Team-Based Learning (TBL)

The rhythm of TBL

TBL courses have a recurring pattern of instruction that is typical of many flipped classrooms. Students prepare before class and then students spend the bulk of class time solving problems and analyzing cases together. This course is divided into four modules. Each module has a similar rhythm, opening with the Readiness Assurance Process that prepares the students for the activities that follow, and then moving to Application Activities that often grow in complexity and length as the module progresses.
Pre-Class Preparation

Students are assigned preparatory materials to review before start of each module. The preparatory materials can be textbook chapters, articles, videos, or PowerPoint slides. The preparatory materials should highlight foundational vocabulary and the most important concepts the student need to begin problem solving, but not everything they need to

Individual Readiness Assurance Test (iRAT)

To begin the classroom portion of the RAP process students complete a 10 multiple-choice question quiz. They first complete the test individually (iRAT), and then repeat the same exact test with their team (tRAT). The iRAT holds students accountable for acquiring important foundational knowledge from the preparatory materials that will prepare

Team Readiness Assurance Test (tRAT)

The Team Readiness Assurance Process Test (tRAT) is the exact same test as the iRAT. A special type of scoring card known as an IF-AT is used (scratch and win style testing). With IF-AT’s, the teams must negotiate which answer to choose, they then scratch off an opaque coating over their answer choice,
Each question on the iRAT is worth 4 points. Students can “split” their points if they are unsure of the correct answer.

- If you know the answer, then you put all 4 points on your response choice.
- You can put this if you are evenly split between two.
- You can put this if you have no idea what the answer is.
- This is another possibility.

**iRAT Response Form**

*Instructions:* Each question is worth 4 points. You should assign a total of 4 points on each line. If you are uncertain about the correct answer, you may assign points to more than one box.

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The team takes the quiz together after the iRAT and decide on the correct answer. You keep scratching until you get the correct answer; find the star, and you are correct!

1 scratch = 4 points
2 scratches = 2 points
3 scratches = 1 point
4 scratches = 0 points

### Appeals

During the closing of the team test, the instructor circulates around the room and encourages teams to consider creating a written appeal for questions they got incorrect. This forces students back into the reading material exactly where they are still having difficulty. The team then researches the “right” answer and may choose to complete the appeals form with their rationale and defense for their alternate answer. The appeal must consist of (a) a clear statement of argument, and (b) evidence cited...
In Class Activities
Students and their teams use the foundational knowledge, acquired in the first two phases, to make decisions that will be reported publicly and subject to cross-team discussion/critique. The class will use a variety of methods to have students report their team’s decision at the end of each activity. Sometimes students will hold up colored cards indicating a specific choice, sometimes they will write their answer on small whiteboards, and other times they will complete short worksheets, which will be randomly reported to the rest of the class.

Mini-lecture
To conclude the Readiness Assurance Process, the instructor focuses a short mini-lecture only on the concepts that are still problematic for the students.

(Information about TBL adapted and excerpted from: Jim Sibley’s handout, *Introduction to Team-Based Learning; Three Keys to Using Learning Groups Effectively* by Larry Michaelsen; *Student Orientation Materials* by Dean Parmelee; and *The Essential Elements of Team-Based Learning* by Michaelsen & Sweet.)