

Spicing up your Lecture:
Igniting the spirit of learning within your students

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Suggestions for Bad Lecturing:

1. Begin a course with no introduction to the subject to your own bias. Simply start with the first topic you wish to represent.
2. Make no references to the broader context of the specific topic being considered.
3. Do not acknowledge the students' interests or previous knowledge and experience.
4. Become preoccupied with the historical context of a topic, neglecting the central subject of the course.
5. Give excessive attention to the trivial details of the subject or to those parts that most interest you; omit topics of more central importance or interest.
6. Dwell extensively on your private scholarly quarrels with other authorities over esoteric points, without showing how your concerns relate to the larger subject.
7. Qualify terms so excessively that students will not be able to explain them to a friend immediately after class. Be so specific and sophisticated in the definitions you present that students will have to memorize what you say word for word and will be unable to define terms meaningfully in their own language.
8. Present learned quotations on the basis of tradition or authority, without explaining why the authorities believe as they do.
9. Justify conclusions on the basis of tradition or authority, without explaining why the authorities believe as they do.
10. Use arcane terms and make no attempt to define them; do not acknowledge that students may not know what you mean.
11. Rarely look at your audience. With a fixed posture, keep your eyes on your notes, the floor, the ceiling, or the side walls.
12. Speak in a monotonous voice, showing little emphasis, force, or enthusiasm.
13. Hesitate frequently in the middle of sentences, but rarely pause at the end of major lecture sections.
14. Show little sense that time is passing and insist on presenting points in the orderly manner you planned, even if individual classes end in mid-topic or you will fall farther behind the course syllabus.
15. Indicate that you know the students are confused or impatient, but then do nothing differently.

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