

(www.dbu.edu/naugle.papers.htm)

Teaching That Works: Strategies From Scripture for Classrooms Today,
Cliff Schimmels

Websites

www.internet4classrooms.com/brain_tasers.htm: great starter ideas
www.edu.uleth.ca/runte/tests: examples on how to design a test/
assessment tools

Learning to Write Objectives

edtech.Tennessee.edu/~bobannon/writing_objectives.html
[www.personal.psu.edu/staff/b/x/bxb11/Objectives/edweb.sdsu.edu/
Courses/EDTEC540/objectives/ObjectivesHome.html](http://www.personal.psu.edu/staff/b/x/bxb11/Objectives/edweb.sdsu.edu/Courses/EDTEC540/objectives/ObjectivesHome.html)
meded.ucsd.edu/faculty/writing_instructional_objectives.pdf

Teaching Strategies

www.cmu.edu/teaching/trynew/index.html
www.ic.Arizona.edu/ic/edtech/strategy.html
teaching.Berkeley.edu/bgd/collaborative.html
[www.videoprofessor.com/resourcelibrary/presentationskills/
improvepowerpointpresentationskills.html](http://www.videoprofessor.com/resourcelibrary/presentationskills/improvepowerpointpresentationskills.html)
www.thiagi.com/interactive-lectures.html

Questions and Critical Thinking

www.criticalthinking.org/
www.sfc.org/uk/socratic_dialogue.htm
www.sfc.org/uk/guidelines.htm
www.officeport.com/edu/blooms.htm

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7

Qualities of Excellent Teachers

Competencies for Effective Teaching



Good teaching goes beyond teaching methods. In this chapter are some important attributes of successful and effective teachers. Knowing these characteristics should provide practical insight as you begin your overseas teaching assignment.

GOOD TEACHERS KNOW WHAT THEY ARE TEACHING

Good teachers are masters of their subject area and are able to communicate this knowledge to students. In chapter five, we saw that Jesus knew what he taught and used that knowledge to challenge others to think in ways they never before considered.

Good teachers know their subject very well and are able to present the content in a way that is relevant to students' interests and needs. Good teachers teach courses in a manner that is valuable to students. Furthermore, when teachers possess comprehensive knowledge of the subject, they are more aware of misconceptions students are likely to have or develop about the subject (Cruickshank et al., 1999).

Things to Consider:

- What culturally relevant examples can be used in lectures that will better explain concepts in your subject matter to students?
- Think about ways you can model the thinking process in your field. Show students and then let them practice.
- Remember learning itself is humbling. Don't embarrass your students but develop trust so learning becomes more effective.

**GOOD TEACHERS KNOW
HOW TO TEACH THEIR SUBJECT**

Instructional strategies involve techniques, methods, materials and other means that are used to assist a student to achieve an educational goal. Examples of instructional strategies include activating prior knowledge, using appropriate reinforcement and practice, implementing cooperative learning, creating graphic organizers and applying efficient note-taking skills.

When teachers have a good understanding of teaching, they are better suited to select and implement instructional strategies that best meet students' learning needs (Cruickshank et al., 1999). Good teachers are concerned about the quality of their teaching. They understand that effective teaching does not just happen, but is a well-planned and thought-out endeavor. Good teachers communicate their subject in an organized, concise and clear manner. They organize their lessons well and explain concepts clearly, providing culturally relevant examples when possible (see appendix A for a lesson plan template). They state objectives, use a variety of instructional strategies, summarize major

points, assess students to determine if they are learning and provide feedback to students so they can learn.

Things to Consider:

- Visuals and handouts can greatly support students' learning activities.
- Connect the academic content of the curriculum with the cultural context, especially for EFL learners. Example: *You are teaching business in Afghanistan and are explaining the principle of supply and demand. Kabul has a street that is just for selling tea. All the vendors selling tea line up right next to each other. Explain that a vendor might get a better price for his tea if he moves his booth to a part of town where there is no tea sold. Supply tea in a part of town where the demand is greatest and you will sell more tea and probably get a better price.* Consider how to make examples relevant to students' lives.
- In what areas do you need to improve the way you plan and organize lessons?
- Alternative teaching methods (projects, student presentations, films) that move beyond lectures facilitate active learning. What can I use? (See "Teaching Methods and Learning Styles" in appendix C.)
- What type of graphic organizers might fit my subject area and help students to learn?

GOOD TEACHERS ARE CREDIBLE AND TRUSTWORTHY

Knight (2006) points out that credible teachers have trustworthiness, having the best interests of the students at heart. Trustworthy teachers are sensitive to cultural issues, honest, friendly and kind. They strive to be fair and explain to students why certain decisions are made.

Credibility and trust are the result of being open, honest, and equitable in your dealings with students, and of openly soliciting and accepting students' comments or criticisms, of defining

A graphic organizer is a visual and graphic display that depicts the relationships between facts, terms and/or ideas within a learning task such as knowledge maps, concept maps, story maps, cognitive organizers, advance organizers or concept diagrams.

your expectations and the relevance of the subject, of communicating clearly, and of demonstrating interest and concern for your students' success. As you can see, credibility and trust must be earned. (Cruikshank et al., 1999, p. 313)

Respect and trust must be earned. This may take longer in a distant classroom than in a North American or British classroom. Students might not trust foreign teachers, and you need to

be aware that they will be watching you and your actions closely. Be patient and deliberate in developing credibility.

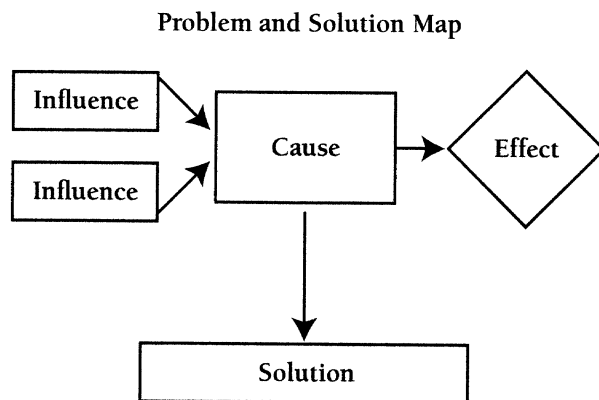


Figure 4. Problem and solution map. (Available, along with other graphic organizers, at http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_go.html. Copyright, CAST. Used with permission.)

Sandy S., Ph.D., Music/Composition, Brazil

Adriane is a young woman who came to study violin with me here at the university. She already played quite well, but the school offers this course so cheaply that she decided to see if she could better her skills. After her second lesson, she began to open up and tell me about herself. She had lost her first husband the same day her first child was born; he was killed in a construction accident. She had become bitter and withdrawn from society until she met another young man. Not knowing much about him, but desperate for love and affection, she moved in with him and quickly discovered that he was an alcoholic. She was so angry with God she decided to get back at him by going to church and making fun of people. But the more she went to church, the more she felt a calming of her spirit. Her boyfriend decided to go with her to church, and he stopped drinking (it has been two years now since he's had alcohol). He asked her to marry him, but she said no. She is afraid.

When she came to me, she had decided to play her violin again after eight years of withdrawal from the instrument. When she discovered that I was a Christian, she was shocked. She said she knew then the Lord had brought her here, to me. After that we began to have serious discussions. She now plays in my orchestra and studies the violin with me, and she regularly comes for counseling. She finally reached the point where she asked me outright, "How can I be saved?" I carefully explained to her what it takes and gave her my own testimony. She is moving toward a commitment to Christ, and I believe that soon both she and the young man will become Christians and get married. I truly feel that God has a very special purpose for this young woman.

Things to Consider:

- Trust is vital in the teacher-student relationship. Don't ever lose sight of this.

- Again, don't talk about students with other students or with colleagues.
- Make sure to do what you say you will do. If you tell a student you will find some particular information for them, make sure you do it! Follow through on promises.
- Treat students equally. Avoid showing favoritism.

GOOD TEACHERS ARE FLEXIBLE

The most effective teachers are prepared for and able to adapt to a variety of circumstances (Walberg, 1990). Good teachers are aware of the need for change, understand what change is required and are willing to change. This includes adapting instruction and classroom routines. Good teaching is not always about your planned agenda. It is about deviating from the course syllabus or lecture when teachable moments arise. You must take advantage of teachable moments because they can lead to in-depth life lessons.

For example, you may be teaching a class on how to do graduate-level research for Western universities. You've planned three hours on the topic of plagiarism and citing sources. A student asks why this is so important in the West. You explain that it is wrong to steal intellectual property. Plagiarism is stealing. Then a student says, "Well, stealing isn't always wrong." And there you have a teachable moment. This is a time to lay aside your first agenda and teach to the moment. A flexible attitude is important not only for your mindset but also for students who expect you to be in charge of any situation. Good teaching is flexible in order to meet students' needs.

Things to Consider:

- When your instruction plan doesn't seem to be working, determine why and implement an alternative strategy. Plan B can be your best friend in a tough situation.
- Read your audience: Are they bored, lost, anxious? How are they adjusting in the middle of the lesson? The inability to answer

questions well, failure to complete a task, or puzzled or frustrated faces may indicate that there is a lack of understanding and therefore a lack of learning.

- When planning lessons, keep in mind individual learning differences and cultural factors and consider alternative methods.

GOOD TEACHERS PROMOTE ACTIVE LEARNING IN STUDENTS

Education is an active process, and good teachers provide opportunities for students to share their knowledge and experiences. Chickering and Gamson (1987) suggest that students must do more than just listen: they must read, write, discuss or be engaged in solving problems of some sort. The key to good teaching and learning is active participation by the learner in the process. Good teachers use teaching methods that engage students and promote active learning. They encourage students to participate and provide them with opportunities to talk about a whole host of concepts, issues and struggles. They motivate students by sparking interest and revealing relevance. They encourage student questions, opinions and discussion. Instead of just giving students information, they seek to have students discover some of the knowledge. Make sure students are challenged and encouraged rather than bored and uninterested.

Things to Consider:

- Active learning involves observing, doing and dialoging. What assignments and activities can be used to get students involved in learning by engaging these three areas?
- Brief activities introduced into the lecture will help students remember more content. How can you introduce student activity into your lectures? You may insert brief demonstrations or short writing exercises followed by class discussion. This goes back to the principle of teaching in intervals.

- Journaling, group work, questions and discussion can be used to actively engage students in your subject area. How can you integrate these into your plans?
- Resistance may come from students who are not familiar or comfortable with active learning. What will you do to reduce this resistance?
- Practical, relevant applications for new knowledge are vital. Lack of this application leads to lower student motivation. What can you do to help students use newly acquired knowledge in their everyday lives?
- Consider how to interact more, lecture less and emphasize active learning.

GOOD TEACHERS HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Good teachers hold high expectations for themselves and their students. They believe all students can learn, and they have the ability to help all students learn. Research informs us that when teachers' expectations of students rise, students learn more. Teacher expectations affect student outcomes because the actions teachers take are in response to their expectations (Good & Brophy, 2000). Good teachers communicate high expectations to students and help each student to attain success. Teachers' expectations of students must be reasonable and modified frequently.

Keep in mind that teachers communicate expectations in many subtle ways. For example, a teacher might be willing to wait on a student who he thinks will respond with a correct answer while skipping over a student he believes will not succeed. Students pick up on these subtleties and may categorize classmates as smart and not-so-smart. Worse, the student that is quickly skipped over may begin to view himself this way as well.

Things to Consider:

- How am I communicating my expectations to students?
- Do my students' cultural differences affect my expectations for them?

- Do I lower my expectations to an appropriate level for students for whom English is a foreign language?
- How can I gain student input about reasonable expectations and goals?
- Remediation is sometimes needed. What are some possible ways I can plan for this?
- Students improve. Do not always center on perfection, but rather growth and progress.
- Am I getting to know my students well enough to set more realistic expectations?

GOOD TEACHERS CREATE A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Good teachers are aware of the physical and psychological environment of the classroom and can manipulate these two elements to increase learning (Anderson, 1991). Teachers can use seating arrangements, bulletin boards and other physical aspects of the room to promote a more positive learning environment. Good teachers also recognize the need to make the classroom comfortable and non-threatening so students are willing to contribute to class discussion, including asking questions and sharing ideas and experiences from their own lives. Students need to know that they are important and invited to participate.

Positive classroom climate requires good teachers to have a genuine interest in students and to respect and relate to students as individuals. They care that students are learning and are concerned about the welfare of students. They use positive language rather than focusing on the negative. Find genuine ways to affirm your students.

Good teachers build learning communities. When teachers build a community in their classrooms, students respond positively. When teachers are approachable, friendly, available and willing to help students both in and out of the classroom, this also contributes to a positive classroom climate.

Linette C., M.A., TEFL, Asia

One of my favorite parts of teaching here is holding office hours. My students love to come practice their English, learn about American culture and find out how I feel about their culture. Our free-flowing talks range over many topics, and they regularly touch on spiritual matters. I think my record attendance at an office hour was twenty-five students (we had to meet outside!). On an average week I might have forty to fifty students spread out over six office hours. Some come only sporadically, but many come every week. These times are not only an invaluable language- and culture-learning opportunity for my students, but they give me a chance to share a little bit of my life with them.

Things to Consider:

- Deliberate, thoughtful planning can create a positive learning environment.
- Arrive at class early and stay late. Talk with your students.
- Post and keep office hours. This might be strange to students and may take some time for them to get accustomed to.
- Pay attention to the physical setting.
- Use positive reinforcement with students.
- In order to create a positive learning environment, you should communicate your expectations to your students each day.

GOOD TEACHERS ENJOY TEACHING

Good teachers have what Knight (2006) terms “dynamism.” An excellent teacher has a passion for teaching. These teachers are energetic and enthusiastic about their subject and love to teach. Not only does enthusiasm make a course more enjoyable, but students retain

Bill W., J.D., Law, Asia

We hold regular “office hours” in our apartment for each of my classes. During the vast majority of these times, nothing of great significance happens. One week, though, something different happened. We had our regular Tuesday night visit with a group of graduate students to whom I taught constitutional law last semester. Most have been here twenty-five times this year, never showing much interest in spiritual things. They asked me to answer this question: “Why are you a Christian?” We had a great discussion and one promised to read the book of John, then discuss it with me in September. He is one of the most enthusiastic Communist Party members we know. We look forward to seeing how God will be at work in his life.

more information when the teacher is excited about the subject matter. Students are more likely to develop enthusiasm of their own and to achieve higher levels of learning (Good & Brophy, 2000).

Things to Consider:

- Be enthusiastic about teaching. If you are not excited about teaching, then why should students be excited about learning?
- Be passionate about your subject and excited to teach others about it.
- Be flexible and willing to change to increase students’ interest.
- Think about how you can change the pace of the class by using a variety of teaching strategies.
- Evaluate your nonverbal communication. Provide nonverbal encouragement and maintain eye contact when it is culturally appropriate.

GOOD TEACHERS KNOW THEIR STUDENTS AND DEVELOP POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM

What separates novices from experienced teachers is that new teachers lack in-depth knowledge of their students. In order to choose ef-

Olga A., Ph.D., Russian Language and Culture, Asia

I have one student who is really close to my heart now. Her name is LX. Last year in her composition she wrote that she had no interest in studying and even thought that if she would take her life, nobody would be upset. The number of suicides in universities here is high. I invited her to my home to talk. She told me that her mom died one year ago after being sick for a long time. After a few months her father remarried, and her stepmother hates her and constantly reproaches her because the family has to spend too much money on her education. LX stopped communicating with her father and didn't want to go home even for holidays. She attended the university without any drive or ambition.

She asked me why I have an optimistic view of life, and I told her about my personal relationship with God. She started to come to my home more often and told me about her thoughts, feelings and concerns. Sometimes she came to me for advice and support. I realized she lacked love and care from people. She started to read the Bible and she had a lot of questions. She started to go to church with me. One day she said she wanted to become a Christian and she believes in the Bible. She accepted the Lord.

Many people can tell that LX became a new person in these past two years since we met! Now she is joyful and usually has a cheerful mood. Being her teacher, I can witness that even her attitude toward studying changed completely. I was touched very much by her words to me one day: "When I will be in heaven with my Father, I will look for you there to say 'Thank you!'" And this is the same person who was thinking about taking her life two years ago!

fective teaching methods and help students learn, you must first know something about the students you are teaching.

Good teachers establish a rapport with students. Building relationships with students based on trust, respect and authentic caring

will give you the rapport that good teachers seek. Crosscultural teaching requires that teachers relate to and understand people of different races, cultures and social class backgrounds. Garcia (1991) points out that contact in interpersonal relationships must be meaningful and should foster better understanding of and empathy for students' feelings, beliefs and cultural differences.

Things to Consider:

- How will you learn and understand your students' cultural backgrounds and experiences so you can use that knowledge productively in the teaching-learning process?
- The invisible diversity is an underlying factor and a constant in the crosscultural classroom. Be aware that many issues not immediately apparent influence how students respond to you as an instructor, especially in crosscultural situations, such as female instructors in a Middle Eastern context.
- Questionnaires, casual visits, listening, observation or asking for their autobiographies will help you learn about your students.
- Use e-mail to increase accessibility to your students.
- Spend time with students outside of class. Take students to lunch.
- While in China, Mike played Ping-Pong every day after class with students and followed up with taking some of them to lunch. Several students and colleagues would show up for these afternoons together. There were numerous opportunities to discuss a variety of issues related to the class as well as their personal or spiritual concerns. Be accessible.

**GOOD TEACHERS ARE SERVANTS
TO STUDENTS AND COLLEAGUES**

As Christian educators, we must be ambassadors for Christ. That means serving others. Serving starts with an attitude of giving. Pat Gustin (Baumgartner et al., 2002) lists several aspects of an attitude of service:

- We consider others as our equals, accepting the role of a learner.
- We become servants, giving up our rights to be "in charge."
- We cast our lot with those around us, experiencing life as they do as much as possible.
- We try to see the world through their eyes, rather than asking them to look through ours.
- We choose to see the good around us, cultivating a sense of tolerance and ultimate acceptance.
- We admit that our own culture is less than perfect.

Things to Consider:

- Be available and offer your help. People often need help with a variety of tasks. When you can, offer your assistance. That can mean ordering a book for a student who has no access to outside resources, editing a paper for a faculty colleague, helping someone move or helping a colleague solve a computer problem.
- Answer students' questions and help with their research or English language development. Students have many questions that need to be addressed.
- Be humble.
- Build a library. Bring as many books as you can and leave as many as you can. Think about the perspectives presented in the books you choose. Donate your books to the school's library. Students will quickly start using the books and ask many questions.
- Conduct English Corners. In some countries students have a sincere desire to develop their English-speaking abilities. In such cases students are willing to talk about anything just as long as they hear and speak English. Give them a place to do that.
- Look for your students' and colleagues' needs and serve them in a Christlike manner.

William W., Ph.D., Christianity and Comparative Religions, Asia

As I was celebrating Mid-Autumn Festival with my students on the campus lawn, another group of students decided to join us. I invited them to my English Club. Jamie came with questions, and one night I spent two hours reasoning with her about God's existence and the beauty of Jesus. "Ask God to show himself to you," I said. She walked away unconvinced but desperately searching. The semester ended. Jamie disappeared into the city's vast millions, and I didn't hear from her again until I received this e-mail in December:

Dear William: About one year ago, we discussed about the God and you told me to ask HIM. Recently, God finally find me! How happy and thankful I am! So I want to share this good news with you! You are one of those lovely people who led me to God. Thank you! Wish you peace and Happy Christmas! Yours, J.

GOOD TEACHERS HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR

An "appropriate" sense of humor is a characteristic students enjoy in teachers (Csikszentmihalyi & McCormack, 1986). Humor can reduce tension, communicate the teacher's confidence and promote trust (Cruickshank et al., 1999). Used appropriately, humor can motivate students and develop group cohesion. It can make you appear more human to your students. Laughing with your class is important in creating a pleasant and productive environment.

Things to Consider:

- The safest target for humor is yourself, not your students. This prevents them from feeling threatened.
- Fit your humor into your style and subject. Share funny stories from your life that demonstrate important concepts.
- Different cultures respond to humor in different ways. Humor must be appropriate. If you are not sure, clear it with a national you trust before you use it.

- Sarcasm is an area of humor that will create problems. Many students will not understand that your sarcastic remarks are only meant in jest, and these can hurt them. It is probably best to stay away from sarcasm.
- Use humor in a natural way that fits your personality and your comfort level.

GOOD TEACHERS PRAY FOR THEIR STUDENTS

Earlier we discussed how Jesus prayed for his students. It is important in a crosscultural setting to pray for your students. You might be the only person praying for that student by name. Prayer is an essential part of your walk with Christ. Without a regular prayer life, your teaching and witness will be less effective and you will be more vulnerable to the enemy. Prayer is vital in discerning and doing God's will. You and your students need prayer.

Things to Consider:

Here are a few things teachers can pray about:

- Pray for wisdom (Jas 1:5) to discern what doors to walk through and what opportunities to grasp.
- Pray to be given insight about the seeking hearts of your students and fellow teachers.
- Pray that their eyes, ears and hearts are open.
- Pray for the conversion of your students and colleagues. Pray for their salvation.
- Pray for wisdom in your teaching in order to meet students' needs.

In some countries these teacher attributes may seem unusual or strange. That is good because it will cause students to seek answers and will provide opportunities for you to talk with them about Christ, who has made the difference in your life.

GOING DEEPER, GOING FURTHER

Suggested Readings

College Teaching Abroad: A Handbook of Strategies for Successful Cross-cultural Exchanges, Pamela Gale George (secular)

Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education, Nicholas Wolterstorff, edited by Clarence W. Joldersma and Gloria Goris Stronks

The 4-MAT System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/Left Mode Techniques, Bernice McCarthy

Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Howard Gardner
Gladly Learn, Gladly Teach: Living Out One's Calling in the Twenty-First Century Academy, John Marson Dunaway, editor

How People Learn Brain, Mind, Experience and School: Expanded Edition, published through the NRCC on Learning Research and Educational Practice

To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey, Parker J. Palmer

Ministering in the Secular University: A Guide for Christian Professors and Staff, Joseph M. Mellichamp

Multiple Intelligences: Theory in Practice—A Reader, Howard Gardner
Pedagogy of the Heart, Paulo Freire

Films on Good Teaching

Stand and Deliver (1988) PG Hispanic/African American

Freedom Writers (2007) PG-13 African American/Hispanic

Websites

www.unesco.org: information on education worldwide

www.learning-styles-online.com/inventory: inventories for students' learning styles

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