

Homework and schoolwork “flip”

CORE PURPOSE: To allow a radical transformation of activities, relationships and expectations, by “flipping” two core elements of the educational experience: school-time and home-work time.

NARRATIVE OVERVIEW:

I’ve been teaching for nearly ten years and have decided to try the popular idea of “flipping” in my class. The basic idea behind flipping is that lectures become homework, while class time is used for collaborative student work, experiential exercises, debate and lab work. Videos and other e-learning materials are used extensively during “home time” to deliver learning content, while class-time becomes open to experimentation and collaboration. I’ve read about flipping and realize it’s not a fully-fledged pedagogical approach, but a philosophy meant to be used flexibly and fluidly alongside all the tools I have gathered during my career. I’ve read how “flipping” can positively impact student learning regardless of the subject or the type of classroom.

It is important to me that the additional classroom time gained through flipping is used as effectively as possible, and that the resources students use in their own time are of the highest possible quality and appropriate to their current levels of knowledge. A content library that is integrated with online videos checked for quality and accessibility seems the best way to ensure success. My colleagues and I have developed teaching resources, videos and online activities over the years, and I’ve also kept the best revision materials developed by students at the school. Now it’s time to put this rich repository of content to good use in a structured approach, filling any gaps with high-quality resources available for free over the internet.

I look within the curriculum to identify topics that lend themselves well to ‘flipping’, like those that don’t require significant initial student-teacher interaction and that have high-quality resources for the at-home instructional element. I also ensure that students understand the purpose and format of ‘flipping’. I support students who lack access to resources at home to find other times and locations to view the materials. I also take advantage of a new school scheme that provides students with notebooks, to help ensure access for students and encourage them to complete their home tasks.

After the first weeks of flipping, some initial challenges arise. I realize that class time requires a different, but just as rigorous, form of planning, and that collaborative activities and project work come with their own issues to be addressed separately. However, after some initial adjustments, the benefits become evident, as the classroom becomes a place for more effective learning activities and increased student-teacher and peer interactions. Many students begin to choose how they learn content and demonstrate understanding, all while being allowed to master it at their own pace.

TREND/S

Young people are always connected and make heavy use of digital media, this is posing challenges to teachers and education systems who are yet to identify consistent and effective responses

Increasing frustration of young people with typical classroom activities

POSSIBLE APPROACH TO TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

- instructional design
- project-based learning
- enquiry-based learning
- formative assessment

ENVIRONMENT

The classroom and the home – flipped

PEOPLE & ROLES

This approach requires teachers and students to collaborate and find the most suitable solutions to the issues that may emerge. This can generate a degree of uncertainty as established conventions and roles are subverted. It is important that teachers are aware of these issues and of the potential conflict that may arise as a result (for example, it is likely that some students and their families might oppose ‘flipping’). It is therefore also important for teachers to be explicit with students and families about the intention and purpose of ‘flipping’.

ACTIVITIES

Activities vary depending on the nature of the subjects, the goals of the teachers and the levels of cognitive development of students. Flipping is more like a general philosophy than a collection of activities. A rigorous approach to planning and a clear idea of the goals to be achieved are paramount and also need to be shared explicitly with students at the beginning.

RESOURCES (INCL. TECHNOLOGIES)

- High quality video resources are essential in the original “flipping” model (e.g. Khan Academy). However flipping can involve a wide range of resources and revision materials. Some people believe that in-house are particularly effective as they already account for local differences.
- Possibly include individual laptops for students to ensure equal access to resources.