
BOOK REVIEWS

Effective Instructional Strategies

From Theory to Practice

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The third edition of the book titled *Effective Instructional Strategies — From Theory to Practice* by K.D. Moore is a beautifully compiled record of all that a “naïve teacher-to-be” needs to know before becoming a seasoned one through practice and experience. It can be considered as “The Journal of Orientation” towards the nuances of teaching for a trainee so that he or she can have a glance of what actually teaching is in its true sense, all bound in one book.

It prepares an individual for the complex world of the school classroom, which is ever-changing based on its occupants, i.e., the students.

As the name suggests, *Theory to Practice Approach to Instruction*, the book offers a platform for the teacher

trainees to analyse their learning and put it into effective practice whenever possible and hence improve their styles and techniques of classroom teaching.

The book is divided into *four parts*, each emphasising on different aspects of teaching, beginning from setting the stage for successful learning and concluding at ideas for maximising students’ learning.

Part I titled “Setting the Stage for Successful Learning” has two chapters. The first one “Getting ready for the classroom” is theoretical in nature and talks of the historical and contemporary aspects of teaching-learning process with greater emphasis on constructivism as a skill for reflective teaching. In addition, it signifies the importance of teacher

accountability and certification to ensure quality assurance in the field of teaching-learning.

The second chapter talks of diversity amongst students based on the mixed cultural composition of the classrooms of this century. It is the description of the modern classrooms in which apart from the academic transaction, the teacher needs to understand the emotional and cultural differences of the students and the expectations they have from their teachers. The diversity addressed here is comprehensive in all respects be it linguistic, physical, societal, intellectual, cognitive or cultural. It suggests various forms of assistive technologies and communication pattern to address the sensitivity of the multicultural society that we live in today.

Part II titled “Organising the Dynamic Classroom” is subdivided into three chapters.

The first one is “Engaging and Motivating Learning”, which focuses on the importance of right communication with all the four components of listening, speaking, reading and writing being a significant part of it. It explains the role verbal and non-verbal communication play in a student’s life and how a word of motivation shapes the future of his/her students.

It gives a new dimension to how a gesture or word from the teacher can impact the student. The various aspects of communication like verbal, non-verbal, vocal, facial, body

language, metaverbal component with respect of space, environment, time and teacher movement have been explicitly described to make the trainee aware of each of it while teaching. A special description of the art and styles of listening has been included hence, leaving no stone unturned to ensure that the teacher becomes a good listener. The classroom motivation techniques are centred on reinforcement, developing healthy and democratic environment, self-modeling of values and behaviour desired from students and contingency contracts with students, so that they themselves reach an agreement with the teacher on how to earn the desired awards and privileges.

The second chapter is on using classroom technology and explains how to integrate computers and technology into instructions. The chapter lists the various school technology functions and the latest hardware and software available for classroom teaching. Issues like social networking, podcasting, blogging, tagging, RSS, cyber-bullying, sexting, social bookmarking are explained overtly.

The last chapter of this part is named “Managing the Classroom Environment”. It deals with the management problems a teacher can face with respect to the classroom environment. Conducting the classroom environment effectively in order to achieve her goals and objectives of teaching is mandatory

and hence, this chapter equips the teacher to handle the same efficiently. The content of the chapter helps the teacher question her strengths and weaknesses as a leader and manager of learning. It emphasises on the role and need of classroom management, leadership and explains in details the various approaches to attain it like the self-discipline approach, reality therapy, the desist approach, etc.

Part III titled “Sequencing and Organising Instruction” forms the major part of the book and deals with establishing instructional intent and planning instruction. The chapters under this part are four in total in which the first one is on planning and organising instruction. This chapter investigates how effectively educators decide what to teach within the parameters of the established school curriculum. The primary purpose of schooling is to equip students with the knowledge and skills so that they become productive and cordial citizens of a nation, hence, the curriculum framed and the instructions provided should be well planned and judiciously organised.

The concepts of curriculum mapping, diagnosing the needs of the students and planning the course; instructions and evaluation pattern are the central ideas of this chapter. The framing of correct objectives and communication of the intent through them is also given significance in the chapter. Hence, this chapter is an intellectually written piece of information which provides a

comprehensive coverage of school curriculum, setting goals, writing objectives and the backward design approach to identifying instructional intent.

The next chapter which is the second part of this and the seventh for the book is aimed at developing units and daily lesson plans for effective planning of lessons for day-to-day teaching. This chapter focuses on the question “Why do teachers plan?”, and probes deeper into the techniques used for effective planning. The chapter highlights the structure of lesson plans with emphasis on all the micro skills of teaching.

The eighth chapter in the book which forms the next one for this part of the book talks about evaluating and measuring learning. It distinguishes between the concepts of assessment, evaluation and measurement by highlighting the purpose of each in teaching-learning. The differences established between the various parameters of measurement accuracy like reliability, validity and usability of a measurement device are simple, easy to comprehend and remove the fears in the mind of an evaluator.

The ninth chapter of the book deals with constructing and grading tests which is the most important aspect of evaluating students’ progress. This chapter focuses on different types of tests like standardised tests, teacher-made tests, alternative choice items, multiple choice items, matching,

completion, essay, authentic assessment, quizzes and homework. It also highlights how standardised tests are produced, how to write test items and design tests. In the end, it elicits the procedure for teacher record-keeping and highlights how to reduce the burden of record-keeping by using computer technology for teaching.

Part IV, the final section of the book is on “Designing Instruction to Maximise Student Learning”. It consists of four chapters which collectively focus on using direct, authentic and integrated teaching methods for instructional delivery. It includes a significant chapter on skills, importance of critical thinking and development of creative thinking as part of the school curriculum.

Chapter ten “Using Direct Teaching Methods”, deals with direct teaching methods and approaches of teaching, so that students can gain fruitful instructions. It is very important for the teachers to choose effective and meaningful techniques and strategies which include students’ need, age of students, students’ intellectual abilities, their physical and mental characteristics, and students’ span of attention, the lesson purpose and the content to be taught for making teaching effective and must keep students involved in the lesson. It also elaborates different modes of instruction like direct teaching, exposition teaching and exposition with interaction teaching. Under exposition teaching, lecture method

has been emphasised with tips on how teachers can plan an effective lecture and identify appropriate time to use lecture method. Further, the chapter highlights the art of questioning, level of questions, types of questions and questioning techniques. The strength and limitations of various teaching strategies and methods and also the ways to improve lectures and presentations are the focus of this chapter.

Chapter eleven titled “Using Authentic Teaching Methods” focuses on various instructional methods to promote students learning through critical thinking, problem-solving, learning by doing, whole class discussion, small group discussions, brainstorming and inquiry learning. All these methods help the child to learn better by involving or engaging in meaningful and constructive activities.

The teacher acts as a facilitator and researcher and should assume the role of leader or advisor. This aspect is focused in the next chapter of the book titled as “Using Integrated Teaching Methods”. The whole essence of the chapter lays in the fact that “in doing we learn”; hence, it talks of demonstration method, concept attainment, cooperative learning and integrating technology, games and simulations in the classroom situations.

The last chapter of the book deals with teaching effective thinking strategies. As thinking is the fundamental constituent of a

person's personality and output, it becomes necessary for the teacher to help her students to think critically and creatively. So this concluding chapter of the book centers on the aspect of imbibing reflective thinking skills amongst students through activities. Thinking skills include brainstorming, which is an excellent way of promoting fluent thinking, flexible thinking, inductive thinking, logical thinking, inference making, problem-solving, decision-making, and observation. So the role of the teacher here is to create a classroom environment in such a manner that students should indulge in out-of-box thinking model.

Hence, this book is an excellent reference not only for trainee teachers but for teacher educators as well. Each chapter of the book is meticulously organised into objectives and overview of the topic and concludes with a summary, discussion questions, activities, technological connection, connection with the field, list of online resources and student study sites for the specific chapter.

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Early Childhood Education Teachers' Perspectives, Effective Programs and Impacts on Cognitive Development

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Early childhood education is the basic foundation and strong means to success in school as well as in higher studies. It is an indispensable part of the overall development of the children. It provides a challenging

environment to learn among school children. Positive interactions begin with the fellows under the guidance of teachers. In fact, the modern education systems around the world have effective systems, however,