



Understanding and Optimizing Student Focus in Our Modern World

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How Do We Best Take Advantage of Plasticity In The Classroom?

- 1) Growth Mindset**
- 2) Using the Reflection Network**
- 3) Social Learning**
- 4) Appropriate Challenge, Exploration and Inquiry
- 5) Overcome Unconscious Biases
- 6) Maximize Network Activation

Growth Mindset:

“Wow! This is hard, but practice makes my neurons grow!”



How Can We Ensure that students have a Growth Mindset about all subjects/areas; that talent is not measured by ease?

Are there subjects/cohorts where students will not even try, perhaps because they are afraid to fail?

How can you bring brain science into the classroom to address these hesitations?

Talk about how neurons grow with learning through mistakes

Tell you own stories of improvement after struggle

Embrace failure in the classroom

Actions and Planning for My Site:

Does Your Site Have Any Student Downtime?

Teachers understand the value of reflection for their own practice. Does your staff understand the value of it for their students?

How can you mitigate the modern world's tendency to pull us outward?

How can you build more time for reflection into the school day/week?

How will you communicate with parents/families that downtime has value?

Actions and Planning for My Site:

Here are some resources referred to in the talk:

1. Reflective exercise prompts:

- If I could go anywhere, I would...
- I learn the most when the teacher...
- I learn the most when I...
- After high school, I will probably...
- My ideal job would be...
- Three adjectives others might use to describe me are...
- My definition of (biology, chemistry, physics, earth science) is...

2. "Wise" interventions (reflection exercises) review paper:

<http://mindsetscholarsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/NewScienceofWisePsychologicalInterventions.pdf>

3. [Don Graves](#)

Create a three-columned chart on a piece of paper or on a simple table/spreadsheet on the computer.

In the left column, write your students' names in the order in which you remember them. (Just this alone is interesting. Who do you remember first? Who do you struggle to remember?)

In the middle column, write down one positive thing about each student that doesn't have anything to do with school work. (Jenny likes horses. Matt skateboards. Maria lives with her grandmother.)

In the third column, put a checkmark if you have talked with each student about this piece of knowledge. This helps us recognize how well we know our students, and—perhaps more importantly—how well they know we know them!

For students you struggled to remember, or for ones you didn't know as much about, make a commitment to connect with them in the next few days.

Sociality is Engaging

Where can your site add in community building at both the site and classroom level?

How can peer-to-peer education be maximized at my site?

How can we use assessments to measure collaboration?

How can we assess the quality of relationships at my site?

Building relationships also matters for overcoming implicit bias

Actions and Planning for My Site: