Chapter 6
Benefits of the Flipped Classroom Model

Marie Larcara
Canisius College, USA

ABSTRACT

With the advent of new technologies and the move for faculty to implement these into their teaching practice, a new model for course design and delivery has developed called the flipped classroom model. As more instructors investigate this model, the benefits, which include classroom management, active learning, critical thinking, and maximum use of student-faculty time together, become obvious. With classroom sizes increasing, more instruction moving online, and resources dwindling, the flipped classroom model can be an improved model for both instruction and quality learning. Research supports the benefits of the flipped classroom, but the change from a traditional classroom model to a flipped model requires a pedagogical shift on the part of both teacher and learner.

INTRODUCTION

There's a reason so many have latched on to the concept of the flipped classroom. And, there is a reason many K-12 teachers have moved, or are moving to this model. As early as the nineties, Nancy Atwell (1998) wrote about the reading/ writing workshop. This method, at the time, was not called "flipping," but it most certainly follows what later teachers came to define as a flipped classroom (Bergmann, 2013). The workshop method asks that teachers essentially watch students read and write in class, using mini-lessons as the basis for teaching, rather than period-long lectures (Atwell, 1998). When I begin teaching in

1993, the workshop method and "flipping" were not on my radar. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was a constructivist, believed strongly in student choice whenever possible, and embraced the idea that students need to connect on a personal level with the content for it to move into their own world. Many of us have a story to share of our early teaching experiences, and I am no exception. I was an adult when I returned to earn my teacher certification. As a newly certified high school English teacher, I felt confident in my skills. Unlike my peers in education classes, I did not suffer the learning curve with time management, organization, lesson planning, or classroom management. One of my first assignments was a long-term

substitute middle school language arts classroom where I was informed I was the third teacher that year. I came in to the situation in April, with just about three months of instruction time left in the year. I was told the class was "troublesome" but not given many details beyond that. After more than one violent outburst, and a situation that had to involve many parents, social workers, and the school psychologist, I realized this class needed something different. There was daily violence, little respect for each other or me, and more than a few students at risk of failing. Reaching out to a mentor, it was suggested I look into Atwell (1998) and a reading/writing workshop method. Of course I did not know it, but this was to be my first experience with a flipped classroom. In my dog-eared, coffee-stained copy of *In the Middle* (Atwell, 1998), the author begins the text with these words:

These days, I learn in my classroom. What happens there has changes; it continually changes. I've become an evolutionist, and the curriculum unfolds now as my kids and I learn together. My aims stay constant-I want us to go deep inside language, using it to know wand shape and play with our worlds-but my practices evolve as eighth graders and I do deeper. This going deeper is research, and these days my research shows me the wonders of my kids, not my methods. But it has also brought me full circle. What I learn with these students, collaborating with them as a writer and reader who wonders about writing and reading, makes me a better teacher-not great maybe, but at least grounded in the logic of learning, and growing. (p. 3)

What Atwell is telling us here, years before we named it "flipping," is essentially that we must work and learn *with* our students, not *at* them if we are to grow as professionals and put their learning at the forefront of our teaching practice. This was transformative for me as a new teacher and I dove in.

As I quickly realized that the traditional classroom management strategies I had learned in college would not help in this unique situation, and with the added incentive of landing a permanent teaching job, I devoured my copy of *In the Middle* (Atwell, 1998). In the book, Atwell uses the art of storytelling to teach us a method of classroom instruction, which, even now, seems foreign and quite a paradigm shift. It involves differentiating instruction, individualized learning, choice, and new and challenging management strategies. While Atwell did not have the benefit of the emerging technologies we do today, she was in fact "flipping" her classroom. In a reading/writing workshop classroom you watch students *do* something with the content. They collaborate, peer revise, talk out loud like writers and thinkers, and process their learning in front of the teacher and peers. The teacher, in Atwell's early days, used intense, "mini-lecture" format to deliver new content. You do this by daily assessing the learning needs of the group and addressing them in intense, shorter teaching formats. Today, these may be a video created to address a specific need of the group or a part of a lecture students traditionally struggle with. But, the bulk of class time is not spent talking *at* students; instead, the classroom is an active learning environment in which the teacher is a guide. This requires a shift in both pedagogy and skills which many find intimidating. I know I did, but the move from a passive classroom environment to an active one transformed me as a teacher and I still refer to and think of Atwell often.

If you could see my copy of *In the Middle* right now, you would see a desperate, new teacher's scribbles in the margins. Some read, "NEVER do this again" or "ALWAYS use this as a journal" as a way of making sense of my own teaching philosophy and her stories. But, beyond Atwell's stories, she also shares research and explains that, coming up with the reading/writing workshop method, among other strategies she shares, is the result of a shared experience between the teacher

Related Content

Gandhi's Satyagraha and the Earth Constitution
Glen Theron Martin (2018). *Handbook of Research on Examining Global Peacemaking in the Digital Age (pp. 361-371).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/gandhis-satyagraha-and-the-earth-constitution/191724

From Teaching Software Engineering Locally and Globally to Devising an Internationalized Computer Science Curriculum
Liguo Yu (2018). *Curriculum Internationalization and the Future of Education (pp. 293-320).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/from-teaching-software-engineering-locally-and-globally-to-devising-an-internationalized-computer-science-curriculum/197965

Teaching Individualized Sexuality Education to a Young Boy With Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Least Restrictive Environment: A Case Study
Laura J. Albee (2020). *Cases on Teaching Sexuality Education to Individuals With Autism (pp. 55-78).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/teaching-individualized-sexuality-education-to-a-young-boy-with-autism-spectrum-disorder-in-the-least-restrictive-environment/248624

Film and the Layers of Literacy Affordance
 (2022). *Affordances of Film for Literacy Instruction (pp. 88-107).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/film-and-the-layers-of-literacy-affordance/298127

Evaluating the Accessibility of Online University Education
Mark O. Pendergast (2017). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design (pp. 1-14).*
www.irma-international.org/article/evaluating-the-accessibility-of-online-university-education/164970