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WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO?

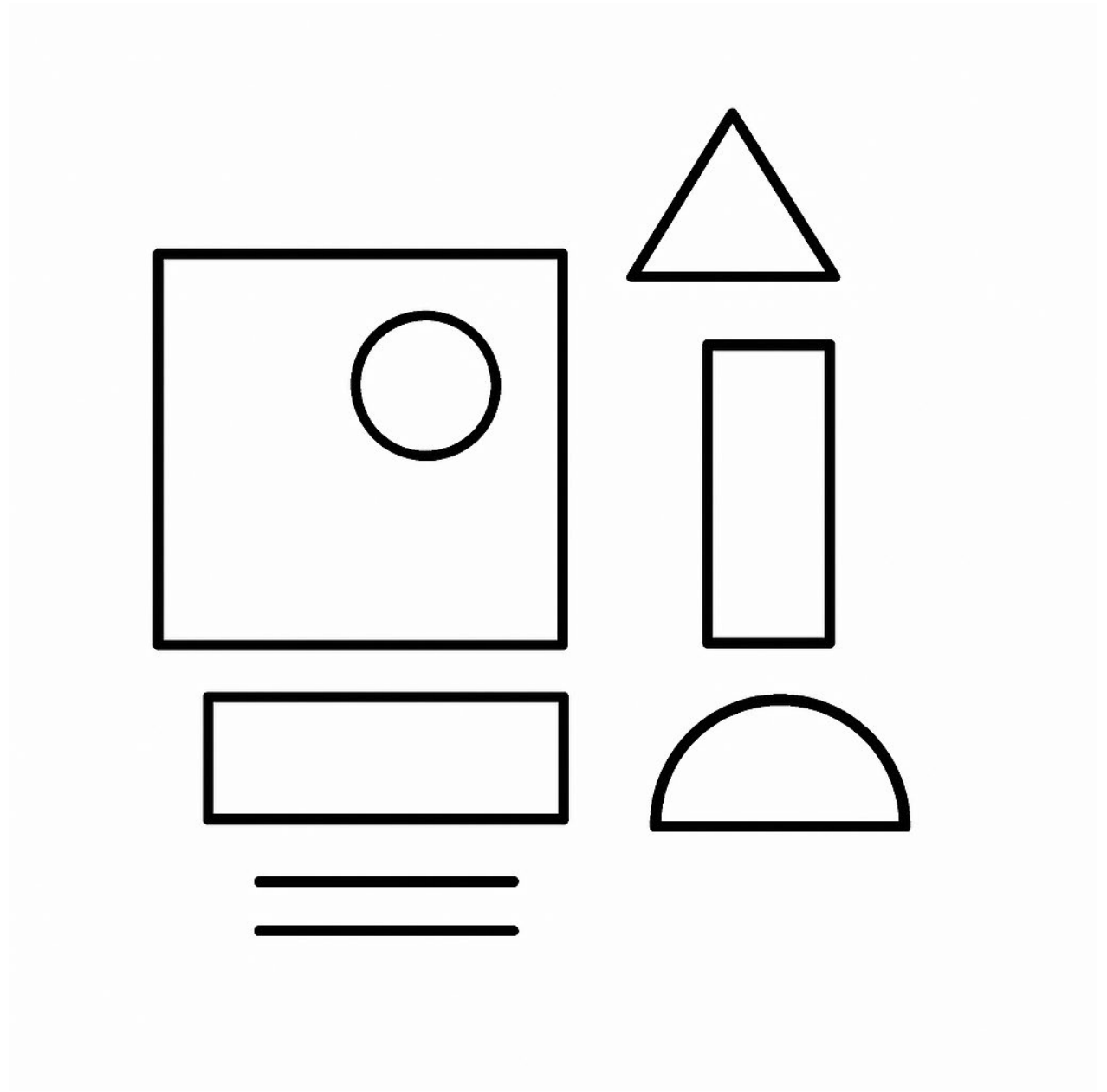
Giving Effective
Directions To Enhance
Student Learning

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ACTIVITY

- You will need a blank sheet of paper
- Listen and follow the directions

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1. **Start by drawing a large square** in the center-left of your page.
 - Make it about 3 inches wide and 3 inches tall.
 2. **Inside that square**, toward the **upper right area**, draw a **small circle** (about the size of a quarter).
 - It should not touch the edges of the square.
 3. **Below the square**, draw a **horizontal rectangle** about the same width as the square but only about 1 inch tall.
 4. **Beneath the rectangle**, draw **two short horizontal lines**, parallel and evenly spaced apart.
 5. Now, move to the **right of the square**.
 6. At the **top right corner**, draw an **equilateral triangle pointing upward**.
 - The base of the triangle should be parallel to the top of the square.
 7. **Directly below the triangle**, draw a **vertical rectangle**, about 2 inches tall and 1 inch wide.
 - The top of this rectangle should be just below the triangle's point.
 8. Finally, **below that vertical rectangle**, draw a **half circle (semicircle)** with the flat edge on top, curved side down.



WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss the importance of effective directions
- Describe the five elements to design and deliver effective directions
- Define “Brain Before Body” Directions
- Practice writing and delivering effective directions

WHY ARE GOOD DIRECTIONS IMPORTANT?

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- Communicate your expectations
 - Provide clarity
 - Provide structure and order
 - Facilitate active learning
 - Encourages engagement

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

- **C**larity
- **V**ariability
- **E**nthusiasm
- **S**tudent opportunity to learn criterion material
- **T**ask-oriented behavior

Write the following words in **alphabetical order**
(the order they come in the alphabet)

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X

~~apple~~

pumpkin

log

river

fox

pond

1. apple
2. ikmnpvu
3. log
4. river
5. fox
6. pond

FIVE ELEMENTS TO DESIGN AND DELIVER



When

*In about 45 seconds
When I say GO!*



Who

*Everyone, This half of the
room, etc*



Directions

Specific, succinct, just-in-
time information
Write on board,
overhead, flip-chart, etc



Check

“What questions do you
have?”



Action

A call to action
*Go, Begin, Engage, Go Forth,
etc*

BRAIN BEFORE BODY DIRECTIONS

Set Context

Cognitive Task

Action Verbs

Logistical Directions

Signal Word, Statement, Sound Or Motion

BRAIN BEFORE BODY DIRECTIONS

Time Frame

Check For Understanding

What To Do When Done

Stand Still

Use Supporting Non-verbals

WORDS TO TEACH BY

- Names
- *Let's*
- *What questions do you have?*
- *Who will tell me?*
- *Focus your attention here.*
- We
- Write
- *Think about*
- Move
- *When you hear go....*
- We will
- *Remember to do your homework*
- Take
- Draw

LANGUAGE TO AVOID

- *Want you to*
- *Don't talk*
- *I need you to*
- *Will you*
- *Don't forget to do your homework*
- *Like*
- *Ok*
- *I*
- *Do you have any questions?*
- *You need to...*
- *Can I have?*
- *Does anyone know?*
- Repeating their response to a question

LET'S PRACTICE...

- Part I:
 - Think about a previous lesson (or one in the future)
 - Identify an activity you will be asking your students to do
 - When I say “Write”, write out the directions meeting the guidelines we have discussed today
 - You have 3 minutes
 - What questions are there?
 - “Write”

LET'S PRACTICE...

- Part 2:
 - In 30 seconds you will **practice giving your directions**, meeting the guidelines
 - Please **critique your directions** and make notes on your paper with the needed changes
 - You have 4 minutes to share
 - What questions are there?
 - Start!

TOP 5 TIPS FOR TEACHERS

- 5. Directions
- 4. Economy of Language
- 3. Be Inclusive
- 2. Pacing
- 1. Modeling

5. DIRECTIONS

- *“Teachers often talk too much. They over-explain concepts, repeat directions, and lengthen their answers in a way that dilutes the impact of what they say.”*
- Instead, avoid prefacing directions, use actions words and explain what the brain will be doing before the body.
- **Take Action!**
 - *Instead of:* What I want you to do next, is take out your books and find the graph on page 134.
 - *Try:* We'll focus on the graph on page 134. Take out your books.

4. ECONOMY OF LANGUAGE

- *“Say what needs to be said with the greatest amount of clarity and the least amount of words.”*
- **Take Action!**
 - *Instead of:* I need you to take out your books.
 - *Try:* Take out your books.

3. BE INCLUSIVE

- The message behind “what you are going to do” and “I need you to” says to the students “I’m in control and you’ll do what I say.”
- Students who have negative associations with these will not respond as well when the negative tone is used.
- Inclusive language will reinforce the belief that we work as a team in the classroom.
- **Take Action!**
 - *Instead of:* I am going to be teaching you the steps to...
 - *Try:* Let’s learn the steps to...

2. PACING

- When do you move on? How fast do you go through information? Let your students tell you.
- First, establish the WIIFM (What's in it for me?), next, partner the information from one lesson to another; preview and review what we are learning.
- Finally, with group work, wait for the “Crest of the Wave” students will start quiet, increase in volume as productive work happens, decrease volume as they finish, and increase when they begin getting off task. Move on directly after the “crest of the wave.”
- **Take Action!**
 - *Instead of:* Wondering when to move on after a group activity.
 - *Try:* Listen for the crest of the wave and move on.

I. MODELING

- Demonstrate what you expect.
- If you are giving directions and do not want them to move – stand still! If you want students to raise their hands, raise yours! When we join in the fun, the students will get the full effect of our expectations.
- **Take Action!**
 - *Instead of:* I need everyone to stand up.
 - *Try:* Raise your voice and your hands palm side up and say “Stand up!”

LAST PIECES OF ADVICE

- Wait until you have full attention from all students before starting to give directions
- State the directions loud enough for students to hear, but don't yell
- Make sure you have enough time to fully communicate the directions and answer all questions
 - Especially if you give them right before the bell rings

LAST PIECES OF ADVICE

- Always give them a shorter amount of time to complete the task than you think necessary
 - Students will fill the time allowed....You can always give more
- Train your students to ask questions when you give them the prompt:
 - “What questions are there?”

SUMMARY

- The directions for an activity/assignment are just as important as the activity
- Practice writing and communicating effective directions to improve your classroom environment and student learning

FINAL THOUGHTS/QUESTIONS

- Thank you for your time!

- Contact me:

- Gaea Hock, ghock@ksu.edu

- References:

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- Sousa, D.A. (2022). *How the Brain Learns*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.