

Some ways of innovative Teaching .

Dr. Goutam Patra
Asst. Professor, WBES
Govt. College of Education, Banipur

Innovative teachers must offer choice

We spent a lot of time as a teacher figuring out new ways to inspire and motivate our students. Sometimes it worked, but often we would fail to reach all of them. [Then if we allow students of their own choice of reading](#) Students are inspired and motivated to learn by themselves...and by each other. And they will do a much better job at inspiring than I ever could. Choice gives students the ability to go above and beyond our curricular limitations... we should try to give as much choice as possible and watch our students innovativeness.

Innovative teaching allows for failure

Maybe this one should be re-labeled “provide growth opportunities”. We learn best after failing. In fact, you should start promoting epic failures in your classroom. We have to give a round of applause when students fail because now the learning can really begin. This doesn't work too well with tests...but with [projects it is great!](#) If we create a culture where failure is not only accepted, but embraced...our students will not be afraid to challenge themselves.

Mentorship comes in all forms

When learning was hard? It took time to find an answer. We had to search the library, ask the right teacher, or find some type of adult or expert who had knowledge and ask for guidance. We have to model to our students where to find the “right answers” to their questions. Their learning mentor could be Google, Siri, YouTube, [Udemy](#), [Quora](#) etc. These sites and platforms can connect our learners to better information than we ever had, it would be a shame for us not to show them how to best use it!

Technology with a purpose

Students may be asked to think about Blog, Rubrics, [Prezi](#), [Haiku Deck](#) and use technology with a purpose and understand which tool (technology) is right for which job (assignment or project). In order to do they must be informed on what options are out there...or to ask a colleague who knows. We should not waste our time, or our students time by using technology for tech's sake.

Build something together

We have to know what is so much better than one student working passionately on something they care about? Students collaborative together to build something that matters...to them...and the world (more on that later). How often do we let our students collaborate? I'm not talking about "Think, Pair, Share". I mean real collaboration where they work through problems together and come up with solutions, and test those solutions, and then debate whether or not they can improve upon that solution... Give them a chance to build something together, and they'll learn much more than they could learn by themselves.

From local to global

Students have to make realized that they are not alone in their "learning". And they also learned that students all around the world were just like them. They struggled to learn, and had to work hard to create. At the same time, we can't forget to have a focus on your local community. When we do project with our local watershed, or run community fundraisers its about a bigger cause. Teachers need to tie "innovation" with both local and global experiences, because both allow students to interact with the real world.

Standards are guidelines, you are the architect

Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe made a great point [when they said](#): *"The standards are like the building code. Architects and builders must attend to them but they are not the purpose of the design. The house to be built or renovated is designed to meet the needs of the client in a functional and pleasing manner – while also meeting the building code along the way."*

Don't let new standards get in the way of innovative teaching. That is a lazy excuse. Instead, use standards as a starting "code" for creative lessons and projects that promote design thinking and innovative learning experiences.

Be a learner first and model it

We have to be relentless learners. Rabindranath Tagore's thought may be shared. A lamp cannot light another until it continues to burn its flame. So the teachers have to remain engaged in learning throughout his/her life

Flexible with high expectation

We should have high expectations for ourselves, our team, our students, and our school. But with high expectations often comes lack of flexibility. Innovation doesn't happen without either of these. Have high expectations for our students and they will rise to meet a challenge, but also to have the flexibility to go with what is working and change paths if need be. It is a fine line to walk as learners, but keep an open mind about what is possible, and anything really can happen.

A challenge that is fun

Learning needs to be fun. The process may have its ups and downs, and it should be challenging. However, it should have moments of pure fun and enjoyment. One of my favorite quotes is by the late professor and author Randy Pausch of the Last Lecture. Randy says, "If you can't learn and have fun at the same time, then I'm not sure you have a good understanding of either." As human beings we enjoy a challenge. It's may also be a better type of fun. Let our students work hard and have fun in their learning experiences. They'll thank you for it.

Conclusion: A teacher should be creative and innovative minded unless innovation is simply impossible. It is the desire of the teacher that leads towards innovation and it is an utmost felt need today in the age of knowledge explosion.