

Planning and enabling learning



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Planning and Enabling Learning Assignment One Identify and describe at least two teaching and learning strategies which meet the aims and needs of individual learners and/or groups. Select one which you will use in a teaching or training setting. In the first part of this assignment, I will describe two principle learning strategies that can be used by students and two teaching strategies that can be used to help develop learning. According to Bloor & Lahiff (2000, p. 56) there are two principle learning strategies that a student might use when seeking to develop their understanding of a new topic.

The surface learning method develops a short term approach to learning which is goal orientated (ie to pass the upcoming test) and is depicted by the student passively accepting information and ideas and focusing on reproducing the key facts without reflecting on the information and where it might fit in to their overall knowledge and understanding of the subject. The second strategy is known as deep learning and requires the student to interact at a more conscious level with what is being taught. By cross referencing this new learning with previously acquired knowledge or experiences, this information is absorbed and available for recall over the longer term.

The strategy the student uses will be largely dependent on the objective of his/her learning. These strategies are not attributes of the individual however; they are tools which the same person may use at different times dependent on his/her learning demands at that particular time. At its most simplistic level, the deep learning strategy might appear to be the most desirable method of teaching and developing knowledge in our students. Other factors, however, must be considered including the timeframe given to

teach the particular topic, the student's ability level and the knowledge requirements of the course they are undertaking. The depth of learning that takes place can also be driven by the teaching strategies used. Practical demonstrations, for example, may be used to show previously introduced theoretical work to develop a deeper level of understanding and apply knowledge to real life situations. In sport, practical work makes up a large proportion of the teaching practice.

Many aspects of sports studies (technical, tactical, psychological and social) can be enhanced by getting students to physically undertake practices. As Petty stated, practical can be used to facilitate learning through imitation because it is an excellent way of obtaining doing-detail (Petty, 1993 page17). Specifically, using practical as a learning tool stimulates the kinaesthetic learner most. In having half the class watch and listen to the demonstration, however, the practical can also be used to develop visual and auditory learners respectively. Students may also learn through another much used teaching strategy in sport, namely group work. This type of activity encourages many of the essential tenements of sport such as teamwork, good organisation and develops communication skills. Keeley-Browne (2007, page33) defined group work as a strategy that encourages learners to achieve more by working together and in addition achieving skills of working with others, communication and listening skills.

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It also encourages peer assessment, confidence, healthy competition and is a fun activity for learners which prepares them for the world of work where these skills are fundamental to their success (Wallace, 2007, page 136).

Whether the student or teacher wants to developed an in-depth knowledge of a subject area or just a superficial understanding, the above paragraphs have introduced a number of learning and teaching strategies that can be used to facilitate the appropriate level of understanding. Evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy used. To assist you in this gather feedback from learners and relevant others (eg peers and/or your mentor) about their experiences of using this teaching strategy. I will now describe and evaluate how I used group work to develop students' knowledge and understanding of Fitness Testing methods in a Btec National class earlier this year. Groups work is an excellent strategy for disseminating knowledge as it allows the responsibility of teaching to be handed over to the students while providing an intermit environment to share ideas.

Each group was assigned a professional sportsman and asked which methods of fitness testing would be most appropriate to the athlete's sport and why. Each group was required to explain the testing protocols, justify their selection and then feedback to the class the benefits the sportsman would yield from having completed the different tests. I split the class of 20 into smaller groups of 4 taking into account that their mixed ability levels. By mixing ability levels in each group, I hoped to encourage peer-to-peer instruction and communication. The stronger students got the opportunity to guide the learning process; and the weaker candidates had the opportunity to develop their confidence in contributing to the discussion in a less intimidating atmosphere with fewer listeners. By observing and listening alone, I would suggest that the group work did seem to increase the contribution of weaker members of the class to the task discussion. It can

often be difficult to get the less confident student to speak on academic matters in the class but by pairing them with others that felt comfortable sharing ideas with, they did give more to the learning process. This would have benefited not just themselves by verbalising their thoughts but also those students deemed to be ??? stronger??™ by contributing something they might not have thought of. On completion of the class, I sought individual feedback from the students regarding the structure of the activities and the success they felt they had achieved in setting up the practical demonstrations.

In the main, I felt that the session have gone well. Most students were interacting but there was one group who did not seem to be sharing ideas. One member of the group appeared to be doing all the work and I was interested to find out why this had happened.

On reflection, I was told that because these members did not interact a great deal usually when it came to taking responsibility for completing the task and working as a team, they were uncomfortable directing each other and found it ??? easier to let just one person sort it out??™. This indicates that I need to put in more thought when allocating groups so that individuals??™ characteristics and social preferences are taken into account so that the best learning outcomes are achieved. In the main, however, the comments of other students were much more positive and they appeared to enjoy the process of allocating and trading responsibilities and to a man, they stated that they thought communication had improved. They also mentioned that they enjoyed the subsequent class discussion which followed as a result of

the confidence they had found in sharing their ideas and answers in their groups.

In contrast of the experience of the students described earlier, some students commented on how much they enjoyed working with other individuals that they would not have usually have interacted with were they not put in their groups.

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