

Instructional Strategies and Teaching Strategies in Your Classroom

Read the Full Article Here:

<https://www.modelteaching.com/education-articles/teaching-strategies/what-is-rigor-webbs-dok>

Instructional strategies are research-based methods that teachers use to deliver content to students and improve their instructional practice. But it also goes further than that, because by combining classroom management strategies, assessment strategies, and other brain-based and memory-based strategies to support students, they all work together to improve the classroom and increase learning. *This article serves as a resource to understand how strong instructional and other teaching strategies translate to student success in your classroom.*

Contents

- What Are Instructional Strategies and Teaching Strategies?
- How this Article is Organized
- Strategies by Purpose
- Recommended Bundles
- Frequently Asked Questions About Instructional and Teaching Strategies

What Are Instructional Strategies and Teaching Strategies?

Instructional strategies (often used interchangeably with teaching strategies) are the specific, intentional techniques and methods a teacher uses to help students learn. If curriculum and standards describe **what** students should learn, instructional strategies are the **how** behind learning. The how encompasses many aspects of a teacher's responsibility: how to introduce new content to students, how to promote active prior knowledge, how to promote discussion and discourse between students, how to differentiate lessons for all students, how to check for understanding of concepts, and many more ways to guide students towards mastery of a learning objective. Technically, teaching strategies are a bit different. If instructional strategies are the *how* behind **learning**, teaching strategies are more the *how* behind your **teaching**, or the guiding philosophy and structural approach to your classroom. Teaching strategies, in the broader sense, can be considered the way teachers shape how the classroom is structured, how

relationships are built, how expectations are set in the classroom, and ultimately which instructional strategies should be chosen to reach each student in the first place. While teaching strategies encompass a broader range of strategies used in the classroom, instructional strategies are typically (though not always) meant to define the specific strategies that happen only in delivering content.



You can group instructional or teaching strategies in a variety of ways. For example, strategies for structuring the learning environment can be categorized by instructional delivery model: direct instruction, demonstration, cooperative learning, discovery / inquiry-based learning, and project-based learning. Another example might be to structure strategies by organizational level: classroom management strategies, learning strategies, and extension and differentiation strategies. Still others categorize instructional and teaching strategies by their purpose in the classroom; for example, a teacher may want to think about strategies specifically based on the needs of his classroom, from how to present new content to how to reach every learner. Later in this article, you will see that we organize strategies by purpose; however, any other categorization method you may see elsewhere is equally as valid!

Why Instructional Strategies Matter

Decades of research on teacher effectiveness point to the same conclusion: the teacher is the single most important in-school factor in student achievement, and how a teacher teaches matters as much or even as more as what is actually taught. (<https://www.rand.org/education-employment-infrastructure/projects/measuring-teacher-effectiveness/teachers-matter.html>). A well-chosen instructional strategy engages your students, improves learning, and reduces gaps in content knowledge within your students. With strong and well-implemented strategies across your classroom, you can reach and improve the outcomes for all your students, including your students with disabilities, English language learners, and gifted students.

The most effective strategies, of course, are grounded in the science of learning, in which cognitive research informs classroom practice. Within the main instructional strategy categories, practices like retrieval practice and spaced repetition for memory improvement, explicit and direct instruction for improving learning, positive reinforcement for increased behaviors in the classroom, productive struggle, chunking instruction, and so many more theories and concepts are proven effective in research and, with practice, can be effective in your classroom as well. The information you find in this article provides you with only a starting point for strategies and ideas that can enhance and improve your instruction.

Teaching Struggles and a Way Forward

Even highly knowledgeable teachers can struggle to translate content expertise into effective instruction and then actually sustain it in the classroom. In addition, with behavioral issues, diverse student needs, non-teaching requirements that take time away from your planning and instruction, and a diverse range of other issues that might impede your instruction on a daily basis, actually grasping onto strong instructional strategies and implementing them well over time can sometimes be daunting and difficult! Also, new teachers frequently enter the classroom with deep subject knowledge but a limited repertoire of strategies, since they don't have the luxury of time or experience implementing strategies. So much professional development offered to teachers today is delivered as one-off workshops that are hard to implement the next day. Strategies learned in these sessions aren't always aligned with objectives and assessments, so it can be difficult for teachers to apply them effectively in their own situations and classrooms. And as classrooms grow more diverse and learning loss persists, the pressure to differentiate and reach every learner only increases.

Building an effective instructional practice means developing a flexible, well-rehearsed toolkit of strategies that are mastered and practiced over time. Teachers need to be able to

align instructional strategies to learning objectives and assessments; choose intentionally between active and passive learning activities; differentiate content, process, and product; group and pair students purposefully; check for understanding continuously and use that data to adjust instruction; scaffold rigor so students move from recall to higher-order thinking; facilitate academic discourse and collaboration; and manage behavior and classroom procedures. It can be daunting to think about the multifaceted components of teaching and learning that must happen in your classroom daily! But the solution to these classroom needs is to identify a place to start, like a single strategy you'd like to practice and master until it is effective before moving on to others. How? Seeking out your own professional learning, reading more articles, analyzing resources and research, and then trying these ideas out in the classroom, while continuing to practice and refine those strategies, is the most effective way to improve.

How this Article is Organized

The remaining article is organized around nine purposes in your classroom so you can narrow down to an area where you may feel you need more support. Like other organizational methods, this is not the only way to organize by purpose, and you will see other groups organize content in different ways. The organizational structure is intended to address most of your concerns and needs in the classroom. For the remainder of this article, you will learn about what that purpose is and how it is important for student learning in your classroom, then be presented with example Model Teaching articles, resources, and courses to support you in improving your practice.

Strategies Organized by Purpose:

Plan & Align Instruction Covers the design of classroom objectives, the backward design model, and aligning assessments.

Present & Model New Content Includes strategies for effective content delivery and instruction like explicit instruction, modeling, and demonstration.

Engage Students Focuses on the strategies meant to sustain engagement in the lesson through various methods, like discussion strategies, movement or brain break activities, and cooperative learning.

Explore, Inquire & Apply Includes methods for allowing students to interact with content at higher cognitive levels in specific lesson delivery models, like through hands-on learning or inquiry, discovery, and project-based learning methods.

Practice & Master Content Focuses on how to make learning “stick” through methods addressing the science of learning and memory theories.

Deepen Thinking Includes strategies to improve rigor, higher-order questioning, and provide methods for productive struggle in any lesson to help deepen and extend learning.

Check Understanding & Give Feedback Includes the various strategies for assessing student learning throughout the lesson and establishing progress monitoring routines through formative assessment and actionable feedback.

Reach Every Learner Covers methods to differentiate to each type of student in your classroom through various instructional methods, and by using specific intervention methods like UDL or tiered supports.

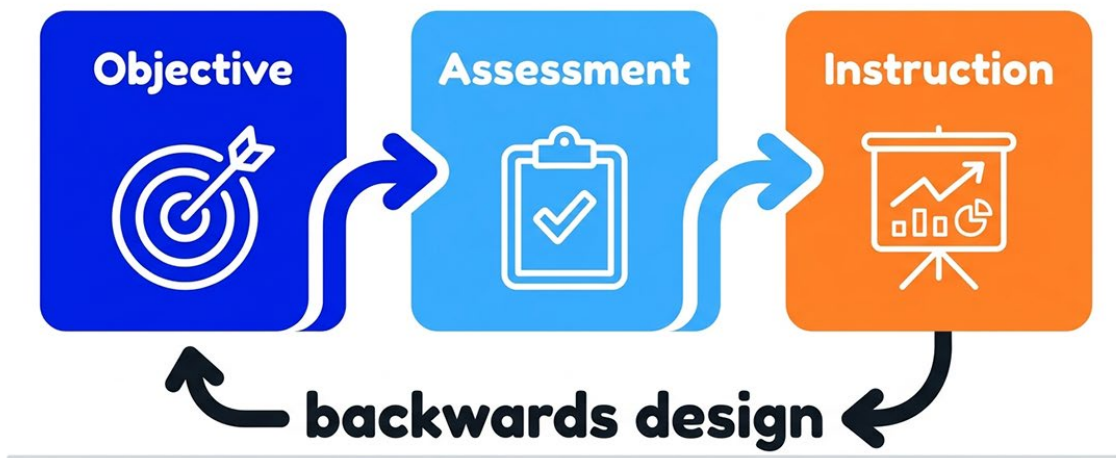
Build a Positive, Well-Managed Environment: Establishes expectations and a structure for an environment conducive to learning through routines, behavioral strategies, and social- emotional learning.

Teaching Strategies by Purpose

Evaluate each strategy category below to understand how it is important in your classroom, then access various sample Model Teaching articles, resources, and courses that can help address specific needs for that purpose category.

Plan & Align Instruction

The alignment of your objectives, lesson content, and assessments is required for effective student learning. Starting from a goal of what you expect your end result or student outcome will be, and working backward to fill in the components of your lesson has been argued to be a very strong framework for designing instruction (https://files.ascd.org/staticfiles/ascd/pdf/siteASCD/publications/UbD_WhitePaper0312.pdf). The strategies in this category focus on methods that align with “backwards design”: start from the desired result, then choose your assessment methods to determine mastery, and finally choose instruction last, so every strategy utilized in your lesson is aligned with a clear learning goal. Teachers who focus planning time here typically waste less class time and see strong connections between their teaching and student performance.



[Backwards Design in the Classroom: Planning with the End in Mind](#) ARTICLE

The article walks you through the backwards-design method: objective first, then assessment, then instruction.

[How to Write Learning Objectives](#) ARTICLE

This article provides you step-by-step instructions for writing clear, measurable objectives, which is the first step in the backwards design process.

[The Value of Rubrics for Assessment](#) ARTICLE

This focuses on how well-built rubrics keep instruction, assessment, and feedback aligned to your objective.

[Backwards Design Planning Tool](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a planning tool that walks you through backwards design: objective first, then assessment, then instruction.

[Learning Objective Checklist](#) RESOURCE

This is a checklist for pressure-testing whether an objective is clear, measurable, and standards-aligned.

[Analytic Rubric Samples](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a sample analytic rubrics for detailed, criterion-based assessment.

Model Teaching Course Suggestions

[Writing Effective Learning Objectives](#)

This course describes how to write clear, measurable objectives, which is the goal that every assessment and lesson strategy aligns to.

[Choosing the Right Assessments for Your Students](#)

Select assessments that accurately measure whether students met the objective in this course.

[Planning for Instructional Strategies & Learning Activities](#)

This course focuses on five main instructional strategies, categorized by delivery model, that describe how to choose activities that align with objectives and assessments and reach every learner.

Present & Model New Content

This category focuses on how you actually deliver and present the content itself. We know that a clear presentation, examples that students can see worked out by the teacher, modeling of concepts, and other methods are important for delivering content in a way that is accessible to students (<https://www.aft.org/ae/spring2012/rosenshine>). The strategies below are a few suggestions and ideas to help you present and model content clearly.

[Choosing a Skill for Explicit Instruction in Reading](#) ARTICLE

Explicit instruction is one of the most well-researched instructional delivery methods. This article focuses on reading and shows how to select a discrete skill and teach it through explicit, direct instruction.

[Explicit, Systematic, and Sequential Reading Instruction](#) ARTICLE

Another reading-focused article, this one unpacks the core delivery principles behind the science of reading and what they look like when teaching students to read.

[Constant Time Delay: Steps to Master Multiplication Facts](#) ARTICLE

This article is a math-specific source to understand a step-by-step explicit-modeling technique: the teacher demonstrates the correct response, then uses a consistent time delay before prompting students.

[Using Word Banks to Support ELL Vocabulary](#) ARTICLE

This is a simple tool for building English learners' vocabulary and supporting their writing and talk.

[4 Engaging Strategies to Teach the Alphabet](#) ARTICLE

Playful, active routines for teaching letter recognition in early grades is outlined in this article.

[Incorporating Technology Using the SAMR Model](#) ARTICLE

The SAMR model is an instructional approach when using technology in the classroom and helps you understand how to present and model content using technology.

[Vocabulary Building Templates](#) RESOURCE

These are templates for explicit vocabulary instruction across content areas.

[Direct Instruction Lesson Plan Template](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a structured template for planning explicit lessons with modeling, guided practice, and independent practice.

[Demonstration Lesson Plan Template](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a lesson-plan template for planning a demonstration or modeling lesson, focusing on structuring what you will show, think aloud, and have students replicate.

[Constant Time Delay Tools](#) RESOURCE

This resource contains ready-to-use tools for running the constant time delay demonstration routine.

Model Teaching Courses Suggestions

[The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model](#)

This course focuses on the “I do, we do, you do” framework for scaffolding from modeling to independence.

[Reading Instruction and Intervention](#)

This course teaches you about explicit, systematic, sequential, multisensory reading strategies grounded in the science of reading.

[Simple ELL Vocabulary Strategies](#)

Easy-to-implement vocabulary strategies for English learners.

[Teaching Methods for Solving Word Problems in Mathematics](#)

Methods and strategies for teaching students to solve math word problems.

Engage Students

Engaging your students is critical in the classroom because you can deliver content in any way to students, but if they are not actually engaged in your lesson, the learning will not stick with them, or they may not even learn at all! Students learn more when they are doing the cognitive work, and not passively watching

(<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.1319030111>) . Focusing on active learning has been shown to raise exam scores and decrease failure rates across hundreds of studies.

Further, strategies focused on structured talk require students to retrieve, reason, and put their thinking into words, and the act of engaging together can deepen student understanding of course concepts.

[**Think-Pair-Share - More Than a Discussion Starter**](#) ARTICLE

This article reframes Think-Pair-Share as a powerful engagement and formative-assessment tool, with tips for intentional discussion at each step.

[**Putting Student Discourse to Work in the Classroom**](#) ARTICLE

This is another article on discussion but focuses on accountable academic conversations as a whole to help students reason out loud.

[**Re-Energizing Classroom Discussion Through Round Table Circles**](#) ARTICLE

A different way of engaging students in discussion is presented in this article, and it introduces Round Table Circles as a discussion structure that distributes participation evenly and re-engages quiet students.

[**The Pyramid Analysis: A Grouping Strategy for Engagement & Dialogue**](#) ARTICLE

This article describes a grouping routine that builds consensus and gets every student talking.

[**“Where’s My Partner?” Grouping and Pairing Strategies for the Classroom**](#) ARTICLE

This article provides some quick, purposeful methods for forming pairs and groups so collaborative time is efficient and tied to learning goals.

[**Cooperative Writing - An Engaging Paired Writing Strategy**](#) ARTICLE

Read about a collaborative writing routine that supports struggling writers and English language learners while building classroom community.

[**Number Talks: The 10-Minute Math Exercise**](#) ARTICLE

Read more about short daily math discourse that builds flexible, expert problem-solvers.

[**Building Community in an Online Classroom**](#) ARTICLE

This article describes strategies to build connection and engagement in virtual and blended settings.

[**Grouping Students Resource Cards**](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a set of quick cards for forming purposeful pairs and groups on the fly.

[**Turn & Talk Prompts**](#) RESOURCE

This resource provides a bank of ready-to-use discussion prompts that make partner talk purposeful.

[**Flexible Grouping Chart**](#) RESOURCE

This chart is an organizer for planning and rotating flexible groups so grouping stays intentional and data-informed.

[Cooperative Learning Lesson Plan Template](#) RESOURCE

This lesson-plan template includes structures for roles, interdependence, and individual accountability.

Model Teaching Courses

[Student Engagement in the Classroom](#)

The three types and levels of engagement, with strategies to promote authentic participation, are discussed in this course.

[Introduction to Student Discourse](#)

This course provides an overview of academic talk, which provides questioning prompts, grouping, and supports for rich discussion.

[Academic Discussions in the Classroom](#)

This is a deep dive into academic discussions and describes how to turn discourse into measurable learning with a complete plan for effective discussion.

[Collaborative Learning Models in the Classroom](#)

This course provides six low-prep models for planning and implementing collaborative, discussion-rich learning.

[Move to Learn](#)

Integrate purposeful physical movement into any content area to boost focus and retention in this interesting course.

[Outdoor Education: Learning Beyond the Classroom Walls](#)

This course teaches you how to plan outdoor learning experiences that enrich instruction across subjects.

Explore, Inquire & Apply

Incorporating opportunities for inquiry, problem-solving, projects, and activities that require application of skills can increase conceptual understanding and improve cognition. Engagement, content retention, and the ability to apply knowledge in a variety of settings can be increased when projects and inquiry-based learning are incorporated into the classroom (<https://www.pblworks.org/research>). Inquiry and project- based learning, as well as other exploratory methods, can also improve collaboration in students and increase grit and persistence through challenges.

[Inquiry-Based Learning: What It Looks Like in a Classroom Setting](#) ARTICLE

This article provides a concrete picture of true inquiry, including how to structure questions, investigation, and reflection.

[A Glimpse at Project-Based Learning in the Classroom](#) ARTICLE

This is an introduction to project-based learning and how authentic, extended projects drive engagement and deep understanding.

[The Scientific Investigation Framework](#) ARTICLE

This article outlines a framework for structuring genuine scientific investigation by requiring students to ask questions, test ideas, and discover concepts through inquiry.

[Chain Reaction STEM Activities: Simple Machines](#) ARTICLE

This article describes a hands-on design challenge that shows what a rich STEM task can look like in practice.

[Open-Ended Math Problems in the Primary Classroom](#) ARTICLE

This article describes how problems with multiple paths and answers push young students to reason and explain.

[Discovery / Inquiry-Based Learning Lesson Plan Template](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a lesson-plan template for designing inquiry and discovery experiences.

[Inquiry-Based Learning Infographic: What True Inquiry Looks Like](#) RESOURCE

Review a quick visual that helps you tell authentic inquiry from activities that only look like it.

[CER Student Graphic Organizer](#) RESOURCE

This is a claim-evidence-reasoning organizer that helps students turn an investigation into an evidence-based conclusion.

[Project-Based Learning Lesson Plan Template](#) RESOURCE

This is a detailed template for mapping a project-based unit that includes things like a driving question, milestones, and an authentic product.

[Poster Presentation Template](#) RESOURCE

Utilize this template for the culminating product of many types of projects that will require presenting findings on a professional poster.

Model Teaching Course Suggestions

[Inquiry-Based Learning](#)

This course describes how to plan and execute inquiry-led lessons where students investigate and construct understanding in this course.

Project-Based Learning

This course describes a full PBL lesson cycle including components, misconceptions, and a project you can implement now.

Claim-Evidence-Reasoning (CER) in the Science Classroom

Teach the CER framework for constructing scientific explanations from evidence in this detailed course.

Effective Lab Reports: A Tool for Problem-Based Learning

This quick course describes how lab reports can support problem-based learning and scientific reasoning.

Flipped Learning

Learn how to deliver direct instruction outside of class so that class time is freed for the active application of concepts.

Practice & Master Content

Once you have your lesson design completed and your engaging activities planned, you also need to consider how you might require students to master concepts through various studying and practice techniques. This is especially important for classes where deep factual knowledge is required for application, like mastering math facts before engaging in word problems. It isn't enough for students to just engage with your content or show they can extend their thinking in various ways. They also need to be able to retain and recall information. Focusing on memory and learning strategies to improve recall specifically is a critical component of student learning, and there are a multitude of strategies you can incorporate into your regular lessons. (<https://www.aft.org/ae/fall2013/dunlosky>). Building strong study routines into instruction is a critical component of student learning.

The Levels of Processing Theory ARTICLE

This article connects cognitive science to daily practice, where focusing on deeper, more meaningful processing of information leads to stronger, longer-lasting memory.

The Testing Effect Theory (Retrieval Practice) ARTICLE

This article explains the testing effect and how low-stakes quizzing and retrieval practice improve memory and content retention.

Building Geography Knowledge: Retrieval Practice of Countries, Regions & Features

ARTICLE

This article explains how retrieval practice is helpful for students to master countries, regions, and geographic features.

[**Building Math Fact Fluency: A New Model Teaching Math App**](#) ARTICLE

This article explains the importance of math-fact recall and how that works within math fact fluency.

[**Improving Writing Fluency in Reluctant Writers**](#) ARTICLE

Routines that build writing volume, confidence, and fluency.

[**Memory Palace Graphic Organizer**](#) RESOURCE

This is a graphic organizer for teaching the memory palace technique and applying how memory works to make content stick.

[**KWL Chart**](#) RESOURCE

This chart is the classic Know-Want to know-Learned chart that activates prior knowledge before new learning.

Model Teaching Course Suggestions

[**Applying Memory Theories in the Classroom**](#)

Teach with encoding, storage, and retrieval in mind to make learning durable in this interesting and comprehensive course.

[**The Notecard System**](#)

Learn how to build durable study skills with a retrieval-based notecard routine aligned to objectives.

[**Utilizing Retrieval Practice in Math**](#)

This course teaches you how to apply retrieval practice in math to strengthen retention and understanding.

[**Recitation Through Rote Memorization of Text**](#)

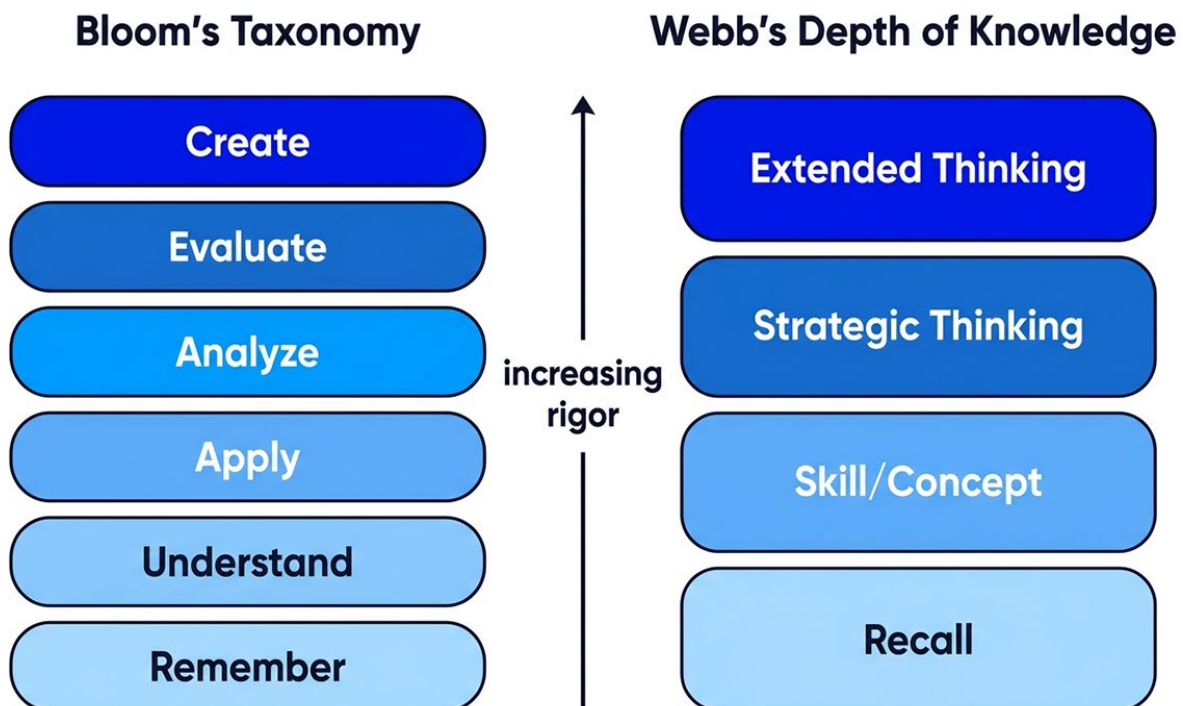
Use this course to consider recitation and memorization to build fluency, confidence, and language.

[**Aligning Homework to Instruction**](#)

This course helps you design purposeful homework that reinforces and aligns with classroom objectives.

Deepen Thinking

Moving past recall of facts to improve memory, rigorous thinking, and tasks is another integral component of a well-rounded educational experience for students. Rather than focusing on what might be considered “harder content”, we consider how to teach students to engage in deeper cognitive learning tasks. Critical thinking can be taught and includes a strong background knowledge, where students work with deliberately designed tasks to move activities toward higher-order thinking (<https://www.aft.org/ae/fall2020/willingham>). Popular frameworks like Bloom’s Taxonomy and Webb’s Depth of Knowledge help move questions and tasks beyond recall toward analysis, evaluation, and creation. Planning for rigor by introducing specific strategies to extend thinking can raise expectations for all students and improve learning.



[What Is Rigor? Understanding Rigor Through Webb's DOK](#) ARTICLE

This article defines what academic rigor really means and uses Webb's Depth of Knowledge to help teachers design tasks and questions that move students beyond recall into deeper thinking.

[Using Text Evidence to Respond to Questions](#) ARTICLE

Evaluate how to teach students to cite and reason from text, focusing on higher-order comprehension.

[Claim-Evidence-Reasoning \(CER\)](#) ARTICLE

This article covers the Claim-Evidence-Reasoning framework so students build and defend evidence-based arguments

[A Literary Response Activity for Grades 3–8](#) ARTICLE

This article describes a structured routine for deeper written response to literature.

[Reverse Brainstorming: A Method to Build Creativity](#) ARTICLE

A divergent-thinking routine that flips a problem to spark creative ideas is presented in this interesting article.

[Strengthening Peer Reviews Through Growth Mindset](#) ARTICLE

This article describes how growth mindset can help impact peer feedback.

[Bloom's Taxonomy Guide](#) RESOURCE

This is a quick-reference guide to Bloom's levels with question stems and verbs for designing higher-order tasks.

[Webb's Depth of Knowledge Guide](#) RESOURCE

A companion guide to Webb's DOK that helps teachers calibrate the rigor of tasks and assessments.

[Frayer Model Template](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a four-square graphic organizer for deep vocabulary and concept development.

[ACE Anchor Chart](#) RESOURCE

An "Answer-Cite-Explain" anchor chart that describes how to construct a complete, evidence-based written response.

[Reverse Brainstorming Graphic Organizer](#) RESOURCE

This organizer allows for a reverse-brainstorming creativity routine.

[Divergent Thinking Activity Resource Packet](#) RESOURCE

This packet provides activities that build creative, divergent thinking.

Model Teaching Courses

[A Guide to Bloom's Taxonomy](#)

This course teaches you to design objectives and questions that move students up the cognitive ladder.

[A Guide to Webb's DOK](#)

This course teaches you to use Depth of Knowledge to calibrate the rigor of tasks and assessments.

[Productive Struggle](#)

You will learn about how to create appropriately challenging tasks and the supports that keep struggle productive.

[Fostering Divergent Thinking](#)

Methods for fostering divergent thinking and creativity in students is discussed in various ways in this course.

Check Understanding & Give Feedback

Progress monitoring and supporting your students are important for you to understand what students still need to learn, and how to help them evaluate their own misconceptions so they can work to improve them (<https://www.edutopia.org/article/blog-providing-feedback-as-formative-assessment-troy-hicks/>) . Frequent, low-stakes methods to check for student understanding in various ways ensure you know exactly what your students know and don't know. With that information, you can provide targeted and actionable feedback to help address misconceptions or improve learning.

[The 3-2-1 Strategy to Check for Student Understanding](#) ARTICLE

This article describes a simple, flexible formative-assessment routine that requires students to record three takeaways, two questions, and one connection.

[The Four Corners Strategy: A Verbal, Active Check for Understanding](#) ARTICLE

This article provides a fun way to check understanding using the four corners strategy.

[The Student Response System: A Verbal Strategy to Check for Understanding](#) ARTICLE

Read about how a structured verbal response system lets a teacher check the understanding of every student at once.

[A Formula for Student Feedback](#) ARTICLE

This article describes how you can provide student feedback using repeated steps so it is timely, specific, and targeted.

[Using Aggressive Active Monitoring to Maximize Student Learning](#) ARTICLE

This article discusses a technique for circulating with purpose during guided and independent practice to actively monitor and address student misconceptions.

[Exit Tickets](#) ARTICLE

This article describes how exit tickets can be used as a quick end-of-lesson check that captures what students learned and what to reteach.

[The Value of Rubrics for Assessment](#) ARTICLE

Read about how well-built rubrics keep instruction, assessment, and feedback aligned to the objective.

[Checking for Understanding Strategy Guide](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a comprehensive reference guide to verbal, written, and demonstration checks for understanding, with when-and-how guidance across a lesson cycle.

[CFU Planning Worksheet](#) RESOURCE

This planning template prompts teachers to build deliberate checks for understanding into a lesson in advance.

[3-2-1 Summary Template](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a ready-to-print template for the 3-2-1 routine

[Exit Ticket Templates](#) RESOURCE

This resource provides a comprehensive set of flexible exit-ticket formats for closing a lesson and checking for student mastery of concepts.

[Student Feedback Template](#) RESOURCE

This structured template helps you deliver specific, actionable feedback that tells students what they did well and what to improve.

[Strategic Monitoring Tracker Template](#) RESOURCE

This resource allows you to plan and record active monitoring of targeted students and skills during a lesson.

Model Teaching Courses

[Strategies to Check for Understanding](#)

This course focuses on the verbal, written, and demonstration checks for understanding, and describes how to use data to drive instruction.

[Checking for Understanding in Elementary Math](#)

This course provides the steps required to implement appropriate checks for understanding and correct common misconceptions in elementary math.

[Providing Actionable Feedback to Students](#)

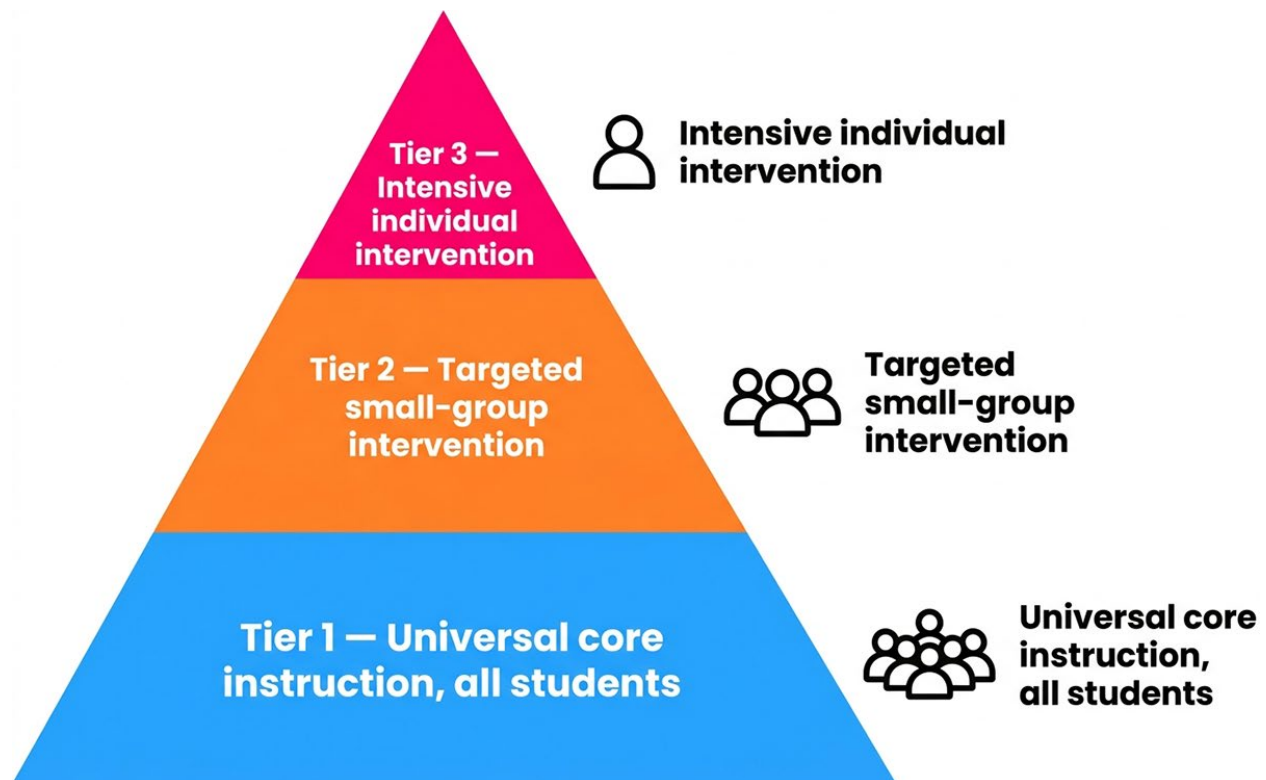
This detailed course provides you with specific insights into collecting evidence and writing feedback that supports and improves student learning.

[Varied Assessment Methods for Gifted Students](#)

This course describes several varied and challenging assessment methods appropriate for gifted learners.

Reach Every Learner

We all know that differentiation is an integral component of effective teaching, since no single lesson delivery method necessarily reaches every student. Flexibility in teaching is required from the start, and considering ways to engage students, represent ideas in various ways, and allow for multiple forms of output and expression can improve learning (<https://udlguidelines.cast.org/>). Incorporating layers of differentiation into your lessons and utilizing tiered supports like MTSS/ RTI ensures that content is still rigorous but appropriate to many different types of learners.



[Differentiation in the Classroom: Content, Process, or Product?](#) ARTICLE

This article provides a straightforward guide to the three dimensions of differentiation: what students learn, how they learn it, and how they demonstrate mastery.

[Tech Tools to Support Differentiation in Your Classroom](#) ARTICLE

Read about how certain classroom technology can make differentiation manageable, effective, and accessible to students.

[AI Prompts for Differentiated Lesson Plans](#) ARTICLE

This article describes some ready-to-use AI prompts that help teachers quickly generate tiered, differentiated versions of a lesson.

[Understanding Students with Reading Struggles](#) ARTICLE

Read about how teachers can recognize the underlying skill gaps behind reading struggles and respond with evidence-based reading instruction.

[Multi-Tiered Systems of Support \(MTSS\)](#) ARTICLE

This article explains how MTSS organizes instruction and intervention into tiers, matching the intensity of support to student need.

[Creating a Sensory-Friendly Classroom for Students with Autism](#) ARTICLE

This describes the design for a structured, predictable, sensory-aware environment that supports students with autism.

[Student Differentiation Profile Template](#) RESOURCE

This resource is a profile template for capturing each student's readiness, interests, and learning preferences.

[The MTSS Model Infographic](#) RESOURCE

This infographic is a visual overview of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework.

[Small Group Lesson Plan Template](#) RESOURCE

This lesson-plan template helps build targeted small-group interventions that a tiered support system depends on.

[Reading Strategies Checklist](#) RESOURCE

This is a student-facing checklist of comprehension strategies to apply before, during, and after reading.

[SMART IEP Goal Graphic Organizer](#) RESOURCE

This resource explains clear, measurable, standards-aligned IEP goals.

Model Teaching Courses

[Ideas and Tools for Differentiation](#)

This course focuses on the core components of differentiated instruction for a mixed-ability classroom.

[Planning for Differentiation](#)

This course helps you select the right differentiation methods for different student types, including special needs.

[A Look into Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#)

Learn how to design lessons up front with UDL so every learner can access rigorous content.

[Educating Diverse Student Populations](#)

This course explores how you can meet the needs of culturally, linguistically, and academically diverse learners.

[Multi-Tiered Systems of Support \(MTSS\)](#)

This course explains the MTSS framework for tiered academic and behavioral supports.

[Intro to Response to Intervention \(RTI\)](#)

The fundamentals of RTI and progress monitoring are discussed in this course.

[Understanding & Grouping English Language Learners](#)

Learn about ELL proficiency levels and flexible grouping to support language learners.

[Understanding and Supporting Students with Dyslexia](#)

This course is focused on evidence-based strategies for supporting students with reading difficulties.

[Understanding and Supporting Students with ADHD](#)

This course is focused on how ADHD affects learning, plus classroom strategies and accommodations.

Build a Positive, Well-Managed Environment

For learning to occur, students must be in an orderly, well-managed space and feel safe at school. Efficient routines and clear behavior expectations are critical for effective instruction, while a strong classroom culture allows students to be more engaged in the lesson. In addition, a focus on social-emotional learning that helps students manage themselves and their relationships helps build a strong classroom (<https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>). Management and classroom culture set the conditions for student learning and should be a first consideration as you plan strategies for your classroom.

[Using Behavioral Momentum to Improve Student Behaviors](#) ARTICLE

This article discusses a research-based management strategy that builds compliance by sequencing small, easy requests before a harder one.

[The ABCs of Behavior](#) ARTICLE

Read about the Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence framework so you can analyze why misbehavior happens and respond proactively.

[Establishing Classroom Procedures](#) ARTICLE

This article describes the specific routines, procedures, transitions, and more that are required for an effective classroom.

[Three Daily Practices to Promote Social-Emotional Learning](#) ARTICLE

This describes simple, sustainable daily routines that build social-emotional skills and create the best classroom conditions for student learning.

[The Importance of a Growth Mindset for Students](#) ARTICLE

Read about why a growth mindset matters for learning, and how to cultivate it.

[The Marble Jar Reward System](#) ARTICLE

This fun article describes one whole-class positive-reinforcement routine for building desired behavior in young students.

[Building a Better Classroom, One Strategy at a Time](#) ARTICLE

Read about a practical approach to steadily strengthening classroom management.

[Three Daily Practices to Promote Social-Emotional Learning](#) ARTICLE

This article describes sustainable daily routines that build SEL skills and a regulated classroom.

[Behavior Contract Templates](#) RESOURCE

Explore these ready-to-use behavior contracts for setting expectations, choosing reinforcers, and tracking progress.

[Classroom Procedures Plan Template](#) RESOURCE

This is a planning template for mapping the routines and procedures that maximize instructional time.

[Mood Meter](#) RESOURCE

This colorful resource is a student-facing tool for naming and regulating emotions

[Calming Techniques Student Tool](#) RESOURCE

This student tool describes calming strategies that support self-regulation in a trauma-informed classroom.

[SEL Components Quick Reference](#) RESOURCE

This is a one-page reference describing the core components of social-emotional learning.

Model Teaching Courses

Student-Led Classroom Management

This course describes how to foster student independence while building strong culture, expectations, and behavior responses.

Efficient Classroom Processes

This course identifies six strategies for building the routines to help maximize your instruction.

Strategies to Support Social-Emotional Learning

Take this course if you want to learn how to embed SEL into instruction to improve emotional intelligence and academic success.

Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies (Gr 6–12)

This course describes trauma and some strategies to address it at the secondary level.

Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies (PreK–5)

This course describes trauma and some strategies to address it at the elementary level.

Behavior Contract Design

In this course, you will create individualized behavior contracts with clear expectations and incentives.

Understanding and Managing the Behaviors of Students with Special Needs

This course focuses on the functions of student behavior and how to use data analysis to improve behaviors in your classroom.

The Model teaching Bundle

If you have license renewal needs, salary advancement needs, or simply continuing education needs to improve your classroom practice, Model Teaching has courses and bundles for you.

Access our full course menu here, which includes 100+ courses like the ones suggested in this article, plus the university- credit version of every course as well.

[<https://www.modelteaching.com/professional-development-courses>]

You can also access our full menu bundle pack to choose the strategies and professional learning support that is right for you, significantly saving money by bundling multiple courses at once.

Learn more about the PD level bundle here:

<https://www.modelteaching.com/professional-development/build-your-own-pd-bundle>

Learn more about the credit level bundle here:

<https://www.modelteaching.com/professional-development/build-your-own-graduate-level-credit-course-bundle>

Are you interested in utilizing Model Teaching courses for on-campus professional development? Learn more about how we support schools and offer online course access at the campus and district levels:

For those working in a public school system, learn more here:

<https://www.modelteaching.com/pd-courses-for-schools-districts>

For those working in a private, religious, or charter system, learn more here:

<https://www.modelteaching.com/pd-courses-for-schools-districts>

Frequently Asked Questions About Instructional Strategies

What is the difference between instructional strategies and teaching strategies?

The terms are often used interchangeably. In this article, we describe instructional strategies as the how behind learning, and teaching strategies as the how behind teaching.

What are the purpose-focused categories for instructional and teaching strategies discussed in this article?

This article describes 9 categories of strategies bucketed by purpose: Plan & Align Instruction, Present & Model New Content, Engage Students, Explore, Inquire & Apply, Practice & Master Content, Deepen Thinking, Check Understanding & Give Feedback, Reach Every Learner, and Build a Positive, Well-Managed Environment.

How can new teachers build a strong set of instructional strategies?

Begin with a foundational, sequenced learning path rather than isolated tips. Identify the purpose in your instruction first, or what you are trying to achieve. Then, narrow down a few strategies you can implement and master. As you master implementation of more strategies, you will begin to improve instruction through various methods. You can utilize the articles, resources, and courses suggested in this article as a starting point.

How do Model Teaching course bundles work?

The Build-Your-Own Bundle lets you combine any courses from the full menu to reach the number of credits or PD hours you need, saving you a significant amount of money compared with buying individual courses. They are great for teachers who need support in

various instructional and teaching strategies and can also be utilized at the school and district level to support the whole campus.

Do Model Teaching courses count toward teacher license renewal or salary advancement?

In most states, yes. Courses can be applied toward license renewal either as graduate credit or as professional development hours, depending on your state's requirements. And most districts accept our credit courses to apply to a salary change to increase your salary.

Are the courses self-paced and online?

Yes, every course is 100% online with immediate access, so you can start anytime, work at your own pace, pause whenever you need, and keep access for a full year. You still get access to a live instructor who reviews your coursework and provides you with feedback. Our courses combine video, reading, and practical assignments you can apply in your classroom right away.