

1. Create and Maintain Supportive Learning Environments

Foundational idea:

Students learn better when they feel safe, valued, and when expectations and procedures are clearly communicated.

Questions to ask yourself:

- Do I clearly communicate protocols about how my students engage in learning activities (group work, homework, discussions etc.)?
- Do my students feel safe in my class; safe to engage in academic risks, safe to engage in academic discussions, safe to ask the teacher for help?
- Does my classroom environment/culture facilitate positive and productive collaboration?

Possible Strategies:

- 3:1 positive narration: Narrate aloud the positive academic behaviors you want to see in your classroom
- Praise in public, correct in private
- Explicitly teach protocols and procedures: e.g. transitions, bell work, group work, discussion norms
- Use learning wall space to post norms and procedures

2. Set Clear Objectives for Student Learning

Foundational idea:

With clarity about learning goals and indicators, teachers can better decide how they will guide students to higher learning.

Questions to Ask Myself

- Do I plan with content AND skills in mind?
- Do I plan with language development in mind?
- Do I have a clear idea of what I want my students to be able to do by the end of the lesson?
- Do I clearly communicate the lesson objectives to my students?
OR Are the objectives clear by the end of the teaching cycle?

Possible Strategies

- Explicitly review content and language objectives at the beginning of the period
- Periodically check for understanding on the objectives throughout the lesson
- Design exit tickets that ask students to perform the content and language objectives (including language stems/sentence starters).

3. Engage all students in the learning process and make content accessible to all students

Foundational idea:

Barriers to learning should be mitigated or removed completely as much as possible so that content is comprehensible for all students including ELLs and SWDs.

Questions to Ask Myself

- What are some misconceptions my students might have about this content?
- What are the language demands of this content?
- How can I make this content more accessible for all my students including English learners and students with disabilities?
- What are my students doing to process this new information?
- What kinds of evidence of emerging understanding can I collect?

Possible Strategies

- Prepare the content by breaking it into smaller parts and building in text-dependent questions or regular knowledge checkpoints
- Provide a focused note-taking guide
- Give strategic academic vocabulary support
- Help students organize their thinking with graphic organizers
- Use technology for formative assessment checks

4. Provide multiple opportunities for students to show their understanding

Foundational idea:

Give students multiple opportunities and multiple tools to express and act on their new learning. Teach them the HOW and not just the WHAT.

Questions to Ask Myself

- How will I know my students are getting it?
- What will the end product or performance look like? What will look like at the beginning of the unit, the middle, and the end?
- How can I provide a variety of ways my students can show their emerging understanding?
- Can my students explain why they are doing what they are doing?
- Are my students using content-specific vocabulary correctly when discussing the content?

Possible Strategies

- Think-Write-Pair-Share
- Project-based assessments or performance tasks
- Assigning argumentative/evidence-based writing tasks (C-E-R or A-C-E)
- Give students the option to use Google Slides, presentations, infographics or other ways of communicating information

5. Use Data to Drive Instruction

Foundational idea:

Using student work, assessment results and other data helps us modify instruction to meet student needs and feel confident that we are making progress towards learning goals.

Questions to Ask Myself

- Who are my students? What information do I have about them?
- What are my students areas of strength and areas of growth?
- What does their last assessment tell me about what I need to do next?
- How do I use exit tickets or other formative assessment checks to plan for my next lesson?

Possible Strategies

- Frequent checks for understanding throughout the lesson.
- Have students reflect on their learning during the lesson (fingers-to-five, 3-2-1 exit ticket etc.)
- Data reflection meetings with course-alike colleagues
- Review exit tickets and give feedback
- Review student data regularly