

The Whip Around:

“We only learn by doing if we reflect on what we have done.” John Dewey

Theory

The “whip” is a technique that is designed for a quick assessment of what students have learned in a class period or segment of a class. It serves multiple functions in that it helps students to recall a significant learning from a class; other student’s comments serve as a review for the rest of the students (helping to provide multiple exposure) and it is an active learning event in the classroom. It is both highly reflective and constructivist in nature. Most students enjoy the process.

The process

At the end of an instructional event each student is asked to quickly state one thing that he or she has learned in the class/ period that day. It is that simple. Initially, the teacher should provide a chart with the following response guides and explicitly teach the process. In my experience, after it has been used several times 30 students can “whip” around the room in less than one (1) or two (2) minutes.

Response guide

I now know that...

I learned...

I was reminded of...

I was surprised to learn that...

I feel (an emotional response is given) because I now know...

This makes me conclude...

I discovered...

I've revisited an old idea about...

“Pass” with a return for comment.

“Piggy-back” on someone else's comment (with an addition of my own).

The rules:

- 1- The comments must be short.
- 2- Everyone should present as quickly as possible.
- 3- All comments are accepted even if a cast-off comment is recalled.
- 4- Everyone participates.
- 5- No "editorial" comments about other people's statements (even the teacher – but the teacher can and should correct blatant errors). I usually active listen.
- 6- Should happen before breaks, class ends or transitions.