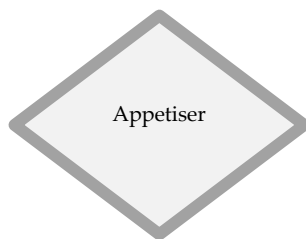


Diamond lesson plan

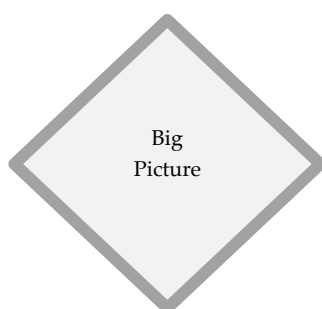


The individual steps of the DLP model may be divided across multiple lessons rather than the confines of a single lesson or as a recommended sequence for online instructional design. It also offers a dynamic structure to enhance formal lectures within Higher Education or classroom-based direct instruction. The DLP is not a fixed formula but rather a spur to creativity.



Open your lesson with a bright, upbeat 3-4 minute 'hook' to capture attention and to stir enthusiasm and interest.

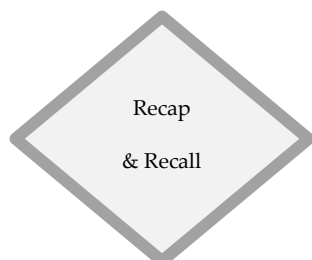
The terms starter, energiser or icebreaker activities are more common but 'appetiser' is more in-tune with Hunter's 'anticipatory' set involving a positive feel-good 'hook' to capture attention. Introductions of this type are often criticised as a distraction, committing teachers to additional preparation and sailing too close to edutainment. However, our purpose is to develop and extend knowledge of the topic by drawing attention to relevant 'in the news' developments, newly published research, a journal article, a key book, a T.V documentary, a video on You Tube etc not only to win engagement but to stir curiosity in relation to the topic, the subject or vocation and future careers with the goal of triggering an intrinsic interest in mastering the subject skills and/or knowledge. It should be kept short and sharp. Over time students should be expected to take the lead in researching and regularly presenting the appetisers. This will offer students a regular lead role in the lesson, provide opportunities to practise and develop their presentation skills and encourage open-ended research involving higher order analysis and evaluation. Appetisers can be used not only to open lessons but between episodes to re-energise students if attention is judged to be on the wane. A wide range of appetiser suggestions are described and presented below.



Share the learning intentions and success criteria with a student-friendly 'big-picture' lesson introduction.

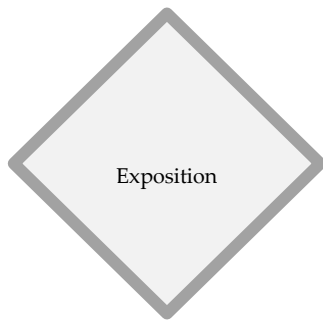
The reading aloud of lesson objectives in the manner of, 'by the end of the lesson you will be able to...?' is a highly mechanistic and ineffective means of engaging students. All too often it sounds and feels rushed and can seem to be more about fulfilling a

bureaucratic 'requirement' rather than a genuine sharing of the learning intentions. The replacement of formal objectives with the prompt *'by the end of the lesson I would like you to be able to answer...'* followed by some graduated key questions is a more direct and effective way of communicating the learning intentions as described in Chapter Six. Questions remove the barrier of formal language and provide a direct prompt to in-lesson assessment. In survey after survey our students describe great teachers as enthusiastic, passionate and inspiring. Those qualities should be to the fore in the lesson introduction by taking the time to describe the planned lesson in an upbeat, enthusiastic manner. The 'big picture' introduction relates to being expansive i.e. explaining the importance of the topic, how it links to previous learning, how it might link to the workplace, the expectations of examiners, the opportunities to build employability skills and the knowledge to be gained. Care should also be taken to apply Ausubel's primary rule of teaching to check and ascertain prior learning and as necessary to adjust the challenge and support for each individual. The overall purpose is to generate interest and commitment by 'selling' the lesson i.e. selling the benefits of engagement. What will the students gain and know that they didn't know when they entered the room? Finally, as an aid to concentration and note-taking employ bright graphics as the centrepiece of a student facing 'big picture' lesson plan as also described in Chapter Six.



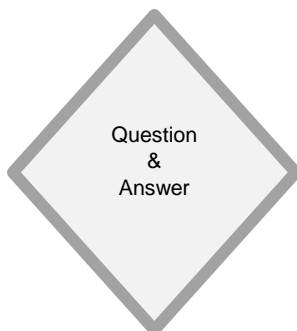
Check and confirm the progress of students by engaging in 'all response' recap and recall assessment activities.

Engagement, although highly welcome, is not learning. It is participation. Our goal over time is to elicit evidence of learning and therefore recap and recall should form a regular feature of our lessons. Recap is a summary of the previous lesson both as a reminder and to carry forward and test understanding of key concepts and vocabulary. Recall is of greater importance because it introduces a firm check on learning retention by regularly employing William's 'all response' feedback strategies. The feedback should regularly involve 'spaced practice' i.e. returning to topics studied weeks or months before rather than the immediate past topic. Teachers should react to evidence of poor recall and misunderstanding and be prepared to re-teach as necessary. Each lesson is a link in a learning chain and a broken link should not be ignored. The application of recap and recall and a range of appropriate strategies are described in Chapter Seven.



Capture and hold attention with a clear step by step enthusiastic presentation of new knowledge.

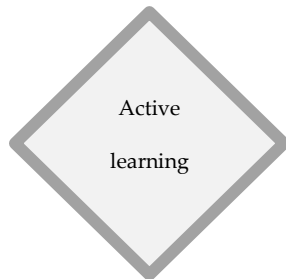
Most lessons will involve some form of teacher presentation or exposition to introduce, explain, model and elaborate new knowledge. The key is to chunk the new knowledge into three or four short steps in acknowledgement of the limitations of working memory. This is preferable to an extended monologue with largely passive students recording notes. Silent note-taking is rarely a reliable indicator of interest in the topic let alone understanding. Each short step should be followed by question and answer, directions for note-taking, guided practice i.e. worked examples and references to relevant supporting resources issued to the students or displayed on PowerPoint or Keynote. It has become popular to deride the use of PowerPoint with the dismissive phrase 'death by PowerPoint' but it is the presenter and not the medium at fault. Too many presenters fill slide after slide with dense text bullet points and even worse read them aloud. The result is cognitive overload because we cannot read and listen well at the same time. Text should be kept to a minimum and PowerPoint should be used to reinforce and clarify the key points by displaying relevant photographs, diagrams, tables, quotations, statistics, apps, websites or video clips to take advantage of Dual Coding. Finally, acknowledge all those student surveys and consciously project enthusiasm, passion and inspiration and step well away from flat, dull and boring. Contrary to folklore the former qualities are not genetic. Great teachers consciously switch them on and all teachers can and should practise and develop warm, upbeat, motivational presentational skills.



Check for attention and understanding by engaging all students in question and answer and developing a learning dialogue.

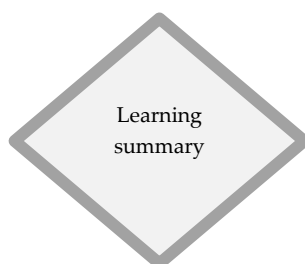
Question and answer is deceptively straightforward but full of pitfalls for the unwary teacher. Consider entering the lesson with a list of relevant questions to test the expected learning outcomes from basic factual knowledge to more demanding conceptual awareness as appropriate. This is preferable to relying upon the hit and miss of generating appropriate questions spontaneously during the lesson. Chapter Six highlights how questions can form the basis of lesson planning via the use of Advance Organisers and can be used to punctuate the lesson with regular checks on understanding. The key is to draw **all** students into full participation via William's 'all response,' 'PPPB' and 'hinge' questioning techniques and to develop their confidence to ask as

well as answer questions. Chapter Seven details a range of questioning strategies and stimulating methods of random student selection designed to gain full participation and to help students to extend and defend their answers within an overall learning dialogue.



Engage all in regular individual, paired and group guided practice to reflect upon and consolidate new knowledge and to provide opportunities to practise and develop employability and life skills.

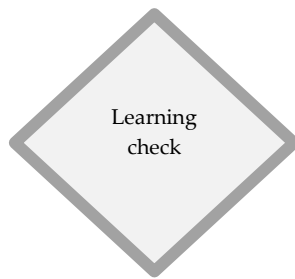
Few students immediately grasp a new concept or perhaps mishear or misunderstand an aspect of new knowledge. Granting reflection time as short as 3-5 minutes individually or in pairs, can reveal misconceptions and give rise to questions that otherwise might never be asked. The aim is to promote thinking about the new knowledge rather than simply receiving and noting it. Without discussion involving questioning and testing opinions many students might simply parrot responses and fail to make connections and to shift from shallow to deeper understanding. Employ bright, visual timers (download from collegenet.co.uk) to maintain a brisk pace. In longer lessons or as a planned feature of a lesson offer time for a more extensive group review of new knowledge to promote deep rather than surface understanding. While the students are working circulate, monitor progress and pick up issues for correction or further whole class elaboration. Continually read the body language, probe and encourage questions. Take the opportunity for one to one and small group coaching in response to any observed difficulties. To work well groups need to be kept small (3-4 is optimum) have a clear task focus and conclude with an answer or relevant end 'product'. Mixed ability should also be the guiding principle to foster a classroom learning culture of peer support. Chapter Ten presents full guidance on all aspects of planning and managing active learning group tasks.



Summarise the major learning points to ensure accuracy of recording and to encourage good note-taking habits.

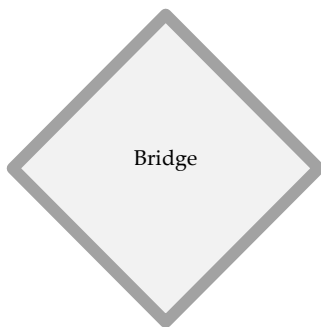
Control the end of the lesson by reserving time to summarise the major learning points introduced during the lesson. Return to the lesson objectives or preferably key questions and invite the students to summarise the key points. Reinforce the importance of good note-taking – memory is weak- and seek assurances of

accurate recording of key points. As necessary direct the recording of a summary paragraph or a list of key bullet points.



Conduct a final check on progress by engaging all in a learning review.

It is important to step beyond a summary of learning by introducing a final check on understanding. Ideally select a method like 'Exit slips' to engage all the students in reflection upon their progress and understanding as a step towards metacognition. Accurate evidence of progress will be revealed over time but it is important to end a lesson by capturing and correcting any immediate misconceptions. Chapter Seven provides a range of useful learning review techniques including the use of 'Exit slips'.



Create a learning continuum by regularly extending learning beyond the classroom with a bridge to the next lesson.

Our lessons should be part of a learning continuum rather than isolated events. This can be secured by the setting of regular Bridge tasks to promote independent research and to develop greater self-reliance and encouragement of self-efficacy. The term bridge is preferred because homework often holds too many negative connotations as a chore best avoided. The terms 'extended' or 'independent' learning tasks may also be employed. The bridge task can take a number of forms as detailed in Chapter Seven. It may be an extension of the guided practice undertaken during the lesson and reviewed at the start of the next lesson to close the loop. It may be a 'Flipped Learning' style preparation task for the next lesson or a 'Blended Learning' extended learning task to promote deeper investigation of the topic by examining specified resources.

For full details of the DLP go to Great Teaching and Learning by Bradley Lightbody