

## Chapter 78

# Teachers' Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Flipped Classrooms in ELA and Non-ELA Classrooms

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### ABSTRACT

*As teachers and institutions continue to incorporate the flipped learning model for delivering curricula to students, more needs to be known about its efficacy in the classroom, especially in secondary classrooms, as the majority of published literature focuses on higher education settings. The goal of this research study was to identify teachers' perceptions regarding the use of the flipped learning model in various content areas, including English Language Arts (ELA). This research study took place in a progressive public high school in Manhattan where surveys were administered to the majority of the faculty, and follow-up interviews were conducted to determine teachers' perceptions of implementing the flipped learning model in their classrooms. Data showed many teacher-identified advantages and disadvantages of incorporating the flipped learning model into secondary classrooms.*

### INTRODUCTION

As schools continue to focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century learning techniques, and the push for more technology integration in schools continues, educators are looking for ways to improve their teaching practice and to increase students' college readiness. In an effort to divert from traditional lecture formats, some educators are using various technological tools to create "flipped classrooms." However, there is little empirical research specifically addressing the flipped learning model. Pedagogical techniques can be passing fads that may even be the focus of published research studies, but what happens when a teaching technique gets global attention without substantial research support? The flipped learning model has taken the teaching community by storm since 2007, when Bergmann and Sams (2012) were among several educators simultaneously creating the model.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7663-1.ch078

This chapter will focus on the outcomes of a research study that was conducted in a progressive, problem-based and inquiry-based public high school in New York City, where teachers from various content areas answered survey questions and interview questions regarding the perceived positive and negative implications of using the flipped learning model. Since there are few published research studies on the effectiveness of the flipped learning model in schools, I did not intend on setting a methodological precedent for how to study flipped classrooms, but instead, wanted to talk with teachers and identify firsthand what they are seeing in their classrooms when this method is employed.

Personally, I was drawn to studying educators' perceptions of flipped learning through my own insecurities of implementing this model into my English language arts (ELA) classroom. I first encountered the flipped learning model while co-teaching a 10<sup>th</sup> grade English course titled, "American Masters." My co-teacher and I were getting ready to use Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* to teach various ELA skills when she told me she made a flipped video lesson on a software program called Juno for students to learn the historical background on the Salem witch trials. The lesson required students to read passages, view video clips, and answer questions at home to prepare for an activity the following day. Initially, I was impressed with the interactive nature of the home portion of the lesson and thought that this approach was revolutionary for student engagement and cognitive growth. As I observed future flipped lessons, however, I noted that students neglected to view the videos the previous evening and seemed to be going through the motions. I became more skeptical regarding the effectiveness of flipping classrooms. This naturally led me to seek what other teachers were seeing, thinking about, and doing with the flipped model.

## **FLIPPED LEARNING DEFINITION**

While definitions and implementation of "flipped classrooms" vary, I will be using the terms "flipped learning" and the "flipped learning model" synonymously and address the definition most closely attributed to Herreid and Schiller (2013), who defined the flipped learning model as switching what students normally complete in class and at home. In this definition, teachers record lectures for students to view independently in order to practice the new skills acquired during class time by collaborating with other students to solve higher order thinking problems. This practice allows students to ask teachers specific questions when needed and allows teachers to better assess students' understanding of and ability to apply the content. Although companies such as Khan Academy and Coursera have an increased presence in home instruction and require students to learn independently from video lectures, they cannot be defined as flipped learning alone. Students must spend face-to-face time with instructors to work on the content learned from the videos in order to be considered flipped learning (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Herreid & Schiller, 2013; Berrett, 2012).

Flipped classrooms are used in a variety of ways, but the common definition involves inverting the expectations of what happens in the classroom with what happens at home (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Berrett, 2012). In this iteration of flipped learning, teachers digitally record lectures, and students view these videos independently outside of the classroom. Students can be required to complete activities while watching the videos, such as answering comprehension questions or completing outlines related to the video content. Students then spend subsequent class time using their new content knowledge by solving problems collaboratively with other students, while the teacher provides support and enrichment. Live interaction with students allows teachers to assess student knowledge and allows students to receive assistance from the teacher if needed.

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