STUDENT TEACHING: A SELF ASSESSMENT
AN HONORS CREATIVE PROJECT (ID 499)

BY

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"Why did I teach what I taught today? How could I have taught it better?" I have often heard my father ask himself these words. The concept of self evaluation is the basis for my research and paper. The idea is very selfish, I suppose, but I hope by analyzing my work and by making improvements, I am becoming a more effective teacher. I used my student teaching experience to conduct my research and to discover my strengths and weaknesses.

I was assigned to student teach for ten weeks at Wes-Del High School in Gaston, Indiana. My Ball State University supervisor was Mr. Kenneth Sieber, and my classroom supervisor was Mrs. Melissa Voss. I was assigned to teach two freshman geography classes, a split junior and senior psychology class, and a senior government class. Geography was not one of my areas, but in order to stay with Mrs. Voss the entire day, I chose to teach it. Indeed, it is with my geography classes that my original research idea began. I planned to develop two units covering Western Europe. For unit one, I would create a lesson plan and teach it to my second hour class while I videotaped myself. Then that evening, I would view the tape to ascertain what types of questions the students asked, what parts of the lesson were confusing and also what habits I displayed that were distracting to the students. I then would make changes in the plans and teach the modified lesson to the seventh hour class and again videotape myself. For unit two, I would begin with the seventh hour class so they did not always get the modified plan. Unfortunately, my original idea was not feasible. I learned
quite a few practical tips while doing my student teaching that I
could not have learned in a classroom at Ball State. For
example, I learned just how often the class is interrupted! It
was unfortunate that the geography classes were second and
seventh hours because the Spring calendar was busy, and seventh
hour class was dismissed frequently. There were mock weddings,
lip sync contests, convocations, pep sessions, and musical
performances which were all scheduled for the last hour of the
day. Obviously, these interruptions destroyed my research
design. Of my original research, I have only four hours of
tape—two lessons!

So, instead of my original idea, I decided to use the tapes
for a different purpose. I had the four hours of tape from the
first plan, plus three extra hours of videotape from my other
classes, and I decided to critique myself using six of the
teaching skills identified by Dwight Allen. I did not make any
direct citations in the text since the authors to which I refer
are reknown in the field of education. I included the works I
reviewed in a works consulted page at the end of the paper. The
six Dwight Allen skills are establishing set, reinforcement,
nonverbal communication, stimulus variation, use of examples, and
questioning. I also included a miscellaneous, catch-all category
of classroom management. For each lesson, I rated myself on each
skill on a scale from zero to five. Zero means that I did not
demonstrate the skill at all, one means that I demonstrated the
skill poorly, two means below average, three indicates average,
four means good, and five means I demonstrated the skill in the
most appropriate fashion. After I rated myself, I analyzed the
videotapes and made suggestions for improvements based on my observations, constructive criticism from Mrs. Voss, and techniques I learned from the works by Dwight Allen and Madeline Hunter.

These skills are certainly not the only ones that exist or that I could have chosen to observe, but I decided to critique these skills because they were easily observable. The establishing set skill refers to how the material is introduced. Are the students interested? Aroused? Or, are they bored? Do the students have a clear idea of what is expected from them for that lesson? What is the tone of the lesson? How is the material relevant to the student? Reinforcement refers to anything the teacher does to increase the likelihood that a desirable student behavior will reoccur. Nonverbal communication refers to how well information is conveyed without words. Stimulus variation can be almost anything the teacher does to help the student stay on-task and reduce boredom. Use of examples is a fairly self-explanatory skill, but one that is extremely important in helping students relate new material to previously learned information. Questioning is probably one of the more important skills. This technique allows the teacher to assess how well he is relating the material and how well the students are comprehending it. Classroom management refers to the atmosphere in the classroom. Is the atmosphere conducive to teaching? Learning? Mastery of these skills is one of my professional goals, and the use of videotape was very useful in helping me in my quest. Before each summary of the tape, I included my data analysis sheet.
I had to view the tapes several times before I could critique them to get over the shock of seeing myself on videotape. My voice sounded so different, and my mannerisms seemed foreign to me. I truly believe that videotaping is the ultimate way to critique oneself. I am fortunate to live in a time of such technological advances. The videotapes enabled me to see myself through the eyes of my students. After viewing the tapes, I learned that I am doing some things well (I just need some polishing), and I am doing other things incorrectly or not at all. While listening to the Madeline Hunter audio tapes and watching the Dwight Allen films, I learned some new techniques and reviewed others. The seven skills I chose to critique were easily observable and critical to a master teacher (a title I would someday like to own). When I was younger, I was very embarrassed by constructive criticism; luckily, I have changed. I am a bit embarrassed for anyone else to view the tapes, because I honestly believe that I did not do a very good job. As a result of my analysis, however, I feel much more prepared and confident. I have identified areas of weakness and areas in which I do well. I believe that this identification is a positive step in my quest to become a better teacher. Hopefully, I will never stop evaluating myself and my methods. I think that self evaluation can help delay teacher burnout. Teacher burnout is a huge occupational hazard, and I met several teachers at Wes-Del who were disillusioned with their profession. Many of these teachers were still quite young, too. I believe that much of the burnout problem stems from discipline problems in the classroom. Hopefully, by mastering these skills, I will reduce
the number of discipline problems, thus reducing teacher burnout.

I now turn to tape one.

DATA SHEET FOR TAPE ONE

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Use of Examples</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the first lesson, the beginning minutes were not recorded, so I obviously could not discuss establishing set. I do not remember doing anything spectacular to get the students' attention, however. I believe that establishing set skill is my weakest skill. I do have one technique that I use to let my students know that I want their attention: I close the door after I have taken attendance. This technique is more of a behavior modification skill than an establishing set skill, however. Establishing set is directly related to the particular content for that day; closing the door was something I did every day.

Reinforcement is a very important skill. It is also easy to observe. I gave myself a three because I did use reinforcement frequently; however, I did not use it very effectively. I fell
into a pattern of saying "good" or "right" too often. There were countless opportunities to use different forms of reinforcement. For example, I should have said "Yes, that was correct because...", thus elaborating on why the answer was correct. Instead, I just said "good" and continued lecturing. I should also use reinforcement on more of an intermittent schedule instead of a regular, predictable one. After awhile, I do not think I was even reinforcing much at all. Another way to reinforce might be something as simple as a smile, which brings me to the next skill--nonverbal communication.

I rated myself a one on this skill because I did not observe myself doing much. I did smile as I reinforced, but other than that, I was weak on the nonverbal communication skill. I think that many teachers are reluctant to use silence; I know that I am intimidated by it at times. It can be a very effective management skill, however, because if I am talking and then stop in mid sentence, I will undoubtedly have every eye looking my way to see why I stopped. I could use other signals, too. For example, I could put my hand to my ear when I want them to speak louder and point to them when I want them to respond to a question. Signals like these mixed with verbal cues help the students pay attention and keep focused on the lecture; they are more likely to keep their eyes on me to avoid missing anything.

I was disappointed in my questioning skills for this tape. On the written tests, I do believe that I was able to obtain a fairly high level of Bloom's taxonomy; however, that skill did not carry over into the lecture. I asked very basic, recall questions which required little thought. Many of the questions
were directly from the study guide. It would have been appropriate to ask questions from the guide in order to discover which students had completed the work, but I also need to include questions which require critical thinking. For example, I informed them that Spain and Portugal were both members of the Common Market and went on to say that this membership has helped their economies. I think instead, that I should have asked why membership in the Common Market would help their economies. When discussing Andorra, I should have asked them how they would support themselves if they lived in Andorra instead of asking them what are the chief occupations in Andorra.

When randomly choosing students to answer questions, Madeline Hunter suggests asking the question first and then calling on a student. If the order is reversed, then the other students who were not called upon will often stop paying attention and miss both the question and the answer. I noticed that I did it both ways. Sometimes I called on the student first; sometimes I asked the question first. One reason I may have called on the student first was to get his attention. I noticed that I had a tendency to call on students who were not paying attention. Evidently, I was questioning the wrong way. Yes, I would get that one student’s attention, but I potentially lost the attention of the rest of the class. I rated myself a two on questioning.

I also rated myself a two on stimulus variation. I did exhibit the skill, but, again, not too effectively. I did not stand in one place too long; however, I paced, and I think that it was distracting. It is also effective to alter the rate, pitch, and volume of the voice to capture and hold their
attention, and I did not take advantage of this technique either. The volume had to be kept at a loud level because the windows were open, and there was noise from the outside. I could have varied the rate and pitch, however. One major criticism I had with my lectures was the extreme overuse of "okay" and "um." I became very annoyed with myself, and I can imagine how my students felt. The odd thing about it was that I had absolutely no idea that I was even saying it! I do not understand how I could say something so many times and be totally unaware of it.

I rated myself a one on use of examples. Because I am closer to their ages, I think that I was able to relate to them well. Many of my allusions were about recent movies, songs, or television shows. On this particular tape, however, I did not use this skill very effectively. I missed repeated opportunities to clarify facts and concepts with examples they could comprehend. It is unfortunate that I did not perform better on this skill because examples help the students remember the material. If the students have a schemata for the material, then the material is more readily encoded and more quickly retrieved.

Overall classroom management is a catch-all category. I am measuring how well I kept their attention and interest as well as how they behaved during class. Before I viewed the tape, I would have guessed that I had their attention for the majority of the hour—surprise, surprise! One mistake I made was to use the map on the side of the room. I should have pointed out a few things and then walked around or moved to the front of the room. Instead, I lectured from the side of the room, and although I had that side's attention, the students on the other side were
off-task, whispering and passing notes etc... . I did scold one student for blowing a huge bubble with his gum, and he did not do it again, so apparently that worked. I also believe that I would have been more effective if I had been more familiar with the material. Practice does make perfect (or in my case, a little better), and I was pleased with some of the improvements I made when I gave the same lecture the next day to the seventh hour class.
## DATA SHEET FOR TAPE TWO

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<td>Use of Examples</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
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I was much more relaxed during lesson two. My camera fright lessened. Although I knew the material well by this time, I still relied too much on my lesson plan. My notes became my security blanket throughout my student teaching experience. I rated myself a zero on establishing set. I began the lesson by demanding their attention at the map on the side of the room. I did nothing to pique their curiosity about Spain or Portugal. I was sitting on a gold mine, too, because two Brazilian exchange students who could speak Portuguese were in the class. While I watched the tape, many ideas came to me for establishing set. I could have begun the lecture by saying something in Spanish or asking Andre B. and Andre C. to dialogue in Portuguese. Later in the lesson, I asked the class how many of them would like to visit Spain or Portugal; this question could have been used to
establish set. Sometimes watching the tapes was frustrating since I continually thought of better ideas and methods.

I rated myself two on reinforcement. Unfortunately, I fell into the same trap of "good" and "right." I think that I should nod my head and smile more in place of verbal reinforcement. I noticed, too, that I reinforced every correct answer. Many of these students were confident and secure enough in their abilities that they did not need to be reinforced every time.

My nonverbal communication improved a bit on lesson two, and I rated myself a two on this skill. I did put my hand to my ear once to indicate to the student to speak louder. I also gave a warning look to a few students who were talking. I still hesitated to use silence, however. I need practice on this skill. Another technique I could have used was pointing to a student to answer instead of calling on him.

I think that my questioning ability improved a bit during lesson two also, and I rated myself a three. I still made the mistake of calling on a student before asking the question, but I did not do it as frequently. I took advantage of more opportunities to question students deeper. For example, I made Jason explain what he meant by the term "subsaharran" so I knew that he knew what it meant. The other students in the class learned the definition, too. I tried to help students determine the correct answer by giving them clues or asking the question in a different way. During other lectures, I let the student off the hook too easily if he appeared to not know the answer. Although parts of my questioning ability improved during this lesson, I made a new error-- asking group questions. Madeline
Hunter does not suggest asking a question to the entire class. Usually, only a few students answer, which makes individual assessment difficult. It often leads the teacher to a false conclusion about how much material the students have mastered.

One positive skill that I used in connection with questioning was repetition. I asked them questions about Spain and Portugal that were answered in a filmstrip they had seen the day before. The answers were also in their reading assignment but not necessarily on their study guides. I also asked them to remember the definition of a peninsula and the definition of arable. I referred to the filmstrip several times, hopefully reinforcing the material I was discussing. I think one reason they were hesitant to answer was the difficult pronunciation of some of the terms and names of cities, rivers, mountain ranges etc...

During lesson two, I paced much less; perhaps it was because I was not as nervous. I only rated myself a two on stimulus variation because I did not do too much to break the monotony of the lecture. I did walk around some, and I used my arms and hands. Also I noticed that I did vary the rate, pitch, and volume of my voice occasionally. I do believe that this method was effective in keeping their attention.

Since I felt more comfortable with the material, I diverged from my notes a few times to tell a few stories of my experiences in the Canary Islands and my sister's experiences in Spain. I believe that these stories added interest to the lecture. It was not a deliberate decision to add these stories; I was just
lecturing, and they came to me. I included these stories as use of examples because examples can be anything that helps make the information more real or relevant to the student. I rated myself a two on this skill because I failed to use more examples. The examples I did use were effective, I think, but more examples would have been even better. Other than the stories I told, the only example I used was explaining per capita income in terms of the class and their allowances. One of my stronger skills is the ability to think fast on my feet. The examples I used were not part of my lesson plan; I just used them as I thought of them. I believe that I would be a more effective teacher if I anticipated places in the lecture that might be ambiguous, and before I teach, develop examples to be included in my lesson plan.

Overall classroom management was rated a two because although I was more relaxed than the day before, I may have been too relaxed. Close to the end of the hour, I began to lose control of the class. My attitude was too casual, and they took advantage of it. The result was my having to really yell at them to keep them on-task. I did force one student to sit up because he had his head on his desk. I will not tolerate students sleeping in my class. Overall, however, they were fairly attentive. This particular freshman class had a bad reputation among the faculty at Wes-Del. Apparently, they talked and disrupted class often. No teacher seemed to be able to control them very well.
DATA SHEET FOR TAPE THREE

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<td>Use of Examples</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
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</table>

The third lesson featured Greece. I was not very familiar with the material, and I think it was apparent. I gave myself a zero on establishing set; if I could have rated myself any lower, I would have. I did nothing to grab their attention; in fact, I started the lecture by scolding a student who had out his biology book, not his social studies one. I know that there will be good days and bad days, and this was a bad day. The students were fidgety and not very interested in the lecture. I believe that my negative attitude at the beginning of the lecture did not help the situation and may have caused it. I am not sure how I could have subdued the class and obtained their attention without scolding them. I should have praised the ones who were doing what they were supposed to do, thus reinforcing the desirable behavior and ignoring the disruptive behavior. I am not sure what would have worked on this particular day.
On reinforcement, I rated myself a three. I noticed that I smiled and nodded my head more rather than saying "good" and "right" all the time. Once, I even said "great." I do think that I need to elaborate on students' correct answers by explaining why it was correct, or questioning the students more to make sure that they understood the answer they gave and did not just copy it from the book.

Nonverbal communication I rated a two. I still was intimidated by the use of silence. I used a warning look a few times to convey my frustration with a few students who were talking, and I also snapped my fingers to "tell" the other side of the room to quiet down. I believe that I need to practice nonverbal communication.

I rated myself a three on questioning. I was pleased with some of the improvements I made. There were still some very low-level questions that I asked, but at least I mixed them with some higher-level ones. For example, I asked them how Greece's location was important to its economy. I also asked them to describe for me what their lives would be like if they lived in Greece today. Answering these questions required more than simple regurgitation of what was on their study guides. I believe that I did a fairly good job of giving the students clues to help them answer correctly. I did call on Dana once and let her off the hook too easily, but on the other hand, I did a good job of coaxing the correct answer from John. Unfortunately, I had a problem while questioning Tyson. I thought my questions were good, but Todd (a class clown) ruined my strategy. I asked Tyson what his occupation would have been if he lived in ancient
Sparta, hoping he would say an athlete or a warrior. He did not know the answer, so I tried to help him. He was wearing a tee-shirt with a famous football player on it—Bo Jackson. I said that Bo would have probably lived on the island of Sparta, hoping that Tyson would pick up on the fact that he was an athlete; he still did not understand my line of reasoning. I finally just gave up and told Tyson what I was looking for, but before I did, Todd interjected from the back of the room that there were no black people in Sparta (Bo Jackson is black). I said, "Okay, assume Bo Jackson is white." I thought I did a pretty good job of not making a huge deal out of Todd's comment and keeping the question alive. After I gave Tyson the answer, Todd interjected again and said that if Bo Jackson was white, then he would not be a good athlete. The class all began to laugh, and I was preparing to reprimand Todd when Tyson turned around and for no apparent reason called Todd a nigger. I was livid! When I watched the tape, I did not think I looked as mad as I was. I immediately told Tyson that I never wanted to hear that word again in my class. I am sure he knew that I was very upset. The class also quieted down after that. Unfortunately, I never scolded Todd, and he was really the instigator. I believe I was wrong not to scold him. It was more of an oversight in all the confusion than a deliberate omission.

I rated myself a three on stimulus variation. I sat on the desk as well as walked around. I do not think that I paced as much either. I know that many educators believe that sitting on the desk is a poor technique, but I think that it can be effective when used in combination with other variations in the
stimulus. I do not understand how sitting on the desk makes someone a poor teacher. Perhaps, sitting on the desk the entire hour would be a bit boring, but so would standing behind a lectern. I did not sit on the desk until Mrs. Voss suggested it to me (maybe she wanted to reduce the pacing). I did walk in the front of the room, but I think I should have walked in between the rows and in the back of the room.

Use of examples I rated a two. I thought the Bo Jackson example was good; however, it ended up backfiring in my face. Again, this example was unplanned. I think that it is appropriate to use examples spontaneously, but I need to preplan examples to be included in my lesson plan.

Classroom management I rated a two also. My students were distracted, and my mood worsened as the hour progressed. I did do some preplanning that I think was effective. I had the students follow the maps in their books instead of the one on the wall. This way, each person could see the areas to which I referred. Unfortunately, I did not view their map intensely enough to notice that it did not show the Suez Canal or the Red Sea. I wanted them to notice certain pictures in their textbooks, so I wrote down the page numbers in my lesson plan. While I was lecturing, I could just look quickly at my lesson plan and tell them to look at the picture on page so and so. This trick kept the lecture moving very smoothly as I did not have to stop to look up the pages.
The fourth lesson was a bit unusual. All of the females were not present for most of the hour as they were on a physical education field trip—one more interruption! I took advantage of their absence to change the environment a bit. I had the remaining students arrange their chairs in a circle. This lesson proved to be unusual because there were many techniques that worked well and many techniques that did not.

Establishing set I rated a two. I used the all-male class as an example of what a town meeting might have been like in ancient Greece. I told them that women were treated as second-class citizens. Unfortunately, they seemed to enjoy this bit of knowledge. The students were fairly interested in the lesson, and I do not know if it was a result of the opening example or the seating arrangement. Perhaps, it could have been a combination of the two. Anyway, the lesson went much more
smoothly with this class than the second hour class the day before.

I was pleased with my reinforcement usage during this instructional session. I did not reinforce every time, which made it more meaningful when I did reinforce. I also used other words besides "good" and "right." I even said, "Bingo! You guys are on it!" I reinforced a student for bringing in an article about Greece. They were allowed to bring in articles for extra credit. The articles were supposed to be about the particular country we were studying, but sometimes they were difficult to find, so Mrs. Voss and I allowed articles from any European country. I smiled more often, and I used the word "alright." I nodded my head in place of verbal reinforcement at times also.

I rated myself a three on nonverbal communication. The atmosphere during the lesson was very casual, and there were a few times when I lost control. Fortunately, the warning looks I gave to students who were misbehaving worked. I also finally used silence. I stopped in mid sentence once to get everyone's attention; the skill was certainly effective! Once I stopped, everyone looked my way.

I was pleased with the questions I asked and their thoughtful answers. When the students do not get a chance to study after I lecture and before they take the quiz, then they are allowed to use their notes. The day before, I had to leave school early, so Mrs. Voss taught for me. She thought that I had already lectured over the material, so she told the students that they were not allowed to use their notes. The students were a bit confused, but instead of questioning Mrs. Voss, they studied
the material very well. Since they already knew the material, the lecture went quickly, and their responses were well done. I think that I did a good job of following-up on their answers and elaborating on the material as well as asking them to elaborate on their answers.

Stimulus variation I rated a four. The different seating arrangement was something new and fun. I was usually strict with them, but since half of the class was gone, and the rest of us were in a circle, I relaxed my tone a little. I did sit on the desk the entire period because I did not think that it would be prudent to walk around the room with the chairs in a circle. The circle allowed for an easy exchange of ideas and discussion. I think the students felt more free to answer questions. Perhaps that was because they knew the material well, too. I talked with my hands quite a bit while I lectured, and I am not sure if it was helpful or distracting. It was enjoyable to have such a small class and to be able to make spontaneous changes like moving the desks.

Use of examples I rated a three. The all-male example that I used at the beginning was popular and got their attention. I also alluded to the book The Odyssey which they all had read in their English class. They enjoyed the Greek money that I showed them, which I obtained when I was at the Ball State London Centre.

Classroom management I rated a two. Although I believe I did many things well during this lecture, I also lost control of the class a few times. The seating arrangement was new and exciting, and they were unable to stop talking at times.
least most of the time they were discussing the material! Their attention did wander a few times, but I was usually able to get them back on track. It was a hot day, and I think the heat contributed to their lack of attention at times. The fan was operating, but it was loud and distracting. It was also the last hour of the day.

I assumed that they knew they could use their notes. One of the students finally asked me, and I told him yes. That is when I discovered that Mrs. Voss had told them no. I also realized why they knew the material so well. I wished that I had told them that whether or not they were permitted to use their notes depended on their behavior. They might have behaved better. I also realized that their misbehavior was probably a result of boredom; they already knew the material. Unfortunately, it took almost the entire hour for me to discover all of this information. The last part of the class was a disaster! The female students returned from their field trip. They did not return together, so instead of one interruption there were several. After the girls got settled, we discussed the deterioration of the Parthenon, which led to a discussion concerning the environment. I think that it was a good discussion. I asked them some questions that I hope made them think about and examine their roles as citizens of the world. Of course once a good discussion ensued, we were interrupted by announcements from the office. Patience is a difficult skill to learn! My attitude was too casual and fun loving. I know that it was a factor in the students' misbehavior. Unfortunately, it was difficult to be nice and still maintain control of the class.
DATA SHEET FOR TAPE FIVE

Establishing Set 3
Reinforcement 3
Nonverbal Communication 4
Questioning 2
Stimulus Variation 3
Use of Examples 2
Classroom Management 4

The format for the fifth lesson was also different from the usual procedure. The class normally had a study day to work independently on their study guides. For this lesson, however, we did the study guide together. Mrs. Voss suggested this method because we were short on time, and it would provide a change for the students. As the students answered the questions, I would elaborate on their responses, thus lecturing on the material at the same time.

I was pleased with my establishing set skill this time. After I explained the procedure for the day, the students were unhappy; they did not want to do the study guide as a class. I was unsure of my ability to conduct the lesson, but it proved to be a valuable learning experience. The day was another warm one, and the fan was on which made hearing difficult. Considering all
of the obstacles, the hour went fairly smoothly. I rated myself a three on establishing set because I actually did something to get their attention at the beginning of the lecture. I asked how many of them would like to visit Eastern Europe. Of those that answered yes (more than I expected), I asked how many would have answered yes half a year ago (still more than I expected). I was pleasantly surprised that they were so interested in Eastern Europe. By asking these questions, I think I got at least everyone’s attention if not interest.

Reinforcement I rated a three. I did use "good" and "right" quite often, but I coupled that with "bingo," "sure," and an affirmative nod of the head. I reinforced one student, not only for the correct answer, but for the correct pronunciation, too. I reinforced on more of an intermittent schedule, and I believe that the students were really likely to change or continue their behavior as a result of the reinforcement. When a student gave an incorrect answer, I tried to explain how that answer would be correct for a different question, but not for the present one. I always tried to save a student from humiliation and embarrassment. I hope that I never discouraged a student from answering a question in my class.

My nonverbal communication increased and was effective in this lesson; I rated myself a four. I used my hands to illustrate the coming together, ideologically, of Eastern Europe. I also nodded yes or no instead of using the words. Once, I failed to hear a student's question, and rather than asking her to repeat it, I leaned in closer and gave her a puzzled look; it worked! Instead of yelling at Tyson to turn around like I
nor did, I walked by his desk and tapped my notes on it. Tyson turned around, and I did not have to stop the lecture or reprimand him in front of the class. At the beginning of the lecture, I remained silent until I had everyone’s attention. It was difficult for me to do—be silent that is—, but it was an effective way to command their attention.

My nonverbal communication skill improved for this lesson, but my questioning skill became less effective. The procedure of completing the study guide together was difficult for me. The students did not want to do it that way, and I was not an experienced enough teacher to conduct the lesson appropriately. It was a good learning experience, and I am sure that is why Mrs. Voss suggested it.

Since the study guide was a class effort, I easily fell into the trap of asking group questions. The better students would answer, and I would repeat the answer for the rest of the class. For many students, this became a lesson in shorthand, not Eastern Europe. They were trying to write down the answers word-for-word and were so busy writing that they failed to hear much of the lecture material. Some other class members feared that we would not finish in an hour, so they began working ahead and also failed to hear much of the lecture. Because I asked group questions or simple recall questions, I only rated myself a two on this skill. I had a perfect opportunity to ask a higher order question while lecturing on Bulgaria. Bulgaria is the poorest of the Eastern European countries and is also the most loyal to the Soviet Union. These two facts seem to be related, and that is what I told the class. I should have asked them to describe
Bulgaria's economy and then explain how their economy relates to their relationship with the Soviet Union. I did ask a few good questions about the countries that border Western Europe, but overall I was disappointed with my questioning ability.

I rated myself a three on stimulus variation. Obviously, the procedure for completing the study guide was the main variation in the lesson plan. Although the students complained at first, and the class had trouble staying together, it was a change; therefore, it kept their attention. I am not certain how soon I would try that procedure again, but I must admit that every student was working on the study guide. The quiz that was scheduled for the coming Monday helped keep their attention, too, because the students knew they only had this hour to obtain and verify their answers.

Unfortunately, I regressed to another bad habit: pacing. I like to address both sides of the class and keep everyone alert. By walking back and forth I hopefully keep everyone's attention; however, when I walk so rapidly, it ceases to be effective and becomes pacing, which is distracting. Once, I did walk down one of the aisles. I think I would have walked around more if the rows had not been in such close proximity. At times, it was difficult to maneuver around the classroom.

Along with my questioning skills, my use of examples skill worsened, too. I did not have any examples in my lesson plan. When I lectured on Western Europe, I could tell stories and show pictures from when I was overseas. I had concrete examples, but for Eastern Europe, I had none. Because I had never been there was no excuse to not have concrete examples or realia. I could
have taken advantage of Educational Resources. I should have worked even harder on this skill to compensate for my lack of knowledge. I did allude to an article in "Life" magazine about Rumania. I think that it captured their attention since it featured the gymnast Nadia Comaneci. The day before this assignment, Mrs. Voss showed them slides of her recent trip to Yugoslavia. I did refer to the slides a few times while lecturing. Hopefully, the slides helped to increase their recall by providing them with a visual image to encode along with names and other facts.

Overall classroom management I rated a four. The camera was focused on the class for a large amount of the hour, so I was able to ascertain how many students were on-task. Since the study guide was completed as a class, and since this was their only opportunity to receive the material for the quiz, they were remarkably attentive. The problem was not that they were not on-task, but rather that they were working ahead of the class or scrambling to write down all the information. Very few students were working on the same question that I was. I did have to ask a few students if they were paying attention and to call on other students who were daydreaming; however, the procedure of completing the study guide as a class reduced discipline problems dramatically.
DATA SHEET FOR TAPE SIX

Establishing Set 3

Reinforcement 3

Nonverbal Communication 4

Questioning 4

Stimulus Variation 3

Use of Examples 5

Classroom Management 4

The last two tapes are a bit different from the first four. Tape six is a tape of a lesson to my first hour psychology class. This class was composed of juniors and seniors. There were only ten students in the class. I noticed a world of difference between the freshmen and the seniors. Some of the physical differences were obvious, but the emotional and social differences were great, too. The tone of the class was always casual. It was the first hour of the day, and the class was very small. For videotaping purposes, I had them all sit together, but usually they were spread out. I enjoyed the upperclassmen very much. Because they were more serious and responsible, I was able to allow them some privileges such as having drinks in the classroom. Also, we usually had doughnuts at least once a week, which was a tradition started by Mrs. Voss.
I rated myself a three on establishing set. Actually, we started where we had finished the day before. I began by reminding them of the material we covered the previous day. They had completed a study guide, and we discussed the answers. I asked if they had any questions from the day before. Since this lesson was a continuation of the day before, I was not too concerned with establishing set. The students were well prepared and already motivated.

The lesson was very structured as we proceeded through the study guide. I asked them many questions and asked them to elaborate on their answers. Actually, the lesson was more like a discussion. I was pleased with their participation and insightful answers. The study guide covered the chapter on intelligence, which seemed to be a topic in which they were interested. Because I was pleased with the lecture and their answers, I reinforced quite often. I rated myself a three on this skill. As they answered, I often nodded my head in approval and smiled. I also said "good" and "right." One technique I also used was probing, even when their answers were correct, to discover why they answered the question the way they did. I encouraged them to elaborate on what they already answered. The atmosphere in the class was very open and friendly. The students were intrinsically motivated and very well behaved. I truly enjoyed working with them, and I think they knew how much I liked them. I also think the feeling was mutual.

Nonverbal communication I rated a four. I used my hands to express myself, and I nodded in place of verbal reinforcement. I indicated to the students when I wanted them to answer by
pointing to them with my notes. When I did not understand the students' responses, I sometimes gave a puzzled look, and they immediately tried to reword or revise their answers. It seems amazing to me how much information can be relayed without the use of words. This skill is certainly an asset to the master teacher. Many messages can be conveyed, not just a smile to say "good job," but also a frown to say "get to work," or other signals to mean "speak up" or "try again." All of these signals can cultivate the teacher/student relationship because the teacher can often avoid embarrassing the student with words the entire class can hear. The lectures run smoother, too, because the teacher does not usually need to stop the lecture. The use of silence is a marvelous skill that I know I need to master. Perhaps, this skill will come with time and practice.

I was pleased with my questioning skill during this lesson, and I rated myself a four. I was able, because of the nature of the lesson, to probe the students when they answered, and to encourage them to elaborate on their answers. I asked the questions from the study guide and then asked them other questions to reinforce the material and to discover if they really knew the answers or if they merely copied them from the book! I asked them their opinions on intelligence tests and what it means to be intelligent. We discussed stereotypes like the "dizzy blond" and the "nerd." When discussing stereotypes and the quick ways people judge other peoples' intelligence, I asked them to pretend they were the director of a play and wanted a certain character to be perceived as a nerd. I then asked them what they would use for props and why. Some of the answers were
very perceptive and others rather humorous, but I think the questions helped to reinforce how easy it is to make judgements about other peoples' intelligence.

Stimulus variation I rated a three. I did not do too much walking around, but the timing of the variations I used was effective. At the beginning of the lecture, I sat on the desk, and the students were moved close together. This atmosphere proved effective for a dialogue/discussion method. The students were responsive and uninhibited by the camera, well, most of them. Later, I rose to use the chalkboard to illustrate the formula for I.Q. and to describe a bell-shaped curve. For the last part of the class, I stood in front of them while I asked questions and lectured. While I was standing, I noticed that I began to pace again. Until I watched the tapes, I did not know how much I paced and how distracting it was. I am not sure how I can diminish this annoying habit.

I was extremely pleased with the examples I used during this lesson. I rated myself a five. Although a five is the highest number on my scale, I do not believe my skill was perfect, only that I demonstrated the skill in an appropriate and effective manner. I used many examples from recent movies and hit television shows. The students knew the people and characters to which I was referring, which helped to reinforce the points I was making. While discussing mental deficiencies, I showed the class some pictures of a person who had Down's Syndrome. I also told them that the main character in the television show And Life Goes On has Down's, too. When we discussed stereotypes about nerds, I alluded to a character from the movie Revenge of the
Nerds. This character was not only a nerd like Arvid on Head of the Class, but he was a divergent thinker. I used this opportunity to review the concept of divergent thinkers. The discussion of the intellectually gifted lended itself well to the example of Doogie Howser M.D.. In this series, Doogie is a sixteen year-old doctor. His character helps to dispel many myths about the gifted. The examples were not only helpful and reinforcing, but they were also fun and helped to create a pleasant, yet informative atmosphere.

Finally, classroom management was rated a four. I am not sure that I can take credit for their courteous behavior. It was a very small, early morning class. I never had behavior problems from any of these students. Often, I had a difficult time getting them to talk at all, which explains why I was so pleased with their responses during this lesson. I remember when I first began student teaching I was too afraid to call on them. I feared calling them by the wrong name or calling on a student who did not know the answer and would hate me for embarrassing him. Mrs. Voss advised me that for this class, it was a necessity to call on them and to force them to give some sort of answer. Mrs. Voss always said that, "I don't know" as a response was not an option. I believe the students respected her more for not letting them "off the hook," and I am sure that they worked harder for her than for certain other teachers who did not hold the same high expectations.
DATA SHEET FOR TAPE SEVEN

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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Questioning</td>
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<td>Use of Examples</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>4</td>
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The final two tapes I did not plan to use in my original research. I taped them for my own benefit, to observe differences in the upper and lower classmen and to observe differences in my interactions with them. I also wanted to have all my students on tape for posterity's sake. Tape seven is a lecture on city and county government given to my fifth hour senior government class. The lecture was the final one before their test. I felt more like a dispenser of knowledge than a teacher; I did more telling than teaching. I was not pleased with my overall performance on this tape. I now know why many education specialists do not like the lecture method. Since the students needed to take notes the entire hour and since most students find local politics to be a bore, I should have worked hard on establishing set. The class was an academic one, and the students were motivated (if by nothing else than by grades), but
I still should have done something to capture their interest. Perhaps then their knowledge would increase, and they would cease to view politics as boring. Maybe I could have increased their political efficacy, but I did little to establish set; I rated myself a one on this skill. I jumped right in with both feet and began lecturing and giving notes. Most classes would have lost all interest after the first five minutes, but these were college-bound, self-disciplined seniors. I could have begun the lecture by giving them job descriptions of city and county officials and have them match them to the office; this could work as an effective pretest, too. Throughout the unit on local government, I tried to stress the enormous impact that the local politicians have on their lives. I do not think this point was well made in this particular instructional session.

Because of the nature of the lesson, I did not ask them very many questions; hence, I did not reinforce very often. I thanked them for their attention, and reinforced behavior other than answering questions, but overall I was weak on this skill; I rated myself a two. During the lecture, they asked me questions to clarify what I was saying. The questions were thoughtful and relevant, and I told them so. Often, I did not know the answer. (I was not extremely well informed on this topic). I either looked up the answer right then, or I told them that I would look up the answer and get back to them. I believe that it is alright to say, "I do not know," whether it is my first or fiftieth year of teaching. If that is all I ever answered, then obviously my students would question my ability, but I can not be expected to know everything, especially in such an "information age."
would rather model research and information gathering skills than memorization skills.

Nonverbal communication I rated a one because I did very little to express myself without the use of words. I did smile and use my hands. I also feigned standing on my soapbox (an allusion many students did not understand). At the end of the lecture (since it was my last one), I took a bow, but other than these illustrations, I did not communicate nonverbally.

I rated myself a two on questioning because I did not ask many questions, and the ones I did ask did not require much critical thought. I did not ask them questions because the information was fairly new to them, and they had no schemata to help them connect the information. I regret that I was not more creative in my questioning technique. The lecture might have been more stimulating if I had.

Stimulus variation received a low rating, also. I rated myself a one because I stood near the overhead projector the entire time. If I had made the overhead transparencies before class, then I would have been able to walk around the room more as I lectured. I know that I was bored just watching the tape; I am sure my students were bored, too.

I demonstrated the use of examples skill a bit better than the other skills during this class, but I only rated myself a three. I did not use nearly enough examples, and the ones I did use were spontaneous, which I suppose is not too bad. I do need to preplan examples, however. Many examples I used were comparisons between city and state, and state and federal governments. The organization of the local governments often
resembles that of the federal government, and these comparisons proved helpful to the students. I used an example of a nuclear power plant decreasing a person's property value when discussing the duties of the assessor, and I used an example of situations in which the coroner must be involved.

My students asked good questions, and several times, I was unable to answer them. I should have been able to predict these questions and have the answers ready; I wasted valuable class time looking up information. Luckily, these students were well behaved. My freshman classes would not have been able to sit quietly while I located the answers. For classroom management, I rated myself a four. I kept them rather busy taking notes, so they did not have time to be disruptive.

The experience of self evaluation via videotape was certainly an enlightening one. I have summarized the information from the data sheets onto Table One. By organizing the information in this manner, I was able to view each skill individually. By far, my weakest skill was establishing set. I performed much better on classroom management (which may have been the result of having all academic classes) and reinforcement. I definitely feel better prepared to teach as a result of this research and evaluation. I hope that I will continue to evaluate myself and continue to ask myself the questions I learned from my father: "Why did I teach what I taught today; how could I have taught it better?"
### TABLE I

**DEMONSTRATING TEACHING SKILLS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
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<td>Use of Examples</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Not available, 1= poor; 2= below average; 3= average; 4= good; 5= excellent
WORKS CONSULTED


Allen, Dwight, "Reinforcement". New York, General Learning Corporation <distributor>, c 1968.


