



# Introduction

The first edition of this handbook opened with the following statement: “We stand at a unique point in the history of U.S. education—a point at which the potential for truly meaningful school reform is greater than it ever has been” (Marzano, Norford, Paynter, Pickering, & Gaddy, 2001, p. 1). A decade later, we can look back and see the powerful impact that *Classroom Instruction That Works* has had on schools and districts throughout the United States and the world. The original book, which was based on a survey of thousands of comparisons between experimental and control groups and across a variety of subject areas, was able to identify nine categories of instructional strategies proven to improve student achievement. The following list shows the nine categories of instructional strategies in rank order, as listed in the first edition:

1. Identifying Similarities and Differences
2. Summarizing and Note Taking
3. Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
4. Homework and Practice
5. Nonlinguistic Representations
6. Cooperative Learning
7. Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback
8. Generating and Testing Hypotheses
9. Cues, Questions, and Advance Organizers

In the first edition of *Classroom Instruction That Works*, the strategies were presented according to the magnitude of their average effect size (from largest to smallest). Focusing on the strategies in that order encouraged some schools and districts to focus primarily on the first three or four strategies—

with the highest effect sizes—without regard to *when* to use those strategies. For example, teachers were asked to focus on identifying similarities and differences as often as possible, yet they found this difficult to do in the early part of a unit when students didn't have a basic understanding of the concepts and vocabulary relevant to the topic. This focus on the strategies with the highest effect sizes often meant that those strategies at the "bottom" of the list were disregarded or considered less important. As a result, teachers might have minimized their use of key practices that help students activate background knowledge (Cues, Questions, and Advance Organizers) and use higher-order thinking skills (Generating and Testing Hypotheses).

## What's New in the Second Edition?

Today, an increasing number of schools systematically and intentionally use all of these research-based strategies to best meet the needs of their students. We see districts in the process of building a common language for instruction and developing shared understandings of what good instruction looks like. In 2001, the focus was on helping individual teachers grow as professionals. A decade later, we are focusing on helping all teachers—and therefore all students—reach their fullest potential.

In the second edition of *Classroom Instruction That Works*, the nine categories of strategies are organized and presented within a framework for instructional planning. This helps teachers learn about the strategies in the context of how each might be used throughout a unit; it also highlights the point that all of the strategies are effective and should be intentionally included in planning. The framework has three components: Creating the Environment for Learning, Helping Students Develop Understanding, and Helping Students Extend and Apply Knowledge. These components were selected because they focus on the key aspects of teaching and learning.

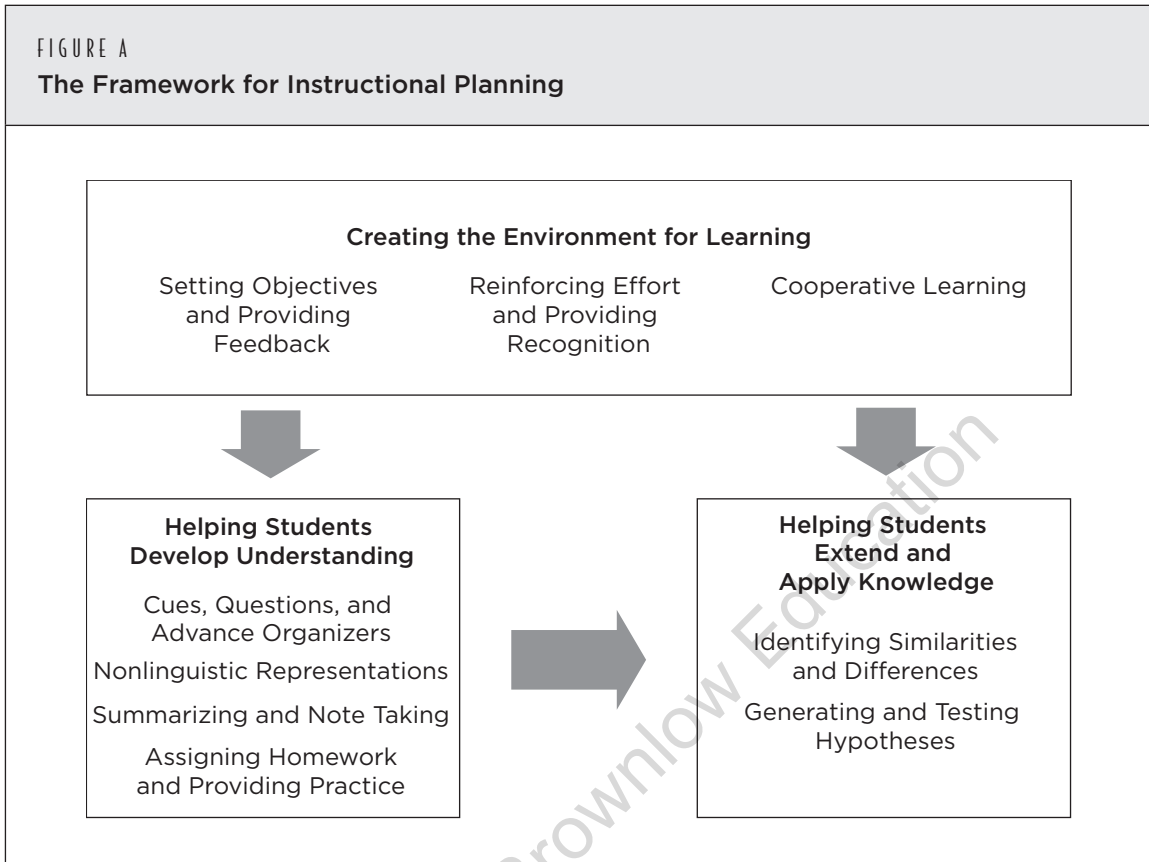
The strategies in the first component of the framework—Creating the Environment for Learning—should be the backdrop for every lesson. When teachers create an environment for learning, they motivate and focus student learning by helping students know what is expected of them, by providing students with opportunities for regular feedback on their progress, and by assuring students that they are capable of learning challenging content and skills. Teachers encourage students to actively engage in and "own" their learning, providing opportunities for students to share and discuss their ideas, develop collaboration skills, and learn how to monitor and reflect on their learning.

The second component—Helping Students Develop Understanding—acknowledges that students come to the classroom with prior knowledge and must integrate new learning with what they already know. The strategies included in this component help teachers use students' prior knowledge as scaffolding for new learning. Acquiring and integrating information-type knowledge requires students to construct meaning, organize what they are learning, and store information. Constructing meaning is an active process. Students recall prior knowledge, make and verify predictions, correct misconceptions, fill in unstated information, and identify confusing aspects of the knowledge (Marzano & Pickering, 1997). They also organize information by recognizing patterns in the information (e.g., a sequence of events, a description) and store information most effectively by creating a mental image of it. Acquiring and integrating procedure-type knowledge involves constructing a model of the individual steps of the process or skill, developing conceptual understanding of the process and understanding and practicing its variations, and using the skill or process fluently or without much conscious thought (Ibid.).

Strategies in the third component of the framework—Helping Students Extend and Apply Knowledge—emphasize the importance of helping students move beyond so-called right-answer learning to an expanded understanding and use of concepts and skills in real-world contexts. These strategies help students become more efficient and flexible in using what they have learned. They involve the use of complex reasoning processes, which are necessary for students to use knowledge meaningfully (Ibid.). Figure A illustrates where the nine categories of strategies fit within the framework.

## How to Use This Handbook

This handbook is intended to be used as a supplement to the second edition of *Classroom Instruction That Works* (Dean, Hubbell, Pitler, & Stone, 2012). Our objective is to provide educators with more in-depth examples that will bring the strategies, skills, and information from that book to life in their classrooms, schools, and districts. Although you can use this handbook without reading *Classroom Instruction That Works*, we recommend that you use both books in conjunction with each other. Our intent here is to provide practical applications and examples, but it is equally important for you to understand the classroom recommendations presented in the primary text for each category of instruction.



This handbook can be used as a self-study guide that targets the effective use of specific strategies in each component of the framework, or it can be used as part of a group book study. It is aligned with the three framework components presented earlier. Discussion of each of the strategies includes the following:

1. **Why This Strategy?** Each strategy is introduced with an explanation about why it has a positive impact on student achievement, how it fits within a high-quality instructional plan, and what research indicates is best practice for its use.
2. **Reflecting on My Current Practice.** We ask questions designed to help you reflect on how and why you currently use each strategy in your classroom in order to stimulate your thinking about the intentionality of your practice.
3. **Bringing the Strategy to Life in the Classroom.** Our intent is to help you see what each strategy looks like in the classroom when used with intentionality and in line with research recommendations. Our

goal is to help you connect recommendations for and examples of each strategy's use with your classroom practice. This will help you see how each strategy is supported by and supportive of other strategies in a well-designed lesson.

4. **Rubrics and Checklists.** Each strategy is accompanied by a rubric that allows you to gauge your own practice, seeing where you currently are and how you can grow as a professional. The rubric is designed so that a 3 represents best practice as indicated by research. A 4 indicates both teacher best practice as described in a 3 and how that practice transfers into student behaviors. Each strategy is also accompanied by a checklist that can be used to gauge how students view instruction and the impact it has on their learning.
5. **Tools, Templates, and Protocols.** As a way to help you broaden your instructional practice, we provide a variety of tools, templates, and protocols. For example, tools are available to help you assess your current practice and to build a professional growth plan. Some strategies include blackline masters and examples that can be customized for your particular content area and grade level.

As mentioned before, this handbook can be used for self-study. You can work through the various components at your own pace and identify your own plan of action. Although implementing some of the ideas in this book will benefit your students—and each strategy has individual merit based on sound research—the real power comes in bringing all of the strategies together with intentionality to provide the best opportunity for your students to excel. Using this handbook in conjunction with *Classroom Instruction That Works* has the potential to transform your teaching to a brand new level.

An alternative approach is to form study groups, possibly as part of a professional learning community. The study group format is one of the best ways to build skills and increase confidence in the strategies because it requires collegial support structures that encourage analysis, discussion, problem solving, and solution sharing in ways that are consistent with best practices in staff development. Study groups fulfill two salient functions relative to the use of this handbook:

- They provide a context for teachers to discuss and reflect upon the extent and effectiveness with which strategies are implemented.
- They provide an opportunity for teachers to use the strategies with structured peer support.

We talk about the importance of oral discourse with students in a number of the strategies. Working in study groups provides the same oral discourse for teachers.

Some educators might question how study groups are possible within the structure of K–12 schooling; they wonder how study groups can function in the context of how the school day is arranged. To help you envision how you might use study groups in your building, consider the following scenario.

A majority of the faculty at Haystead Middle School agreed to use the *Handbook for Classroom Instruction That Works* (2nd ed.) as the focus of study during the upcoming school year. Those faculty members who volunteered to work on the project organized themselves into study groups of four to six individuals. Each group agreed to meet for two hours every other week during both semesters of the school year. Some groups met during the school day on released time; others met after contract hours. Because of her interest in the project and to demonstrate her support for it, the principal joined one of the groups. She arranged the school schedule to allow teachers to meet during common planning periods, and she arranged for group members to receive recertification credit upon completion and acceptance of a paper describing their learning at the end of each semester.

Meeting dates, times, and locations were agreed upon at the first meeting, during which a group leader was also selected. The group leader was responsible for making sure meetings began and ended on time; arranging for meeting rooms, materials, and refreshments; and completing a summary sheet at the end of each session outlining what had been discussed, who had attended, and the goals for the next meeting. These summary sheets were forwarded to the principal, who then met with team leaders monthly so group members could exchange ideas, coordinate efforts, and share resources. Although the group leaders were volunteers, they were given a stipend of \$300 per semester in partial recognition of the responsibilities they had assumed.

The groups realized it made logical sense to begin studying the book sequentially, starting with the strategies of Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback, the first category of strategies presented in the part of the framework dedicated to creating the environment for learning. Prior to the first scheduled meeting, each group member was required to read the section on Setting Objectives. The first order of business at the first meeting was to share individual responses to the Reflecting on Current Practice questions (see Figure 1.1 on pages 6–7). For some teachers, this discussion was enough to provide them with ideas about various ways to use the information presented. Other teachers felt they would be best served by doing some action research



related to specific strategies. Following the meeting, one or more members of the group identified a strategy, hypothesized the effect of using that strategy with their students, and then actually tried it out in the classroom. After the strategy was implemented, data were collected using the Student Checklist (see Figure 1.3 on page 17) and by examining student work. The data were then brought back to the next group meeting, which was spent analyzing and interpreting the data and implications for classroom practice.

Periodically, and at the end of each semester, each study group evaluated its progress in terms of individual members' learning and the overall effect on student learning. In addition, the groups came together in the larger professional learning community to share their action research and learn from one another.

## Designing an Approach That Works for You

Ultimately, professional development is personal. No two teachers are alike, just as no two students are alike. Therefore, no two teachers need exactly the same information to enhance their performance. The same is true at the school level. Though some teachers might be best served working independently, many need and crave the interaction and collegiality of the group approach. Working in a study group, as part of a professional learning community (PLC), also helps a school create a common language for instruction and mutual understanding of the strategies.

The previous scenario was presented to stimulate your thinking regarding the use of this handbook and to provide one possible approach. Individual schools and teachers can design study programs that meet their individual needs and learning styles, keeping in mind that the end target is building collective efficacy as a school and a district. The important thing is to look at instruction as an intentional act.

When we wrote the second edition of *Classroom Instruction That Works*, we didn't create the instructional strategies. Rather, we looked at those strategies that research identifies as highly effective, categorized them, and then highlighted what best practices would look like for each one. This book will help to intentionally embed the strategies into your classroom pedagogy. As we stated previously, each section includes a rubric showing a continuum of practice from "Not Evident" to "Exemplary." It is highly likely that you are already using every one of these strategies in your daily practice. With that in mind, we hope this handbook will help you move along the continuum toward best practice in each strategy, with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement for every child in every classroom in the country.

# Part I

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## Creating the Environment for Learning

The categories of strategies in this section reflect the first priority of a teacher: to create an environment in which students know what is expected of them, have opportunities for regular feedback on their progress, and receive constant messages that they are a vital part of the classroom and are capable of learning even the most challenging content and processes.

These three categories are useful for motivating and focusing student learning and for helping students learn how to work collaboratively with others. They also promote student reflection and ownership of learning.

The strategies in this section include

- Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback
- Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
- Cooperative Learning

Every day, when students enter the school building, they ask themselves two important questions: “Will I be accepted?” and “Can I do the work?” If students cannot answer in the affirmative to both of these questions, then it makes it difficult for them to be successful. Teachers can use the strategies in this section to create a learning environment in which students know what they are supposed to be learning, have clear direction on how well they are progressing toward that learning objective, understand their role as learners, and have an engaging and interactive place to learn. The intentional application of these strategies makes it much more likely for students to be able to answer those two questions with a resounding *yes*.



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## Related ASCD Resources: Classroom Instruction That Works

At the time of publication, the following ASCD resources were available (ASCD stock numbers appear in parentheses). For up-to-date information about ASCD resources, go to [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org). You can search the complete archives of *Educational Leadership* at <http://www.ascd.org/el>.

### ASCD EDge Group

Exchange ideas and connect with other educators on the social networking site ASCD EDge™ at <http://ascdedge.ascd.org/>

### Online Courses

The Art and Science of Teaching (PD11OC102)

What Works in Schools: School Leadership in Action, 2nd Edition (PD11OC119)

What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action, 2nd Edition (PD11OC103)

### Print Products

*The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction* by Robert J. Marzano (#107001)

*Classroom Assessment and Grading That Works* by Robert J. Marzano (#106006)

*Classroom Instruction That Works* (2nd edition) by Ceri B. Dean, Elizabeth Ross Hubbell, Howard Pitler, and Bj Stone (#111001)

*Classroom Instruction That Works with English Language Learners* by Jane Hill and Kathleen Flynn (#106009)

*Classroom Management That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Every Teacher* by Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering, and Jana Marzano (#103027)

*Effective Supervision: Supporting The Art and Science of Teaching* by Robert Marzano, David Livingston, and Tony Frontier (#110019)

*A Handbook for the Art and Science of Teaching* by John L. Brown and Robert J. Marzano (#108049)

*A Handbook for Classroom Management That Works* by Mark Foseid, Robert J. Marzano, Maria C. Foseid, Barbara Gaddy Carrio, and Jana Marzano (#105012)

*School Leadership That Works: From Research to Results* by Robert J. Marzano, Timothy Waters, and Brian McNulty (#105125)


*Using Technology with Classroom Instruction That Works* (2nd Edition) by Matt S. Kuhn, Elizabeth Hubbell, Howard Pitler, and Kim Malenoski (#107025)

*What Works In Schools: Translating Research into Action* by Robert J. Marzano (#102271)

### Video

Classroom Instruction That Works DVD Series (Elementary, Middle, High School) (#612061)

Classroom Management That Works DVD and Facilitator's Guide (#604038)

 The Whole Child Initiative helps schools and communities create learning environments that allow students to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. To learn more about other books and resources that relate to the whole child, visit [www.wholechildeducation.org](http://www.wholechildeducation.org).

For more information: send e-mail to [member@ascd.org](mailto:member@ascd.org); call 1-800-933-2723 or 703-578-9600, press 2; send a fax to 703-575-5400; or write to Information Services, ASCD, 1703 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria, VA 22311-1714 USA.