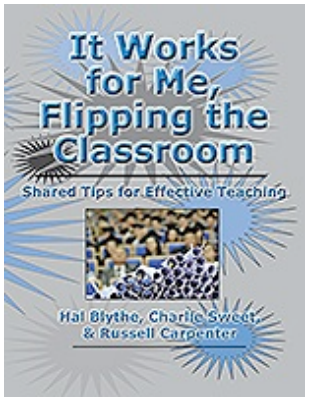


It Works for Me, Flipping the Classroom: Shared Tips for Effective Teaching

Blythe, Hal; Sweet, Charlie; and Carpenter, Russell, eds.
New Forums Press, Inc., 2015

Book Review

Tags: effective teaching | flipped classrooms | student learning

Reviewed by: Rob O'Lynn, *Kentucky Christian University*
Date Reviewed: March 14, 2016

The pedagogical landscape of education has recently experienced a tectonic shift in terms of professional development. Once in the field, teachers seeking improvement and new ideas as to how to improve their craft, like so many professionals, used to wait for top-notch scholars to produce new research-based, paradigm-changing tomes. The thinking was that those in the trenches, those who filled kindergarten classrooms and chemistry labs across the country, were not creative enough to provide cutting-edge educational discoveries; only those who labored for a doctorate and took to the ivory towers of academia were capable of such exploration. Sadly, by the time these game-changing discoveries trickled down to the huddled masses in the faculty workroom, these ideas had already been discovered by accident and had been shared among the other faculty on the quad. Teacher's in-service did not focus on the next great discovery but on how to share the discovery with fellow teachers.

As this new wave of creative teachers began filling the gaps in higher education after proving themselves as master teachers and scholars in this area or that (and with the advent of social media), the focus kept evolving: for example, how can this idea, discovered in a chemistry classroom, be applied to the theology, composition, or social work classroom? Thankfully, Hal Blythe, Charlie Sweet, and Russell Carpenter, all writing professors at Eastern Kentucky University, have made it their mission to improve teacher effectiveness across the nation, first with their Noel Studio for Academic Creativity and now with their *It Works for Me* book series.

In this volume, as in the previous seven volumes, Blythe, Sweet, and now Carpenter, have assembled a cadre of interdisciplinary scholars from across the country to engage in a conversation about what these teachers and administrators have found in their efforts to "flip"

Published by the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion
301 West Wabash Ave, Crawfordsville, IN 47933
(765) 361-6047 (800) 655-7177 fax (765) 361-6051
Fully Funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and Located at Wabash College

the classroom in an attempt to improve student learning and retention. The authors selected for this volume exhibited good ideas and were invited to share those ideas with others. Generosity, author and speaker Michael Hyatt would say, has become the new currency in learning, leadership, and life.

This volume is divided into seven sections and includes an introduction and take-away-style conclusion. The sections this reviewer found of note were the opening where the flipped classroom is defined (all instructional content is found outside the classroom and classroom time is used for conversations, processing, and reflection), the sections on in-class and out-of-class assignments, and assessment. Each larger section opens with a short introduction from the editors, which is followed by a number of short essays from the contributing authors where each author or team of authors discusses their experiment with flipping the classroom. References, where applicable, have been provided. The concluding take-away section offers twenty ideas, such as never spending more than fifteen minutes on any activity, using Bloom's taxonomy when crafting course components, engaging other faculty to get feedback on flipped assignments or course structure, and developing your own competency in technology.

Overall, this is an incredibly helpful volume. Its strength is in sharing ideas that might inspire a new way of doing one assignment or offering one lecture that might increase student learning and retention. In that way, it works!

https://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/resources/book_reviews/it-works-for-me-flipping-the-classroom-shared-tips-for-effective-teaching/