

BE A ~~GOOD~~ GREAT TUTOR!

Module 4, Teaching Methods



TEACHING METHODS

“[KIDS] DON'T REMEMBER WHAT YOU TRY TO TEACH THEM. THEY REMEMBER WHAT YOU ARE.”

JIM HENSON, IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN: AND OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

“THOSE WHO KNOW, DO. THOSE THAT UNDERSTAND, TEACH.”

ARISTOTLE

“. . . [I]N TEACHING YOU WILL LEARN.”

PHIL COLLINS

“TRUE TEACHERS ARE THOSE WHO USE THEMSELVES AS BRIDGES OVER WHICH THEY INVITE THEIR STUDENTS TO CROSS”

NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS

TEACHING METHODS

Teacher centered

- Employs direct instruction
- Uses tutor-provided materials
- Is a tutor-managed environment

Student centered

- Is driven by student objectives
- Relies on student participation
- Requires tutor creativity

Content centered

- Employs a text book curriculum
- Discourages deviation from curriculum
- Definitively measures progress

Classroom centered

- Is based on previous class meeting
- Employs student discussions and input
- Is completely flexible

TEACHER CENTERED

Teacher centered

- Employs direct instruction
- Uses tutor-provided materials
- Is a tutor-managed environment



Tutor-centered teaching is generally based on “direct instruction.” This term refers to a traditional teaching strategy of using lectures and teacher-led demonstrations.

(<https://teach.com/what/teachers-know/teaching-methods/>.) The tutor will provide all necessary materials and will usually manage all aspects of the class environment.

There are advantages to this method. For one, it is tried and true. Secondly, it gives the tutor great control and allows for advance planning. Systematic, scripted lesson plans are used, and student activities are planned that take up every minute of class time. (<https://teach.com/what/teachers-know/teaching-methods/>.) It also allows for assessment.

It does not, however, allow for student preferences. It does not provide alternative opportunities for learning experiences.

Great tutors like to mix things up. And, while many great tutors do use teacher-centered methods, those tutors remain flexible and provide opportunities for student inquiry and input.

Thus, if you decide to use this traditional tutoring method, stay aware of your students. Stop frequently and take the emotional pulse of your classroom.

Remember that great tutors want to engage with their students even when the instruction is tutor-led and tutor controlled. Great tutors may dictate, but they are not dictators!

STUDENT CENTERED

Student centered

- Is driven by student objectives
- Relies on student participation
- Requires tutor creativity



In student-centered classes, the students have an active and participatory role. ([https://teach.com/what/teachers-know/teaching-methods/.](https://teach.com/what/teachers-know/teaching-methods/))

In this method, teachers not only encourage students to get engaged; the lessons are based on student engagement and participation. Learning is truly student-led.

For example, tutors will begin by asking students what the students' objective are. Is a student's objective to advance from stockroom to cashier? The tutor and student will then work on learning polite greetings and making change. Is the student's goal to move from kitchen work to server? The tutor and student may then role play waiter and restaurant patron.

Another common device is to ask students to bring a question to the next class meeting regarding something they saw or heard but did not understand. For example, a student may come to class saying, "I saw a truck with 'U-Haul'" written on it. An immediate opportunity is there for a great tutor to devise a lesson on the spot. Or a tutor may ask students to take phone photos of objects around the room. Students must then explain why the particular object was chosen.

In sum, student participation is required for this method to succeed, but tutor creativity is also required. These requirements may be disadvantages, but the upside is that students play an active and participatory role in their own learning. They are therefore far more likely to enjoy and remember the lesson.

CONTENT CENTERED

Content centered

- Employs a text book curriculum
- Discourages deviation from curriculum
- Definitively measures progress



There are definite advantages to using a content-centered curriculum. It provides a safe and secure pathway from here to there – a road to a particular teaching objective. There are a number of really good textbooks available. The superior ones provide assessments, objectives, lesson plans which include scripted teaching and activities, and quizzes and exams that measure progress.

The disadvantages are lack of flexibility and lack of creativity. And, because learning is not linear, the rigid structure may not provide opportunity to fill in missing gaps. The content-centered remedy for missing gaps is review of the original material.

Great tutors who use this method will carefully consider what content or which textbook will be used. Or a great tutor may use more than one, taking from each that which is best. Additionally, a great tutor will spend time with the teacher's guide or teacher's edition of any chosen text. An excellent teacher's guide is an invaluable tool.

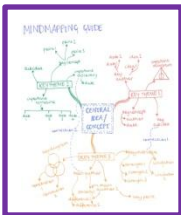
Finally, great tutors will use the assessments provided with the chosen text to measure students' progress. This is a vital step which will reveal whether review is needed and which sections of the curriculum are most effective.

If you decide to use the content-centered method, choose wisely what text or other material you will use. And do not hesitate to dump your first choice and choose again if the first one disappoints you.

CLASSROOM CENTERED

Classroom centered

- Is based on previous class meeting
- Employs student discussions and input
- Is completely flexible



Classroom-centered methodology, also called reactive method, free form method, and the “Unplugged”* method is an innovative approach to teaching. (*SCLC / Mariners tutor Camila Santos presented this method in February 2019 at a live Tutor Training Seminar.)

This teaching method involves using student conversations to build confidence in speaking. The twist is that “lessons” are based on what happened during the *previous* class meeting.

It works like this: The class begins with the tutor asking open-ended questions (i.e., “Tell me about your job.”) Students must participate and interact. As they do, they become more confident. Language development occurs and improve as they converse more.

Meanwhile, the tutor is busy taking notes for the next class. The tutor will note any areas of repeated gaps, any new vocabulary, any subjects of particular interest that will bear further discussion, and any new ideas that surface. Tutor prep then occurs *after* class, as the notes are formed into the next lesson.

The advantages and disadvantages of this method are the same! It is free-flowing, flexible and creative! But that leaves some things to chance, and the tutor must be ready with Plan B.

If you choose to use this method, remember to be flexible and creative, take copious notes, and prepare well *after* the class ends!