

Introduction

Much has happened since this book was first published. Brain research has made leaps in terms of being able to tell us about the thinking processes of the brain and has given us hope for an immediate cure to many of the illnesses and problems associated with the brain such as autism and paralysis. Neuroscience and particularly neuroplasticity has done away with the idea that we only learn to a given point in our lives and then we prune off the growth in our later years. The truth, according to Norman Doidge (2008) in his groundbreaking book *The Brain That Changes Itself*, is that we are constantly learning, building dendrites, creating new brain maps, and pruning all through life and that the brain we were born with is not the brain that we die with.

Add to that the rapid changes in our society in the last five years. Our classrooms are a reflection of the changes taking place in society. For example, the culture of the classroom today is made up of many cultures with very different ideas about learning and about the purpose of the classroom and the teacher. Where we once thought that we could apply traits of poverty across the board to all children of poverty, we now know that the influences of poverty are not the same among cultures and that in research, culture trumps poverty every time in looking at influences on learning. In this book, I have included how culture affects motivation and how we can differentiate in the classroom based on the various cultures of our students. What a wonderful time to be a teacher! Never before have we had available to us the answers to unlock the mysteries of the

mind or to change the world in the way that we have at this time. Through brain research and its implications for learning and remembering, we truly have the tools to work smarter. Never before have we had the opportunity to make positive change in today's troubled classrooms.

You have chosen one of the most awesome professions on earth; you have chosen to be a teacher. John Steinbeck wrote a wonderful poem, "Like Captured Butterflies," about a teacher who touched his soul. She was the kind of teacher who created a love of learning within her students. As teachers, we can choose to join those who punch in and out each day to receive a paycheck and who teach what Steinbeck called "soon forgotten things," or we can choose to be the kind of teacher who "creates a new hunger" for learning in students' minds. I have written this program for those of us who have chosen the latter path.

For so long we have been told to emphasize the cognitive system of the brain. As teachers, we often begin our lessons by teaching for cognitive knowledge and then for processes. No wonder our students are sleeping in class! They come from a multimedia world, a world in which they receive instant feedback and gratification through games, through the Internet, and through sports. They come to our classrooms to sit and listen passively without giving any forethought to why they are learning information of civilizations long ago or math equations or grammar. We now know, thanks to the work of people like Marzano (1992, 1998, 2001), Jensen (1997, 1998), Sylwester (1995), and others that learning does not begin with the cognitive system of the brain. Rather, learning begins in the self-system of the brain, and it is this system that decides whether the learning is worthy of our attention.

The growing number of students from many cultures is having a direct impact on the way we teach. In the United States our schools have been built on a model inherited from our northern European ancestors in which we teach to the cognitive first. All other populations of the world believe in creating a relationship first, substance second. It is no wonder so many teachers today are struggling with a changing population that does not learn in the traditional pattern of our schools.

In this book, you will find a map to guide you to activating motivation in your students.

Since one of the most effective ways that we can teach vocabulary to our students is to introduce the vocabulary, have our students provide their own ideas about what the words mean, and then guide them to examine the meanings in context, the following exercise is offered. Form 0.1 provides the vocabulary that will be examined throughout this book. Look at the words to see which ones are familiar and which are not. Write your own definitions in the middle column, and adjust your thinking as you read through this book.

In addition, I am providing a vocabulary pretest for you. After you have read the book, you will be given a posttest and the solutions to both tests. The Vocabulary Summary offers additional information about these words and other terms associated with motivation.

Form 0.1 Vocabulary List for Student Motivation

Vocabulary Word	Your Definition	Your Revised Definition
Celebrations		
Climate		
Contextualization		
Extrinsic motivation		
Feedback		
Culture		
Intrinsic motivation		
Scaffolding		
Learning state		
Locus of control		
Metacognitive system		
Off-task behavior		
Rewards		
Self-efficacy		
Self-esteem		
Self-system		
Self-talk		
Students at risk		
Teacher expectations		
Threat		
Wait time		

Copyright © 2010 by Corwin. All rights reserved. Reprinted from *What Every Teacher Should Know About Student Motivation*, Second Edition, by Donna Walker Tileston. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, www.corwinpress.com. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site or nonprofit organization that has purchased this book.