

Why do students often mess up tasks?!

Rachel Appleby, NYESZE, May 2023

OVERVIEW

How we can help our students?

- Grading language
- Using L1
- Strategies: before, during and after
- Differentiation

Checking instructions

Online instructions

How we can help our students:

- **Grading language**

What do you do to make your instructions understandable at lower levels?

- **Using L1** (your students first language, e.g. Hungarian)

If you speak your students' L1, how do / can you use it to good effect when giving instructions?

- **Strategies:** before, during and after

- **Differentiation**

What's your preference for receiving instructions?

What are you best at when giving instructions?

What about your students' preference(s)?

Checking instructions

A task you use: What questions could you ask to make extra sure students will have no difficulties completing it?

Online instructions

What extras can you do?

When giving instructions, it's a good idea not to ...

- get distracted
- add extra, unnecessary chat
- tell students the task will be difficult
- be over-polite (too wordy)

REFERENCES

'Chill' cartoon seen on Facebook

'Rabbit' video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ID5w-5xoTqA

'to draw' cartoon: <https://ruinmyweek.com/funny/funny-bad-instructions>

'Sandwich' video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct-IOUqmyY&t=117s

Kerr, P. (2014). *Translation and Own-language Activities*, CUP.

Scrivener, J. (1998). *Learning Teaching*, Macmillan.

Scrivener, J. (2012). *Classroom Management Techniques*, CUP.

WORKSHEET



- **Strategies:** before, during and after: Fine-tuning your instructions

1. Complete these lists with the missing items / phases below.

Things to do BEFORE you go into class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan your instructions • Be clear about the aim of the task • • Order your instructions (logically) • • 	
Things to think about IMMEDIATELY BEFORE or WHEN you give your instructions:	
<p>Using your VOICE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tone: be friendly & polite 😊 • Diction: be clear • • 	<p>Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Make sure students can see you (see your lips!) • • Go step by step • • Show (e.g. page number) • Demonstrate (show how the activity works) •
Things to think about IMMEDIATELY AFTER you have given your instructions, or AFTER CLASS:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check students understand (use Instruction Checking Questions – ‘ICQs’) • Monitor, to see if students are on task • 	

- | | |
|---|--|
| a) Check your instructions with a colleague | g) Script your instructions |
| b) Get your students' attention | h) Speed: slower than classroom 'chat' |
| c) Give a (brief) overview of the task | i) Use 'please' |
| d) Have handouts ready | j) Volume: loud enough, but not too loud |
| e) Reflect: what could you do better? | |
| f) Repeat / paraphrase | |

2. Is there anything else you would add?

3. What three things could you do next week to make your instructions better, or even more efficient? Mark them in the box above with a star *, or underline them.

* * *

Food for thought

“If you try to force feed a child, the food will be rejected. Rather, one needs to make the eating experience pleasant, and even exciting. Once the child has voluntarily accepted the food, it’s now up to them to swallow it.”

“Education is at its finest when it is not taught, but caught.”

Chief Rabbi Mirvis, on ‘Thought for the day’, 4 Oct 2022 [Yom Kippur] BBC R4

