

New publication

Principles of teaching for effective learning: the voice of the teacher. Ian Mitchell, Judie Mitchell & David Lumb

This book draws on the 25 years of the Project for Enhancing Effective Learning (PEEL). It is a comprehensive amalgam of PEEL practice and theory developed during the project by practising teachers and academics. It is structured around 12 strategic principles for effective teaching. The many ways each principle can be enacted are developed from rich anecdotes from primary and secondary classrooms and reflections by teachers and academics that identify a range of critical features of practice that stimulates learning that is purposeful, reflective and intellectually active. It explores teacher and student journeys in learning how to learn and what makes a successful learning community. Each of the 159 classroom stories is linked by text boxes to relevant aspects of learning and teaching and the indexing allows readers to find all examples of any of the 41 aspects of effective learning and 26 aspects of teaching for effective learning that emerge from these stories. An example from the book relating to the strategic principle *Look for occasions where students can work out part (or all) of the content or instruction* follows. The book can be ordered or purchased from www.peelweb.org.

Lyn Boyle ([Introducing Antarctica using visual stimuli](#)) presented her students with a map of Antarctica and asked them to work out what they could from the map alone. This involved working out facts at the comprehension level because they had to interpret the map and put their knowledge into words. Her technique is described below:

Teaching: Steps back/gets out of the way/lets students work it out..

As an introductory activity, students are presented with a map of Antarctica. In groups of two or three, they are asked to use the map to list as many facts as they can about Antarctica. Any facts that they can determine from the map are to be included.

The students are encouraged to use all the information on the map. Students could also ask questions to clarify items on the map (if they were observant enough to realise that the key did not give them information on everything on the map). For example: What are dry valleys? What is the outer line surrounding the continent?

Learning: Working collaboratively – engages in collaborative planning and working in small groups.

Principle 5: Promote talk which is exploratory, tentative and hypothetical.

Students are encouraged to brainstorm this activity within a given time - perhaps ten minutes. By brainstorming, students write down everything that comes to mind without judging. At the end of the ten minutes they discuss which comments are relevant and which should be removed.

Learning: Processing – builds a rich meaning for a piece of content.

Each group is able to read out their best ten responses. This was made into a game with prizes for the longest list of facts from the map AND the most creative response e.g. The winter ice shelf is less than 500 km from South America.

This open-ended task was an effective way to allow students to work at their own ability level and to challenge each student individually. By working in small groups,

students were able to express their own ideas and piggy-back on the ideas of others to extend their thinking. Many aspects of thinking were drawn upon.

Students came up with very lengthy and creative lists including distances between locations, distinguishing summer and winter sea ice, longitude readings, highest mountains and more. This activity could easily be adapted to any map or diagram.

Learning: Contributing – engage in social construction of understandings.