

Seven Laws of the Teacher – Part 7: Readiness

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I. Introduction.

A. Running—the American addiction.

1. Before the race, the runners stretch their muscles.
2. Before the symphony, the orchestra tunes up.

B. There is a necessary procedure to take before the race.

II. Definition of the Law of readiness.

A. Learning is most effective when the student is adequately prepared.

1. Students should not come cold to class.
2. You want to arouse students' interest.

B. You need to start to build interest before a class begins so that you have built momentum and saved enough time to answer the questions that are burning at the end.

III. The value of assignments.

A. They precipitate thinking.

1. It gets the students' minds working before they ever come to class.
2. Interest has already been aroused.

B. Assignments provide a foundation upon which to build.

C. Good assignments develop habits of individual study.

1. The goal of teachers is to develop lifelong learners.

IV. Characteristics of good assignments.

A. They must be creative—more than busy work.

1. Clear cut objectives need to be defined.
2. Preparation must go into it.
3. Every student comes into the classroom with varying abilities; we need to put our hooks into the areas of their interest.

4. Evangelicals are killing creativity by not providing outlets for students.

B. Make sure they are thought provoking.

1. Predictability and impact have high correlation.

a. The higher your predictability concerning methodology the lower your impact.

b. Jesus is the supreme example of this—you could not predict his response.

1) His answer to the tax question throws both the Herodians and the Sadducees.

V. Four problems with application.

A. What do you do when the student does not come prepared?

1. You do it in class.

2. You tap into their experience.

a. If you come into a class convinced that the students will not participate, do not expect much.

b. Tap into what they know.

B. What do you do if they lack confidence?

1. Convince them they can do it.

2. Develop confidence in them.

C. What do you do when someone talks too much?

1. Be sure to express appreciation to that individual for their interest.

2. Ask the person if he will help you to get the rest of the class involved in the process.

3. Call on that person.

a. You do not want to kill anyone—you want to get all involved.

D. What do you do when there are some not participating?

1. Encourage people to participate and affirm them when they do.

2. What do you do when a question is asked that you do not know?

a. Tell the person that you will write the question down and get back to him.

b. You do not need to “pull the wool over their eyes.”

3. What about simple questions?
 - a. Affirm the student for all questions.
 - b. Give people freedom to ask all sorts of questions.
4. What if there is no answer?
 - a. You need to exercise great patience.
 - b. Rephrase questions, and wait until they answer.
 - c. People are really uncomfortable with silence.
 - d. Encourage the first questioner—this breaks the barrier.
5. Once you get your students over the barrier of discovery learning they will not be satisfied until they are involved in the process.

VI. Series review.

- A. Boiled down, the laws of education concern a passion to communicate.
- B. The secret of an effective Sunday school teacher's method: her passion to communicate.

Application questions:

1. Why are assignments effective tools for preparing students for class? When might this principle break down?

2. What are some examples of some creative assignments you can use in your own classroom? How will these whet the appetites of your students for the content?

3. Which answer to the problems of application stood out to you the most? How do you plan to be a more effective communicator? What steps can you take to cultivate a burning desire to communicate to your students?
