Research on Teaching

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It's Time to Wait

Teachers typically wait less than one second after they ask a question for students to reply. They wait about the same amount of time before responding to students' answers. Wait time is the term researchers use to describe these pauses. If teachers can learn to increase their average wait time to three seconds or more, students' use of language and logic will improve. Students' and teachers' attitudes and expectations will also likely improve.

Why?
The idea of wait time appeals to our common sense. If we are not given time to think, we won't. When we have time to think and talk through what we have done or observed, our ideas multiply and, in turn, are clarified and refined. Yet, the rapid-fire speed at which most elementary and secondary teachers ask questions and respond to students' answers is astonishing and may prevent any thoughtful consideration by students or by teachers themselves.

Several things happen as wait time increases. Students lengthen their responses and make more inferences and logical arguments. They exchange more ideas with one another. There are fewer failures to respond. More students participate, and unsolicited but appropriate comments increase. Students become more confident rather than trying to guess what's on the teacher's mind. Achievement improves even on questions that require complex thinking.

Teachers, too, are affected as wait time increases. They stay on the topic longer and develop ideas in depth. Their questions decrease in number but improve in quality; they invite elaboration or contrary positions.

Supervision

CARL D. GLICKMAN AND JEAN W. JONES

Creating the Dialogue
School systems are increasingly shedding dogmas about supervision being a particular set of skills, behaviors, procedures, and observations, and are developing their own programs based on adaptations, revisions, and combinations of particular approaches. The aim of supervision is not to ensure the soundness of using a certain approach. Standard uses of such approaches as clinical supervision, developmental supervision, and the Hunter model are being criticized by their own developers (see Hunter 1985, Glickman 1986, and Goldhammer et al. 1980). The critical point is that supervision creates an instructional dialogue among and with teachers that results in planning and acting upon improvements in learning for students (Sparks 1983, Beach 1976, Goldhammer et al. 1980). The critical (see Hunter 1985, Glickman 1986, and Goldhammer et al. 1980). The critical point is that supervision creates an instructional dialogue among and with teachers that results in planning and acting upon improvements in learning for students (Sparks 1983, Beach 1976,
References


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