

A “Teacher’s Dozen”: Fourteen General, Research-Based Principles for Improving Higher Learning in our Classrooms

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1. Active learning is more effective than passive learning.
2. Learning requires focused attention, and awareness of the importance of what is to be learned.
3. Learning is more effective and efficient when learners have explicit, reasonable, positive goals, and when their goals fit well with the teacher’s goals.
4. To be remembered, new information must be meaningfully connected to prior knowledge, and it must first be remembered in order to be learned.
5. Unlearning what is already known is often more difficult than learning new information.
6. Information organized in personally meaningful ways is more likely to be retained, learned, and used.
7. Learners need feedback on their learning, early and often, to learn well; to become independent, they need to learn how to give themselves feedback.
8. The ways in which learners are assessed and evaluated powerfully affect the ways they study and learn.
9. Mastering a skill or body of knowledge takes great amounts of time and effort.
10. Learning to transfer, to apply previous knowledge and skills to new contexts, requires a great deal of practice.
11. High expectations encourage high achievement.
12. To be most effective, teachers need to balance levels of intellectual challenge and instructional support.
13. Motivation to learn is alterable; it can be positively or negatively affected by the task, the environment, the teacher, and the learner.
14. The interaction between teachers and learners is one of the most powerful factors in promoting learning; interaction among learners is another.