

ED 3780

Part G: The Lecture-Demonstration

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LECTURE-DEMONSTRATION

The superiority of any one method of teaching for all learning situations has not been established by research. There is much evidence to show that a variety of methods and procedures improves the teaching-learning situation. Thus, teachers need to draw upon a variety of teaching skills.

Because of the growing flood of students, educators have sought methods that can be used with large classes. Therefore, much emphasis in the past in the colleges and universities has been upon the lecture method. During the past years the lecture method has been extended into all levels of the educational system. Although the lecture method of teaching is currently the most widely used, it is the most highly criticized instructional technique in the secondary schools. However, there is a definite place in today's curriculum for the well-planned, well-executed lecture.

There are two kinds of lecture - the formal and the informal. The formal lecture evolved because of the scarcity of hand copied books in universities prior to the invention of the printing press. Because of this problem, the teacher lectured from the book while the students took notes. As books became available, the lecture expanded to include comments and points of view of the lecturer. This concept of lecture as a teaching method became part of the culture of American higher education.

The formal lecture has been greatly criticized by educators, and rightly so, because the lecture, as it is commonly used, is teacher-centered rather than learner-centered. The choice of the lecture usually does not concern the student but is determined by the needs of the teacher. Because of this, the lecture lacks concern for what is happening to the learner. The teacher who lectures is concerned with "what shall I say." It is the teacher who acquires the most learning from the research in preparing the lecture.

The informal lecture or lecture-demonstration emphasizes telling, explaining, and showing. Its basic purpose is to prepare the learner for problem-solving. It is usually short - from two minutes to twenty minutes. The lecture-demonstration makes a great deal of use of illustrations, visual aids, opportunity for questions, and demonstrations. There are a number of situations where the lecture-demonstration method is of particular value. These are when:

1. Time is a factor, and the data are widely scattered.
2. It serves to channel the thinking of students in a given direction.
3. The needed background information is not readily accessible to students.

4. Demonstrations especially enable the class leader to utilize activities which would be too dangerous for pupils themselves to perform within the ordinary classroom.
5. Facts or problems are of a conflicting or confusing nature.
6. A change of pace or variety is needed.
7. The unique experiences of the teacher help to clarify issues.
8. A unit of work is introduced.
9. Motivation is needed (i.e., stimulation for inquiry is needed).

Lecturing is not merely a case of all or none; it should be pervasive. It supplements practically all other teaching devices such as role-playing, introduction of videos, group discussions, etc. The lecture-demonstration can be made more effective if attention is given to the following:

1. It is of short duration - from two to twenty minutes.
2. The language is appropriate to the learning ability of the student.
3. The purpose is to inform, enrich, and motivate.
4. It is tailored to the adolescent audience.
5. It presents new, fresh, stimulating ideas to students.
6. The organization is well planned. The exact purpose of the lecture is presented and followed.
7. It uses many visual illustrations to accent verbal ideas. Audio visual aids such as videos, overheads, maps, charts, graphic organizers, are used.
8. The teacher encourages the students to take notes when appropriate.
9. It adheres to the characteristics of effective speaking - easily heard, enthusiasm, eye contact, poise, etc.

In a lecture-demonstration, attention should be paid to:

1. selection of the subject. The topic will grow out of the unit of work being done and the purpose for the presentation.
2. organization of subject matter. The teacher or student preparing the lecture-demonstration must be sure that the main point is emphasized and that all of the verbal illustrations and facts have a bearing on the topic. Personal opinion should be clearly labeled and the information presented as accurately as possible. The lecture-demonstration should be short with no more than two or three major points. The basic parts of the organization should be carefully delineated - the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.
3. the presentation. The presentation should include all of the principles of effective speaking - easily heard, enthusiasm, eye contact, poise, etc.

4. attention to questions and discussion. If a question is asked during the lecture-demonstration, it should be carefully handled at that time. At the conclusion of the lecture-demonstration the class and lecturer should review the main points and discuss all ideas pertinent to the topic.
5. evaluation. Evaluation can be an informal observation by the lecturer in which he or she notes the overall effectiveness of the lecture by the number and quality of the questions asked at the conclusion of the lecture. These help determine whether or not the organization has left a clear impression of the intent upon the minds of the listeners.

In conclusion, the lecture-demonstration has a definite place as a teaching strategy in the classroom today. However, the teacher should know when to use this strategy. The lecture-demonstration strategy can be utilized in the self-contained classroom, with 30 to 40 students or in large group instruction. This method can be used whenever the purpose of instruction is to inform, enrich or motivate.

The main danger of the lecture-demonstration strategy is that teachers get into a pattern and overuse the strategy. They find it easier to decide what they want to "tell" the students rather than to determine what the students need to know. It is also easier to prepare the daily lecture than it is to plan with students and determine the kinds of learning experiences that will bring about the desired changes in insights and understanding. Also, teachers usually have a more orderly classroom while lecturing; they fail to understand that passivity does not presuppose learning. Use the lecture-demonstration strategy in your classroom when, and only when, the situation warrants it; but use it! It is an effective, worthwhile, and necessary teaching strategy.

Liven Up Your Lecture (Lots of Choices)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• advance organizers• anticipatory sets• bells and whistles• blackboards• charts• checks for understanding• computers• costumes• debates• demonstrations• discussions• examples• exquisite oral essay• humor• games• graphics• graphic organizers• listening guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• maps• minute writes• music• objects• overheads• pictures• PowerPoints• problem solving• questions• quick writes• quotes• readers' theater• role playing• simulations• stories• suspense• tapes (audio & visual)• Think-Pair-Share
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Benefits and Limitations of Lecturing

Benefits

- A large amount of information can be covered
- Time-efficient
- Can instill enthusiasm and motivation for further study
- The lecturer can cover material and/or highlight current research not available in accessible printed materials
- Allows for maximum teacher control
- Less threatening to students
- Learning by listening and watching is emphasized

Limitations

- Does not necessarily promote independent thought or the development of problem solving skills
- Students may be passive
- Students' attention wanes within 15 to 25 minutes of the lecture
- The instructor may lack feedback regarding student understanding
- Information is quickly forgotten
- It is presumed that all students learn at the same pace and level and with the same learning style
- It is assumed that when teachers talk, students listen
- Students are not necessarily held accountable for preparing for class

Preparing the Lecture

1. Having researched your topic, identify what topics you want your students to remember and prepare an outline with 5 to 9 major points (or approximately 3 major points per 50 minute class).
 - a. Design your lecture in 10 or 15 minute blocks with a single topic or point being covered in each block.
2. Organize your points
 - a. chronologically.
 - b. in ascending or descending order.
 - c. by presenting a problem and then possible solutions.
 - d. by asking a question followed by short answers which are followed by full explanations.
 - e. by moving from the simple to complex.
 - f. by moving from familiar to unfamiliar.
3. Select meaningful examples to help with understanding and remembering information.
4. Identify appropriate teaching materials to support your explanations.
5. Plan ways to verify their comprehension.
6. Begin and end with a summary.

Tips on Delivering and Pacing the Lecture

1. Provide a skeletal outline, map, or tree diagram of the lecture. Refer to it during the lecture.
2. Give useful directions at the beginning of the class such as whether or not they need to take notes, when is the best time to ask questions, etc.
3. Give students the terminology they will need to understand new concepts.
4. Consider a "warm-up" activity to pique the students' interest in the topic.
5. Summarize what happened during the last class period. Or, ask a student to do this and assign another student to do it for the next session.
6. Speak neither too slow nor too fast.
7. Vary the volume and tone of your voice to fit the explanation.
8. Look at students for cues.
9. Be prepared, but allow for spontaneity.
10. Move around the room.
11. Summarize or recap often.

12. Do not read from notes or a book for an extended length of time.
13. Pause.
14. Use humor, but not at the students' expense.
15. Do something different every 15 to 25 minutes. Pose a question, put up an overhead, break into small groups, have pairs review and compare notes, etc.
16. Use visual aids.
17. Avoid distracting mannerisms such as jiggling pocket change, saying "um" frequently, pacing, etc.
18. Repeat, rephrase, and slow down when you are presenting new ideas or using new technical terms.
19. Keep them interested by adapting your material to your audience.
20. End with a closing.

The last three sections are from *Lansing Community College* resources for instructors. Websites are as follows:

<http://www.lcc.edu/cte/resources/onlineworkshops/lecturingtechniques/lesson1.html>

<http://www.lcc.edu/cte/resources/onlineworkshops/lecturingtechniques/lesson2.html>

<http://www.lcc.edu/cte/resources/onlineworkshops/lecturingtechniques/lesson3.html>