

Effective Teaching in a Block Schedule

This is not THE solution or template for teaching in a block schedule. It is a simple and flexible framework to imagine ways to engage your students in longer class periods. While the stages below can be sequential one does not have to follow such a plan or the time limits slavishly. Any stage below can be the basis of the entire lesson (typically not best practice) or can be blended or bundled together in a more intensive fashion. **The more intentional and clearer you are with the WHAT & WHY, the more effective the lesson will be.**

Prioritize.....????? minutes==>

The planning phase BEFORE one enters the classroom. Taking what one has always “covered” and making it fit in the new daily schedule will likely lead to frustration. Planning to effectively teach in a block starts with establishing clear curricular priorities and goals and designing lessons and instructional strategies that align with those priorities.

Entice.....10-15 minutes ==>

Set the stage for the day and connect it to previous learning. Reinforce class and learning principles, take care of business (Take attendance, touch base with individual students and collect work.). Engage students with the day’s learning goal(s). Skill or concept review with quick formative assessment.

Enlighten.....15-20 minutes ==>

Student encounters new information, concept, or skill. Typically direct instruction through lecture, reading, notetaking, handouts, research

Engage.....10-15 minutes ==>

Students engage in an activity to collectively or individually practice/explore skill or concept presented during direct Instruction time. (Floundering and struggle during this phase is productive and good)

Extend.....10-15 minutes ==>

More practice. Similar to the Engage phase but higher emphasis on individual practice and teacher guiding and supporting. Alternately this segment may become a “homework” assignment and the next lesson might begin a review and assessment of that work.

Closure.....5 minutes ==>

“What did I learn today?” Reflection on learning goals and work completed in class. Formative assessment. Clarify any expectations, practice, or considerations for next meeting.