5 Highly Effective Teaching Practices

1. Teacher Clarity

When a teacher begins a new unit of study or project with students, she clarifies the purpose and learning goals, and provides explicit criteria on how students can be successful. It's ideal to also present models or examples to students so they can see what the end product looks like.

2. Classroom Discussion

Teachers need to frequently step offstage and facilitate entire class discussion. This allows students to learn from each other. It's also a great opportunity for teachers to formatively assess (through observation) how well students are grasping new content and concepts.

3. Feedback

How do learners know they are moving forward without steady, consistent feedback? They often won't. Along with individual feedback (written or verbal), teachers need to provide whole-group feedback on patterns they see in the collective class' growth and areas of need. Students also need to be given opportunities to provide feedback to the teacher so that she can adjust the learning process, materials, and instruction accordingly.

4. Formative Assessments

In order to provide students with effective and accurate feedback, teachers need to assess frequently and routinely where students are in relation to the unit of study's learning goals or end product (summative assessment). Hattie recommends that teachers spend the same amount of time on formative evaluation as they do on summative assessment.

5. Metacognitive Strategies

Students are given opportunities to plan and organize, monitor their own work, direct their own learning, and to self-reflect along the way. When we provide students with time and space to be aware of their own knowledge and their own thinking, student ownership increases. And research shows that metacognition can be taught.