



# What Makes Good Teachers

## Characteristics of Good Learning Experiences

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Many of the characteristics of good learning experiences mentioned by the group during the May 13 seminar are in fact related to instructional techniques that have substantial research support behind them. This handout provides a list of these instructional techniques along with resources for people who would like to learn more about them. The characteristics identified as “Best in Show” during the session are listed under the relevant technique.

NOTE: Links may change over time; if you click a link and it does not work, you may be able to find the resource by going to the site’s main page and searching for it.

### 1. Problem Based Learning

Resource: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning (IJPBL)

<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/ijpbl/>

- a. Learning activities include applied portions/projects that are directly applicable to later life/work.
- b. The learning activities include applied learning and problem solving.
- c. The teacher uses an apprentice/mentor model: the teacher provides the tools / framework and presents students with a problem, then provides guidance as needed while they work through it.

### 2. Collaborative Learning

Resource: <http://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/engaging-students/collaborative-learning.html>

- i. The activities include interactive, small group learning experiences.
- ii. The teacher fosters a shared sense of responsibility amongst the learners; the group gains strength through working together to learn.

### 3. Small Group Discussion

Resource: <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching/small-groups-and-discussions>

- a. Learning activities include small group discussion, which encourages critical thinking and allows interaction with peers who may have relevant knowledge or expertise.

### 4. Authentic Tasks and Events

Resource: <http://jfmuller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/whatisit.htm>

- a. Students complete real world tasks as teaching examples (e.g., determine the guilt or innocence of a suspect).
- b. Learning activities or projects are tied in to current events and/or include real life examples.

5. Interdisciplinary Learning

Resource: <https://serc.carleton.edu/econ/interdisciplinary/how.html>

- a. The learning activity mixes disciplines and allows students to apply one to the other (e.g., teaching Freud alongside Shakespeare).

6. Team Teaching

Resource: <http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/teamcollaborative-teaching/>

- a. Teachers work together to incorporate related content in multiple courses to give students a sense of the wider context of the material.

7. Class Structure

Resources:

<https://cit.duke.edu/get-ideas/teaching-strategies/course-planning/>

<http://www.nea.org/home/34960.htm>

- a. The teacher provides good structure and guidance.

8. Emotion and Engagement

Resources:

<https://www.natcom.org/CommCurrentsArticle.aspx?id=4678>

<http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-teaching-strategies/10-ways-to-promote-student-engagement/>

- a. Learning activities engage the students' emotions.
- b. The teacher is committed to and pays attention to the individuals – understanding where they are and helping them to get to where they should be.
- c. The teacher incorporates the content into a clear narrative or story.
- d. The teacher provides creative assignments (e.g., create a documentary about a topic rather than writing a research paper about it).
- e. The teacher demonstrates enthusiasm about teaching; he or she comes to class prepared (e.g., has case studies or good real-life examples).

9. Reflective Teaching Strategies

Resource:

[http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fjournals.library.wisc.edu%2Findex.php%2Fnetworks%2Farticle%2Fdownload%2F400%2F590&ei=bP1VVd7gGo\\_bsATc9oFQ&usq=AFQjCNEHbiHE9r77iOEE0So8TxJUzJEd-Q&sig2=xKfBJtp3XQJtMhKN037cBQ](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fjournals.library.wisc.edu%2Findex.php%2Fnetworks%2Farticle%2Fdownload%2F400%2F590&ei=bP1VVd7gGo_bsATc9oFQ&usq=AFQjCNEHbiHE9r77iOEE0So8TxJUzJEd-Q&sig2=xKfBJtp3XQJtMhKN037cBQ)

- a. Thinking about how to teach (e.g., watching yourself teach on video, practicing an activity before trying it in the classroom, gathering relevant real world stories to use) can help you provide more effective learning experiences for your students.

There are also teaching resources available to you at the website of the Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs at <https://www.usuhs.edu/medschool/faculty/facultydevelopment> .