How Can I Capture Students’ Interest in the First 5 Minutes?

Presented by:

Alice Cassidy
Presenter Bio:

Alice Cassidy is Principal of Alice Cassidy In View Education and Professional Development. She teaches two undergraduate courses at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and helps to coordinate a third, in the Faculty of Science. She has over 25 years of experience designing, directing, facilitating and teaching a wide variety of educational programs, including the award-winning Shad Valley Program for high-school students; university courses in biology and education for undergraduate and graduate students and science education and natural history field classes for children, youth and school teachers.

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Our presenter:

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“Education is not the filling of a pail; it is the lighting of a fire.”
W.B. Yeats

What does this mean to you? Make a few notes; we will return to this at the end of the session.

Motivation

“In the personal investment that an individual has in reaching a desired state or outcome” (Maehr and Meyer, 1997, in Ambrose et al., 2010)

Motivation

Influences the direction, intensity, persistence and quality of the learning behaviors in which students engage
Learning Objectives
By the end of this session, you will have:

✓ Crafted an “enthusiasm statement”
✓ Considered how examples from the literature could apply to your course
✓ Been given additional resources to explore later

What question is foremost in your mind?

Jot it down; we will return to it at the end of the session
Welcome to class

“We want students to share our enthusiasm, find our courses compelling, devote their hearts and minds to the learning process.”

Barkley, 2010

Whatever level of motivation your students bring … will be transformed, for better or worse, by what happens in … classroom

(Gross Davis, 1993)

What will you do to aim for better?
Craft an “enthusiasm statement” – the first thing you’ll say

How did you first get interested?
Who are the leading scholars?
What are some burning questions?
What great thing will students leave with?
*Pick 1 or 2; jot down some notes*

Two blue birds…
What species?

Local? If not, where?
Native? Introduced?
Why should we care?

If students do not find [it]...interesting or relevant, they may see little...value in mastering it...fail to engage in the behaviours required for deep learning

Ambrose et al., 2010
The value of sharing your enthusiasm
Can be powerful and contagious
Could raise students’ curiosity
They might want to find out what excites you, leading them to engage more deeply, or discover value they may have overlooked
Ambrose et al., 2010

"Effective learning ... depends on the teacher's ability ... to maintain the interest that brought students to the course"
Ericksen, 1978, in Gross Davis, 1993

Human Ecology (Biology 345)
As described by student, Brian Cheng

This course is about...
• The natural world and the role of humans in it
• Current events and issues
• Group project:
  – Research
  – Community Service
By the end of this course, you will be able to:

* Define ecology
* Explain ecological concepts/principles
* Increase knowledge about, and appreciation for the natural world and how we use it

From mystery item in first class to final exam....

What do you see?
What questions do you have?
What species did it come from (common and Latin name). How do you know?
Find out students’ personal connections and course goals

Ask them...
- What topics interest you?
- What have you heard or read?
- What questions do you have?
- What other questions could you ask?

Situated Learning

A ‘natural learning environment’
(Kirshner and Whitson, 1997)

We learn in the context of how we apply it in an everyday activity

In View Education and Professional Development

✓ Active Listening
✓ Communities of Practice
✓ Sustainability education and leadership
✓ Use of story and narrative

http://cassidyinview.wordpress.com/
What is your enthusiasm statement?

Email (alicecas@telus.net) if I can share it

• Discipline?
• With your name or anonymous?

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Look back at what you wrote; any connections to this session?

Back to your question

Has it been answered?
If not, check out the resources
Sharing

Coming your way.....
Your unanswered questions
Any examples you email me that you are willing to share

Thanks!

We'd like to know what you think!

Our evaluation form is located here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5minutes