

## The Daily Riff - BE SMARTER. ABOUT EDUCATION.

# LEARNING, INNOVATION & TECH

## BOMBS & BREAKTHROUGHS

### The Flipped Class Revealed

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*Editor's Note: This is Part 3 of 3 of The Flipped Class Series at The Daily Riff. You can start here, by reading this post, and go backwards and still understand what's going on in the conversation. Links to Part 1, ["The Flipped Class: What it Is and What it is Not,"](#) and*

*Part 2 - ["Are You Ready to Flip?"](#) and other related links can be found below.*

*- C.J. Westerberg*

### The Flipped Class What Does a Good One Look Like?

*"The classroom environment and learning culture play a large role in determining the best pedagogical strategy."*

by Brian Bennett, Jason Kern, April Gudenrath and Philip McIntosh

The idea of the flipped class started with lecture and direct instruction being done at home via video and/or audio, and what was once considered homework is done in class. So, the order of the "lecture" and "homework" components of the class are, well -- flipped.

Now, it is becoming much more than that.

The main reason, maybe the only reason, to flip a class is to provide more class time for learning and that is the major shift that we are seeing as the flip gains popularity across content areas. Other than that, a good flipped class should be like any other in which good teaching and effective learning take place. Flipping the class is not the end-all solution to finding the "best use" of class time, but it does allow for varied forms of instruction. And after all, doesn't anything that results in more in-class learning a move in the right direction?

A lot of flipped class discussions focus on moving away from a traditional lecture format. While some lessons lend themselves better to a lecture format, others will be more appropriate as a flipped lesson. The classroom environment and learning culture play a large role in determining the best pedagogical strategy. This decision-making is a vital part of providing a constructive learning environment for students.

Switching from a traditional classroom to a flipped classroom can be daunting because there are a lack of effective models. So, what should an effective flipped classroom look like? In our experience, effective flipped classrooms share many of these characteristics:

- Discussions are **led by the students** where outside content is brought in and expanded.
- These discussions typically reach **higher orders of critical thinking**.
- Collaborative work is **fluid** with students shifting between various simultaneous discussions depending on their needs and interests.
- Content is given **context** as it relates to real-world scenarios.
- Students challenge one another during class on **content**.
- **Student-led** tutoring and collaborative learning forms spontaneously.
- Students take **ownership** of the material and use their knowledge to lead one another without prompting from the teacher.
- Students ask **exploratory** questions and have the freedom to delve beyond core curriculum.
- Students are actively engaged in problem solving and critical thinking that reaches beyond the traditional scope of the course.
- Students are transforming from passive listeners to **active learners**.

The flipped class is not for everyone, but it offers the best way we know of to maximize in-class learning opportunities. If an individual learner or group of learners needs something akin to lecture, that can be done. Small group discussions? No problem. Plenty of time for interaction with the teacher? You bet.

The best way to understand how the method works is to see it in action. If you are interested in the Flipped Classroom, you are not alone...find and begin building a support network at [The Flipped Class Network](#). Look at the network resources, connect with other professionals, or even visit a class and see what the buzz is about. Chances are the flip will be coming soon to a school near you, if it hasn't already.

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[Brian Bennett](#) is a second year teacher that just finished his first year of flipping with no intentions of going back to a traditional class. His focus is on using the flipped model to build collaborative classes that integrate technology to foster the growth of 21st century learners. Brian has spoken on the Flipped Class at conferences in the United States, South Korea, and Malaysia.

[Jason Kern](#) is the Director of Technology at The Oakridge School in Arlington, TX. Jason has been an educator for 14 years. He is the curator of TEDxYouth@Metroplex, a Google Certified Teacher, and a Powerful Learning Practice Fellow. Jason went back into the classroom this year to help implement a flipped Economics class to seniors. He has also trained Middle School science and math teachers to begin to flip their classrooms.

[April Gudenrath](#) is an English teacher at Discovery Canyon High School in Colorado Springs, Co. April started her career in the IT industry training for Wal-Mart, Oracle, and Microsoft. She then left the technology field to follow her dream to be a high school English teacher. Currently she teaches 9-12 in both the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Years Programme and has created blended classes across grade levels. In addition, she teaches the IB epistemology class Theory of Knowledge, which she has also blended, and is an IB assessor in that area.

[Philip McIntosh](#) is a Learner-in-Chief for mathematics and science at Challenger Middle School in Colorado Springs, CO. He is entering his 9th year as an educator and he went all in on the flipped model and mastery learning in his 7th grade pre-algebra and algebra classes in 2010.

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*Editor's Note2: The educator-contributors to this series are stars in this narrative, because they: show their vulnerable underside (aka thought processes); think of student learning first and foremost in their discussions, practice, and iterations; have the cahoonas to be in an "always learning" mode, rather than a "knowing it all" mode; put their names out there about work in progress, while honing it daily; consider pedagogy with the understanding that content and skills together are important; do not fear peer feedback, or feedback from [parents](#) or students; view a student's ownership (and responsibility) of learning as critical; have the humility and confidence to admit that this is not a one-size-fits-all silver bullet solution for*

*all learning; and recognize how adult guidance and expertise matter, especially when it is truly about student learning as the goal.*

*In addition to the hard intellectual work and professionalism exhibited from their writing and work, they show a certain [je ne sais quoi](#) and energy . . . pretty awesome conditions for learning and teaching. Sure, there is more to find out and talk about here in the total scheme of things - but this is more than a start.*

*- C.J. Westerberg*

*Originally published by The Daily Riff June 23, 2011*

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Lori • 11 months ago

I notice many of the upper grades seem to be flipping. How does it work n elementary age settings?

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Marina • 11 months ago

Flipped classes do make sense, especially in ESL and EFL ( English as a foreign language). There's much more time for students to practise and speak during the class, instead of passively listening to a teacher. Actually, I've been flipped teaching my students for a year, but wasn't aware of the term :)

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Marv Tjaden • 2 years ago

This sounds interesting. I am an Industrial Arts teacher, teaching such classes as woodworking and metals. How would these types of classes fit into the flipped classroom method?


^ ▾ Reply Share ›

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