

# Choosing the Right Pedagogical Strategy

Transcript for the online video from CSAI – Section 3

Welcome back to the module on Taking Pedagogical Action.

Recall that this module covers these three big ideas. This video will delve into the third one: Choosing a Pedagogical Strategy.

Teachers can choose from a variety of strategies for taking Pedagogical Action when evidence of student learning (either planned or in-the-moment) reveals a gap.

These include modeling, telling, explaining, directing, prompting, questioning, and giving feedback. The decision about which to use is dependent on a variety of factors, including whether the teacher thinks she needs to take a more active or passive role in the situation. Additionally, students can become adept at using these as well as they support one another's learning in formative assessment.

These strategies are adapted with permission from the New Zealand Ministry of Education. For more information, see this Literacy Online website <http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Teacher-needs/Pedagogy/Deliberate-acts-of-teaching>.

Now let's go through each of these strategies in more detail.

Nearly everything a teacher does during the course of a lesson can be seen as modeling, but deliberate, purposeful modeling is a powerful instructional strategy. For example, teachers can make intended student learning “visible” by verbalizing their reasoning out loud, explicitly narrating their thinking during a problem-solving process, or demonstrating a specific skill.

Telling means supplying what students need in the moment to enable them to maintain momentum in the learning process. A teacher makes a professional judgment to use this instructional strategy so that student learning is not short-circuited, but rather so that temporary obstacles are removed on the way to deeper learning. Chris Harrison describes the role of telling as providing “drops of knowledge.” These are small bits of information intended to keep student learning moving forward. In this context, telling is not a foregrounded lecture but a brief intervention during an on-going learning process.

Explanations are verbally explicit, tailored to individual student needs, and intended to help students develop their own understandings. Teachers may use explanations to clear up misconceptions, explain a process, or clarify the steps of a specific learning strategy.

Directing is simply giving a specific instruction to let the learner know what he or she is supposed to do. For example, “find the sentence in the text that suggests ...,” “write the letter for the sound ...,” or “turn to your partner and share ...”

Prompting is an instructional strategy that teachers use to help students access and apply prior learning as a bridge to new learning. Prompting may take the form of a reminder, a strong hint, a clue, or a question, and should always be followed by adequate wait time.

Asking questions is an ideal way to generate thoughtful discussions and explorations of issues that are important to developing students' understanding. Questions can also help students make connections among ideas and prompt further thinking.

Feedback is a core response to students' learning in formative assessment. Using feedback helps students develop learning strategies and can increase students' motivation to learn.

According to John Hattie, of the 150 interventions he studied, feedback ranks as one of the top three in showing the strongest, positive effects on student learning.

However, not all feedback is effective. Effective feedback should be directly linked to both the learning goal and success criteria and to immediate evidence of student learning, and indeed may involve some of the strategies that we've just discussed.

Research suggests that effective feedback also meets the following criteria:

- It is specific and clear.
- It communicates where the student has met the Success Criteria and what else he/she can do to move learning forward.
- Provides suggestions, hints or cues for how the student can improve rather than correct answers.
- Focuses on the task and not on the student.
- Engages students' thinking.
- Allows students TIME to use the feedback.

In contrast to these qualities ineffective feedback is too general, too personally evaluative, and too reward focused.

For example,

- “*Great work on the dialogue, Terry*”; Too general
- “*You're a good dancer, Debra*”; Too evaluative
- “*Your pronunciation was right on target, Kate, you deserve a star*”; Too reward focused

It's worth noting that grades also fall short in providing effective feedback. They do not meet any of the criteria and are not part of the process of formative assessment.

Next, we'll pause and reflect.

Which pedagogical action strategies would you like to use more of? Which ones would you like to use less?

What are your strengths in providing feedback?

What aspects of providing feedback would you like to improve?

Pause the video a moment to reflect on these questions.

Now we'll consider some exit questions for this module.

- In your own words what factors do teachers need to consider when responding to evidence?
- What did you learn about effective pedagogical action?

Thank you! You have completed the module on Taking Pedagogical Action.

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