ASSIGNMENT MAKING AND ITS AID TO EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

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"High expectations and pressure to achieve refer to establishing challenging goals for students" (Robert Marzano, 2003, p. 35).

Do we give assignments? What is our purpose on giving homeworks to our students? Have we ever come to think how effective assignments are to our instruction?

These are the questions that we should think about before giving assignments to our students. As a matter of fact, our president have come across this issue and even released an order telling the teachers not to give assignments on weekdays. Nevertheless, making of assignments is indispensable to effective instruction.

Researchers suggests three principles of effective instruction, and these are supported and aided by letting the learners make their assignments. In a blog posted by Eleanor Dougherty entitled “Assignments Matter”, she enumerated these three principles suggested by researchers:

1. Effective instruction is clear about what to teach and how (Danielson, 1996; Hunter, 1993; Marzano, 2007). In teaching, it is important that we know our end goals. Teaching cannot be focused and purposeful without clarity about what we expect to happen in the end. One must know why he or she is teaching an assignment and where that assignment fits into the larger curriculum. Teaching that strolls from one strategy to another does not improve student performance. As well, tasks that are too complex and carry an overload of cognitive demands are equally confusing and hard to manage (Stein, Brown, & Forman, 1996). In contrast, a well-done assignment tells students what
to do and how well to do it. Assignments are also aligned to long-term goals and it also aids in assessment.

2. Effective teaching is formative, providing feedback that allows teachers to adjust their instruction and scaffold learning (Reeves, 2006; Stiggins, Aster, Chappius, & Chappius, 2006). Assignments provide clear evidence of what is taught and what is learned in response to instruction because both teacher work and student work are documented. Teachers could also reflect on their teaching because of the result of the assignment they have given to their students.

3. Effective teaching sets high expectations. When assignments are aligned to high expectations, students are challenged. They will become more eager to answer or discover the answer to interesting questions in the assignments. This could somehow help the teachers see the needed improvements necessary for her teaching.

Making assignments is thus part of our instruction. It is our role as teachers to make use of this task as an important part of effective classroom instruction.

References:

www.ascd.org * Why Assignments Matter

www.facultyfocus.com*Giving the Students a Choice in Their Assignments