Every teacher has her or his own style of teaching. And as traditional teaching styles evolve with the advent of differentiated instruction, more and more teachers are adjusting their approach depending on their students’ learning needs.

But there are a few fundamental teaching styles most educators tend to use. Which one is yours?

You’ve Got Style
These teaching styles highlight the five main strategies teachers use in the classroom, as well as the benefits and potential pitfalls of each.

The Authority, or lecture style
The authority model is teacher-centered and frequently entails lengthy lecture sessions or one-way presentations. Students are expected to take notes or absorb information.

• **Pros:** This style is acceptable for certain higher-education disciplines and auditorium settings with large groups of students. The pure lecture style is
most suitable for subjects like history, which necessitate memorization of key facts, dates, names, etc.

- **Cons**: It’s a questionable model for teaching children because there is little or no interaction with the teacher. Plus it can get a little snooze-y. That’s why it’s a better approach for older, more mature students.

**The Demonstrator, or coach style**

The demonstrator retains the formal authority role by showing students what they need to know. The demonstrator is a lot like the lecturer, but their lessons include multimedia presentations, activities, and demonstrations. (Think: Math. Science. Music.)

- **Pros**: This style gives teachers opportunities to incorporate a variety of formats including lectures and multimedia presentations.
- **Cons**: Although it’s well-suited for teaching mathematics, music, physical education, or arts and crafts, it is difficult to accommodate students’ individual needs in larger classrooms.

**The Facilitator, or activity style**

Facilitators promote self-learning and help students develop critical thinking skills and retain knowledge that leads to self-actualization.

- **Pros**: This style trains students to ask questions and helps develop skills to find answers and solutions through exploration; it is ideal for teaching science and similar subjects.
- **Cons**: Challenges teacher to interact with students and prompt them toward discovery rather than lecturing facts and testing knowledge through memorization. So it’s a bit harder to measure success in tangible terms.

**The Delegator, or group style**

The delegator style is best suited for curricula that require lab activities, such as chemistry and biology, or subjects that warrant peer feedback, like debate and creative writing.

- **Pros**: Guided discovery and inquiry-based learning place the teacher in an observer role that inspires students by working in tandem toward common goals.
- **Cons**: Considered a modern style of teaching, it is sometimes criticized as eroding teacher authority. As a delegator, the teacher acts more as a consultant rather than the traditional authority figure.

**The Hybrid, or blended style**

Hybrid, or blended style, follows an integrated approach to teaching that blends the teacher’s personality and interests with students’ needs and curriculum-appropriate methods.
• **Pros**: Inclusive! And it enables teachers to tailor their styles to student needs and appropriate subject matter.

• **Cons**: Hybrid style runs the risk of trying to be too many things to all students, prompting teachers to spread themselves too thin and dilute learning.

Because teachers have styles that reflect their distinct personalities and curriculum—from math and science to English and history—it’s crucial that they remain focused on their teaching objectives and avoid trying to be all things to all students.

---

**What you need to know about your teaching style**

Although it is not the teacher’s job to entertain students, it is vital to engage them in the learning process. Selecting a style that addresses the needs of diverse students at different learning levels begins with a personal inventory—a self-evaluation—of the teacher’s strengths and weaknesses. As they develop their teaching styles and integrate them with effective classroom management skills, teachers will learn what works best for their personalities and curriculum.

Our guide encapsulates today’s different teaching styles and helps teachers identify the style that’s right for them and their students. Browse through the article or use these links to jump to your desired destination.

- [What is a teaching style inventory, and how have teaching styles evolved?](#)
- [What teaching method is best for today’s students?](#)
- [How does classroom diversity influence teachers?](#)

---

**Emergence of the teaching style inventory**

How have teaching styles evolved? This is a question teachers are asked, and frequently ask themselves, as they embark on their careers, and occasionally pause along the way to reflect on job performance. To understand the differences in teaching styles, it’s helpful to know where the modern concept of classifying teaching methods originated.

The late Anthony F. Grasha, a noted professor of psychology at the University of Cincinnati, is credited with developing the classic five teaching styles. A follower of psychiatrist Carl Jung, Grasha began studying the dynamics of the relationship between teachers and learning in college classrooms. His groundbreaking book, *Teaching with Style*, was written both as a guide for teachers and as a tool to help colleagues,
administrators and students systematically evaluate an instructor’s effectiveness in the classroom.
Grasha understood that schools must use a consistent, formal approach in evaluating a teacher’s classroom performance. He recognized that any system designed to help teachers improve their instructional skills requires a simple classification system. He developed a teaching style inventory that has since been adopted and modified by followers.

- **Expert**: Similar to a coach, experts share knowledge, demonstrate their expertise, advise students, and provide feedback to improve understanding and promote learning.
- **Formal authority**: Authoritative teachers incorporate the traditional lecture format and share many of the same characteristics as experts, but with less student interaction.
- **Personal model**: Incorporates blended teaching styles that match the best techniques with the appropriate learning scenarios and students in an adaptive format.
- **Facilitator**: Designs participatory learning activities and manages classroom projects while providing information and offering feedback to facilitate critical thinking.
- **Delegator**: Organizes group learning, observes students, provides consultation, and promotes interaction between groups and among individuals to achieve learning objectives.

Although he developed specific teaching styles, Grasha warned against boxing teachers into a single category. Instead, he advocated that teachers play multiple roles in the classroom. He believed most teachers possess some combination of all or most of the classic teaching styles.

**How does differentiated instruction affect teaching styles?**
Carol Ann Tomlinson, a professor at the University of Virginia, is an early advocate of differentiated instruction and a pioneer in the development of learning-based teaching styles. If Grasha laid the groundwork for 20th-century teachers to adopt styles tailored to match their personalities and strengths, Tomlinson has advanced this theme into the 21st century by focusing on differentiated instruction.

In the simplest terms, differentiated instruction means keeping all students in mind when developing lesson plans and workbook exercises, lectures, and interactive learning. These student-focused differences necessitate instructional styles that embrace diverse classrooms for students at all learning levels and from various backgrounds without compromising the teacher’s strengths.
What teaching style is best for today’s students?

Whether you’re a first-year teacher eager to put into practice all of the pedagogical techniques you learned in college, or a classroom veteran examining differentiated instruction and new learning methodologies, consider that not all students respond well to one particular style. Although teaching styles have been categorized into five groups, today’s ideal teaching style is not an either/or proposition but more of a hybrid approach that blends the best of everything a teacher has to offer.

The traditional advice that teachers not overreach with a cluster of all-encompassing teaching styles might seem to conflict with today’s emphasis on student-centered classrooms. Theoretically, the more teachers emphasize student-centric learning, the harder it is to develop a well-focused style based on their personal attributes, strengths, and goals.

In short, modern methods of teaching require different types of teachers—from the analyst/organizer to the negotiator/consultant. Here are some other factors to consider as teachers determine the best teaching method for their students.

Empty vessel: Critics of the “sage on the stage” lecture style point to the “empty vessel” theory, which assumes a student’s mind is essentially empty and needs to be filled by the “expert” teacher. Critics of this traditional approach to teaching insist this teaching style is outmoded and needs to be updated for the diverse 21st-century classroom.

Active vs. passive: Proponents of the traditional lecture approach believe that an overemphasis on group-oriented participatory teaching styles, like facilitator and delegator, favor gifted and competitive students over passive children with varied learning abilities, thereby exacerbating the challenges of meeting the needs of all learners.

Knowledge vs. information: Knowledge implies a complete understanding, or full comprehension, of a particular subject. A blend of teaching styles that incorporate facilitator, delegator, demonstrator, and lecturer techniques helps the broadest range of students acquire in-depth knowledge and mastery of a given subject. This stands in contrast to passive learning, which typically entails memorizing facts, or information, with the short-term objective of scoring well on tests.

Interactive classrooms: Laptops and tablets, video conferencing, and podcasts in classrooms play a vital role in today’s teaching styles. With technology in mind, it is imperative that teachers assess their students’ knowledge while they are learning. The alternative is to wait for test results,
only to discover knowledge gaps that should have been detected during the active learning phase.

**Constructivist teaching methods:** Contemporary teaching styles tend to be group-focused and inquiry-driven. Constructivist teaching methods embrace subsets of alternative teaching styles, including modeling, coaching, and test preparation through rubrics scaffolding. All of these are designed to promote student participation and necessitate a hybrid approach to teaching. One criticism of the constructivist approach is that it caters to extroverted, group-oriented students, who tend to dominate and benefit from these teaching methods more than introverts; however, this assumes introverts aren’t learning by observing.

Student-centric learning does not have to come at the expense of an instructor’s preferred teaching method. However, differentiated instruction demands that teachers finesse their style to accommodate the diverse needs of 21st-century classrooms.

#### The ‘sage on the stage’ meets the ‘tiger mom’

The objective of blending teaching styles to leverage the teacher’s strengths while meeting the demands of diverse students has become increasingly difficult, as parents take a decidedly proactive role in child-learning techniques.

The traditional authoritative/expert, or “sage on the stage” lecture style, has come under attack by some parents—and contemporary educational leaders—who emphasize that a more diverse approach to teaching is necessary to engage students. This is compounded by the rise of “tiger moms,” a term made popular by parents devoted to improving the quality of education with laser-precision focus on A-list schools and a highly competitive job market.

#### Age of the proactive parent

Regardless of what style a teacher adopts, it’s important for teachers to develop positive attitudes, set goals, and establish high expectations for students.

“Assume students can excel!” education authors Harry and Rosemary Wong declare. As former teachers with a combined 80-plus years of educational experience, the Wongs emphasize in their best-selling book, *The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher* and their more recent, *The Classroom Management Book* that successful teachers share three common characteristics:

- effective classroom management skills
lesson mastery
• positive expectations

All instructors, when developing their teaching styles, should keep in mind these three goals, as well as the primary objective of education: student learning.

How does classroom diversity influence teachers?

It is abundantly clear that today’s teachers are responsible for students with a diverse range of learning abilities. The 21st-century teacher does not have the luxury of “picking the low-hanging fruit” and then leaving the rest of the tree for experts who specialize in children with behavioral issues or learning disorders.

Today’s teachers must develop instructional styles that work well in diverse classrooms. Effective teaching methods engage gifted students, as well as slow-learning children and those with attention deficit tendencies. This is where differentiated instruction and a balanced mix of teaching styles can help reach all students in a given classroom—not just the few who respond well to one particular style of teaching.

The wonderment of teaching, what author/educator Dr. Harry Wong refers to as “that a-ha moment” when a child “gets it,” is one of the most rewarding and seemingly elusive benefits of becoming a teacher. This transfer of knowledge from expert to student is an art form and a skill. Fortunately, both can be learned and perfected.

Knowing how to engage students begins with selecting the teaching style that’s right for you. And remember, even though you may prefer one teaching style over another, you must find the style that works best for your students! Try different styles to meet different objectives, and always challenge yourself to find ways to reach each student.

Learn More: Click to view related resources.

You may also like to read
• Effective Teaching Strategies for Adolescent Literacy Teachers
• Effective Teaching Strategies for Special Education
• Activities for Teaching Tolerance in the Classroom
• Interactive Teaching Styles Used in the Classroom

Tags: Leadership and Administration, Mid-Career Teacher, New Teacher, Professional Development, Veteran Teacher
https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/classroom-resources/5-types-of-classroom-teaching-styles/

https://www.slideshare.net/justindoliente/principles-of-teaching-33070911
Teaching Methods

The term teaching method refers to the general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used for classroom instruction.

Your choice of teaching method depends on what fits you — your educational philosophy, classroom demographic, subject area(s) and school mission statement.

Teaching theories can be organized into four categories based on two major parameters: a teacher-centered approach versus a student-centered approach, and high-tech material use versus low-tech material use.

Teacher-Centered Approach to Learning

Taken to its most extreme interpretation, teachers are the main authority figure in a teacher-centered instruction model. Students are viewed as “empty vessels External link ” who passively receive knowledge from their teachers through lectures and direct instruction, with an end goal of positive results from testing and assessment. In this style, teaching and assessment are viewed as two separate entities; student learning is measured through objectively scored tests and assessments.

Learn more about the different teaching styles that use a teacher-centered approach.

Student-Centered Approach to Learning

While teachers are still an authority figure in a student-centered teaching model, teachers and students play an equally active role in the learning process.

The teacher’s primary role is to coach and facilitate student learning and overall comprehension of material, and to measure student learning through both formal and informal forms of assessment, like group projects, student portfolios, and class participation. In the student-centered classroom, teaching and assessment are connected because student learning is continuously measured during teacher instruction.

Learn more about the different teaching styles that use a student-centered approach.
High Tech Approach to Learning

Advancements in technology have propelled the education sector in the last few decades. As the name suggests, the high tech approach to learning utilizes different technology to aid students in their classroom learning. Many educators use computers and tablets in the classroom, and others may use the internet to assign homework. The internet is also beneficial in a classroom setting as it provides unlimited resources. Teachers may also use the internet in order to connect their students with people from around the world.

Below are some tech tools used in classrooms today:

- **G Suite External link** (Gmail, Docs, Drive, and Calendar)
- Tablets/laptops
- Gamification software (such as 3DGameLab External link and Classcraft External link)
- Education-focused social media platforms
- Technology for accessibility External link for students with disabilities

FEATURED ONLINE DEGREES AND SHORT COURSES
In this 8-week course you'll engage deeply with the most relevant research on effective and engaging teaching methods in the higher education context, while refining your own practices, portfolio, and teaching philosophy.
**Master of Science in Teaching at Fordham University External link**
The online Master of Science in Teaching program prepares aspiring teachers (grades 1-6) for initial teaching certification or dual certification in teaching and special education.

**Master of Science in Education (MSE) in Educational Leadership at University of Dayton External link**
The University of Dayton School of Education and Health Sciences offers a top-ranked online MSE in Educational Leadership that prepares students to serve effectively at all levels of leadership from pre-K to grade 12.

---

**Low Tech Approach to Learning**

While technology undoubtedly has changed education, many educators opt to use a more traditional, low tech approach to learning. Some learning styles require a physical presence and interaction between the educator and the student. Additionally, some research has shown that low-tech classrooms may boost learning. For example, students who take handwritten notes have better recall than students who take typed notes External link. Another downside of technology in the classroom may be that students exposed to spell check and autocorrect features at an earlier age may be weaker in spelling and writing skills External link. Ultimately, tailoring the learning experience to different types of learners is incredibly important, and sometimes students work better with a low-tech approach.

Here are some examples of low technology usage in different teaching methodologies:

- Kinesthetic learners have a need for movement when learning. Teachers should allow students to move around, speak with hands and gestures.
- Expeditionary learning involves “learning by doing” and participating in a hands-on experience. Students may participate in fieldwork, learning expeditions, projects or case studies External link to be able to apply knowledge learned in the classroom to the real world, rather than learning through the virtual world.
- Many types of vocational or practical training cannot be learned virtually, whether it be a laboratory experiment or woodworking.
Through these different approaches to teaching, educators can gain a better understanding of how best to govern their classrooms, implement instruction, and connect with their students. Within each category of teacher and student centeredness and tech usage, there are specific teaching roles or “methods” of instructor behavior that feature their own unique mix of learning and assessment practices. Learn more about each one to find the best fit for your classroom.

Teacher-Centered Methods of Instruction

**Direct Instruction (Low Tech)**

Direct instruction is the general term that refers to the traditional teaching strategy that relies on explicit teaching through lectures and teacher-led demonstrations.

In this method of instruction, the teacher might play one or all of the following roles:
As the primary teaching strategy under the **teacher-centered approach**, direct instruction utilizes passive learning, or the idea that students can learn what they need to through listening and watching very precise instruction. Teachers and professors act as the sole supplier of knowledge, and under the direct instruction model, teachers often utilize systematic, scripted lesson plans. Direct instruction programs include exactly what the teacher should say, and activities that students should complete, for every minute of the lesson.

Because it does not include student preferences or give them opportunities for hands-on or alternative types of learning, direct instruction is extremely teacher-centered. It’s also fairly low-tech, often relying on the use of textbooks and workbooks instead of computers and 1:1 devices.

**Flipped Classrooms (High Tech)**

The idea of the flipped classroom began in 2007 when two teachers began using software that would let them record their live lectures External link . By the next school year, they were implementing pre-recorded lectures and sharing the idea of what became known as the flipped classroom.

Broadly, the flipped classroom label describes the teaching structure that has students watching pre-recorded lessons at home and completing in-class assignments, as opposed to hearing lectures in class and doing homework at home. Teachers who implement the flipped classroom model often film their own instructional videos, but many also use pre-made videos from online sources.

A key benefit of the flipped classroom model is that it allows for students to work at their own pace if that is how the teacher chooses to implement it. In some cases, teachers may assign the same videos to all students, while in others, teachers may choose to allow students to watch new videos as they master topics (taking on a more “differentiated” approach).

But despite this potential for more student-centeredness, flipped classroom models are still mostly based on a teacher’s idea of how learning should happen and what information students need, making it chiefly teacher-centered. From a technology perspective, the system hinges on pre recorded lessons and online activities,
meaning both students and teachers need a good internet connection and devices that can access it.

Read More:

• Teach100 Blog #697: Teaching with the iPad in a Flipped Classroom
• Changing Classrooms with Flipped Learning
• Educator Connection: Flipped Classroom Resources from the Teach100

Back to Top

Kinesthetic Learning (Low Tech)

Sometimes known as tactile learning or hands-on learning, kinesthetic learning is based on the idea of multiple intelligences External link, requiring students to do, make, or create. In a kinesthetic learning environment, students perform physical activities rather than listen to lectures or watch demonstrations. Hands-on experiences, drawing, role-play, building, and the use of drama and sports are all examples of kinesthetic classroom activities.

Though a great way to keep students engaged and, at times, simply awake, very few classrooms employ kinesthetic learning activities exclusively. One reason is that, despite the popularity of learning style theories, there is a lack of researched-based evidence that shows that teaching to certain learning styles produces better academic results External link.

One upside is that kinesthetic learning is rarely based on technology, as the method values movement and creativity over technological skills. That means it’s cheap and fairly low-barrier to adopt, as well as a welcome break from students’ existing screen time. Kinesthetic learning can be more student-centered than teacher-centered when students are given the choice of how to use movement to learn new information or experience new skills, so it’s also adaptable to a teacher’s particular classroom preferences.

Read More:

• Using Classroom Debates to Engage Students
• The Benefits of Puzzles in Early Childhood
• 5 Ways Learning Through Play Improves Early Development in STEM Subjects

Back to Top

Student-Centered Methods of Instruction

Differentiated Instruction (Low Tech)
Differentiated instruction is the teaching practice of tailoring instruction to meet individual student needs. It initially grew popular with the 1975 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which ensured all children had equal access to public education. The Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that started under IDEA helped classroom teachers differentiate for students with special needs. Today, differentiated instruction is used to meet the needs of all types of learners.

Teachers can differentiate in a number of ways: how students access content, the types of activities students do to master a concept, what the end product of learning looks like, and how the classroom is set up. Some examples of differentiation include: having students read books at their own reading levels, offering different spelling lists to students, or meeting in small groups to reteach topics.

Though differentiation is focused on individual student needs, it is mostly planned and implemented by the teacher. And technology, though a potential aid, is not a hallmark of the differentiated teaching style, making it a fairly traditional, low-barrier method to adopt.

Read More:
- Engaging Gifted and Talented Students
- How to Engage a Classroom of Diverse Learners
- Become a Gifted Education Teacher

Inquiry-based Learning (High Tech)

Based on student investigation and hands-on projects, inquiry-based learning is a teaching method that casts a teacher as a supportive figure who provides guidance and support for students throughout their learning process, rather than a sole authority figure.

In this method of instruction, the teacher might play one or all of the following roles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilitator</th>
<th>Personal Model</th>
<th>Delegator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitators place a strong emphasis on the teacher-student relationship. Operating under an open classroom model, there is a de-emphasis on teacher instruction, and both student and educator undergo the learning process together. Student learning loosely guided by the teacher, and is focused on fostering independence, hands-on learning, and exploration.</td>
<td>Teachers who operate under the “Personal Model” style are those who lead by example, demonstrating to students how to access and comprehend information. In this teaching model, students learn through observing and copying the teacher’s process.</td>
<td>Teachers act as a “resource” to students, answering questions and reviewing their progress as needed. Teachers play a passive role in student’s learning; students are active and engaged participants in their learning. The main goal of a Delegator is to foster a sense of autonomy in the learning process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers encourage students to ask questions and consider what they want to know about the world around them. Students then research their questions, find
information and sources that explain key concepts and solve problems they may encounter along the way. Findings might be presented as self-made videos, websites, or formal presentations of research results.

Inquiry-based learning falls under the student-centered approach, in that students play an active and participatory role in their own learning. But teacher facilitation is also extremely key to the process. Usually, during the inquiry cycle, every student is working on a different question or topic. In this environment, teachers ask high-level questions and make research suggestions about the process rather than the content. At the end of the inquiry cycle, students reflect on the experience and what they learned. They also consider how it connects to other topics of interest, as an inquiry on one topic often results in more questions and then an inquiry into new fields External link.

Inquiry-based learning can make great use of technology through online research sites, social media, and the possibility for global connections with people outside of the community. But depending on the subject at hand, it doesn’t necessarily require it.

Read More:

- Teach100 Blog #942: Inquiry-Based Learning
- 9 Maker Projects for Beginner Maker Ed Teachers

Back to Top

Expeditionary Learning (High Tech)

Expeditionary learning is based on the ideas of the educator who founded Outward Bound External link, and is a form of project-based learning in which students go on expeditions and engage in in-depth study of topics that impact their schools and communities.

The learning in this model includes multiple content areas so that students can see how problem-solving can happen in the real world—ideally, their own worlds. A student in a big city, for example, might study statistics about pollution, read information about its effects, and travel to sites in their city that have been impacted by the problem. When they have a good understanding of the circumstances, students and teachers work to find a solution they can actively implement.

Technology-wise, G Suite (Google Docs, Sheets, and Drive) and internet access can aid student research, presentation, and implementation of projects. But it’s the hands-on work and getting out into the community that’s the cornerstone of this methodology.

Read More:

- Teach100 Blog #153: I’m a teacher, get me OUTSIDE here!
- Take it Outside: 6 Ways to Use Nature in Your Lessons
Personalized Learning (High Tech)

Personalized learning is such a new educational model that its definition is still evolving. At the heart of the model, teachers have students follow personalized learning plans that are specific to their interests and skills. Student self-direction and choice in the curriculum are hallmarks of personalized learning.

Assessment is also tailored to the individual: schools and classrooms that implement personalized learning use competency-based progression, so that students can move onto the next standards or topics when they’ve mastered what they’re currently working on. That way, students in personalized learning classrooms can progress to work beyond their grade level as they master topics, while students who need additional help have that time built into their daily schedules as well.

There’s also room for an emphasis on college and career readiness in personalized learning environments. Students who don’t require remediation or extension work can instead work with teachers to nurture social skills and other 21st-century skills and receive mentoring.

Personalized learning is extremely student centered, but teachers are required to look at frequent assessment data, and meet with students to make any necessary changes to their learning plans. They’ll also need to have a certain comfort level with technology; the differentiated and personalized instruction that students receive often come in the form of online lessons and programs, so teachers must be able to navigate virtual platforms with ease.

Game-based Learning (High Tech)

Game-based learning comes from the desire to engage students in more active learning in the classroom. Because they require students to be problem solvers and use soft skills that they will need as adults, games are a great way to encourage a “mastery” mindset, rather than a focus on grades.

In a game-based learning environment, students work on quests to accomplish a specific goal (learning objective) by choosing actions and experimenting along the way. As students make certain progress or achievements, they can earn badges and experience points, just like they would in their favorite video games.
Game-based learning requires a lot of time and planning on the teachers' part. Fortunately, there is software that makes this process much easier, like 3DGameLab External link and Classcraft External link. Teachers who use this software may be better at differentiating quests for students because of the data the programs provide.

Because teachers play a big role in planning and creating content under this model, game-based learning isn't completely student-centered. But it is still very much focused on the student, who works at their own pace and makes independent choices in a gamified environment.

Read More:

- iPad Education Games
- Teach100 Blog #950: The Games-Rich Classroom
- Video Games in Learning

https://teach.com/what/teachers-know/teaching-methods/