



The mission of GISD is to ensure that every student achieves maximum potential.

GISD Curriculum News

rigor/engagement/higher-order thinking

From the Desk of Keri Thoele,
GISD Asst. Superintendent

The Power of Choices

Daniel Pink calls this motivation 3.0 – using autonomy and mastery experience to tap into a student's intrinsic desire to learn.

In our *Design and Delivery* training, we learned about the importance of choice for students, and were given strategies that dealt with the Qualities of Choice (see box on right). Choice is a simple strategy that increases a students' autonomy or control over their own learning. Interestingly, research shows that motivating students with rewards and punishments has little effect in the long run, but giving students the power to make some instructional decisions is powerful.

Qualities of Choice:

- Product Focus
- Affirmation
- Affiliation
- Novel and Variety
- Choice
- Authenticity

Schlechty, *Working on the Work*, 2001

See Addendum on p. 3 for more information.

Strategy of the Week:

By
Appointment



By Appointment

Concept: Sometimes we get tired of the students picking the same partner every time we do some sort of partner activity or discussion, such as Think-Pair-Share. “By Appointment” is a strategy that teachers can use to mix it up.

Procedures: 1. Once a year or semester, take time out to have students go around the room “making appointments” by putting a classmate’s name by a certain time. They must put their name on the classmate’s sheet at the corresponding time. This way the two students have an appointment time when they will meet. 2. Have students keep up with their appointment sheets by filing them into a notebook or folder. 3. When you want

students to pair up, say for instance to discuss a point made in lecture, then call out an appointment time, such as, “Meet with your 5:00 appointment.” 5. Students then pair with the person written by that time slot. 6. Be sure to vary the appointment times you pick so that students get to have a variety of partners.

HINT: For larger classes, create more appointment times. You can include intervals with half hours or every fifteen minutes. Use enough guidance when conducting this activity so that the shy kid doesn’t get left out. If you create the same number of time slots as students less one (can’t put yourself in a slot), this won’t happen.

Time	Name	Time	Name
1:00		7:00	
2:00		8:00	
3:00		9:00	
4:00		10:00	
5:00		11:00	
6:00		12:00	

Possible Template

Student Choice

Some interesting research on choice:

- Students tend to increase their intrinsic desire to learn when they are given choices in their learning.
- 3-5 is the ideal number of choices for students to pick from. With more than 5 choices, the student often spends too much time and focus on the choice itself versus the activity.
- Choices that are instructionally irrelevant tend to be just as effective as academic choices. For instance, an elementary student who gets to pick what color to write in or what color to write on or a secondary student who gets to pick the order to do assignments or what medium to use to present answers.
- Savvy teachers can come up with choices that all support the desired learning outcome and have the same rigor and relevance to the lesson.

Patall, Cooper & Robinson, 2008

Addendum (This information is also in your *Design & Delivery* notebook.)

There are six Design Qualities of Choice:

- **Product Focus**, which refers to the opportunity to structure tasks and activity so that what students are to learn is linked to some product, performance, or exhibition to which the student attaches personal value.
- **Affirmation of Performance**, which refers to the possibility of designing tasks and activities so that the performance of students is made visible to persons who are significant in their lives, as well as designing the work in ways that make it clear that the quality of the performance of the student has meaning and value to peers and others whose opinions the student values and cares about.
- **Affiliation**, which refers to the possibility of designing tasks so that students are provided the opportunity to work *with* peers as well as with parents, outside experts, and other adults, including but not limited to the teacher.
- **Novelty and Variety**, which refers to the possibility of providing students the opportunity to employ a wide range of media and approaches when engaged in the activities assigned and encouraged.
- **Choice**, which refers to the possibility of designing tasks and activities so that students can exercise choice either in what they are to learn or how they go about learning that which it is required that they learn.
- **Authenticity**, which refers to the possibility of linking learning tasks to things that are of real interest to the student, especially when the student is not interested in learning what adults have determined he or she needs to learn.

Schlechty, *Working on the Work*, 2001