



# THE MAIN IDEA

*current education book summaries*



File: Teaching  
Techniques

## Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College

By Doug Lemov (Jossey-Bass, 2010)

### S.O.S. (A Summary Of the Summary)

*The main ideas of the book are:*

- Great teaching can be learned.
- Aimed at teachers who want to improve their students' academic success, this book provides a detailed look at the techniques used by top teachers.

*Why I chose this book:*

First of all, there has been a buzz about this book since it was featured in *The New York Times Magazine* on March 7, 2010 that has pushed this book into the top 100 books (of *all* books, not education books) on Amazon for quite some time. But what makes this book stand out is Doug Lemov's keen observations of top teachers and his ability to break down what they do into concrete techniques that all teachers can put into practice. Then he goes a step further by including a DVD of teaching clips that clearly illustrate what these techniques *look like* – a resource sorely needed by the teaching profession.

For each technique he not only provides enough specifics so teachers can implement it, but he also includes a thoughtful explanation of the rationale behind it. The goal of each technique is ultimately to set high standards for students and help them get to college.

The book is not just a tool for teachers. It serves as a powerful resource to help school leaders understand the elements of effective teaching which is vital in both observing and training their own teachers.

Note that Lemov does an impressive job of describing dozens of techniques in just over 300 pages. The summary can't possibly capture the depth and nuances of all of these techniques. Instead you will find an overview of most of the techniques and a few more details for some of them.

### The Scoop (In this summary you will learn...)

✓ *How to get ALL students to exert effort and not give up*

You ask a question and a student shrugs his shoulders and says, "I don't know." Rather than moving to the next student, learn the technique **NO OPT OUT**.

✓ *How to get ALL students to follow classroom directions*

Typically teachers ask students to be quiet, and about three-quarters follow through and the teacher moves on. Don't send the message that it is OK for students not to listen to you, instead try the technique **100 PERCENT**.

✓ *How to use your words and tone to communicate with students in a positive way*

Small shifts in your language can make a difference. Instead of harping on the past, "Keana, stop looking back at Tanya," try a positive forward-looking approach, "Keana, I need your eyes forward."

✓ *How to have students actually read in your class in a way that is much more effective than DEAR (Drop Everything and Read)*

Learn the technique **CONTROL THE GAME** to get all of your students engaged in meaningful reading.

✓ *How to prepare your teachers to implement these teaching techniques in their own classrooms*

Learn The Main Idea's simple PD format that can be used to introduce any technique from the book.

## **INTRODUCTION – THE ART OF TEACHING AND ITS TOOLS**

Great teaching can be learned. Doug Lemov, admits that he himself was no “champion teacher,” but he has studied, through countless hours of observations, what it is that successful teachers do. He focuses on public schools, primarily those serving the inner city. Taking a page from the playbook of Jim Collins who studied what separated the “good” from the “great” companies, Lemov looked for those teaching techniques that separated the merely good teachers from the great ones. This book is a compilation of those techniques and is presented as a toolbox for teachers who want to improve their craft. Lemov purposefully presents “techniques” and not “strategies.” He has memories of going to workshops as a teacher and returning with inspirational and yet vague initiatives to “hold high expectations” or “teach kids and not content.” Yet it was the more specific suggestions from a peer about what to say and do that helped him to improve his teaching, “When you want them to follow your directions, stand still.” It is with the goal of providing teachers with more specific guidance about their teaching craft that Lemov compiled and now presents 49 specific teaching techniques in this book.

### **What Makes Teaching Good is What Works**

At first glance, the techniques introduced may seem uninspired and banal. They may not be intellectually stimulating or follow the latest educational trends yet they yield impressive results. Consider one technique for collecting and distributing class materials. Lemov often shows a video clip of Doug McCurry, the founder of Amistad Academy in New Haven, Connecticut, taking the time to show students how to pass back papers at the beginning of the school year. He explains the correct way to do this (pass across rows; start on his command; only the person passing gets out of a seat; etc.) Then McCurry times the students with his stopwatch. “Ten seconds, pretty good, let’s see if you can do eight.” Skeptics may see this as a demeaning task that treats students like robots and brainwashes them. However, if teachers collect and distribute materials twenty times a day, and a typical class takes one minute and twenty seconds to do this compared to McCurry’s twenty seconds, by the end of a typical year, McCurry will have saved an additional 63 hours or almost eight days of instruction to teach the causes of the Civil War or coordinate geometry! And yet no school of education in the country would be caught dead teaching teachers how to pass out papers despite the fact that this efficient technique saves a school’s scarcest resource (time!) so students have more time to learn.

While not every teacher uses every one of these techniques, these are the tools that have emerged from watching some of the most successful teachers teach. These techniques are not meant to be formulaic. There is a craft involved in individuals making insightful decisions about when and how to apply the different techniques. Lemov has given the techniques names (like “No Opt Out”) not to be gimmicky, but so teachers and administrators can develop a shared vocabulary to talk about these techniques as they relate to their own teaching. By using the names, they can talk about a clearly defined set of ideas quickly and easily. Furthermore, a number of the techniques are captured in short video clips in the book’s accompanying DVD. Note that for each chapter, this summary will provide more detail for one to two techniques and just a brief overview of the rest due to space restraints. Read the book for full descriptions!

Furthermore, these techniques do not exist in a vacuum. The techniques will yield the most powerful results when used together with four other approaches that are *not* described in this book, but with which many educators are familiar:

1. Backwards-Planned Instruction – Great teachers start with the objectives and then plan assessments and then activities.
2. Using Data – Great teachers use results to learn about their students and improve their teaching.
3. Thorough Lesson Planning – Great teachers plan their lesson, often minute by minute, write their questions ahead of time, anticipate wrong answers, and plan follow-up questions.
4. Content and Rigor – Effective teachers choose challenging materials rather than what *appeals* to students.

### **How the Teachers Were Chosen**

Lemov studied the teachers who were the *most* successful at closing the achievement gap. His primary measure of success was state test scores. Given the abundance of misconceptions about their use, he explains that succeeding on state tests is necessary, but not sufficient for students to succeed in college. There are many skills students need for college that are *not* assessed on state tests. However, there are no students succeeding in college who cannot master the skills required on those tests. Furthermore, the teachers who successfully teach the skills on these tests are most often the ones who are more effective at teaching the higher-order skills as well. That said, Lemov looked at schools such as the Uncommon Schools for which he is a managing director in which the poverty rates is over 80 percent and yet the schools score extremely well on state exams. Given there are many good teachers at these schools, Lemov chose the “best of the best” --those who were often getting 100 percent of their students to reach proficiency.

## **PART I – TEACH LIKE A CHAMPION: THE ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES**

### **Chapter 1 – Setting High Academic Expectations**

Research consistently shows that holding high expectations improves student achievement. However, the problem is that the definition of high expectations varies widely. Below are five concrete techniques for holding high expectations that top teachers use.

*Technique 1: NO OPT OUT\** (Each technique that is demonstrated in the DVD is marked by an asterisk.)

In typical classes, when students don't know an answer, or don't want to try, they quickly learn the teacher will leave them alone if they respond to a question with "I don't know" or shrugging their shoulders. The teacher then moves on to another student. Instead, **NO OPT OUT** is a useful tool to get all students to the right answer, as often as possible, even if only to repeat the correct answer.

For example, on day 1 to review you ask Charlie, "What is 3 times 8?" He mutters, "I don't know" and looks away. Many teachers don't know how to respond, and students come to use "I don't know" to avoid work all year long. Instead, at a minimum, you can turn to another student, ask the same question, and if you get the correct answer, turn back to Charlie, "Now you tell me what is 3 times 8." Charlie, and all of the students, have just learned that they can't get off the hook and must do the work in your class.

In a more rigorous form of **NO OPT OUT** you or another student can provide a cue. For example, in a class where a student was unable to identify the *subject* of the sentence, "My mother was not happy" the teacher asked another student, "When I am asking you for the *subject*, what am I asking for?" The second student responded, "You are asking for who or what the sentence is about." Then the teacher turned to the first student and said, "When I ask for the subject, I am asking for who or what the sentence is about. What's the subject?" This time the student was able to respond correctly, "Mother." The sequence began with the student unable to answer and ended up with him giving a correct answer. Note that the tone in most classrooms that use **NO OPT OUT** is positive and academic and using it only reinforces the teacher's belief in students' ability to get the right answer.

*Technique 2: RIGHT IS RIGHT\**

Students often stop striving when they hear that their answer is "right." However, many teachers often accept answers that are partially correct or not totally complete. They affirm these answers by repeating them and then adding information to make the answer completely correct. For example, when asked how the families in *Romeo and Juliet* get along a student says, "They don't like each other." You would hope that the teacher would ask for more elaboration, but instead, she might say, "Correct, they don't like each other and have been feuding for generations." By responding in this way, the teacher is setting a low standard for correctness. The key idea behind **RIGHT IS RIGHT** is that the teacher should set and defend a high standard of correctness by only naming "right" those answers which are truly and completely right. There are four ways to use the **RIGHT IS RIGHT** technique.

1. **Hold out for all the way.** When students are close to the answer, tell them they're almost there. While great teachers don't confuse effort and mastery, they do use simple, positive language to appreciate what students have done and to hold them to the expectation that they still have more to do. For example, "I like what you've done. Can you get us the rest of the way?"
2. **Answer the question.** Students learn if they don't know an answer they can answer a different question, particularly if they relate it to their own lives. If they can't identify a story's setting, for example, a student might start with, "That reminds me of something in my neighborhood..." Or, you ask for a definition and a student gives you an example, "*Eyeball* is a compound word." Instead, direct the student back to the question at hand, "Kim, that's an example, I want the definition."
3. **Right answer, right time.** Sometimes students get ahead of you and provide the answer when you are asking for the *steps* to the problem. While it may be tempting to accept this answer, if you were teaching the steps, then it is important to make sure students have mastered those steps, "My question wasn't about the solution. It was, what do we *do* next?"
4. **Use technical vocabulary.** *Good* teachers accept words students are already familiar with as right answers, "Volume is the amount of space something takes up." *Great* teachers push for precise technical vocabulary, "Volume is the cubic units of space an object occupies." This approach strengthens a student's vocabulary and better prepares her for college.

*Technique 3: STRETCH IT* – Rather than stopping after a student gives you the correct answer, follow up with questions that extend knowledge and check for full understanding. Champion teachers ask students how they got the answer, what is another way to get the answer, what is the evidence, how to apply the same skill in a new situation, and what more specific vocabulary words they can use. This both challenges students to extend their thinking, and checks that students don't get the correct answer by luck.

*Technique 4: FORMAT MATTERS\** -- It's not just *what* students say when they respond that matters, but *how* they say it. If we want our students to be prepared for college we need to make sure they respond in complete (not one word) answers, answer in a loud enough voice, and use correct grammar. For inaudible answers you can simply and swiftly say, "Voice" to remind them to speak up. For grammatical errors, try repeating the sentence and emphasizing the incorrect words, "We *was* walking down the street?"

**NOTE** that Lemov often refers to minimizing "transaction costs" – meaning doing interventions with the least disruption possible and as quickly as possible so as not to take time and attention away from teaching and learning.

*Technique 5: WITHOUT APOLOGY* -- In the hands of a great teacher, no content is boring. Don't lower your expectations inadvertently with comments such as, "I know this is kind of dull," or "This material is on the test so we'll have to learn it." It also lowers expectations to assume that *these* students won't connect to college prep material and instead replace learning sonnets, for instance, with learning contemporary songs. Instead, show your belief in your students with comments such as, "This material is great because it's really challenging!" or "Lots of students don't understand this until college, but you'll know it now. Cool."

## Chapter 2 – Planning That Ensures Academic Achievement

The six techniques below have to do with *planning* – the crucial part of teaching that you do before you step foot in the classroom.

**Technique 6: BEGIN WITH THE END** -- When Lemov started teaching he admits that he frequently spent the night before a lesson asking, “What am I going to do tomorrow?” This was a flawed approach. First, he focused on the *activities* for the lesson, not the *objective*. In addition, he found himself planning each lesson individually rather than seeing the lessons as part of a carefully planned unit that drove students, a day at a time, toward mastery of larger concepts. Great teachers start with unit planning which consists of:

1. Progress *from* unit planning to lesson planning.
2. Refine and perfect the lesson objective based on the degree of mastery from the day before.
3. Plan a short daily assessment to determine whether the objective was mastered.
4. Plan the sequence of activities that lead to mastery of the objective.

**Technique 7: 4Ms** – It is vital to design effective objectives. To do so, use the criteria below to determine if your objective is effective:

1. **Manageable:** An objective can’t be effective if you can’t teach it in a single lesson. Of course you want your students to master larger skills, but this can take weeks so you need to break them into steps your students can master in one period.
2. **Measureable:** Effective objectives can be measured. This is often done at the end of the period with an exit ticket (a short activity or question students complete to show they learned the material).
3. **Made first:** An objective should guide the activities you use in the lesson and not simply be an afterthought.
4. **Most important:** Choose an objective based on what is *most* important for students to learn on the path to college.

**Technique 8: POST IT** -- If the objective is so important, then you should post it. Use language that students understand so they know what they’re trying to do. Posting it also helps visitors and administrators give more effective and tailored feedback.

**Technique 9: SHORTEST PATH** -- Teachers have become accustomed to choosing their lesson activities based on how clever, how artfully designed, how in tune with the latest education philosophy those activities are. Instead, activities should be chosen based on how fast and how well they get students to master the objective. It’s time to stop thinking of Socratic seminars or lectures as good or bad. Instead, take the **SHORTEST PATH** to your objectives in designing activities.

**Technique 10: DOUBLE PLAN** -- Most lessons focus on what you, the teacher, will be doing – what you will say, do, collect, and assign. Teachers often forget to plan what the students will be doing. What will students do while you review the causes of the Civil War? Will they take notes on a graphic organizer? Will they review those notes in a one-sentence summary? To help you see the lesson through the students’ eyes try creating a T-chart listing what you will do on one side and what the students will do on the other.

**Technique 11: DRAW THE MAP** -- Teachers often forget to use the physical environment to support the goals of the lesson. Teachers often seat students in pods facing each other so they can interact more and leave the set-up like this all year. What if the teacher only wants the students to interact with each other for part of the lesson? Lemov admits that his personal bias is to set up the classroom in rows of pairs because it is tidy, orderly, and socializes students to primarily attend to the board and teacher. Then if the teacher wants the students to interact more directly, she can ask students to “track” the speaker (look at the person speaking) or have students move desks quickly into another formation. Furthermore, rows of pairs allow the teacher to get anywhere quickly.

## Chapter 3 – Structuring and Delivering Your Lessons

Champion teachers plan a deliberate progression in their lessons in which the responsibility for being able to do the work is gradually transferred from teacher to student, sometimes known as “I/We/You.” Some people know it as *direct instruction*, *guided practice*, and *independent practice*. The “I” part of the lesson is when the teacher introduces information or models a process and walks students through examples. The “We” follows when the teacher asks students to complete examples with less and less assistance. In the “You” part, students have multiple opportunities to practice the work on their own. What is challenging is deciding when to move to the next step. In some classes students do independent work before they are ready and in others, the teacher does all the demonstrating without giving the students a chance to practice independently. Below are some techniques to help with this progression.

### “I” Techniques

**Technique 12: THE HOOK** – When appropriate, use a short, engaging introduction to excite students about the material. You can use a story, an analogy (single replacement bonds in chemistry are like dancers choosing partners), a prop (a globe and a flashlight to show the earth’s rotation), a challenge (“See if you can translate this Shakespearean line into plain English!”), or other hooks.

**Technique 13: NAME THE STEPS** – Champion teachers help their students learn complex skills by breaking them down into steps and often naming those steps. Giving the steps a name helps students recall those steps. For example, to help students learn to make an inference, one teacher broke this down into three steps (figure out the *context*, look for an *appositive* – a restatement of the word’s meaning in the sentence, and find *relational* words – like *and*, *but*, and *because*.) Then to make this more memorable, more “sticky,” she used the acronym CAR for the three parts and made up the phrase, “To gather the clues, you’ve gotta drive the CAR!”

**Technique 14: BOARD = PAPER** – In addition to teaching content and skills, teachers need to teach how to be a student. In this technique, the teacher models for students on the board how they should take notes. You start by making the board a mirror image of their papers, and then as students grow they learn to make decisions about how to take notes and what to include.

**Technique 15: CIRCULATE\*** – Move around the classroom to both engage students and hold them accountable. Don't expect proximity to be enough. It's important to move strategically throughout the entire classroom, continue to face the class as much as possible, and to engage when you circulate. Assess and respond to student work as well as check for understanding.

### **“We” Techniques**

**Technique 16: BREAK IT DOWN** – When students don't understand, break down the material into its parts to focus on the problematic area. Champion teachers don't simply repeat the question, they think about the part of the material that most likely caused the confusion and ask smaller, simpler questions about this part. The goal is to provide the smallest hint possible and do it quickly. This is a challenging technique and it is best to prepare for this during planning by considering possible wrong answers and cues to use for those errors. There are many ways to break down the material, such as the suggestions below:

- **Provide an example.** If asking for the definition of a prime number, provide an example, “7 is one, but 8 is not.”
- **Provide context.** To help a student who does not understand *ancient*, “I hope nobody ever calls me ancient.”
- **Provide the missing (or first) step.** “What do we always do when the numerator is larger than the denominator?”
- **Eliminate false choices.** “If it were a verb, it would be an action. Is *owner* an action?”

**Technique 17: RATIO** – To help students do *more* of the cognitive work (instead of the teacher) use techniques such as feigned ignorance (“Wait, I can't remember what's next”), involving students when you are at the board (“6 plus 8 is what, Sarah?”), having students explain why and how, asking students to support answers with evidence, and asking students for more rigorous thinking by providing an additional example or a more precise and richer answer.

**Technique 18: CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING** – Good drivers check their mirrors every five seconds. It would be far too costly to wait for an accident to learn what they are doing wrong. Teachers also need to check for student understanding frequently *while* they are teaching to avoid the costly result of waiting until a final assessment. First you need to gather the data, then you need to respond to that data to insure learning occurs.

**Gathering Data** – Traditionally, a teacher would ask students to name a cause of the Civil War and three students would get it wrong and the fourth one would get it right. The teacher would think, “Oh, good they finally got it.” However, the champion teacher thinks, “Only one of four students understands this, I need to circle back.” By *sampling* a smaller group of students who are representative of the larger group, teachers can learn about student understanding. It is important to ask *several* students at different ability levels for an answer to provide enough data. To insure your data is accurate, you should also check for *reliability* (do students get the answer correct several times in a row) and *validity* (is the question measuring the type of material you are ultimately responsible for). There are two ways to gather data – by asking questions, and through observation. To observe, circulate and look for the number and types of errors students are making. Consider tracking this data on a sheet of paper for later reference. Another way to observe is to use “slates” (paper or dry erase boards) for students to hold up their answers so you can check for understanding. You can also use nonverbal methods to gather data as well, such as, “Hold up one finger if you got answer A and two fingers if you got B.”

**Responding to Data** – Teachers are usually better at checking for understanding than responding to the data. However, this is the crucial second part. There's no sense in continuing on if students don't understand. It's vital to stop and correct the misunderstanding, and only then move on. A lack of understanding that continues for hours or days is only more difficult to correct. Instead, the champion teacher stops and reteaches the material in a different way, reteaches the problematic step (“I think we're struggling when we get to remainders.”), identifies the challenging terms (“I think the term *denominator* is giving us some trouble.”), reteaches at a slower pace, or identifies struggling students (“Push ahead in your packets while I work with a few of you up front.”).

### **“You” Techniques**

**Technique 19: AT BATS** – In baseball, to perfect your swing, you need as many “at bats” -- or practice sessions batting – as possible. In the same way, students need lots and lots of practice to master a new skill entirely on their own. Also make sure students can solve questions in various formats. Because some students reach mastery more quickly, have bonus problems to push those students further.

**Technique 20: EXIT TICKET** – By collecting answers to one or a few questions at the end of class you can gather important information about student understanding. What percentage of your students got it right? What mistakes were made? What in your lesson might have led to the confusion? This short assessment provides critical insight and helps in designing the next day's lesson.

**Technique 21: TAKE A STAND** – This technique gets students to actively make judgments about their peers' answers. “Stand up if you agree with Alexis” or “Thumbs up if you think Dashawn is right.” The answers will help to inform your teaching, especially if you ask students to defend their answers, “Why is your thumb down, Keisha?”

## Chapter 4 – Engaging Students In Your Lessons

Champion teachers are successful in engaging their students – not for the sake of engagement, but engaging them in the *work* of the classroom. The techniques below show how some of these great teachers engage students and keep them focused on learning.

**Technique 22: COLD CALL\*** – To **COLD CALL** you call on students regardless of whether they’ve raised their hands. For example, you ask a question, pause, and then call on a student, “Tell us one cause of World War I, please, [slight pause here] Darren.” While this sounds incredibly simple, if done correctly, Lemov believes it is the single most powerful technique in the book. First, it lets you check for understanding because you choose the student you want to check for mastery. Second, you don’t waste time asking a question and then waiting and cajoling students to answer. Third, it allows you to include more students, not just those raising their hands. Some students have ideas but won’t share them unless you push them. People often mistakenly assume that this is a stressful technique for students, but teachers who use it consistently normalize it and it becomes a regular part of class. Also, it is a positive and often powerful way to reach students who want to speak but aren’t hand raisers. Finally, it increases engagement because students don’t know when they will be called on, so there is a strong incentive to do the work to be prepared to be called on.

While it seems simple, you can do it wrong. Make sure you use it preventatively to keep students from drifting off. It is not a discipline strategy for once they are already off task. Cold calling should become a *predictable* part of every day so students can anticipate the questions and pay attention. Cold calling is also *systematic* – the questions should be for everyone not for singling out students not paying attention, it is simply how we do business here. Furthermore, cold calling is *positive* because it engages students in rigorous work. Students will surprise themselves with what they know and can do if we give them the chance to answer. Finally, cold calling is particularly effective when it is *scaffolded*, that is, when you start with simple questions and progress to harder ones.

**Technique 23: CALL AND RESPONSE** – In this technique you ask a question and the whole class calls out the response in unison. It sounds simple, but it can be an effective way to engage students. Rather than one student responding, everyone responds. It’s also a lively and spirited way to energize your students. It can be used to simply report an answer to a completed problem (“On three, tell me your answer to number four.”) or it can be used to have students solve a more rigorous problem (“If the length is ten inches and the width is twelve inches, what is the area, class?”) As long as all students know that they are to respond, and they all know *when* to respond based on your cue (“Class?” “One, two, three!”), it will be effective.

**Technique 24: PEPPER\*** – Pepper is a game to reinforce skills – it does not teach new skills. The teacher tosses a question out to students and if the student gets it right, the teacher moves to the next question. If the student is wrong, the teacher calls on someone else to answer. There is no discussion of an answer because it’s a fast-paced review.

**Technique 25: WAIT TIME\*** – In this technique you wait a few seconds before calling on a student to answer. Typically, teachers wait only about a second after asking a question which is unlikely to lead to the most thorough or thoughtful answer. By waiting three to five seconds you are more likely to improve the quality of answers and the number of students who volunteer to answer.

**Technique 26: EVERYBODY WRITES\*** – Writing gives all students a chance to reflect on and clarify their thinking to prepare for more rigorous thinking and discussion. Writing not only engages students, but it helps them to process and refine their thinking. In one video clip the teacher asks, “What are some of the characteristics an individual must have to change history?” Consider the difference between the answer from a student who shoots her hand up immediately and the student who first writes and clarifies his ideas.

**Technique 27: VEGAS** – The **VEGAS** is the sparkle in a lesson – when you might have music, lights, rhythm, or dancing. It’s not sparkle for sparkle’s sake, but it supports one of the learning objectives. It can be a 30 second break to do the “action verb shimmy” or sing the “long division song” or a brief competition to see who can do the best charade for the day’s vocabulary word.

## Chapter 5 – Creating a Strong Classroom Culture

The techniques in Chapters Five through Seven focus on building a strong classroom culture, that is, a place where students work hard, behave, model strong character, and do their best. Below is an overview that aims to clarify the five aspects of classroom culture.

- 1. Discipline** – People often think of this as punishments and consequences. Lemov prefers to think of it as teaching students the right and successful way to do something. Teachers often set up a system of rewards and consequences, but forget to teach their students, step-by-step, how to perform the successful learning behavior such as *how* to line up, enter the classroom, take notes, etc.
- 2. Management** – Management is using consequences and rewards to reinforce behavior. What we usually refer to as “disciplining” is really management. Because management is the most visible part of classroom culture, we often miss the importance of using it *in concert* with the four other areas. Teachers often over-rely on management and dole out consequences until students are desensitized to them. Management will fail on its own. It must be implemented *together* with the four other areas.
- 3. Control** – Teachers with strong control use language and relationships to get students to do what they want even without consequences. They do this firmly and confidently, but also respectfully and with civility. With clear commands (“Please return to your seat and begin writing in your journal.”) teachers can exert control and save consequences for when they most need them.
- 4. Influence** – Inspiring students to believe, to want to work, and to want to succeed for intrinsic reasons is influencing. This is less visible than getting students to behave, instead it involves getting kids to believe – the biggest driver of student success.

**5. Engagement** – Champion teachers provide plenty of opportunities for students to get involved and lose themselves in productive, positive work. This leaves them little time to engage in counterproductive behaviors. Once they start *behaving* as contributing members of the class, they also start *thinking* of themselves as positively engaged and enthusiastic students as well.

*Technique 28: ENTRY ROUTINE* – The routine for entering the room sets the tone for the class. Students should know where to sit, what to do with homework, have a Do Now in the same location, and pick up any packet of activities from a table, not from you.

*Technique 29: DO NOW* – A short activity on the board or waiting at students’ desks gets students to be productive right away if it is quick, can be done independently, includes writing to hold students accountable, and previews the lesson or reviews a recent lesson.

*Technique 30: TIGHT TRANSITIONS\** – Students spend a tremendous amount of time on transitions – moving from place to place or activity to activity -- and this is time that they are *not learning*. If you cut one minute from ten transitions a day, at the end of a year you would gain 35 hours of instructional time! Teachers should make sure that students learn, practice, and master procedures – like how to line up or pass out papers – in under 30 seconds during the first week of school. To do this, teachers must break down procedures and map out the one right way to do them. One effective way to scaffold the teaching of procedures is to number them. “When I say one, please stand and push in your chairs. When I say two, please turn to face the door. When I say three, please follow your line leader to the place to line up.” Then you just call the number and students know exactly what to do. Eventually you can dispense with the number calling, “Please line up.” Practice with a stopwatch to improve speed, “Now let’s try this in 12 seconds.”

*Technique 31: BINDER CONTROL* – By requiring a binder your students will have an organized system to store, organize, and recall what they’ve learned. One idea is to number papers that go in (37: notes on subject-verb agreement; 38: worksheet for... etc.) so you can send students to “number 37” when looking through old notes or have students study “items 32 to 45” to prepare for the test.

*Technique 32: SLANT* – If students are *not* sitting up, alert, and actively listening, it doesn’t matter how wonderful the lesson is. **SLANT** is an acronym to remind students to focus: **S**it up, **L**isten, **A**sk and answer questions, **N**od your head, **T**rack the speaker. It’s shorthand to remind students either about the “S” in **SLANT** or about the whole thing (“Make sure you are **SLANTing**.”) It helps to use nonverbal signals (pointing to your eyes with your two fingers to remind a student to track) to avoid interrupting your instruction.

*Technique 33: ON YOUR MARK* – A coach would never start practice by asking kids to get their shoes; they know to show up with their shoes on. Kids need to start class with the materials they need, too. This means the teacher needs to be clear about what students need, how long they have to get it, and regularly use a small consequence (loss of some privilege) for not having the materials.

*Technique 34: SEAT SIGNALS* – To avoid disrupting your teaching, have students use nonverbal **SEAT SIGNALS** for certain requests. Students can raise a hand with two fingers crossed to use the bathroom, pinch their nose to signal a need for a tissue, or hold up a broken pencil to exchange it for a sharpened one (keep sharpened pencils ready rather than have students sharpen them.)

*Technique 35: PROPS* – Also called “shout-outs” and “ups” – is a way to give students public praise for excellent work or virtues. It’s a way to root for a student who has shown perseverance, found his own mistake, or tried a tough problem. For it to work, it should be short (a few seconds), universal (everyone must give the praise), and enthusiastic (fun, lively, perhaps using movement and sound). One example is “Hot Pepper” --- You say, “That answer deserves a Hot Pepper.” You kids hold up an imaginary hot pepper, dangling it above their mouths, take a bite, and make sizzle sounds “tssss” for exactly one second.

## **Chapter 6 – Setting and Maintaining High Behavioral Expectations**

Up to here, the techniques show how champion teachers actualize high *academic* expectations. However, these techniques won’t work for you if you don’t establish high *behavioral* expectations and learn ways to respond when students do *not* follow those expectations.

*Technique 36: 100 PERCENT\** – When giving a direction, you need to require that **100 PERCENT** of your students comply. While that may sound draconian, if you accept anything less, you are sending the message that it’s optional to follow the direction. Furthermore, champion teachers get **100 PERCENT** compliance with warmth and a positive tone. In the long run, discipline that is positive and invisible (a matter of habit) is the only kind that is sustainable. In a typical class, a teacher asks for silence and about three-quarters of the class follows through. When the teacher moves on anyway, she sends the message that any direction is optional. Three principles are important in getting **100 PERCENT** compliance so you can teach.

**1. Use the least invasive form of intervention** – You want everyone to follow your directions in the quickest and least disruptive way, so choose an intervention that is as close to the top of the list below as possible.

a. *Nonverbal intervention* – Use eye contact with off-task students without interrupting instruction.

b. *Positive group correction* – Quick verbal reminder to all, “We’re following along in our books.”

c. *Anonymous individual correction* – Sends the message that there are individuals not following, “We need two people.”

d. *Private individual correction* – Correct individuals privately and quietly by leaning down next to the student and in a quiet voice telling the student what he should do, “Quentin, I need you to track me so you can learn.”

e. *Lightning-quick public correction* – When you need to correct an individual publicly, make sure to minimize her time “onstage.” Something like, “Quentin, I need your eyes,” tells the student what to do and is efficient and effective.

*f. Consequence* – It’s best to solve noncompliance quickly and save consequences for occasional use. If you must use one, see the suggestions in Technique 42 **NO WARNINGS** for possible quick, calm, and noninvasive consequences. Some people mistakenly believe that ignoring misbehavior is the least invasive response, but unchecked behavior will only persist and intensify.

**2. Rely on firm, calm finesse** – Remember that gaining **100 PERCENT** compliance is not about power, but about achieving an important purpose – that students will succeed. Take yourself out of the equation and focus on the goal. Rather than saying, “I asked for your eyes on me because when I ask you for something I expect you to do it,” try “I need your eyes on me so you can learn.”

**3. Emphasize compliance you can see** – Asking for pencils down is better than asking for attention because you can see if it has been done. Then make sure students know you are looking, “Thank you, Peter. Thank you, Marissa.”

*Technique 37: WHAT TO DO* – Sometimes noncompliance is not due to defiance, but because students do not understand or know how to follow a direction. To remedy this, teachers must give clear and useful directions. It is *not* helpful to tell students, “Don’t get distracted” or “Pay attention.” Has anyone ever taught them what the specific expectations are (eyes on the speaker, pencil down, for example)? Directions are most useful if they are *specific*, give students something to *do* (“Put your feet under the desk”), are *sequential* (“John, put your feet under your desk, put your pencil down, and put your eyes on me”), and *observable* (to assess it).

*Technique 38: STRONG VOICE\** – Some teachers have “it” – the ability to walk into a classroom and be in command. They know how to earn respect and credibility, and exude confidence and poise. While this may seem impossible to replicate, there are five basic principles that **STRONG VOICE** teachers do when interacting with students to establish control that you can use.

**1. Economy of Language** – It’s stronger to use fewer words. When teachers become chatty this signals nervousness. Focus on what is important and make just one point.

**2. Do Not Talk Over** – When you need students to listen, your words are the most important and should not compete for attention. Wait until there is no talking or rustling. One technique is to cut off your instructions and wait completely still, “Sixth grade, I need your...” Nothing continues until you have everyone’s attention.

**3. Do Not Engage** – Do not let students distract you from the topic at hand. For example, if you say, “Please take your foot off Margaret’s chair.” David might say, “But she’s pushing me!” Don’t fall into the trap of engaging David by saying, “Margaret, is that true?” or “I’m not concerned with what Margaret was doing.” Instead say, “I asked you to take your foot off Margaret’s chair.”

**4. Square Up/Stand Still** – When giving directions, stop moving and doing other tasks. To convey the seriousness of your directions, turn with two feet and two shoulders to face the object of your directions directly.

**5. Quiet Power** – When you feel you are losing control, your instincts may be to speak louder and faster. Fight those instincts and get slower and quieter to maintain control. Exude calm and drop your voice so students strain to listen.

*Technique 39: DO IT AGAIN\** – When students fail to successfully complete a task, often the best consequence is asking them to **DO IT AGAIN**, this time correctly. This is particularly useful for transitions between activities. This technique is effective because it gives students immediate and logical feedback, sets a standard of excellence, ends with showing the students what success looks like, does not give the teacher administrative work, and holds the whole class accountable. Plus, you can use this technique repeatedly.

*Technique 40: SWEAT THE DETAILS* – In the famous “broken windows” theory, if we erase the graffiti, fix broken windows, etc. then people will perceive their environment as orderly and safe and will work to preserve that. Even the smallest of details can signal the expectations for behavior. In the classroom, if we create order, students will receive the message that disruptions are not permitted here. Clean up clutter, keep desk rows tidy and hats off and you will decrease the likelihood that students see disruption as an option.

*Technique 41: THRESHOLD* – The most important moment for setting expectations is when students enter your class or begin a lesson. **THRESHOLD** helps you get it right from the start. By greeting students at the physical threshold of your classroom you can accomplish two things: (1) establish a personal connection and (2) reinforce your classroom expectations. Students shake your hand, look you in the eye, and offer a civil greeting and you respond in a way to build relationships, “Loved your homework, David!” or “Nice game last night, Shayna.” It is important to correct weak handshakes or lack of eye contact in order to maintain high expectations. Simply send students to the back of the line to enter and greet you again. The tone is warm, but also industrious.

*Technique 42: NO WARNINGS* – Too often, teachers give a warning when addressing a student’s behavior. However, giving a warning is *not taking action*. Warnings tell students that misbehavior is tolerated a few times first. This does not mean that a consequence needs to be given every time a student does not meet your expectations. As mentioned earlier, consequences are overused and teachers can respond by breaking down the directive (**WHAT TO DO**) or having students try again (**DO IT AGAIN**). However, when it is time to deliver a consequence, teachers should have a scaled system of incrementally larger consequences. For example, first have a student repeat an action more appropriately, then require him to apologize, next take away a small privilege, then take away an entire privilege and make a phone call home. While doing this, be calm and be private.

## **Chapter 7 – Building Character and Trust**

As a teacher, you communicate with your students for many reasons (to correct, to praise, to inquire) and in many different contexts. Students inevitably react to your communication in a variety of ways as well (they may be defensive, angry, motivated, grateful). Because communication is so important in classroom culture, below are guidelines to help with your words and tone.



*Technique 43: POSITIVE FRAMING\** – Your interventions will be more effective if they are framed positively. Correcting students in a positive way does *not* mean avoiding interventions. Some teachers will praise Kelsey for being on task as a way to deal with David being off task, but this is not sufficient. David needs to be corrected, but in a positive way. Below are six rules.

1. **Live in the now.** Don't harp on the past. Instead of saying, "Keana, stop looking back at Tanya, say, "Keana, I need your eyes forward."
2. **Assume the best.** Until you *know* a student has a bad intention, remain positive. If you say, "Just a minute, class. I asked for chairs pushed in, and some people decided no to do it," this assumes disrespect, laziness, or selfishness. Instead try, "Just a minute, class. Some people seem to have forgotten to push in their chairs."
3. **Allow plausible anonymity.** When possible, correct students without using their names. "Class, check yourself to make sure you've done what I've asked."
4. **Build momentum, and narrative the positive.** Don't narrate it when students do not follow directions. Avoid, "I'm still waiting on some of you," and try, "I've got almost everybody now!"
5. **Challenge!** Kids love a challenge so frame a direction as one, "Let's see if we can get these papers in 12 seconds!"
6. **Talk expectations and aspirations.** When your class is doing well, tell them you feel like you're among future presidents, doctors, and artists.

*Technique 44: PRECISE PRAISE* – Positive reinforcement can be one of the most powerful tools a teacher has, but it should be implemented well. First, don't praise students for what is *expected*, "John, great job bringing a pencil to class!" Instead, save it for something *exceptional*. This cheapens praise, and what kid wants to be praised if that's all it takes? Also, be specific about what you are praising and make it as public as possible. In contrast, criticisms should be whispered or nonverbal.

*Technique 45: WARM/STRICT* – We're socialized to think that being strict and being warm are opposites. In fact, as a teacher you must be both, "Because I care about you, you must serve the consequence for being late." High expectations *show* caring for someone.

*Technique 46: THE J-FACTOR\** – Including joy in the work of learning is part of a high-achieving classroom. This can include anything from games (jeopardy), to making students feel they belong (making up funny nicknames for students), to humor, to suspense (setting out a box wrapped as a present and building anticipation about what's inside).

*Technique 47: EMOTIONAL CONSTANCY* – Students will get upset at times, but the teacher must remain calm and under control.

*Technique 48: EXPLAIN EVERYTHING* – If the teacher explains why she is doing what she is doing – because she wants to help students get to college or learn to be responsible – students will believe that their best interests are at heart and make better choices.

*Technique 49: NORMALIZE ERROR* – By not making a big deal out of wrong (or right!) answers, champion teachers show that it is a normal part of school to get it wrong, then get it right. Avoid chastising students or spending much time on wrong answers.

## **Chapters 8 and 9 – Two Additional Critical Teaching Issues – Pacing and Questioning**

The suggestions in the next two chapters don't break down into techniques as easily. Instead there are helpful suggestions on two critical issues in teaching – pacing and questioning.

### **PACING**

Students would like to think they're learning something new more frequently than you can actually change the topic. So the key is to create the illusion that you are moving quickly to give them a sense of progress and change. One way to do this is *not* to change topics all the time (that's just confusing), but to change formats – from mini-lessons to independent work to reviewing. Vary between active and passive activities every ten minutes or so. Also mark the beginning and end of activities clearly so students feel they are moving along. Another way to create the illusion of speed is to change language such as, "Take some time to answer" to "Take exactly three minutes to answer the questions" and use a clock. Champion teachers know that every minute counts and never give students time to relax when there are extra minutes at the end of class (those minutes add up to a few weeks of school by the end of the year!) Instead, keep short learning activities ready for when you have a few unanticipated minutes so you can do a vocabulary review or a read aloud.

### **QUESTIONING**

Asking students strategic questions has been an essential part of teaching as long as there have been teachers. Questions are used for many purposes, in many ways, and appear in almost every aspect of teaching. However, questioning is a very complex and multifaceted skill. Aspects of questioning have been discussed in techniques such as **RATIO, BREAK IT DOWN, STRETCH IT,** and **CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING.** Below are a few rules to make sure your questioning is effective. First, make sure you ask one question at a time. When teachers are most excited about their teaching is when they often push ahead and ask too many questions at once. Instead of asking, "Jason, how is the rats' house different from Mrs. Frisby's, and which one do you think she would rather live in?" help students focus on answering *one* question at a time. Furthermore, your questions should be clear and concise. Also, your questions should progress from the concrete to the complex. By starting with narrower and more fact-based questions, this jogs students' memories of the facts and details necessary to help them answer broader questions more insightfully later. Furthermore, their success from answering simpler questions will give them the confidence to answer more challenging ones.

## PART II – HELPING STUDENTS GET THE MOST OUT OF READING

### Chapter 10 – How All Teachers Can (and Must) Be Reading Teachers

Reading is a foundational skill. No other single activity contains so much potential educational value. Yet our students read for less than an hour a day. Recently a researcher found that 40% of the students she followed in New York City public schools did *no* reading at all. Furthermore, the teaching of reading is limited to English and literacy teachers. In response, we need everybody in a school to be a reading teacher. Teaching reading in a highly effective and productive way, no matter what subject or grade you teach, leads to powerful results. The reading techniques outlined in the next section work whether your students are reading “The Three Little Bears,” Plato, Chapter seven of *Cell: The Building Blocks of Life*, a written math problem, or the Gettysburg Address.

#### **CONTROL THE GAME: MAKING READING PRODUCTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE**

How do teachers integrate reading instruction into their classrooms in a way that is productive and accountable? It’s not enough to simply increase the number of minutes of “reading time” in your class. For example, the commonly used DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) program is a good idea to increase reading time in theory, but in practice, many students reinforce their poor reading skills during this time or let their minds drift off. Instead, we need to make sure that reading in our classrooms is a high-value activity, that is, we need our students to be doing *meaningful reading*. Meaningful reading is reading that is **accountable**, moderately **expressive**, and highly **leveraged**. *Accountable* here means that teachers can assess that students are actually reading (not looking out the window), and reading effectively. *Moderately expressive* means that students read with an inflection that shows they comprehend rather than robotic reading. Many people question the value of one student reading aloud at a time because what would the other students be doing? This is where *leverage* comes in. If only one student is reading and the others are passive, this would be a low-leverage reading activity. However, if you can get the 25 other students to read silently but accountably, then it becomes a high-leverage activity. Below is a technique, called **CONTROL THE GAME**, that makes reading accountable, moderately expressive, and highly leveraged. Once you are successful with this technique, *then* you should be able to dispense with it because your students will know how to engage in *meaningful reading*. Lemov just cautions you not to assume that your students are initially at this stage.

In **CONTROL THE GAME** one student reads aloud at a time, but the rest of the students follow along as secondary readers silently. The way to achieve this is to keep everyone on their toes about when it is their turn to read by keeping reading durations unpredictable. Rather than saying, “James, read the next paragraph,” which signals that everyone can tune out until the end of the paragraph, say, “Start reading for me please, James.” This gets everyone to read along because they don’t know when they’ll be asked to pick up. Keep the durations for reading short to keep the pace lively, and don’t reveal the identity of the next reader. In the interest of maximizing time keep transactions short. Rather than, “Thank you, Stephen. Nicely read. Susan will you begin reading, please?” try “Susan pick up.” This not only saves time, but it keeps the continuity of the reading so students will better comprehend. Another suggestion is to use *bridging* in which the teacher reads a few sentences in between student readings. This helps the reading move along quickly and it also models for students what expressive reading sounds like to help increase comprehension.

### Chapter 11 – Teaching Decoding, Vocabulary, and Fluency

Once students are reading more frequently and with more leverage, champion teachers improve the quality of their students’ reading by developing three fundamental aspects of their students’ literacy: decoding, vocabulary, and fluency. Together, improvement in these three areas will strengthen comprehension, a topic that will be discussed in the next chapter.

**1. DECODING** – Decoding is identifying written words to decipher a text. While it appears to be a lower-order skill, if students don’t master it, they will have reading problems in the future. Because they will labor over several words in each sentence, they will have little memory or energy to understand the larger meaning. Instead, all teachers should strive to correct decoding errors. It is particularly useful to teach general rules along the way because if a student can’t read *sight*, she also probably can’t read *might*. Also, try to quickly and efficiently correct the error so it doesn’t interrupt the flow of the lesson. Below are ways to correct decoding errors.

**Punch the Error** – Repeat the word emphasizing the error so the student can self correct, “Is the word *in-SPEEK-tion*?”

**Name the Sound** – Give the students the general rule so they can learn it and self correct. For example, if a student reads a word incorrectly you say, “That’s a long *a*. Long vowels say their name.” Or another example, “An *e* at the end of the word makes the other vowel say its name.” There are 10 rules on p.268 that all teachers show know so they can reinforce them.

**Cueing** – Help the student use the context to understand the error. If the student reads, “The boys wore their coat.” Ask, “The boys all shared one coat? Is that correct?”

**2. VOCABULARY** – By tenth grade there is a ten thousand word gap between privileged and less advantaged students. So it is critical that we teach vocabulary, and that we teach it effectively. Rather than superficially teaching a definition, we need to have students practice using words widely long after they know the meaning. Plus, students need to learn the subtle differences between words such as imitate and mimic. Below are a few examples of the techniques champion teachers use to reinforce strong vocabulary.

**Multiple Takes** – It’s important to expose students to words repeatedly because students need to hear a word multiple times before it becomes a part of their functioning memory. Students should practice words in different settings, “What animal would you want as a *companion*?” It also means reviewing past vocabulary words as well, “Who can recall a vocabulary word that means not having enough of something?” Students also need to practice saying each word correctly, “Everyone say ‘FLOO-Id.’”

**Compare, Combine, Contrast** – The difference between similar words often changes the meaning of a passage. Ask students to compare, combine, and contrast. “Can anyone describe how *indifferent* is different from *apathetic*?” “How would it be different if he *mimicked* Sue instead of *imitating* her?” “Could a *tyrant* ever be *humble*?”

**Upgrade** – Get students to use richer, more specific words, when possible. “Can you use a better word than *big*?” Who can summarize the chapter using the word *desolate*?”

**3. FLUENCY** – Fluency involves automaticity (reading at a rapid rate without error) and expression (emphasizing and expressing words and phrases to reflect meaning). Fluency should be continually practiced and modeled, even after elementary school, because it is a skill that shows the reader comprehends. Below are some techniques used by champion teachers to reinforce strong fluency.

**Read with spunk** – Even if you’re not inclined to drama, read aloud to your students frequently with expression. Particularly at the start of a reading, if you read with verve and energy you will model and normalize expressiveness. Then ask your students to read with expressiveness, as well. Help students identify characters’ feelings, important and descriptive words, and read accordingly.

**Check the mechanics** – Have students heed punctuation, “There’s a period – did you stop?” “She is speaking there, right?”

**Reread** – In addition to reading frequently, have students *reread* frequently as well. Have them go back and reread a passage with fluency and expression.

## **Chapter 12 – Comprehension: Teaching Students to Understand What They Read**

At times, students cannot answer higher-level questions about a text. This is often because they have failed to understand the basic facts of what they’ve read, and they’re not prepared to make those cognitive leaps. Champion teachers do a successful job of teaching reading comprehension because they put intensive focus on barriers to this basic comprehension. This often means asking word- and phrase-level questions students with underdeveloped language skills struggle with. So champion teachers ask questions like, “Who’s ‘he’ in that sentence?” or “What does it mean that Harry ‘flashed his teeth’?” This does not mean that these teachers *don’t* ask higher-level questions, it just means that they ensure students have a solid foundation of understanding before moving to these higher levels. Below are some of the techniques strong reading teachers use to teach comprehension. Note that these do not include some of the popular reading strategies such as connecting, picturing, predicting, and noticing. Lemov believes these are not well defined, focus on engagement more than comprehension, and often the strategies themselves become the goals, not a means to boost comprehension.

**Prereading Techniques** – Top reading teachers start by teaching important facts and information about context to help readers prepare to make sense of the text they are about to read. Unlike the K-W-L (Know, Want to Know, Learned) charts that many teachers use to ask students what they already know about the text’s topic, champion teachers see this as a guesswork exercise and instead opt for a direct, clear, and more efficient way to address students’ gaps in knowledge before reading (for example, teaching vocabulary words or historical events that students will encounter in a text but be unlikely to know). They do this by teaching about the *context* (showing slides of a moose to see how fierce the animal can be before reading *Hatchet*), emphasizing what will be important about a book (“This book is going to change your thinking about *bravery*”), or frontloading a scene to excite student interest (“For the rest of your life you’ll hear people refer to the idea of having ‘blood on your hands.’”)

**During-Reading Techniques** – It is key to ask the right kind of questions *during* reading. This means balancing both the higher-order kinds of questions with more basic checks for understanding. Sometimes teachers omit the latter when in fact, it is critical to ask numerous questions on the word level, sentence level, or passage level in order to assess understanding, such as:

*Word level:* “The author says, ‘It was the worst thing imaginable.’ What’s the ‘it’ she’s referring to?”

*Sentence level:* “Can you take that sentence and put it in simpler language?”

*Passage level:* “What part of that paragraph tells you that Mohi is mean spirited?”

Top teachers also know they need to *constantly* check for understanding. Many teachers go through several pages of reading before checking to see if their students are still with them. Stopping frequently to ask straightforward questions not only allows you to correct any misunderstandings immediately, but it gives better clues about the *source* of the misunderstanding.

**Postreading Techniques** – *After* completing a text, summarizing is a useful tool to process the reading. Having students summarize by simply retelling is not that effective. Instead, champion teachers have their students prioritize the information and pull out the most important points. “Who can describe the chapter by recapping its three most important points?” “Can you summarize the author’s two major arguments in support of this thesis?”

**Making Connections** – Reading teachers ask students to make connections beyond the text they are reading. However, while many teachers value text-to-self connections, champion teachers know these often lead class discussions astray and instead emphasize the more rigorous strategy of text-to-world connections or the *most* rigorous of all the connections, text-to-text (“Can anyone think of a character in another book we’ve read who was similar?” or “When else in the book has someone acted this way?”)

## **CONCLUSION**

The goal is not blind fealty to all of these techniques. Instead, try them, adapt them, and improve them in a way that works to increase student achievement. The path of successfully adapting and refining these techniques will be different for every teacher.

## The Main Idea's Professional Development Suggestions: Introducing the Techniques to Your Teachers

BOOK GROUP – This book lends itself easily to book group material for teachers. At the end of each chapter are excellent questions teachers can use to guide their discussions. For leaders, read each chapter and then come together to discuss how you would introduce the chapter's concepts and techniques to teachers using the IPPA format listed below.

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Below is a way school leaders can bring the ideas from the book to their teachers. I've created an approach that can be used with a number of the different techniques from the book. I'm using the acronym IPPA for this approach (inspired by Lemov's penchant for naming steps and techniques!) and it involves the 4 steps: (1) INTRODUCE (2) PRACTICE (3) PLAN/PUT INTO PRACTICE and (4) ASSESS. I will provide an example of training your teachers using IPPA with one of the book's techniques, and you can map out similar PD sessions for your teachers using any of the other techniques you want to introduce.

### An Overview of IPPA – An Approach to Introduce the *Teach Like a Champion* techniques

1. INTRODUCE – Help teachers understand the rationale behind it, especially since many of these ideas seem to contradict the latest educational theories. You can refer to the rationale for the technique described in the book, show a video clip if there is one for the technique you are introducing, or have teachers look at how successful they already are in this area.

2. PRACTICE – Before trying the technique in the classroom, have teachers practice it. This can be in the form of a role-play as teacher and student(s) or it might involve practicing writing a powerful lesson **HOOK** or writing **STRETCH IT** questions.

3. PLAN/PUT INTO PRACTICE – If the technique is conducted *spontaneously* in class (like responding to a student) then the teacher should plan to implement it for an entire week, perhaps asking a colleague to observe for it. If the technique is something that needs to be planned *ahead of time* into a lesson (like what the students should be doing in **DOUBLE PLAN**), the teacher should incorporate it into a lesson plan to be implemented within the next week.

4. ASSESS – Teachers will more rapidly progress in their command of these techniques if they get feedback on their implementation. In addition to their own self-reflection (which can happen at a future staff meeting), teachers should invite visitors to observe and give feedback on the technique, or even better, consider video taping themselves so they and others can watch multiple times to give feedback. Obviously any feedback should be used by the teacher to improve her practice next time.

### Introducing the technique **NO OPT OUT** using IPPA to a group of teachers

#### 1. INTRODUCE

\* *SELF-ASSESS* -- Have teachers stand on an imaginary (or use tape) line in the middle of the room. The wall to their right represents '10' (always/all) on a continuum and the wall to the left represents a '1' (never/none). Ask teachers, "About how many students in your class regularly answer, 'I don't know' or shrug their shoulders when you ask a question? Please stand on the continuum from 1 to 10." Then ask, "How often do you continue with that student until s/he gets the answer right? Again, stand on the continuum from 1 to 10." "How often, when a student answers a question incorrectly, do you move to another student to provide the correct answer? Please move on the continuum." "How often, when a student answers incorrectly, do you stay with that student until s/he gets it right?"

\* *READ AND DISCUSS* -- Then use these responses as a starting point for discussing the rationale behind **NO OPT OUT** – that it's not OK for students not to try, and that all students, with effort, can answer questions correctly. You can copy pages 28-34 in the book for them to read and show the video clip of **NO OPT OUT**. Make sure they read or learn about the 4 formats of **NO OPT OUT** before practicing below.

#### 2. PRACTICE

\* *FISHBOWL* – Have 2 teachers role-play teacher and student to model **NO OPT OUT** in the middle of the room. You may want to provide a script. (Sample scripts are on pp.32-33.) Or provide guidelines. Tell the 'teacher' to give a simple multiplication problem and tell the 'student' to get it wrong. Then the 'teacher' will have to demonstrate how, thinking on her feet, she uses cues to get the student to the right answer (or ultimately gives the answer herself and has the student repeat it if she can't.) Have teachers and participants discuss and reflect.

\* *PRACTICE IN PAIRS* – Have everyone pair up and do their own student-teacher role play. You can pass out cards with scenarios (the teacher asks a grammar question, the student always gets it wrong). Make sure they practice with all the **NO OPT OUT** formats (there are 4).

#### 3. PLAN/PUT INTO PRACTICE

\* *MAKE A PLAN FOR THE NEXT WEEK* – Give teachers time to map out a plan like this: Monday observe how many and which students are responding with "I don't know" or incorrect answers. On Tuesday, practice with the simpler version of having students repeat the correct answer from another student or from me. On Wednesday and Thursday practice helping students self correct with cues.

#### 4. ASSESS

\* *GET FEEDBACK* -- Invite a visitor in on Friday and ask: 1) How often, when a student does not know an answer or gets it wrong, do I get her to eventually say the right answer? 2) In doing this, how would you categorize my tone (helpful? punitive? encouraging?) 3) Please write down the questions I ask to cue my students during class. Are there ways I could improve these cues to get the students to self correct more quickly or more accurately? THEN, invite the visitor for next week to see if you have improved your **NO OPT OUT** technique!

School Leaders – Now it's your turn to write out, in IPPA format, how you would introduce another technique to your teachers.