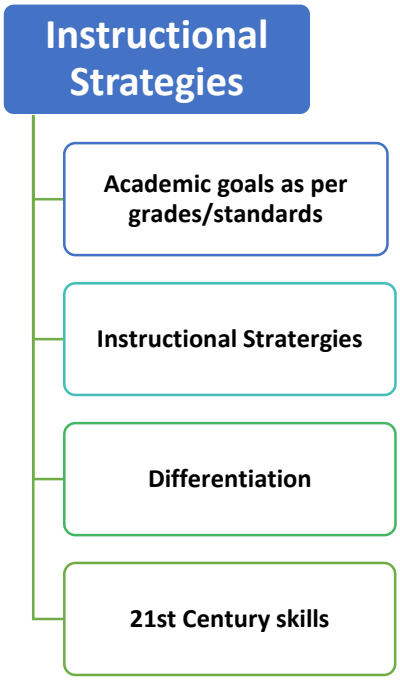
Instructional Strategies

Below mentioned are few of the instructional strategies from the traditional classroom to be used in the online learning environment:



I.1. Academic Goals as per Grades/Standards

An effective teacher can implement effective lessons only after setting and clearly communicating the learning outcomes or objectives; providing descriptive feedback to the students on achievement and support students with challenging and interesting tasks.

A learning objective is a statement of what the student will know and will have learned by the end of the lesson. In other words it gives us an idea of the knowledge the students would have learnt from the lesson and the activities they are engaged in.

The three components of a clear objective are:

- It contains an observable verb /action
- It contains a clear description of the anticipated student learning
- It is measurable

Students must feel that what they are learning is continuation of what has been learnt previously. Hence an effective teacher makes connections between prior and new learning.

I.2. Ten Instructional strategies for successful teaching

HOW CAN EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING TRANSFORM CLASSROOMS?

Asking questions is natural and intuitive. As teachers, we ask questions as soon as the lesson starts and continue until the end. Asking questions forms part of any lesson because it invites the student to think.

Teachers use questions to engage the students and sustain an 'active' style to the learning. The teacher also uses questions as part of the assessment of learning in order to determine how they best structure, organize and present new learning.

Historically, teachers have asked questions to check what has been learnt and understood, to help them gauge whether to further review previous learning, increase or decrease the challenge, and assess whether students are ready to move forward and learn new information.

Effective questioning in fact can

- ✓ continually communicate learning objectives
- ✓ increase student engagement
- ✓ create an environment of trust where students' opinions and ideas are valued
- ✓ show connections between previous and new learning
- ✓ encourage students to ask as well as "receive' questions"
- ✓ encourage students to listen and respond to each other
- ✓ encourage creative thought and imaginative or innovative thinking
- ✓ foster speculation, hypothesis and idea/opinion forming
- ✓ create a sense of shared learning and avoid the feel of a 'lecture'
- ✓ challenge the level of thinking and possibly mark a change to a higher order of thinking
- ✓ model higher order thinking using examples and building on the responses of students

I.3. Differentiation

Differentiation means starting where students are rather than adopting a standardized approach to teaching that seems to presume that all learners of a given age or grade are essentially alike. Thus, differentiated instruction is "responsive" teaching rather than "one-size-fits-all" teaching.

Is there an easier, more effective way to manage instruction in the multilevel classroom? The response is not as complicated as it seems if we find out the factors responsible.

- The student's educational background
- The student's personality and attitude towards learning
- The student's goals
- The student's age

- The student's learning style

When planning instruction for a multilevel class, teachers must first consider the varied proficiency levels of their students. In general, many students perform at

- the same or similar level;
- "below" level and
- "above" level.

Below-level. These students are struggling to keep up with instruction. They need extra time to complete activities or comprehend the concept and are often dependent on peer support to be successful. These students may have feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem and are usually very conscious of the fact that everyone else in class is learning more rapidly than they are. Below-level students are at risk because they often give up and blame themselves for their inability to learn more efficiently.

At-level. These students are doing well with their current level of instruction and are progressing as they should.

Above-level. These students may have more language proficiency than the at-level students, or these students may be able to "get it" more quickly than their classmates. Above-level students are at risk because they can become frustrated with the teacher for not providing more challenging lessons. They can also become bored or disruptive while waiting for the other students to "catch up."

Effective Practices:

- ✓ Begin the lesson with the whole class together
- ✓ Assign leveled tasks using appropriate grouping
- ✓ End the class with whole class together

I.3. 21st Century Skills

Today's students need more than just instruction in the core topic areas. They also need to develop skills that will serve them well in a globally competitive, information-based society, such as problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

Core Skills:

Creativity: Curiosity and creativity fuel lifelong learning, as they contribute to the quality of life and the intellectual and emotional health of individuals. It can be inculcated by assisting students generating new ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing ones. Students then apply this thinking to create, design, imagine, or suppose something new.

Critical thinking: Critical thinking prepares the student for the future career options. It involves analysis, evaluation, and application of concepts and ideas to real-life situations. Explaining of information is a skill that applies to all disciplines and is critical to the educated world.

Problem solving: Both creative thinking and critical thinking are essential for problem solving. Students use problem solving skills on a constant basis. Students learn how to utilize and apply information they have gained. Students ask questions and create solutions to diverse and challenging problems connected to real-world situations.

Effective Practices:

Part of encouraging the core skills is helping children become both fluent and flexible thinkers. Fluent thinkers have the ability to come up with ideas; flexible thinkers are able to see many possibilities or view objects or situations in new ways.

- ✓ Brainstorm. Invite children to be fluent thinkers by asking them to respond to questions that have many right answers. Incorporate these questions into the interests children are involved with and the situations they are in.

- ✓ Reflect. Help children to be flexible thinkers by asking them to comment on specific objects or situations in your room.

- ✓ Challenge. Encourage children to practice critical and logical thinking by asking them open-ended questions, such as "How many ways can you solve the problem? "How would the answer be different if you use long division method?"

- ✓ Listen. Asking questions about things that don't make sense is another way children express critical thinking. When a child wonders, "Why is the sky blue?" or "Why can't I see the wind?" you don't need to respond with one right answer. Instead, encourage children to express their ideas.

- ✓ Reinforce children's solutions. Let children know that their ideas and efforts are valued.

- ✓ Extend creative thinking and problem solving. Ask open-ended questions about activities to help children see the problem they are trying to solve in new and different ways.