Multilevel Teaching Techniques

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Pediatric Hospital Medicine Conference
22 July 2017

Disclosures

- The workshop facilitators have no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- The workshop will not include discussion of any unapproved, experimental, investigatory, or off-label drugs.
Learning Objectives

 Describe multilevel teaching, its utility, and its challenges
 Discuss the educational literature on differentiated and multilevel instruction
 Practice specific multilevel teaching techniques, including: Broadening, Targeting, Novelty, Up the Ladder, Student as Teacher, and Multi-Answer

Current Perceptions

 What does the term multilevel teaching mean to you?
Definition

- Multilevel teaching = teaching multiple levels of learners simultaneously
- GOAL: maintain engagement
- CHALLENGE: limit teaching that any trainee perceives as boring or over his head
Current Perceptions and Practices: The Literature

Effective multilevel teaching techniques on attending rounds: A pilot survey and systematic review of the literature

- Survey of 66 attending physicians
- 90% reported trying to teach to multiple levels of learners
- 50% indicated that it was difficult to do

Learners’ Perspectives

Effective multilevel teaching techniques on attending rounds: A pilot survey and systematic review of the literature

- Also surveyed 89 trainees (MS3 through PGY4)
- 85% of the teaching they received was useful
- Interns reported a greater percentage of teaching was at their level
Differentiated Instruction

- Teacher’s role is maximizing the capabilities of all learners
- Requires flexibility and creativity
- Integrates what we know about constructivist learning
- Variable process to achieve same goal
- Influencing factors of learner readiness, interest, and intelligence

Relevance

MS3  MS3  Attending Hospitalist  Fellow  Senior Resident
Intern  Intern
MULTILEVEL TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Broadening

- Change the specifics of a case to make it more challenging or interesting
- Example: What if the patient was a different age? What if the patient had certain comorbid conditions? How would these changes affect your management?
Targeting

- Target questions at specific team members depending on the difficulty of the question
- Example: “Medical student, what are the common causes of bacterial meningitis in neonates? Resident, what are admission criteria for infants undergoing a sepsis evaluation?”

Novelty

- Provide new data
- Example: Recently published journal article
Up the Ladder

- Ask the same question to all team members, starting with the most junior learner
- Example: “That is an interesting point, Learner A. What do you think, Learner B?”

Student as Teacher

- Ask a senior learner to teach a junior learner
- Example: Ask resident to demonstrate physical exam maneuver or procedural skill for a medical student
Multi-Answer

- Seek multiple answers to a single question
- Example: Ask each learner to contribute 1-2 items to a differential diagnosis

No Right Answer

- Ask questions that do not have a single correct answer
- Example: “How would you approach this difficult conversation with the family?”
Teaching to the Top

- Teach to the level of the most senior learner

Extreme Challenge

- Teach at a level above all learners on the team
Effective Strategies

Effective multilevel teaching techniques on attending rounds: A pilot survey and systematic review of the literature
Laura K. Certain, A. J. Guarino, & Jeffrey L. Greenwald
Published online: 06 Jan 2012

- Vast majority of trainees found Targeting, Up the Ladder, Student as Teacher, and Multi-Answer effective
- Half the trainees found Broadening and Novelty effective

Ineffective Strategies

Effective multilevel teaching techniques on attending rounds: A pilot survey and systematic review of the literature
Laura K. Certain, A. J. Guarino, & Jeffrey L. Greenwald
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- No Right Answer, Teaching to the Top, and Extreme Challenge perceived as much less effective
- Few physicians deliberately teach above everyone, but many trainees reported experiencing these strategies
Lessons from General Teaching Articles

AMEE Guide
AMEE Guide no. 34: teaching in the clinical environment
Dr. Subha Ramani & Sam Leinster
Pages 347-364 | Published online: 03 Jul 2009

- Learners of different levels can be taught on the same patient by focusing on different learning tasks
- Large disparities in learning goals may render simultaneous teaching counterproductive, however

Small Group Activity: Cases

- Please review the cases and questions in your small groups.
- Be prepared to report out to the large group at the end of the activity.
Conclusion

- With careful attention to teaching practices, clinician educators can instruct junior learners while challenging senior trainees.
- The most effective multilevel teaching techniques are Broadening, Targeting, Novelty, Up the Ladder, Student as Teacher, and Multi-Answer.

References

Additional Reading