**TEACHING METHODS AND STRATEGIES**

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**Introduction**

Teaching  from methods and strategies that promote critical thinking engage students in an active learning process. An active learning process requires students to be directly involved in the learning process, thus they are more likely to commit to memory information associated with the lesson.

This article presents various teaching strategies associated with critical thinking. This is not intended to be a comprehensive presentation, rather selected examples with exemplars. Teachers may find these examples helpful for developing critical thinking learning activities appropriate for their classroom. Students can benefit from this section by developing an appreciation for the value of diverse learning strategies instructors may use, and their role as learners in such activities.

**Topic analysis**

Developing and Implementing Analogy as a Teaching Strategy

The premise of analogy as a teaching strategy is to make the unfamiliar familiar. Analogy is defined as a likeness or similarity between two things that are otherwise unalike. Analogy enhances an understanding of complex concepts or abstractions by allowing learners to consider the concepts in a different context. This learning strategy can be used in a variety of settings (classroom, clinical, Web) and can be used with large groups, small groups, or as an individual assignment.

*Example of Using an Analogy (Video)*

In order to view the example below, you will need Windows Media Player installed on your computer and speakers or headphones for your computer.

*Developing and Implementing Analogy as a Teaching Strategy*

It is important to point out that that there are several ways this learning activity can be done; the level of the learner and the desired time spent on task are variables that should be considered. Some sources describe drawing an analogy from everyday life experiences; a higher level activity requires learners to use non-nursing literature to draw comparisons. Regardless of the method used, the basic following steps are followed:

Phase I: Substantive Input

The instructor must clearly frame the content of study conceptually. This may be done as a classroom presentation, discussion, or through written materials provided to the student.

Phase II: Analogy

The learners draw analogies that represent the concepts. Students should be able to compare analogies to the concepts by explaining how they are similar, but also how they are different.

Phase III: Concept Summarization

Students should summarize the connections made either in discussion groups, or in writing. A fun way to do this is to ask the student to write a story (using the analogy) to explain the concept, and are then shared with other students.

*Advantage*

Is an active learning strategy

Stimulates critical thinking

Does not require a great deal of preparation

Facilitates learning of complex concepts

*Disadvantage*

This activity does not appeal to all students; some will not want to participate, and may consider the activity a waste of class time. Some students have difficulty making connections in a meaningful way. Use of literature for analogy can be difficult and time consuming

Developing and Implementing a Case Study Activity

A case study involves an analysis of a clinical situation or incident. This widely used teaching strategy usually depicts an actual or fictitious patient in a clinical situation, thus allowing students to learn concepts and diagnostic reasoning in a clinical context. Case studies can range from very simple to complex. Typically, a case study presents patient information followed by questions. The learner must analyze and interpret the data provided to answer questions. Critical thinking occurs when questions involve problem solving as opposed to interpretation of facts – in other words when questions posed are at an application, analysis, or evaluative level.

Example of Using a Case Study (Video)

In order to view the example below, you will need Windows Media Player installed on your computer and speakers or headphones for your computer.

*Developing and Implementing a Case Study Activity*

*Planning*

The instructor must determine the goal of learning for the case study (i.e. what type of clinical situation is desired). Because there are several published case studies available, the planning may involve finding a case study appropriate for the desired learning. If the instructor elects to write a case study, it should include a patient situation within a specific setting and should include desired data (such as laboratory results, examination findings, medications, etc). The complexity of the case should be based on a) the level of the students, and b) the amount of time the instructor expects the students to work on the case study.

*Implementation*

The instructor needs to decide if this is an individual assignment or a group activity,

and if this is to be an in class activity, or an out of class assignment. If the case study is to be an in class assignment, the instructor should be sure to provide initial instructions to the students, and allow them to work. The role of the instructor is to facilitate the work by discussing various points or options posed by the questions.

*Evaluation*

Instructors should provide feedback to the students so they can evaluate their thinking process. Evaluation can be done in a classroom setting (such as a discussion) or in writing if the case study was completed as an assignment.

*Advantage*

Stimulates critical thinking through analysis and interpretation of data. Presents nursing concepts in a clinical context that students can relate to. When done in small groups, generates discussion and sharing of ideas and thoughts among group members.

Can be applied in multiple settings.

Can be done in multiple formats (written, video, computer)

Professionally written case studies are readily available in multiple formats

*Disadvantage*

Development of a case study requires clinical expertise and is time intensive.

Debate involves the construction of argument to defend a position. This is an excellent critical thinking teaching strategy because it requires reasoning skills, analysis of multiple relationships, and consideration of multiple perspectives. This teaching strategy is best applied to topics involving controversy or dilemma particularly ethical or legal problems.

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*Example of Using a Debate (Video)*

In order to view the example below, you will need Windows Media Player installed on your computer and speakers or headphones for your computer.

*Developing and Implementing a Debate Activity*

The faculty member introduces the topic or problem.

Teams are formed (usually 2-3 per team); each team commits to defending or arguing for one side or the other.

Teams prepare a defense or argument for their position – ideally, this is done based on information from the literature. Debate preparation requires students to be able to articulate their position, and argue against the opposing position – thus students must be well prepared on both sides of the argument. The amount of time for

preparation should depend on the type of problem posed. Preparation is often done as an out of class assignment for the following class period.

The debate occurs after the teams have had preparation time. The debate process includes opening arguments, presentation of viewpoints, rebuttal, and summary.

Discussion after the debate may be done to explore how the debate process changed the thinking of the students involved.

*Advantage*

Argument/debate broadens the viewpoint of controversial topics

Develops analytical skills

Develops communication skills (required to present argument)

*Disadvantage*

Requires time to develop argument – inadequate time for preparing argument defeats the purpose of this learning activity. Requires an understanding of the debate format (faculty and students)

**Conclusion**

All instructors have not the same ability to teach learners and any teachers with classroom teaching experience will agree that their style of teaching is uniquely their own. An effective teaching style engages students in the learning process and helps them to develop critical thinking skills. Traditional teaching styles have evolved with the advent of differentiated instruction, prompting teachers to adjust their styles toward students' learning needs. Although it is not the teacher's job to entertain students, it is vital to engage them in the learning process. Selecting a style that addresses the needs of diverse students at different learning levels begins with a personal inventory — a self-evaluation — of the teacher's strengths and weaknesses. As they develop their teaching styles and integrate them with effective classroom management skills, teachers will learn what works best for their personalities and curriculum.

Writing is a basic skill that can be practiced over and over again. With our help, our students can become better and better as the time passes. Teachers play a huge role in students' education and in their skills development process.

The moment we decide that you want to take a bigger responsibility concerning our students' writing aptitudes, teachers will be one step closer to what want to achieve with them. Teachers should try different types of motivation techniques and instructions, and observe what's working best for our students.

I can say that writing can be improved by learning through repetition. If the teachers would be aware of the writing process, this would help in teaching appropriate strategies and that would also improve the writing abilities of students in education environment.

This work provides guidelines to the teachers as to which pedagogies should they adopt to improve their students' writing skills. I hope that with the help of suggested methods, teachers can conduct classes efficiently.

Firstly, they can contribute to the development of students writing performance as well as they can be motivational for the students.

Secondly, innovative technologies require students to work in a collaborative learning environment. Besides, they increase students' autonomous learning.

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