

BASIC TUTOR TRAINING

Activity packet

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Tutoring Attitudes

Claude Steele

Some stereotypes are so prevalent that we don't have to try for them to be salient, others are less so.



In his research, Dr. Claude Steele brings stereotypes out intentionally to elicit underperformance or changes in behavior.

Watch

Stereotype Threat

Underperformance

Briefly, stereotype threat is an explanation for underperformance: when someone performs lower than they “should” based on their ability. Two important aspects for stereotype threat are identity and salience.

Identity

We all have multiple identities. Just a few categories by which we likely identify include our age, gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, profession, political association, educational level . . . the list goes on. Further, all identities have some socially encoded “value.” Even if we don’t buy into it, society views certain identities as better or safer or more valuable than others. But this is only half of stereotype threat.

Salience

The second half of identity threat is salience, or being aware of the threat. As explained by stereotype threat, making the person aware of the stereotype brings additional strain resulting in underperformance.

Watch

It is important to recognize how we can mitigate stereotype threat, or what Dr. Claude Steele calls *identity safety*.

First, start by watching the short video where Dr. Steele explains stereotype threat:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=failylR0nrY>

Think

Second, think of all the identities you hold.

- Which ones have negative stereotypes?
- Which ones have positive stereotypes?
- How can we promote identity safety?

Discuss

During training we will discuss stereotype threat. We will discuss ways that our learners may be affected by stereotypes, and how we can promote identity safety.

Tutoring Knowledge

Daniel Willingham

Reading is far more complex than we may think. Strong readers may have a hard time appreciating challenges others experience.



In his research, Dr. Willingham explores myriad concepts with respect to how we learn.

How We Learn

What is in a Theory?

Learning theory has evolved for millennia, and what we currently think of as contemporary learning theories have evolved over centuries. What's more, learning has been studied from disparate vantage points. Over time, fads come and go. What might have once been taken as infallibly true has been shown to either be wrong or incomplete.

We will not delve deep into learning theory during training (those who are interested would be welcomed for subsequent discussions!). However, an appreciation of some aspects can be helpful as we think about tutoring and structuring sessions.

Watch

First, start by watching the video where Dr. Willingham discusses the reading mind:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3VKBvoiuwc>

Think

Second, think about reading as discussed here.

- Did you learn anything new about the reading process?
- Did this video bring any new thoughts about motivation?
- How might this information inform your tutoring?

Discuss

During training we will discuss many aspects of reading. We will discuss ways that our learners will engage with reading.

Watch

Tutoring Techniques

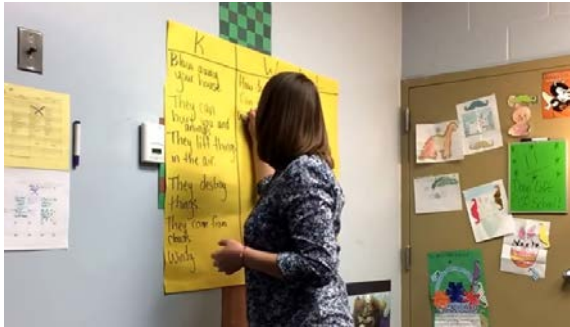
Graphic Organizers

Supporting Reading Comprehension

Graphic organizers come in a wide range of styles, but the basic idea is providing a structure to assist organizing content. These tools can be very helpful with reading comprehension to organize main ideas and supporting details, and when comparing and contrasting information.

KWL Charts

There are multiple ways to use graphic organizers, and the KWL chart is just one type.



Main Idea			
Detail	Detail	Detail	Detail

Metacognitive Processes

Metacognition is thinking about how we think, and this is critical in learning. Graphic organizers can be very useful for making this process explicit. A basic but useful example of a graphic organizer geared toward metacognition is the KWL chart.

Searching for graphic organizers online can spur new ways to think about learning. Use the organizer that is most applicable to the material: do not try to force content to fit an incompatible organizer.

Watch

First, start by watching the video describing how to use the KWL chart. Although the video is directed toward children, the concept is applicable throughout the learning spectrum; anyone can employ graphic organizers.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVKESR5n_xo

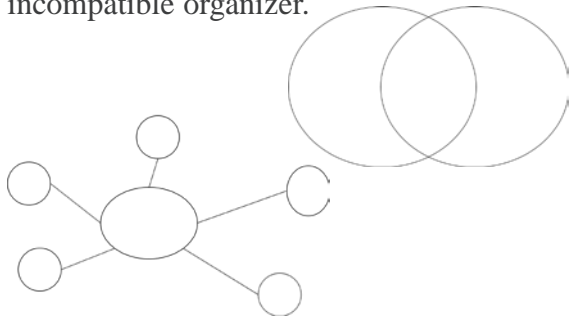
Think

Second, think about yourself as a tutor and develop your own KWL chart. Ask yourself:

- What do I know about myself that will make me a good tutor?
- What do I want to know to make myself an even greater tutor?
- What did I learn that will make me a terrific tutor?

Discuss

During training we will discuss the use of graphic organizers and share some of our thoughts on tutoring.



Watch

Do

Tutoring Knowledge

Formative Assessment

There are multiple ways to use graphic organizers, and the KWL chart is just one type.



Searching for graphic organizers online can spur new ways to think about learning. Use the organizer that is most applicable to the material: do not try to force content to fit an incompatible organizer.

Assessment

The Ugly Side of Assessment

When I was finishing graduate school (for the first time) I planned to go to Harvard for a postdoctoral fellowship. In chemistry, we learn by solving mechanistic problems. Our lab group solved problems together on the white board where we tried to figure out how molecules assembled. The laboratory I intended to join had group website; on the main page was the image below. Even though I was accustomed to the practice, seeing this image struck fear in me. I don't know if we ever get over the test anxiety.



Different Uses of Assessment

While assessment can be associated with negative memories, there are a number of uses where testing is beneficial. One type is formative assessment that is used to make adjustments to instruction. It can be thought of feedback for the tutor.

Research shows retrieval practice is beneficial for learning. Counterintuitively, forgetting is important because it makes subsequent retrieval more challenging, and the connections formed to retrieved information stronger. Spacing out retrieval has also been shown to be superior to massed practice (i.e., cramming) for long-term retention.

Watch

First, start by watching the video describing formative assessment.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkoDWSCGIE4>

Think

Second, think about assessment:

- How does hearing about testing make you feel?
- How can we make testing beneficial to our learners?
- How can we avoid negatively impacting learners?

Discuss

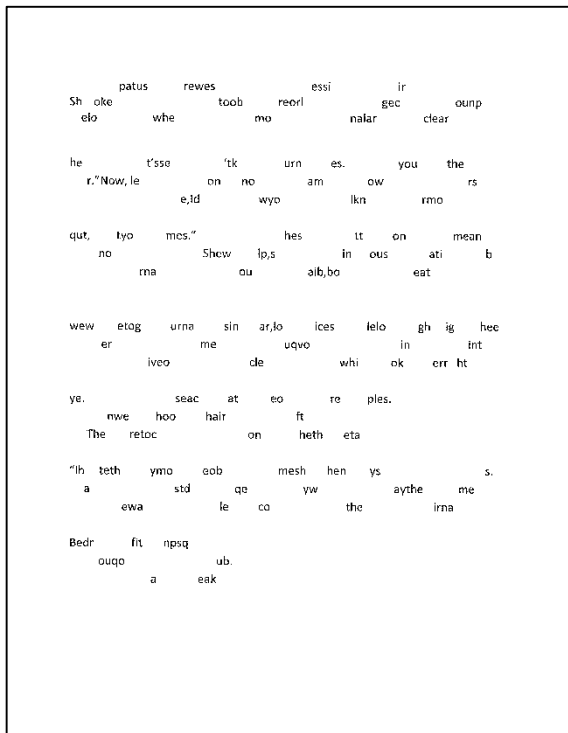
During training we will discuss the use of assessment in tutoring: the good, the bad, and the ugly!

Watch

Tutoring Attitudes

Visualizing Challenges

On the next page is one example of how particular learning difficulties may be “experienced.” Approach this exercise as just one example intended to provide us all with a similar experience for discussion.



Learning Difficulties

Every Learner is Unique

Learning differences or difficulties are often generalized, however, they may present with widely different challenges and degrees of difficulty. A few that you may be aware of include:

- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyslexia

What is important to remember is that we are talking about people. While it was once socially acceptable to label people as “disabled,” that is no longer true. A physical disease, disorder, or condition does not define us, nor does a difficulty with learning.

Politics

When searching for information about learning challenges, disorders, or difficulties, consider the hidden politics involved. On the one hand, organizations that support individuals and families with particular difficulties are important means of advocacy. On the other hand, the same organizations benefit from greater visibility of their cause. Unfortunately, limited resources means advocacy for one group may come at the expense of another.

Diagnosis or Appreciation

We should not assume that any learner has a learning difficulty. Diagnosis is a lengthy and often costly process. However, it is important for us to have an appreciation that learning difficulties exist and that there are strategies to help everyone learn.

Experience

Bear in mind that we do not suggest that the exercise replicates dyslexia, however, consider the value of experiencing a challenge that certain learners may face.

First, read the document on the next page.

Think

Second, write down how you felt while reading.

- What did you experience?
- What can you recall from the reading?

Discuss

During training we will discuss the activity.

Do

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