to plan the timing and as far as possible stick to this plan.

Transitions constitute the “space between” individual experiences and /or lesson parts and even between lessons. Transitions provide cohesion to the lesson by wrapping up before moving to a new experience or lesson part. Transitions link and hold the learning experiences together and ensure that students understand how each experience/part build toward the learning intention.

Offering managed choice

Managed choice usually involves students making a choice from a range of familiar options rather than "free" choice.

With managed choice, students do not have an unlimited range of task or topic choices, but it is less common to find every student doing the same task and more common to observe students working on similar but different tasks.

Choice of this sort has been shown to lead to greater student ownership of and engagement with the work.

For example, choices about how information is presented may include:

- poster
- video
- poem
- mind map
- PowerPoint presentation
- slideshow
- illustration
- graphic organiser
- podcast
- booklet
- chart
- speech

It is important that students are familiar with each choice (i.e. each choice has been explicitly taught on a previous occasion).

Choice can also be offered in the tasks or in the learning experiences.

Questioning

Strategic questions are used in two ways.

1. To assess students' understanding and find out what they know.
2. To prompt students to seek further information and think more deeply.

Types of questions

- Aim for questions that challenge the student and encourage higher-order thinking. Avoid too many literal, basic recall questions which don't require the students to make inferences or link prior learning or strategise and are concerned with low-level thinking.
- Use Bloom's hierarchy of questions to help identify useful, challenging questions.
- Consider asking questions that begin with How..? Why..? What if...?
- Invite elaboration: Tell me about your thinking on this?
- Echo to clarify: So you think...?
- Offer ideas: Did you know that...?
- Model and encourage wondering: I wonder if...?
- Transfer questions: Could you use this idea another way?
- Prompt evaluation: So, looking at the situation, what do you think?

Open-ended questions that may lead to higher-order thinking:

- What might be a different viewpoint on that?
- How could we find evidence to back up our information?
- How do these two ideas connect?
- What are some of the reasons for this happening?
- What are some possible causes for this?
- What might happen if ...?

Feeding back to students

The emphasis of feedback should be on progress and achievement, pinpointing strengths and guiding students towards future learning.

Simply saying "Great work" is not giving quality feedback. More useful comments are encouraging, specific and focused on improvement.

Feedback needs to:

- relate specifically to the learning intention
- be timely - preferably given during the lesson or very soon after. A week later is too late
- include specific prompts to encourage improvement
- relate clearly to the success criteria so the student is fully aware of the steps needed to "close the gaps" or improve their performance.

Feedback can be provided by other students as well as the teacher.