

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

MWGYW AND HBLT LESSON PLAN APPLICATION
PROCESS AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

AN ESSAY SUBMITTED TO
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DSMN 601 MINISTRY OF TEACHING

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JUNE 28, 2012

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Introduction

Teaching and learning has been part of the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next since the time of the fall when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit in the garden (Genesis 3).¹ This teaching and learning process goes on today, with the advantage of several thousand years of understanding and research into how the human mind works, how best a student will receive information, and how they can take that information and transform it into knowledge. Our society, and the overall human race, is now at the point where technology “allows for faster acquisition” of information, but “not necessarily better acquisition.”² Even with the use of technology teachers still have to prepare to teach students, some students still need to be motivated to learn and to improve, and the evaluation process must continue. This paper will evaluate, and personally reflect upon, the process and performance of preparing and presenting different structured lesson plans to students.

The Evaluation Process

For a teacher to take a reasonable assessment of how well their students have learned the course objectives, educators must have a means of evaluation themselves. Evaluation of test materials can be one of the most important steps in learning how to teach students effectively. The reason for this evaluation is clear from any student who has taken an exam, which was perceived as unfair, written poorly, or flat out incorrect in it’s questions.³ Within the formal academic setting “nothing affects students attitudes more than the quality of the exams” the

¹ Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture references are from the ESV translation. *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (ESV)* (Wheaton, IL: Good News Publishers, 2007).

² William R. Yount, *Created to Learn: A Christian Teacher's Introduction to Educational Psychology*, Second Edition (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2010), 199.

³ *Ibid.*, 483-493.

teacher chooses to administer.⁴ This requires the examiner to construct tests objectively, and fairly, while at the same time maintaining a high level of scholarship to see if the student has transformed the proper information into knowledge.

Being a student myself, for most of my life at this point, Yount's assessment here could not be more accurate when it comes to the importance of a proper evaluation of test materials. Every student at one point in time or another can probably recall a test they believed was unfair, or one they could find enough ambiguity and inconsistencies in the questions, which later affected their thoughts about the class or material presented. This can also become more frustrating the higher a student rises in the learning process. In graduate school, or a professional setting of one kind or another, one would expect a higher level of evaluation. This isn't always the case, and emphasizes how important proper or quality evaluation is to a student, to the overall learning process, and to the teacher or institution giving the examination.

Yount's own evaluation of the way tests are administered is of note in that he really only includes two formats, a standardized test, and an essay exam, but he does include a complex system of taking those exams and mathematically adjusting them using a "Discrimination Index."⁵ Since essay exams are more subjective and difficult to evaluate, Yount spends a great deal of time on evaluating standardized tests through this Discrimination Index Formula, an approach with obvious limitations and probably not realistically used in real-world situations.⁶ While the author's formula for evaluation is commendable, very extensive, and gives good results to the teacher, it downplays the other forms of assessing a students' comprehension of the material so as to be as objective as possible in the assessment itself. Over the last decade or two educators have been "more and more dissatisfied and frustrated with the use of standardized tests

⁴ Ibid., 481.

⁵ Ibid., 496-499

⁶ Ibid., 494-497.

as a method of assessment” and have found that it provides only a limited subset of assessing student knowledge.⁷ Among other issues, standardized test can only examine a small subset of knowledge gained by the student, and often require a specific set of skills that have nothing to do with the material at hand. Often the student will have to be more adept at memorization, or knowing how to find the material’s location, instead of obtaining a deep learning of the material that adds to an overall educational process. Outside of standardized tests and essay exams, “one of the more promising forms of assessment is what is known as "Portfolio-Based Assessment."⁸ This assessment type requires a little more work on the teacher and student, but it gives a far better overall examination of student learning and knowledge. As noted, this process is slightly more subjective, which is something Yount writes is a great disadvantage in the assessment process.⁹

Review of the HBLT and MWGYW Plans

Through the process of learning different approaches to teaching, two plans were put forth and used, as a way to bring some structure to the lessons being presented. These two plans had slightly different approaches to learning the particular information, and each included some positive and negative aspects to a structured teaching plan. The HBLT approach used a “hook” method to spark the student’s interest in the material, and then they would use that connection to bring the students through the “took” conclusion, giving them a tangible takeaway. The MWGYW approach used an approach familiar to many

⁷ PATT BRITT, J.M. BLACKBOURN, RICHARD BLACKBOURN, BOBBY PAPASON, J. LARRY TYLER, FRANKIE WILLIAMS CONN THOMAS, "Portfolio Assessment: A Guide For Teachers And Administrators," *NATIONAL FORUM OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION JOURNAL* (National Forum) 23, no. 4E (2004-2005): 1-8.

⁸ Bob Peterson and Monty Neill, "Alternatives to Standardized Tests," *Rethinking Schools*, http://www.rethinkingschools.org/restrict.asp?path=archive/13_03/assess.shtml (accessed June 22, 2012).

⁹ Yount, 494.

pastors and preachers. The teacher would tell a story from a personal situation, which the students would be able to relate to as they were taught the rest of the lesson. The teacher would then conclude with a practical application for their lives.

Upon personal reflection of the two plans presented, neither plan in and of itself would be one I would care to adopt in total. For me, the important point to be taken away from using either of these plans is not the specifics of the approach, but the importance of using a specific structure. While I have been the recipient of a lesson taught without a plan, almost any specific structure would be better than none at all. While neither were my personal choice, these two plans in particular provided a good example of what can be accomplished through using a structured teaching approach.

Personal Reflections on Preparing and Presenting the Message

Preparing and presenting the messages, as described above, was a process unfamiliar to me in my limited experience as a formal teacher. Preparing a message is something I have done through the academic process for many years, but adding that human element to the process changed how the message was prepared, and presented.

In preparation for each teaching approach it was imperative that, as the teacher, I already had a strong working knowledge of the material to be presented. This was something the different approaches almost assumed of their teachers. To teach something, you must have learned the material being taught. While this sounds obvious, sometimes it is necessary to gain a greater understanding of the material before the message can even begin to be formally structured. This was something I had not anticipated as I started to prepare for each lesson. This is essentially what every pastor/teacher does prior to preparing the next lesson, sermon, or class, and it is probably the most important part of

preparing a lesson. Once the material was firmly understood, I found structuring each lesson a less complex matter of organization to facilitate the learning process.

Presenting the lesson provided additional challenges I had not necessarily anticipated, some of which would be eliminated as experience increases over time. Obstacles such as being nervous about presenting a message to a live audience, confidence in the material being presented, and proper preparation of the material, were not fully realized until the moment the presentation began. My first attempt at teaching a lesson using the HBLT approach (on James 3:13-18) did not transmit information into knowledge. It concluded quickly, without much interaction or understanding by the students, and through the personal evaluation process I corrected several issues before presenting the second lesson a few days later. The second attempt was far more successful in communicating the intended message, proving that, at a minimum, the evaluation process of both students and teachers is extremely important as shown in this paper early on.

As it pertains to the two plans presented, the HBLT and the MWGYW, I would prefer to use the strengths from both plans to structure a future lesson. When comparing the two plans, and looking forward to my next teaching opportunity, I would use the “hook” section of the HBLT, and the application section of the MWGYW plan. These can be used in conjunction with a structured outline similar to what is found in the MWGYW plan to draw in the attention of the students, while giving them a very specific life application takeaway when the lesson concludes. I would leave out some of the larger “me” details of the MWGYW plan, and try to focus more on the students than on myself, engaging them in their own life struggles. This combination should further advance my ability to have a positive impact on my students, while still maintaining a solid teaching structure.

Conclusion

This paper has evaluated and reflected on the process of preparing, and presenting, a lesson plan to students in two different formal structures. The brother of Jesus himself wrote how important the role of teaching is to the learning process. In the book of James he says, “not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness” (James 3:1), and this is something every teacher should take very seriously. When teachers look at their role of transmitting information to students in order to give them greater knowledge, the process is an ordained one. To take a nonchalant approach to the teaching process is to turn away from God’s own instruction to His followers. When seen in this divine light, it is important to have learned the material as best as possible, have a structured plan for teaching students, and continually evaluate the teaching process. With these factors kept in full sight of the preparer, their students will be given the proper ability to transform information into knowledge.

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