The Art of Intentional Teaching

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Or
Teaching at the Student’s Cutting Edge!

Texts Used in Presentation


My Goals

• Present complex ideas under three big ideas.
• Use video examples to illustrate how the big ideas look in different settings.
• Share procedures for applying big ideas to teaching and learning.
• Show how the big ideas align with the Common Core Standards.

Big Idea #1

Intentional teaching is based on what the student already knows, what the student needs to know, and what the student is capable of learning with assistance.
• Teaching changes as learning changes, constantly keeping students’ learning at the cutting edge.

Big Idea #2

To teach with intentionality, teachers must consider the students’ learning behaviors across three different settings:
• Before teaching
• During teaching
• After teaching
If the learning behavior doesn’t change, teachers must examine the conditions for learning and adjust accordingly.
Big Idea #3
Teaching at the upper edge of students’ learning promotes a growth mindset with opportunities to solve challenging problems with help from others.
- Intellectual growth is dependent on making mistakes and knowing when to seek help from others and to determine how much help is needed to solve the problem.

First, what is intentional teaching? What is it not?
What are words and phrases that come to mind when you think of ‘intentionality’?

Intentional Teaching

### What it is
- Deliberate
- Conscious
- Purposeful
- Focused
- Reflective
- Strategic
- Responsive
- Contingent
- Meaningful

### What it is not
- Random
- Routinized
- Scripted
- Unorganized
- Not thoughtful
- Ritualistic
- Nonessential
- Trivial
- Unimportant

What is Intentional Teaching?
A conscious deliberate act where the teacher attempts to influence the student's involvement in a specific task by arranging the environment so that the student's attention is directed to what is important, and by adjusting the degree of scaffolding to keep the student involved in learning from the activity.

Intentional teaching means to
- Act with specific outcomes or learning goals in mind
- Know when to use a particular strategy for scaffolding student success
- Know how much help to give the student
- Know when to let the student do the work
- Assess for change over time and across different contexts

Teach & Assess for Change in Behavior
- What changes in students' behaviors occurred over the learning period?
- What was the influence of teaching on changes in students' behaviors?
- What do these behavioral changes indicate about the students' cognitive control?

![Scale of Behavioral Change](image)
Three Questions to Consider

- At the end of the instructional period, what skills or concepts will students be able to use that they were not able to use before?
- What strategies will they be able to understand and apply that they were not able to do before?
- In what situations will students be able to transfer the new skills, concepts, and strategies?

Where is the cutting edge?
What does it mean for intentional teaching?

The upper limit (optimal challenge) where the student can accomplish a harder (or more challenging) task with varying degrees of assistance.

The optimal challenge serves both as a motivation for change and as a source of direction for change.

Optimal challenge can be found at the upper end of a child’s zone of proximal development.

The Art of Scaffolding

As knowledge is being transformed, it can slide backwards, then leap forward, and slide backwards again, then become more stable through practice in multiple settings.

Repeated practice and degrees of scaffolding matter!

Independence leads to lifelong reading!

Building a Case for Challenging Work with Scaffolding from a Responsive Teacher
Enough Challenge to Create Work

Enough Help to Ensure Success

I'm really puzzled by what happened here. I don't understand why the character would have done that.

Okay, that makes sense. Now, I understand why he did that.

Equals Intellectual Growth

Reading acceleration occurs on tasks and materials that are challenging and engage the child’s mind in productive reading work.

The teacher keeps the child’s learning at the cutting edge, thereby pushing the boundaries of the child’s learning to increasingly more complex levels through assisted performance.

Instructional Levels

• Some research has found that younger readers may be able to read instructionally (with scaffolding) at levels as low as 83-85% based on background, interest, length of text, and other factors (Powell, 1970; Stahl & Heubach, 2005).
• The length of the passage makes a difference in the child’s ability to read a text at the instructional level.

Challenging Work Promotes a Growth Mindset and Shapes Independence

Learning From Teacher Assistance

• You did some good work on this page.
• Show me what was tricky for you.
• And how did you help yourself when you got to that word?
• What parts did you see that would help you?
• Write that word and show me how you broke it.
• That’s what you are good at. You are always thinking about the story and you are able to break the word into parts like that.

Let’s apply the theory to a beginning reader at two points in time.

Meet Josh and his teacher Sonya.

I can do this by myself.
Assessing the Teaching for Intentionality

- Is my teaching helping the student to initiate and carry out a plan of action?
- Is my teaching consistent and focused?
- Am I scaffolding for independence?
- Will the student be able to transfer the knowledge gained in the teaching interaction to a different situation?

The ultimate goal of teaching is to empower students to take control of their thinking in order to generalize their knowledge and strategies to new settings for solving new problems.

Learning From Self-Assistance

- Movement from the external (concrete) to the internal (abstract)

Identifying a ‘Stretch’ Text for Challenging Work

What is the optimal level that a child can read with scaffolding? How can assessment (2nd grade and beyond) be used to determine a stretch text?

Two Types of Assessments

**Standard Assessment – No Teaching**
- Determine child’s instructional level based on standard reading assessment

**Learning Potential – With Teaching**
- Select a harder text (above instructional level) and embed teaching into the assessment to determine the child’s challenge (stretch) level.

Locate good examples of short interesting passages.

Good source for fiction and nonfiction below:

- www.ReadWork.org
Assessment of Learning Potential

• Select an interesting short passage and provide title. Briefly describe assessment process.
• Read aloud the first paragraph (or two) and ask child to set a purpose for silent reading. Interact with child to scaffold understanding.
• Assess how well child is able to set a purpose for reading.

A Video Snapshot of Assessing Student’s Potential for Learning with Assistance on a Harder Text

Wendy Satterfield, Literacy Coach in Magnolia, AR

Assessment and Teaching Interaction

• After child reads silently, interact with child around text meaning and one or two important vocabulary words.
• Assess for silent reading comprehension.

Assessing and Teaching Interaction

• Ask child to read next passage aloud. Assess for fluency and comprehension.
• Continue silent and oral reading interactions at critical places in the message (about every 3 or 4 paragraphs).
• At end of passage, interact with student around theme and text evidences to support meanings.

Assessing Comprehension Strategies

• Setting a purpose for reading
• Reading with intentionality
• Using meaning and structure cues to predict vocabulary
• Inferring meaning from text evidence
• Determining theme and supporting details
• Providing text evidence
• Reading silently for meaning
• Oral reading fluency

Teaching at Student’s Cutting Edge

Influence of Instructional Settings on Student Learning
Three Learning Settings

1. Acquisition Setting
2. Consolidation Setting
3. Internalization Setting


Acquisition Setting (Modeling)

Modeling provides students with visuals, strategies, and language examples, which serve as the cognitive hooks on which they can hang new information.

Characteristics of Effective Modeling

• Naming a strategy, skill, or task.
• Stating the purpose of the strategy, skill, or task.
• Using “I” statements.
• Demonstrating how the strategy, skill, or task is used.
• Alerting learners about errors to avoid.
• Assessing the usefulness of the strategy, skill, or task.

Consolidation Setting (Scaffolding)

Scaffolding occurs when students integrate multiple sources of information and apply strategies to solve problems. Teachers prompt for consolidation of knowledge and orchestration of strategies.

Let’s look at a video conference of scaffolding in the consolidation setting

Focus on Conference: Main Idea and Summarization Strategy

But first, a little background on how Brian has intentionally taught for main idea and summarization strategies in the Acquisition Setting.
Modeling New Learning (Acquisition Setting)
• During explicit mini-lessons, Brian models how to identify main idea and details from a themed set of texts on the topic of erosion.
• As concepts are introduced, Brian adds them to an anchor chart for main idea and guides students to contribute their thinking to the chart.

Scaffolding (Consolidation Setting)
• During reading conferences, Brian confers with students and prompts them to use strategies for summarizing information and identifying main idea and details.

Consolidation Setting: Main Idea
Ask student to summarize important information. Give a prompt if needed, e.g., “In your own words, how did the Colorado River create the Grand Canyon?”
Refer to the book to provide evidence and invite the student to explain the meaning for a particular passage or concept.
Listen carefully to ensure the student understands the concept and interact as needed to promote comprehension.

Scaffolding Prompts
1. Prompting for Problem Solving
2. Prompting for Reflection
3. Prompting for Metacognition
4. Prompting for Transfer

Prompting for Problem-Solving
• What have you tried so far?
• What are you trying to figure out?
• What strategy would work there?
• Is there something else you can try to help yourself?
• Why is this easy for you to do?
• What is making this so difficult for you?
• What do you need to work on?
• How can you improve this part?
• What do you know that can help you?

Prompting for Reflection
• How do you think you did on that?
• Where do you think you did your best work?
• Can you find a part that you would like to spend more time on?
• Did you have any problems with this part?
• Show me the hardest part?
• As you look back on your work, what changes do you see?
• How has your reading (or writing) changed since the beginning of the year?
Prompting for Metacognition

- What advice would you have for someone who is stuck on this problem?
- Help me understand how you solved this part.
- Can you explain what you are thinking?
- Why did you decide to try that? Is there anything else you could have tried?
- What can you do to help yourself understand that part?
- How are you doing? Do you need to do anything differently?

Prompting for Transfer

- When you learn how to do this, you will be able to use it to help you solve other problems.
- How can you use what you learned in reading to help you in writing?
- How is this like what we learned yesterday?
- Where have you noticed this word before?
- Have you encountered this type of problem before?
- Where have you used this strategy before?

Internalization Setting (Transferring)

During independent reading, students set a purpose for reading and activate their knowledge, skills, and strategies to solve problems in flexible ways, while maintaining a constant focus on meaning. Independent reading provides the context for transferring knowledge for different purposes and demands.

Let’s revisit intentional teaching and its relationship to scaffolding on the edge.

The upper limit (optimal challenge) where the student can accomplish a harder (or more challenging) task with varying degrees of assistance.

Steps for Intentional Teaching

- Name the strategy or skill to be learned.
- State the purpose.
- Explain when it is used to support learning.
- Model a think-aloud process for applying strategy.
- Provide guided practice on a similar task.
- Scaffold learning at critical points.
- Assess student learning.

Now, let’s apply our learning to a new video example: Acquisition and Guided Practice Setting

Small group writing mini-lesson on ‘Show, not Tell’
First, the teacher states the purpose

“Today, we are going to learn about cracking words open to find the image. Writers use words to paint pictures in the minds of their readers, just like artists use paint to create images on canvas. This writing strategy is called ‘show, not tell’ and we can use it to make our writing come alive for our readers.”

Model and Explain Strategy

- **Activate** prior knowledge with known concept
- **Provide clear contrasting example**
- Prompt students to **elaborate** on the learning.

T: Let’s look to our first example on the chart. “It was a nice day.” What type of sentence is that? Anna?
S: Telling.
T: It’s a telling sentence. And look at the difference here. Instead of saying, “It’s a nice day,” I’m going to show you. I’m going to crack “nice day” open. “The brilliant sun sailing over the ocean called everyone beachside.” What images do you see? Makela?
S: I see sailboats sailing the ocean.
T: What a beautiful picture just painted by these words. What about you, Sam?
S: We swung high over the trees on my tire swing.
T: (repeats sentence and calls on another student).
S2: The sun beat down on us as we splashed and swam in the ocean waves.

S3: I see people running to the beachside.
T: They are running, because it is such a nice day. And how do we know it is a nice day in here (pointing to the words)? What words tell us this, Makela?
S3: It tells us it is a nice day because of the brilliant sun sailing over the ocean.
T: And look at that image. Can you see the sun just kind of drifting along over the ocean?

T: Let’s crack this new sentence open and create an image. Then we’ll discuss it. “We had a lot of fun.”
You try it. Think and try.
Ss: Write independently.
T: What did you come up with, Sam?
S1: We swung high over the trees on my tire swing.
T: (repeats sentence and calls on another student).
S2: The flowers were beautiful and colorful. My mom handed me a boutique of brilliant red roses for a job well done.
T: Brilliant red roses, can’t you just see them?
Video Example: Writing Conference on Show, Not Tell

T: Selects good place to scaffold the writer to apply the ‘show, not tell’ strategy.
S: Applies strategy with 2 or 3 revisions to one sentence and selects the best one.
T: Praises the writer’s use of the strategy and asks him to go through his paper and find other places to use the ‘show, not tell’ strategy.

Teacher as Mediator of Knowledge

• Arranges environment to activate students’ background knowledge.
• Introduces new learning and provides adjustable scaffolds to promote integration and reflective analysis.
• Encourages student decision-making based on multiple evidences.
• Creates opportunity for student to transfer knowledge to different contexts and for different purpose.

In closing, let’s return to the three big ideas.

How do they align with the Common Core State Standards?

Big Idea #1

Intentional teaching is based on what the student already knows, what the student needs to know, and what the student is capable of learning with assistance.
• Teaching changes as learning changes, constantly keeping students’ learning at the cutting edge.

Alignment to the CCSS

• Learning progresses along a continuum of simple to more complex ideas and concepts.
• Scaffolding is continually adjusted to accommodate student learning, and to promote student independence on complex tasks.
• The goal of teaching is to promote independent learners with the capacity to solve problems, seek information, and learn from experience.
Big Idea #2

To teach with intentionality, teachers must consider the students’ learning behaviors across three different settings:
- Before teaching
- During teaching
- After teaching

If the learning behavior doesn’t change, teachers must examine the conditions for learning and adjust accordingly.

Alignment to the CCSS

- Modeling provides an image of how experts construct knowledge in order to accomplish a particular goal, whereas scaffolding provides a scale of help to enable learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be too difficult.
- Teachers must be able to create instructional settings for building background knowledge, integrating information, and transferring knowledge to different contexts and for different purposes.

Big Idea #3

Teaching at the upper edge of students’ learning promotes a growth mindset with opportunities to solve challenging problems with help from others.
- Intellectual growth is dependent on making mistakes and knowing when to seek help from others and to determine how much help is needed to solve the problem.

Alignment to the CCSS

- Students must read more complex texts with deeper understandings.
- Assessments must identify what students can do with scaffolding from others, as well as what they can do independently.
- For struggling readers, teachers will need to increase the scaffolding on harder tasks, in contrast to watering down the curriculum.

A Closing Thought to Take Away with You.

We don’t need a long list of things to do: we just need to listen to our students, know our content standards, find interesting and motivating texts, and apply scaffolding techniques to help others accomplish tasks they would be unable to do alone.

This is the art of intentional teaching, and we do it everyday with people we care about.