Title and Author

Principles of Instruction – Rosenshine (2012)

Link: https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Principles-of-Insruction-Rosenshine.pdf

Summary

Rosenshine proposes a range of research-informed principles for effective classroom practice. This article explores 10 of them in greater depth. These are based on cognitive science, research on master teachers and cognitive supports.

- **Principle 1: Review prior learning at the start of lessons.** This is based on the notion that daily review of new knowledge can strengthen remembering and lead to ease of recall. The most effective teachers included a 5-8 minute recall of previous introduced knowledge at the start of their lessons.
- **Principle 2: Present new concepts in small and manageable steps.** In order to avoid cognitive load, the most effective teaching avoids introducing too much new knowledge in one go, rather adopting an approach of introducing learners to new concepts and allowing them to rehearse before building on this further.
- **Principle 3: Asking questions to check for understanding of all learners.** As a means of practicing what they have learned, pupils should be asked questions regularly. Effective teachers might vary how this is achieved through the use of different AfL strategies. All pupils should be involved in the teacher's assessment.
- **Principle 4: Use models in the teaching of new concepts.** Models act as a scaffold for learning; teachers can model and think aloud to demonstrate as a means of cognitive support. These can be designed to provide less support as the learner moves towards greater independence and deeper understanding.
- **Principle 5: Guide learners in practicing new material.** Most effective teachers spend more time explicitly guiding pupil learning to provide opportunities for rehearsal of new information. This can include rephrasing, elaborating and summarising new material to support encoding into long term memory.
- **Principle 6: Check pupil understanding regularly.** Frequent assessment of pupil understanding supports effective learning and helps teachers to identify where misconceptions might be held. This can be done using methods including asking pupils to explain their thinking aloud or apply their knowledge in new ways.
- **Principle 7: Obtain a high success rate in your class.** A success rate of 80% indicates that lessons are pitched at the optimal level; this is because pupils are learning new material while also being appropriately challenged.
- **Principle 8: Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks.** Scaffolds are provided to support pupils with tackling more complex tasks and are slowly withdrawn to allow for greater competency and independence.
- **Principle 9: Plan for and assess independent practice.** Pupils who can work independently will develop fluency in their application of knowledge and most effective teachers ensure that learners are prepared to do this.
- **Principle 10: Carry out weekly and monthly reviews of knowledge.** Knowledge that is consistently reviewed will form part of a rich and secure network of connected understanding in the long term memory. Research also suggests that the variety of ways learners are asked to review new knowledge will have a direct impact on the amount of information learners can store.

Key Considerations for Practice

- Effective lessons are carefully planned and delivered to facilitate opportunities for learning.
- Learners need teachers to consider the ways in which they learn, retrieve and apply new knowledge.
- Effective practitioners evaluate the opportunities for learning in their teaching and respond to their pupils.

Prompts for Professional Dialogue and Reflection

- What evidence do you see of these principles in your practice?
- Have you observed examples of these principles in other teaching practice? What was the impact?
- Which do you feel are most effective in promoting learning and why?
- Which principles are you most confident with and to what extent is there variety in the way you use them?
- Are there any other principles of instruction which you feel are important for effective learning?
- Which of the principles will you develop in your practice and how will you do this?
- How do these principles align with other learning theory you are familiar with?