Fact Sheet No. 4

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TITLE The word “Lecture”:

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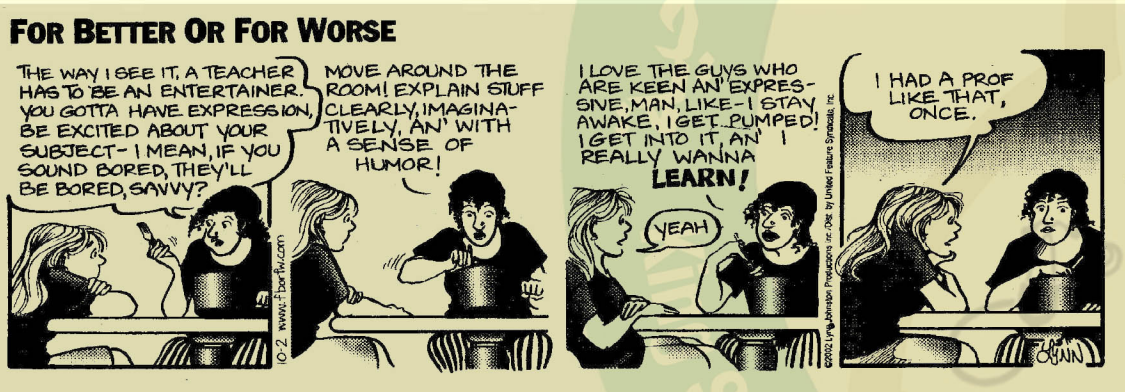
CONTENT



A lecture is an oral presentation intended to teach people about a particular subject. The noun "lecture" dates from 14th century, meaning "action of reading, that which is read," from the Latin lectus, pp. of legere "to read." Its subsequent meaning as "a discourse on a given subject before an audience for purposes of instruction" is from the 16th century.

Lecture as an Instructional Tool:

Lecture is one of the instructional tools among a list of others including tutorials, seminars, visits and skills sessions etc. It is best used to deliver contents from the cognitive domain of knowledge and it has a limited role in the delivery of contents from the psychomotor domain of knowledge.

Lecture is appropriate when:	**Lecture is not appropriate when:**
Disseminating information quickly to a large audience	Dealing with information concerning feelings and attitudes
Presenting new information before using other media or activities (e.g., a brief lecture before playing a videotape)	Training in psychomotor (hands-on) skills
Providing an overview of a topic	Teaching high-level cognitive skills (e.g., synthesis and evaluation)

Adapted from: Renner 1993; Ruyle 1995.

Suggestions for effective lecture preparation and delivery:

The following list of suggestions for effective lecture preparation and delivery are arranged under three phases of a lecture- the introduction, the body, and the closing.

- The Beginning of the Lecture
- The Body of the Lecture
- The Closing of the Lecture

The Beginning of the Lecture:

- Use an introduction that will catch the listener's interest.
  - Suggestion: Raise a question to be answered by the end of the lecture.
  - Suggestion: State an historical or current problem related to the lecture content.
  - Suggestion: Explain the relationship or relevance of lecture content to laboratory exercises, homework problems, professional career interests, the "real" world, etc.
  - Suggestion: Relate lecture content to previous class material.
- Provide a brief overview of the lecture's content either verbally, with a handout, or through an outline on the chalkboard.
- Tell students how you expect them to use the lecture material.
- Define or explain unfamiliar terminology.

The Body of the Lecture:

- Allow for some flexibility in the amount of content to be presented in order to respond to student questions and comments.
- Determine the key points to be developed during the class session. When every nuance, detail, or instance of a topic is discussed, or when too many ideas are presented and not well developed, students often lose sight of the main idea.
- Organize material in some logical order.
- Prepare examples to clarify and emphasize key ideas.
- Provide transitions, which show the relationships between key ideas.
- Effectively incorporate audiovisual or support materials. See "Practical Suggestions for Using Visual Instructional Aids: Chalkboard, Slides, Transparencies."
- Throughout the lecture check on student understanding by:
  - Asking students to answer specific questions.
  - Asking for student questions: State structuring question(s) or cues that help students formulate questions about what they don't understand.
  - Presenting a problem or situation, which requires use of lecture material in order to obtain a solution.
  - Checking on student understanding by watching the class from nonverbal cues of inattention, confusion or misunderstanding...

The Closing of the Lecture:

- Answer any questions raised at the beginning of the lecture.
- Provide closure for the lecture. Suggestions include:
  - Briefly summarize lecture material and preview what lies ahead.
  - Relate lecture material to past or future presentations.
  - Ask a student to summarize the lecture's key ideas.
- Restate what you expect the students to gain from the lecture material.
- Ask for and answer student questions.

REFERENCES

1. Renner P. 1993. The Art of Teaching Adults. Training Associates: Vancouver, British Columbia.
2. Silberman ML. 1990. Active Training: A Handbook of Techniques, Designs, Case Examples, and Tips . Lexington Books: New York.
3. Sullivan R. 1996. Delivering Effective Lectures. JHPIEGO Strategy Paper. JHPIEGO Corporation: Baltimore, Maryland.