

Sound Bites for Better Teaching
Planning for Authentic Instruction
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You need to know this for the test.
Skip a line between each sentence.
Restrict your essay to three pages.
How do you form the future tense of regular verbs?
Include three irregular feminine adjectives in your dialogue.

What would you say in the following situation?
Show three cultural differences between the French and the Americans.
Create a clothing ad showing the prices in euros and in the equivalent American dollars.
As a Spanish major, write your letter of application in Spanish for the available Spanish position in your hometown.

Classroom success

Real-World Success

According to Newmann and Wehlage (1), teachers need to plan instruction that will guarantee success beyond the classroom by creating an environment wherein students use disciplined inquiry to construct meaning and produce knowledge, products, and performances that have value or meaning beyond success in school. They have identified the following five criteria necessary for authentic instruction: higher-order thinking, depth of knowledge, connectedness to the world beyond the classroom, substantive conversation, and social support for student achievement. To be considered as authentic, they distinguish between achievement that is meaningful and significant and that which is trivial and useless.

(1) <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr93/vol50/num07/Five-Standards-of-Authentic-Instruction.aspx>

Self Evaluation (no right or wrong answers)

Can you list examples showing the differences between lower-level and higher-level thinking? Which is more prevalent in your class?

Do you usually lead the students to the answers or do you encourage them to discover them themselves?

How deep is the student knowledge of the concepts that you teach? Can they apply those concepts to new situations?

Are your students taught certain concepts just to do well on their tests or are they encouraged to apply them to the L2 world whose language they are learning?

How substantive is the conversation that takes place in your classroom? Is it mainly the recitation of facts or are students encouraged to share ideas, express opinions, and question one another?

Do you encourage your students to take risks and to respect one another's points of view?

Do you have high expectations of everyone or are some of the students shut out of the class participation because of their behavior or lack of success?

TIP

Use the following chart to assess the degree (1 to 3) to which you apply the five criteria necessary for authentic instruction at the end of each week, or month, or marking period.

Higher order thinking	1	2	3
Depth of knowledge	1	2	3
Connect to outside world	1	2	3
Substantive conversation	1	2	3
Support for student achievement	1	2	3