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TEACHING WITH THE 6 PRINCIPLES FOR ACADEMIC AND OTHER SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Questions for Discussion and Application

Principle 1: Know Your Learners

- 3.1.1. What are your techniques for getting to know your learners? Do you have an intake protocol? How do you use this information you collect to plan instruction?
- 3.1.2. What is your approach for learning about your learners' home culture and languages? How much do you know about the immigrant, ethnic, and cultural groups represented in your program? Where did you or can you gain that knowledge?
- 3.1.3. How much do you know about your learners' educational or professional background? How much do you know about their educational system in their home country or their workplace environment? Where can you find reliable information? How can you use this information to guide your teaching?
- 3.1.4. How does your program conduct needs assessments? Who are the stakeholders in the program where you teach? How do you gauge what goals, wishes, and needs each group of stakeholders has?
- 3.1.5. Have you ever shared information about the learners? With whom did you share (other teachers, employers)? How did you share this information (database, personal meetings)? How can this benefit the learners?
- 3.1.6. What products can your English learners produce to help you get to know them? How can you get products such a product, such as a life experience story, to help you know your students? How can you use these products to create high-interest, comprehensible materials to guide learners to their goals?

Principle 2: Create Conditions for Language Learning

- 3.2.1. Think about the learners in your setting. What might cause them to be nervous or concerned about your program? How can you create a supportive learning environment to reduce learner concerns?

- 3.2.2. What are your approaches to building trust and respect among the learners in your program?
- 3.2.3. What types of advance organizers or graphic organizers are you familiar with that can help students manage the wealth of content covered in your program?
- 3.2.4. Share your experience with an MS (Learning Management System) or CMS (Course Management System). How can these be used to promote a supportive learning environment?
- 3.2.5. How do you teach learners to gain from learning activities that are new to them?
- 3.2.6. What are your best strategies for guiding learners to practice and extend their language learning outside the classroom?
- 3.2.7. What are some learner goals that are meaningful, challenging, but achievable within the context of your instruction? What are the main action steps to help learners succeed with those goals?
- 3.2.8. Create a sample project with well-defined goals for your students. What would the project or goal be? How long would it last—one week, two weeks, 16 weeks? Do you choose the topic or do you let the learners choose? What topics do you anticipate your learners might choose?
- 3.2.9. Identify learning activities that your learners find inherently enjoyable. What in particular do they enjoy in these activities? How can you put these activities in support of the learning goals and objectives you have identified for your teaching?

Principle 3: Design High-Quality Lessons for Language Development

- 3.3.1. Are your course objectives SMART? Answer the questions on pages 58-59 to determine a set of content objectives, language objectives, and learning strategy objectives for your class.
- 3.3.2. How does your syllabus show learners that they are developing the skills and content they will need to achieve their goals? How do you convey these objectives to your students?
- 3.3.3. What types of scaffolding do you employ from Table 3.1? What other ways can you help scaffold content? Identify a content learning objective for your class. Create several learning activities that will make that content comprehensible to students, using the techniques in Table 3.1.

- 3.3.4. Have you ever flipped your classroom? How does a flipped classroom ensure comprehensibility of input? What verbs from Bloom’s taxonomy would use to explain new content?
- 3.3.5. Think of a lesson you currently teach? What source of input does that lesson require? Are there other sources that you can incorporate into this lesson that can increase the learners’ comprehensibility?
- 3.3.6. What is your process for engaging students with authentic language? How do you elicit output from your learners? What are the opportunities you use to get learners to actively participate?
- 3.3.7. Table 3.2 shows a number of language practice techniques that teachers can use throughout the lesson. Which of these are familiar to you? Which of these are potentially useful to you? Select the one you might like to try first and think through how you would implement it.
- 3.3.8. Every content area has specific vocabulary and syntactic structures as well as specific genres and discourse characteristics. Think of your learners’ goals. How can you develop a lesson that addresses the needs and goals for the particular field or study or professional job your learners are pursuing.
- 3.3.9. How do you select materials that reflect your learners’ specific needs?
- 3.3.10. What is differentiated instruction? Is it applicable to your class? How would you practice differentiated instruction in your setting?
- 3.3.11. Which types of learning strategies do you teach your students? Several language learning strategies are listed on page 69. Of these, which ones are familiar to you and which ones are new? Discuss your understanding of these strategies with your group.
- 3.3.12. What can teachers do in the classroom to promote self-directed learning? What do you do intentionally to prepare students to become independent learners outside the classroom?

Principle 4: Adapt Lesson Delivery as Needed

- 3.4.1. What are your preferred techniques for checking learners’ comprehension throughout the lesson?

- 3.4.2. What response from the learners might make you adjust your talk, the task, or the materials? What are some ways you can adjust your talk, the task, or the materials?
- 3.4.3. How does scaffolding help learners? Of the types of scaffolding listed in table 3.3, which ones do you use regularly? How do these scaffolding techniques work for you?
- 3.4.4. Certain learning strategies provide scaffolding. Which of the learning strategies listed in Table 3.4 have you used? Which do you want to try?

Principle 5: Monitor and Assess Student Language Development

- 3.5.1. What are the purposes and forms of assessment in the your program or classes where you teach?
- 3.5.2. How do you monitor learners' errors and what is your thinking process about how you respond to the errors that you notice?
- 3.5.3. Think about learner errors that you have noticed. Which ones might need more than error correction? How could you address these through form-focused instruction?
- 3.5.4. How often to you provide feedback? How can you make it more useful to learners?
- 3.5.5. Write your own examples for each type of oral feedback listed on pages 79-80 for a lesson you teach. Practice these in a role play to grow your repertoire of oral feedback strategies.
- 3.5.6. What information do you provide to learners in your written feedback? What advantages does written feedback have over oral feedback?
- 3.5.7. Do you employ any peer assessments in your setting? Share these with your group. How do your students benefit from participating in these types of assessments?
- 3.5.8. How do you design rubrics to assess performance on tasks? Share your rubrics with your peers. How do these rubrics help learners focus on the most important elements of the performance? Do the rubrics provide guidance to your students on how to prepare for the task?
- 3.5.9. What types of formative and summative assessments do you employ? What advantages do they each have? What drawbacks do they each have? Are there certain types of lessons or courses for which formative or summative might work better? Why?

- 3.5.10. How do your learners share the products of their learning in meaningful ways? What ideas do you have for growing these opportunities?
- 3.5.11. Have you ever used a performance-based portfolio with your learners? What was the experience like for you as the teacher? What was the experience like for the learners?

Principle 6: Engage and Collaborate within a Community of Practice

- 3.6.1. The opening vignette shows a teacher working with a former classmate who is now teaching in another location. In your teaching context, are there opportunities for coordination between other teachers, administrators, volunteers, and staff that could potentially benefit learners? What benefits could result from coordination?
- 3.6.2. How do you engage in reflective practice? What sort of questions do you tend to reflect on? Do you have any colleagues whom you would consider to be people you trust who can support your critical self-reflections?
- 3.6.3. How do you stay current in TESOL? What types of ongoing professional development options are available to you? How would you describe your participation in these opportunities?
- 3.6.4. Which of the professional development associations mentioned on p. 85 are you familiar with? To which professional development associations/groups do you and your colleagues belong? How do you benefit from being a member? What do the different associations offer you?
- 3.6.5. Do you develop curriculum or co-plan with others? Do you share assessments, materials, and resources? How do you find the time and motivation to sustain collaboration? How do you, your colleagues, and your students benefit?