

Table 4.2

HOW TO TEACH LEARNING STRATEGIES

Preparation

Develop students' metacognitive awareness and self-knowledge through activities such as:

- Discussions about strategies students already use for specific tasks;
- Small group interviews in which students describe and share their special techniques for completing a task successfully;
- Learning strategy questionnaires in which students indicate the frequency with which they use particular strategies for particular tasks; and
- Individual think-aloud interviews in which the student works on a task and describes his/her thoughts.

Presentation

Teach the strategy explicitly by:

- Modeling how you use the strategy with a specific academic task by thinking aloud as you work through a task (e.g., reading a text or writing a paragraph);
- Giving the strategy a name and referring to it consistently by that name;
- Explaining to students how the strategy will help them learn the material; and
- Describing when, how, and for what kinds of tasks they can use the strategy.

Practice

Provide many opportunities for strategy practice through activities such as:

- Cooperative Learning
- Reciprocal Teaching
- Hands-on science experiments
- Mathematics word problems
- Research projects
- Developing oral and written reports
- Analyzing literature
- Process writing

Evaluation

Develop students' metacognitive awareness of which strategies work for them—and why—through self-evaluation activities such as:

- Debriefing discussions after using strategies;
- Learning logs or journals in which students describe and evaluate their strategy use;
- Comparing their own performance on a task completed without using learning strategies and a similar task in which they applied strategies;
- Checklists of their degree of confidence in using specific strategies;
- Self-efficacy questionnaires about their degree of confidence in completing specific academic tasks; and
- Self-reports telling when they use or do not use a strategy, and why.

Expansion

Provide for transfer of strategies to new tasks through activities such as:

- Scaffolding, in which reminders to use a strategy are gradually diminished;
- Praise for independent use of a strategy;
- Self-report in which students bring tasks to class on which they have successfully transferred a strategy;
- Thinking skills discussions in which students brainstorm possible uses for strategies they are learning;
- Follow-up activities in which students apply the strategies to new tasks and contexts;
- Analysis and discussion of strategies individual students find effective for particular tasks.