

# "Instructional Support Weekly"

Topic: Student Understanding, Attention & Motivation

How to ensure student understanding of newly introduced academic material:

- Structure lessons so that they can contain no more than one-quarter new material. (Students are most successful when they can 'anchor' new concepts to known information.)
- Match student's level of instruction to ability level to guarantee him or her high rate of success (80% or greater).
- Use a 'think-aloud' approach: Talk through the steps of a problem-solving strategy as you teach it so that students can understand and internalize those steps. Then have them use the same 'think-aloud' approach as they work through the strategy, so that you can observe them and offer feedback.
- Give the student your master notes as a guide for improving or expanding this or her own notes. Or at the end of each class period, have the student compare his or her notes for thoroughness and accuracy against those of a classmate who takes thorough notes.

How to promote student attention and motivation in group instruction:

- Seat the student at the front of the room, so that you face him or her as you teach (the teaching 'action zone')
- Use alerting cues to get the class's attention before giving a directive or assignment.
- Integrate learning into game-like tasks that allow students to win praise, points, privileges, or rewards; promote friendly competition between student teams; or use puzzles, riddles, or other novel vehicles to kindle student interest.
- Present instructional material in short sessions at a brisk pace.
- Require that students engage in some type of active responding to teacher instruction (e.g. students respond to teacher question in unison; students write down their response and then the teacher calls randomly on one student to share his or her answer; students break into small groups and use cooperative-learning strategies to solve a problem).

Have a great week!

From the Instructional Support Team at STM

Wright, Jim. Accommodating All Students: 'Classic' Ideas That Teachers Can Use to Diversify Classroom Instruction. November 5, 2008.

<http://interventioncentral.com/htmldocs/interventions/genAcademic/classic.php>