

10 Ways You Can USE ROSENSHINE'S PRINCIPLES TO IMPROVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE

ROSENSHINE'S PRINCIPLES

The educational psychologist Barak Rosenshine established ten principles for providing the best conditions to produce positive outcomes for young people.

1. Begin a lesson with a short review of previous learning
2. Present new material in small steps with student practice after each step
3. Ask a large number of questions and check the responses of all students
4. Provide models
5. Guide student practice



6. Check for student understanding
7. Obtain a high success rate
8. Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks
9. Require and monitor independent practice
10. Engage students in weekly and monthly review



1. START WITH STUDENTS IN MIND

Begin by focusing on the young people you teach and their most immediate needs. For example, if they're struggling with independent practice, you may need to prioritise more effective modelling.



2. CONSIDER HOW OFTEN YOU ENACT THE PRINCIPLES

Rosenshine states that most teachers will be doing these things some of the time, but that the most effective teachers will be doing them more purposefully and frequently. Engage in some honest reflection about how often you carry out each of the principles.



3. GET A COLLEAGUE'S PERSPECTIVE

When working out which of the principles to focus on first, another pair of eyes can help. Ask a colleague to observe and feed back on which principles you're enacting effectively – then cross reference that with your own evaluation to build up a clearer idea of where to begin.



4. CONSIDER THE PRINCIPLES' RELATIONSHIP

After following the previous tips, you may feel ready to work on a specific area of practice. If you've decided, say, to improve your checking for understanding, you'll also want to think about other principles which support that (such as "ask a large number of questions"). Consider how they connect with and complement one another.



5. TAKE A GRANULAR FOCUS

Having explored the principles in relation to your students and your practice, get granular with the area you wish to develop. So if you're aiming to provide more regular models for your students, think about the steps that go into it. Do you need to practise modelling live? Would you benefit from preparing it in advance to begin with?



6. PLAN IN ADVANCE

As the principles focus on classroom practice, it would be easy to wait until you're in the classroom to consider them. The most effective implementation, however, also involves the planning stage: consider the types of questions you'll ask; who you'll direct them to; and what you'll do with the responses.



7. ACCEPT THAT WORKING MEMORY IS LIMITED

The principles sit on the tenet that working memory is limited. Students should use it to engage with their learning, and the principles are designed to support that. Factor this in when planning lessons – and if students are falling behind or lacking understanding, re-evaluate the demands you've placed on working memory.



8. ENSURE LEARNING IS CONTEXTUALISED

Remember that students need learning to be contextualised – it's essential to begin a lesson with a review of previous learning. This can't happen in isolation: ensure that students understand where this review sits in the wider picture of their learning and how today's lesson will benefit from it.



9. AVOID USING THE PRINCIPLES AS A FORMULA

It can be tempting to look at the principles as a formula which can help give us success criteria for our teaching – but that won't produce effective lessons. Consider which principles support learning in each of your lessons rather than trying to squeeze them all in.



10. KEEP RETURNING TO THE LIST

The best way to utilise the principles is to become fluent in them. Understand why Rosenshine concluded that these ten are worth teachers investing their time in. Read Rosenshine's full paper and keep returning to it.



Meet Our Expert

Claire Grimes is Director of Professional Learning and Development for a trust of schools. An experienced teacher and senior leader, she has been an assistant head in grammar and comprehensive settings and Vice-Principal of a large secondary school. Author of Rosenshine's Principles in Action: The Workbook, Claire is passionate about improving the life chances of young people through evidence-informed practice.



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