

#1 Recapture Instructional and Engaged Time: What Works?

1. The **power of academic learning time has been well documented in the research**. Time is important for learning. Across decades of research, **time on-task is positively associated with academic achievement**.
 - Studies indicate that up to **50% of the school day is spent on non-instructional activities** in general and special education classrooms.
 - Time is vital to closing the achievement gap. Bottomline: **Time on-task matters!**
 - If you want **to see test scores increase quickly...recapture instructional time** (look at your classroom instruction and see how much academic learning time is occurring).

The Educational Research & Dissemination (ER&D) Foundation Study found the following results:

- Students were **actively engaged in learning 84% of the time during teacher led activities** (70% during seatwork)
- **Seatwork and students working alone was the dominant activity pattern** in classrooms studied (66% in reading and 75% in math)
- Student **engagement dropped considerably** lower when students spent **90% of their time doing seatwork**.

2. Components of Academic Learning Time

Allocated Time

Amount of time teachers allocate for instructional activities

Reduced by: student interruptions, teacher interruptions, class visitors, announcements, transitions, and other sources of lost time

Instructional Time

Proportion of allocated time that is actually used for instruction

Reduced by: lack of procedural and/or substantive engagement by student(s)

Engaged Time

Proportion of instructional time during which students are engaged in learning

Reduced by: inappropriateness of the task for student(s)

Successful and Productive Learning Time

3. **Self-Analysis of Time Use:** Teachers can calculate their own academic learning time with the goal of increasing it by 5%, 10%, etc.

		TOTAL TIME
	Total time allocated for instruction in classrooms	
Minus	Time engaged in management tasks like attendance, review of class rules, etc.	
Equals	Instructional Time -- the in-class time the teacher devotes to instruction	
Minus	Time students are not paying attention to the content of the lesson	
Equals	Engaged Time -- the portion of instructional time during which students are attending to the content	
Minus	Time students are not successful at the tasks they are engaged in	
Equals	Academic Learning Time -- the portion of engaged time during which students are successful at their tasks.	

4. **Increasing instructional time alone does not always lead to an increase** in time that students spend learning or in the total amount learned. It is the **combination of quantity and quality of instruction that is the key to student success.**
5. **Engagement is the cornerstone and foundation of improving academic achievement** (Feldman) -- all students must be dynamically engaged every day.
- Engagement is **not a choice**—it is the way we must do business.
 - There is a massive amount of evidence that unless individuals take a very active role in what it is that they’re studying, unless they learn to ask questions, to do things hands on, to essentially recreate things in their own mind and transform them as is needed, the ideas just disappear. (Howard Gardner, Harvard Graduate School of Education)
 - **Implementing Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 interventions alone will not move students into proficient or advanced levels of performance.**
 - Feldman states that students look for the “zone of minimal impact” (i.e., we have taught students that “chilling” is okay).
 - Studies show that **special needs students were significantly less engaged** in the general education classroom.
 - Good news is that we can change the game and push reset at any time.
 - **High student engagement during teacher-led instruction and group work yielded high engagement during independent work.**
6. Teachers **must structure student engagement** by ensuring that every student responds and makes their thinking visible. (Feldman)
- **“How well we structure = how engaged students are”**
 - It does not happen by accident, it is our responsibility to make sure that school becomes a “chill-free” zone
7. **Engagement is the observable evidence of a learner’s interest and active involvement** in all lesson content and related tasks. There are clearly articulated “evidence checks” of concrete, productive responses to instruction (i.e., **“Visible Evidence of Learning”**) -- Feldman
- If you **can’t see it, you can’t measure it or improve it**

- The **goal is to make thinking “visible”** – every student explains their thinking and receives feedback from peers and the teacher multiple times in EVERY lesson.
 - **Academic engagement is the quantity and quality of student responses:**
 - Saying
 - Writing
 - Doing (pointing, touching, demonstrating, etc.)
 - **Never more than 2-10 minutes without every student “saying, writing, doing”** in direct alignment with the curriculum (**2-10 seconds for K to 3rd grade**)
 - **“20/80 Dilemma”:** Studies show that 20% of the students are responsible for 80% of the doing (answering, asking, volunteering, etc.) – we must flip this equation
 - **Examples of effective practices** to ensure that ALL are engaged:
 - Choral responses
 - Precision Partner and Small Group Responses (if task warrants)
 - Written Responses
 - Individual Responses (AFTER rehearsal/practice)
 - List/write
 - If it is worth doing, ensure that ALL students are “doing the doing” and that All students are ready/able to participate (scaffold as necessary to ensure ALL means ALL)
 - Structuring Active Learning: Tools for Your Engagement Took Kit (handout attached)
8. **We can change current practice to increase academic learning time by breaking old habits that don’t work.**
- **Common instructional practices that don’t work** (“old school”)
 - Teacher asks questions and students raise hands to answer
 - Teacher asks “does anyone know?”
 - Teacher asks “who can tell me?”
 - Teacher asks “who would like to share?”
 - Teacher asks “who has an idea?” etc.
 - **Expect off-task performance under these task conditions:**
 - Too long, too hard, too boring, too much repetition
 - Students don’t quite know what to do (i.e., directions are not clear)
 - Students don’t have the skills to perform
 - Unscheduled interruptions, public announcements, fire drills, visitors and other school management practices
 - Uneven transitions between activities and inefficient classroom management procedures that disrupt the learning flow, such as disorderly material distribution or disorganized assignment collection
 - Over-reliance on seatwork, uninteresting and overly demanding lessons and other non-engaging instructional practices
9. **Summary: Educators who are familiar with the time on-task research, know their students, use effective classroom management techniques and employ effective teaching practices** and interactive learning activities have the **power to increase the learning of their most at-risk students.** Anita Archer has said that **“How well we teach = how well they learn”**. Remember that it is the **quality of our teaching that is the single most important variable that we can influence** (versus curriculum, parents, etc.)

*“It’s not what you say or do that ultimately matters....
it is what you get the students to do as a result of what you said and did that counts”*
Kevin Feldman

References:

- Dr. Kevin Feldman, “Ensuring the Literate Engagement of Every Student, Every Day, Every Lesson”, UMTSS Summer Conference, Layton, Utah (June 13, 2013)
- Dr. Francis Stetson, “Closing the Knowing-Doing Gap”, UCASE, St. George, Utah (March 20, 2013)
- Dr. Anita Archer & Dr. Charles Hughes, Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching
“Time-on-Task: A Strategy that Accelerates Learning” <http://feaweb.org/time-on-task-a-strategy-that-accelerates-learning>
High School Algebra Video Clip <http://youtu.be/h6WJdsb0dfM>