

Benefits of guided learning and how to achieve



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“ Learning is a fundamental process of life. Every individual learns and through learning develops modes of behaviour by which he lives. All human activity and achievement manifest the results of learning. Whether we look at life in terms of culture, the community, or the individual, we are confronted on every side by the pervasive effects of the learning.” (Garry& Kingsley, 1970, p. 3). Though, it should not be only learning but guided learning that leads to progress and improvement. Guided learning is a technique, used to create an independent learner who is able to find the information by himself and manage his own learning. Through guided learning, as in co- operative learning students can share their ideas and opinions and collaborate with each other. When thinking of guided learning, it is better to think of the elements that are related to it, such as the role of teachers’ characteristics and effectiveness, the parents’ role, what they can do to stimulate their children to be guided learners, how it is applied by giving an example, and the importance of teaching aids and feedback. Guided learning has a lot of benefits and effects on students, teachers, schools and the whole society. The teacher, as an essential part of the educational process, has a great role in motivating, managing and guiding his students, especially in guided learning. Though teachers may face some problems in creating a fit environment for an effective guided learning, they can try to find some solutions for these problems.

“ Guided learning enables teachers to support and challenge pupils by intervening in a sustained and proactive way at the point of learning, as pupils read, write, talk, design, make or practise. It helps to develop personalised learning since it is a means of tailoring teaching and learning to

the needs of individual pupils to provide structured support and challenge inside or outside normal lesson to address aspects of progress and specific needs. Guided learning builds pupils' independence through focused intervention, interaction and collaboration."(Senior leaders et al., 2004, p2). Regarding the teacher, guided learning may not be easy, as it requires an effective teacher who has characteristics that enables him to motivate, guide and lead his students. The teacher as a guide should be well qualified, prepared, trained and equipped. He should also have self- confidence, self-esteem, and enthusiasm, not only these but also the ability to transfer these characteristics to his students by being a real model for them. A teacher must have good knowledge of what he teaches to be able to guide or direct his students in the right direction by telling them what the objectives, he wants them to achieve, and giving them variety of resources they can use to achieve their tasks. Moreover, the teacher should be flexible to deal with different levels of students and to have the ability to modify his techniques and methods to suit his students' needs, backgrounds, cultures, and levels of intelligence and understanding.

Another consideration that should be taken into our account is the parents' role, as the learner's life is mainly between his school and his house. Parents have a considerable role in the process of guided learning. Their role is mostly related to how they can reinforce and support the guided learner. For example in Egypt, teachers ask the students to do some tasks and activities at home, but sorrowfully some parents do these tasks and activities instead of the children themselves. Parents should only help, encourage and support their children to finish the required tasks on their own. They may provide

their children with different information sources to choose from and find the right suitable ones for every task or activity. They may also give them advice or feedback on their work at home so they can enhance and improve their work. Another important duty that parents should pay attention to and take it seriously into their consideration, is their relationship with their children's schools. They must have good connection with the school to know everything about their child performance and behaviour to be able to help enhancing the child's performance and modifying any undesired behaviour. This also strengthens the relationship between the parents and their children. " I expected to participate in my children's education, but in addition to participating in their education, I became educated myself. Our family is more closely bonded because of our participation with our children in their education." (Pendell, 2001, p66) Though we have this in our schools in Egypt, but it is on a limited scale and it needs to be widened to achieve better results with parents' and students' performance in the guided learning.

An example of activating the guided learning inside the class, is using the co-operative learning strategy. Co-operative learning means putting students in small groups to do some tasks together to enhance their own leaning and benefit from each other experiences. Consequently, this will maximise their participation and make them responsible for their own learning. In this way students will achieve the required aim of the co-operative learning and to fill each other learning gapes. However, achieving this aim requires a teacher with certain qualities such as being a good instructor and guide to have an effective impact on his students. " For guided work to take place, an

effective learning climate needs to be established with the whole class, including good behaviour and positive relationships, clear routines and well-presented environment.”(Senior leaders, et al., 2004, p 3) The teacher should be a good manager by creating a fit environment for the learning process; by organising the students into groups and giving them clear instructions for the task. He may also rearrange the desks and chairs inside the class to help students feel more comfortable and communicate easily to finish their task in the limited time. In addition, an effective teacher ought to encourage and motivate his students to participate effectively. He can do that by authentic praise, stimulating and even challenging them from time to time to get them do their best to achieve the teacher’s high expectations of the task they are working on. In my school co-operative learning is used on a wide scale, as students have found it beneficial. For example, transforming the given information into a meaningful dialogue enables them to communicate well with each other. The students find sharing their information is a good thing, as it encourages every student to participate and nobody is left behind. “ Regardless of the teaching method used, an instructor must properly organize the material. The lessons do not stand alone within a course of training. There must be a plan of action to lead instructors and their students through the course in a logical manner toward the desired goal.” (Dynamic Flight, 2003)

Furthermore, there is another important element that helps the teacher to achieve effective guided learning. In addition to using different teaching methods and techniques, the teacher should use teaching aids such as posters, flash cards and modern technology such as computers and

projectors to attract the students' attention and show them how to use different resources to extract the information. " Teachers use teaching aids to provide these different ways of learning as well as to improve or reinforce skills and to make instruction interesting and fun."(Cohen, 2010) Nowadays, in Egypt, most of the schools widen their use of computers and internet by training the teachers and the students to use and get the benefits of such modern technology. Consequently, this will lead to a new generation that will be able to use this modern technology at work in the future. However important they are, a teacher should not be tempted to use them more than they are needed, and he should put in his consideration that the excessive use of aids may lead to students' distraction, and make them confused about what is being taught. " Always remember that you have many choices, but you do not want to use too many bells and whistles just for the sake of it. You want to make sure that these techniques enhance the materials, provide more information or a different viewpoint, rather than just be repetitive. Also, too many teaching aids can be very confusing."(Cohen, 2010)

" More formally, feedback is responsive communication (verbal or non-verbal) showing a reaction-" teaching" through the learner's own work. Feedback can come from teachers, peers, the self, or relevant professionals outside the teaching-learning relationship. Active learning requires not only prompt but also specific, challenging, catalyzing feedback. Without it the learner is most likely to recycle past achievements and errors rather than create new insight, ability and competence." (The Ohio Learning Network, 2010) The idea of feedback is crucial in the field of guided learning.

Feedback can be applied on a broad scale between a student and himself,

students with each other, between a teacher and his students, between teachers and the school staff such as the head teachers and managers. In spite of its importance, it should be given or shown in a friendly polite way that praises and encourages the good things and explains what should be done to enhance or improve what we give feedback on, or give a real clue that can lead to progress. In my school I always try to give feedback for my students as I have found that it helps them a lot to improve or modify their work. However, receiving feedback from students or colleagues is as important as giving it, it helps the teacher too, to modify his teaching methods to suit and help his students' needs.

Furthermore, the teachers may face some obstacles to apply the guided learning, such as the big number of students inside the class, the lower attainers, the trouble makers and the lazy students who refuse to work or participate. They can overcome such problems through co-operation, patience and experience. For example, regarding the big number of students, teachers can help each other by dividing the class into two or three groups, however this may not last long but only at first to set up the basic lines of the guided learning. As for the lower attainers, the teacher can involve them in group work and get other students to help them, not to feel left behind, and also praise their work to give them self confidence to participate more. “ While one must have some degree of self-confidence before one can make on a task, the act of starting itself increases one's confidence in the ability to carry the task through.”(Bruner& Clinchy, 1966, p72) Although trouble makers can waste the teachers' and other students' time, they can achieve good results if they are separated from each other.

Lazy students, as well as lower attainers and trouble makers can improve their performance in the learning process as a whole, if they are motivated effectively by giving them confidence, encouragement and self-esteem.

Finally, guided learning is a good way that helps in creating effective citizens by developing their skills and self-confidence. It improves the students' ability to develop their skills and characters. For example, it helps them to determine their learning problems and try to find possible solutions for them, as they reflect on themselves and get feedback from others. Thus, they become decision-makers and responsible for their choices and achievements. By being an independent learner the student may be able to use different resources for getting information, activate or improve his creativity by coming out with his own ideas, selecting the better for the task or job he is dealing with , developing his critical thinking and even reflecting on himself as well as others. Having such characteristics, the learner may be an effective independent person who is able to work for the good and progress of his society. " In its best form, Guided Learning is characterized by a mutual and genuine sharing of the work that is building community. That means that faculty, staff, and students collaborate in solving problems, engage in civil discussion to bring about change, and healthfully explore choices and consequences. This approach is in opposition to expecting that students should make the transition to college life without accompanying guidance and resources."(Hall, 2009)

To conclude, guided learning is a fruitful way of teaching, when it is applied in the right way. This is why the government, in Egypt, encourages and holds trainings for the teachers to use such useful methods effectively. It may be <https://assignbuster.com/benefits-of-guided-learning-and-how-to-achieve/>

very tiring at first, as it needs a lot of effort, especially from the teacher's side, to get his students accustomed to it, but at the end it somehow lightens the burden on the teacher's shoulders by becoming a guide. Moreover, guided learning needs all efforts to be integrated to create an independent learner who has the ability to get the information from different resources, select the best for his work, reflect on his work and others', and modify or improve his work, after receiving feedback. Supporting the guided learning needs cooperation and encouragement, not only from the teachers, but also from the parents, the schools and the whole society. As they are all responsible for the learning process, they have to support it to get its benefits.