

Smart Teaching Tips

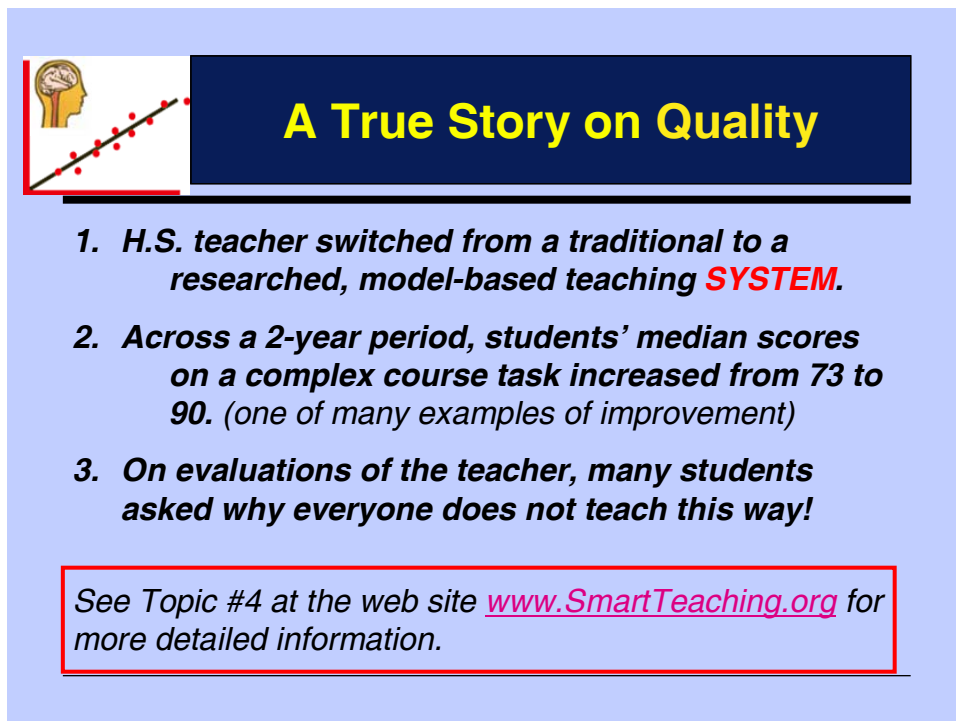
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Issue #1

Ronald Fitzgerald, D.Ed.

Why use a system approach to teaching?

Consider the message in the following graphic:



A True Story on Quality

- 1. H.S. teacher switched from a traditional to a researched, model-based teaching **SYSTEM**.**
- 2. Across a 2-year period, students' median scores on a complex course task increased from 73 to 90. (one of many examples of improvement)**
- 3. On evaluations of the teacher, many students asked why everyone does not teach this way!**

See Topic #4 at the web site www.SmartTeaching.org for more detailed information.

W. Edwards Deming defined some powerful management principles called Profound Knowledge that work as well in teaching as they do in business, industry, and government. Here are some of the main tenets of Profound Knowledge adapted for education:

1. **SYSTEM** -- The use of a well researched process for teaching and learning will promote the highest levels of student achievement. Successful football coaches use offense and defense systems. Successful physicians use diagnostic and treatment systems. Successful teachers use diagnostic and learning systems. As much as 80% of the quality of learning for an individual student can be determined by effective use of a system approach.
2. **MODELS** -- A system is constructed by using concept models of what works best and building a process and sequence that is derived from the research supporting those models. The teacher in the story above used these concept models in a system to be described in the next issue of Teaching Tips:
 - A. Use of researched, brain-friendly teaching/learning techniques improves learning.

Continued.

- B. Continuous improvement is facilitated in a school by using a quality management process.
- C. Formative assessment of learning in the classroom is much more powerful and useful than high stakes testing in facilitating improved student achievement.
3. MEASUREMENT -- Some teachers and professors consider testing and issuing marks an adequate measurement component of their teaching. By itself that is really completely inadequate in a Deming-based system or in any system truly focused on mastery by students. A fundamental component of mastery teaching is the use of formative (not for grade) assessment in a Plan-Do (Teach)-Check-Act or PDCA process. You plan and teach the skills that you want the student to master. You and/or the students check each skill with a not-for-grade measurement or test. For any student who has not yet mastered the skill, you act to provide added or alternative learning activities one or more times. Finally you give a summative test for grading purposes, a test on which many more students will then exhibit higher levels of mastery.
4. TEAMING -- Once the teaching staff in a school (district) begins using the same strong teaching system and similar concept models, many more opportunities for productive teaming develop. For example, while staff members are free to use different activities to connect or motivate students at the beginning of a learning unit, they all address such motivation as a practice of brain-friendly teaching. So they can more easily share successful ideas for activities since they all focus on the same critical components of the system. Student training in the use of different learning styles can be done on a school wide basis that benefits all classes because everyone will be addressing learning style options. Friendly student competition on establishing measured improvement records can be arranged across classes, etc. There are simply more ways that learning can be improved in a teaming environment than there are in a school where every classroom is a separate island.

For teachers who want to be the best they can be at helping students learn, there is no path more powerful than using a researched, model-based **SYSTEM** for teaching.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SMART TEACHING TIPS & MANY RELATED RESOURCES are available on the free web site www.SmartTeaching.org. To view the available mini-newsletters, go to the home page and click on the button:

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