Teachers Are Brain Changers

a collaboration between



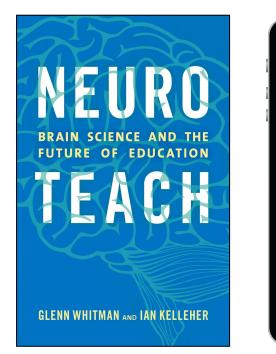
THE CENTER *for* TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING At ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL



History Teacher, Student Advisor & Soccer Coach Executive Director of the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning



Co-author of Neuroteach: Brain Science and the Future of Education Co-designer of Neuroteach Global gwhitman@saes.org Follow on Twitter @gwhitmancttl







To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement: "Teachers are brain changers?"

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree more than disagree
- c. Disagree more than agree
- d. Strong disagree
- e. Never thought about it (until now)

<u>2007</u>

What is the next frontier for teacher training, to take good teachers (and their schools & districts) and make them great, and great teachers (and their schools & districts) and make them expert?







THE CENTER *for* TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING [™] At ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

The CTTL's vision is a world where every teacher understands how every student's brain learns

The CTTL's mission is to create and innovate in the field of Mind, Brain and Education Science research.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)

ASU+GSV Summit

Challenge Success

Council of International Schools

EdSurge

Educators Rising

Edutopia

European League for Middle Level Education (ELMLE)

IMBES

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)

Learning and the Brain

Learning Forward

National Association of Episcopal Schools

NAIS Annual Conference

NAIS People of Color Conference

National Network of Schools in Partnership

New Teacher Center Symposium

Outstanding Schools (Asia and Europe)

researchED (U.S. and U.K.)

SXSW EDU

U.K. Festival of Education

The CTTL Around the World

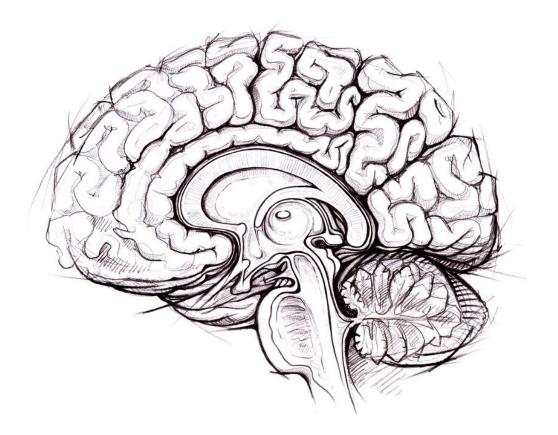
Since its founding in 2011, the CTTL has collaborated with teachers and school leaders from 6 continents and 43 states. Additionally, we have presented at more than 200 conferences, schools, and districts around the world.



Which one of these questions is least likely to be asked during a teaching candidate interview?

- A. Do you know and can you teach the subject and age group you will be working with?
- B. How much do you know about how the brain learns?
- C. Do you like kids?
- D. Can you coach (what else can you contribute to the school)?

What one is thing <u>NO</u> student will ever forget to bring with them to each Colorado school day?



"The organ of learning"

What percentage of 12,000 teachers surveyed reported that they have had foundational training in how the brain learns best? 20%

40%

60%

80%

100%





ABOUT EDUCATORS ADMINISTRATORS RESEARCH WINTER WEBINAR SERIES

What's Your MBE-IQ?

TAKE THE DIAGNOSTIC

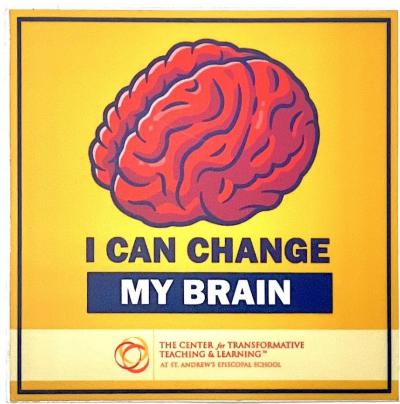
SEE SAMPLE RESULTS

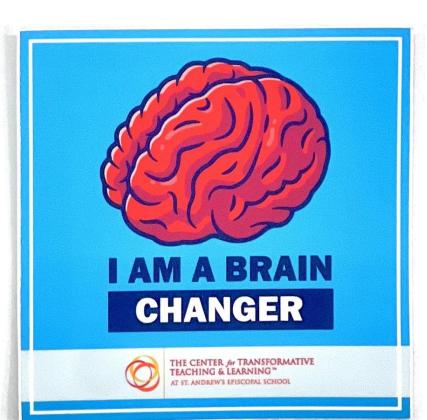
The NeuroEducation Confidence Diagnostic (NECD for short) is a free diagnostic tool for helping schools and districts gauge key elements related to teacher efficacy. Developed by the team at The Center for Transformative Teaching & Learning, the NECD measures an educator's influence, knowledge, and confidence around the science of teaching and learning. It's for **teachers** who want to identify gaps in their knowledge and confidence, as well as **school and district administrators** who want to get an overall picture of the organizational strengths and gaps in learning science knowledge and confidence in classroom practices. The NECD measures the following areas:

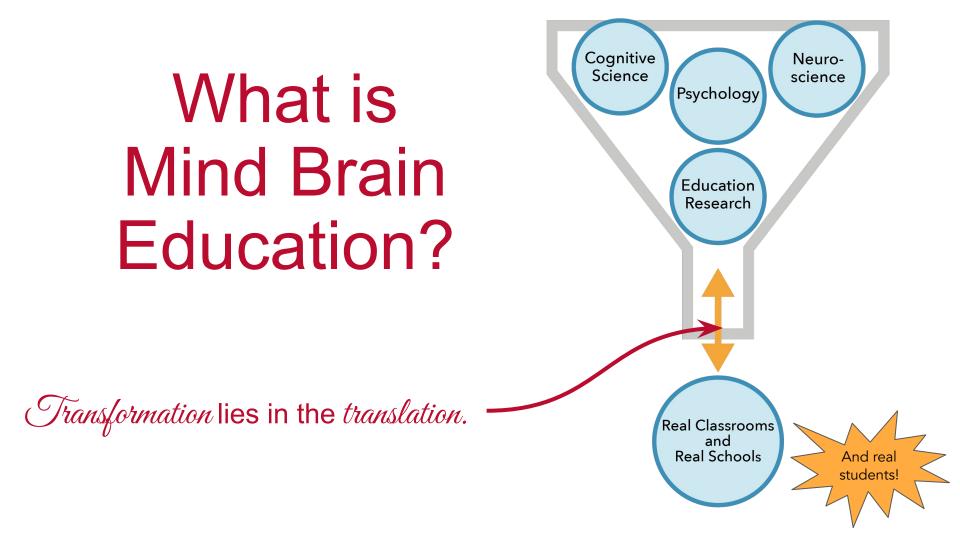
- · How much change can teachers affect within the school
- · Teacher's self reported knowledge of learning science and their confidence to apply it in the classroom
- · Evaluation of learning science scientific concepts and their application

What does your school or district get from the CTTL when they complete the NECD? Take a look at this fictional example from Springsteen Academy.

www.thecttl.org/necd



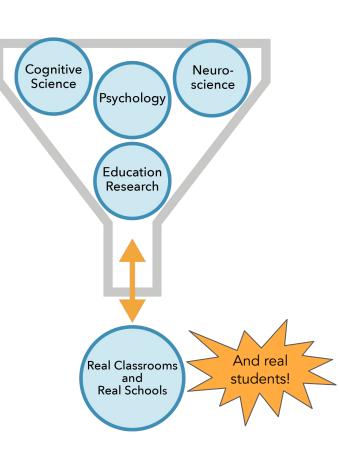




How can MBE inform, validate, and transform your instructional design and student learning?

Arts Integration Assessment Attention Belonging **Constrained Choice** Cognitive Load Daily Schedule Disciplinary Literacy **Dual Coding** Emotion and Cognition Engagement **Executive Functions** Feedback Formative assessment Homework Knowledge Richness & Transfer Literacy/Science of Reading Memory

Metacognition Mindsets Motivation Multiple modalities Multitasking Neuromyths (eliminate!) Neuroplasticity Novelty Play **Project Based Learning** Self regulation Sleep Spaces where learning happens Stress Technology Use Transfer Well-being and Joy







Editorial Neuroscience in Education: A Bridge Too Far or One That Has Yet to Be Built: Introduction to the "Brain Goes to School"

Gerry Leisman 1,2

- ¹ Movement and Cognition Laboratory, Department of Physical Therapy, University of Haifa, 19 Abba Khoushy Avenue, Eshkol Tower, Rm. 910, Haifa 3498838, Israel; g.leisman@alumni.manchester.ac.uk; Tel:: +972:>2420-5643
- ² Department of Neurology, University of the Medical Sciences of Havana, Havana 11600, Cuba

Abstract: There have been numerous detractors and supporters relating to attempts to merge the neurosciences and the knowledge base of related contributing disciplines with the field of education. Some have argued that this is a "bridge too far". The predominant view is that the relationship between neuroscience and the classroom has been neither significantly examined, nor applied. What is needed is a specially trained class of professionals whose nois twould be pay anguide the introduction of cognitive neuroscience into educational practice in a sensible and ethical manner. Neuroeducators would play a prototal role in assessing the quality of evidence purporting to be relevant to education, assessing who is best placed to employ newly developed knowledge, as well as with what safeguards, in addition to investigating how to deal with unexpected consequences of implemented research indingins. This special issue of the "The Brain Goes to School" aims to provide support for the development of training programs that truly integrate curriculum design and classroom instruction with the developmental cognitive neurosciences.

Keywords: developmental cognitive neuroscience; educational neuroscience; neuroeducation



Citation: Leisman, G. Neuroscience in Education: A Bridge Too Far or One That Has Yet to Be Built: Introduction to the "Brain Goes to School". Brain Sci. 2023, 13, 40. https://doi.org/10.3390/ brainsci13010040

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Copyright © 2022 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland, This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https:// creativecommons.org/licenses/by/ 40/). the knowledge base found in developmental cognitive neuroscience, [1,2] cognitive science and cognitive neuroscience, [3], psychology, [4] educational theory, [5] human factors, [6] production management, [7,8] educational technology, [9] curriculum design, [10] and even architecture [11,12]. The penultimate aim is to develop basic and applied research that can support the development of practical applications for more effective instruction and learning. There have been numerous detractors and supporters of attempts to merge the neuro-

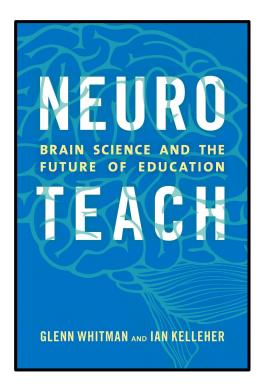
Educational neuroscience is a promising area of study, which can collectively integrate

sciences with the knowledge base of the contributing disciplines. In a 2004 paper, Davis [13] noted that "medical models" of cognition, "...have only a very limited role in the broader field of education and learning mainly because learning-related intentional states are not internal to individuals in a way which can be examined by brain activity." On the other hand, Petitio and Dumbar [14,15] have indicated that educational neuroscience "Provides the most relevant level of analysis for resolving today's core problems in education.

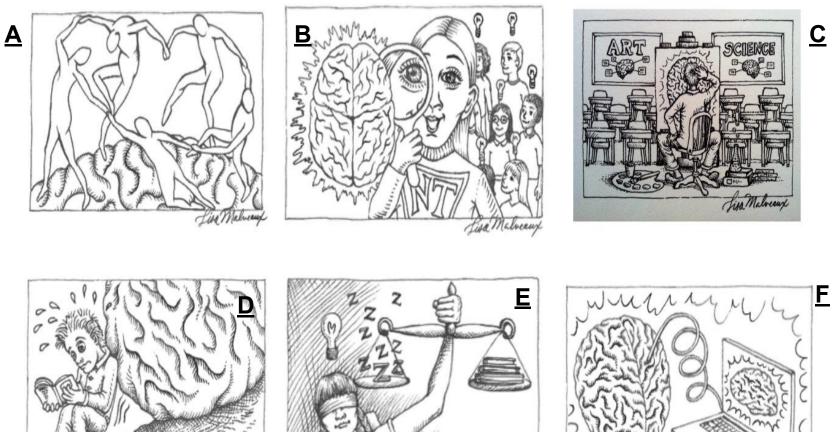
Several educational researchers have held that merging the knowledge base of developmental cognitive neuroscience with education is a "bridge too far" [16,17], and others have argued against such a view [18-21]. Nevertheless, a bridging discipline, such as educational or cognitive psychology [22,23], can provide a neuroscientific basis for educational practice. The predominant view, however, seems to be that the relationship between neuroscience and the classroom has neither been significantly examined nor applied [24-26].

In some way or another, the brain sciences ought to be able offer much for the learner, given the vast literature on the psychology of learning [27], neuroscience of learning [28], human factors and information processing [29], and developmental cognitive neuroscience [30]. Educational neuroscience has been "birthed" from the necessity to

<u>1997</u>



A neuroteacher is one who intentionally applies research from the field of Mind, Brain, and Education (MBE) science to inform, affirm, and transform their instructional design and work with each individual student.



Jiza Matreaux

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lisa Malveaux

A Pathway to Becoming a Brain Changing Teacher or School Leader

Brain Changing Deeper Dive



Develop your personal and school's "brain changing" word wall "Having words about important concepts enables community members to talk about them, think together and agree on their meaning, interrogate them for deeper understanding and gain collective clarity around related action and impact."

> -Language for learning leadership Stoll (2020)

Amygdala Cognitive load Corpus Callosum Hippocampus Limbic System Myelination Neuroplasticity Neurotransmitters Prefrontal cortex Pruning

How many of these terms do you *currently* know, understand, and use to inform, your teaching and leadership?

- 1. The brain's communication bridge, connecting the left and right hemispheres to help with coordination, thinking, and problem-solving.
- 2. Relates to the amount of information that working memory can hold at one time.
- 3. The process that enables nerve cells to transmit information faster and allows for more complex brain processes.
- 4. The ability of the brain throughout life to form and reorganize synaptic connections, especially in response to learning and experiences.
- 5. The brain's emotional and motivation center, influencing feelings, memory, and decision-making in students.
- 6. The brain's chemical messengers, helping send signals between brain cells to regulate mood, attention, and learning.
- 7. Forms part of the limbic system and plays a key role in the processing of emotions.
- 8. A process by which the brain eliminates extra synapses, structures that allows the neurons to transmit an electrical or chemical signal to another neuron, because of lack of use or need.
- 9. The brain's memory hub; it helps students store and retrieve information, making it crucial for learning.
- 10. The brain's control center for focus, problem-solving, and self-regulation, still developing in students, which affects decision-making and impulse control.

Amygdala Cognitive load **Corpus Callosum** Hippocampus Limbic System **Myelination** Neuroplasticity **Neurotransmitters** Prefrontal cortex Pruning

- The brain's communication bridge, connecting the left and right hemispheres to help with coordination, thinking, and problem-solving.
 Corpus Callosum
- 2. Relates to the amount of information that working memory can hold at one time. Cognitive Load
- The process that enables nerve cells to transmit information faster and allows for more complex brain processes.
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- The ability of the brain throughout life to form and reorganize synaptic connections, especially in response to learning and experiences. Neuroplasticity
- 5. The brain's emotional and motivation center, influencing feelings, memory, and decision-making in students. Limbic System
- 6. The brain's chemical messengers, helping send signals between brain cells to regulate mood, attention, and learning. Neurotransmitters
- 7. Forms part of the limbic system and plays a key role in the processing of emotions. Amygdala
- 8. A process by which the brain eliminates extra synapses, structures that allows the neurons to transmit an electrical or chemical signal to another neuron, because of lack of use or need. **Pruning**
- 9. The brain's memory hub; it helps students store and retrieve information, making it crucial for learning. Hippocampus
- 10. The brain's control center for focus, problem-solving, and self-regulation, still developing in students, which affects decision-making and

Neuroscience Vocabulary Applied

	I can apply this term to my thinking about teaching, learning and instructional design.
Neuroplasticity	I believe all students can and want to learn - and some might need different temporary scaffolds (and maybe extra opportunities) to meet the high bar I set for all students.

	I can apply this term to my thinking about teaching, learning and instructional design.
Myelination	Increasing my integration of retrieval practice into my instructional design can promote myelination allowing students to access information more quickly and with greater accuracy in the future.



Currently surviving



Currently

"just fine"

and "doing school"



Currently thriving All students and employees can learn

All students and employees want to learn

Evidence-informed practices can help everyone meet their full potential

Brain Changing Deeper Dive



Teach teachers, students, and parents about neuroplasticity

The human brain is "set" at an early age.











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The human brain is "set" at an early age.

Neuroplasticity exists throughout our life - our brain alters over time in reaction to our environment and experiences. It is never "set" as neurons are being formed, connected, and pruned, and thus our brain is able to learn all through our life.



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Citation: F

Neuroplasticity: The lifelong ability of the brain to change its organization as a result of experiences.

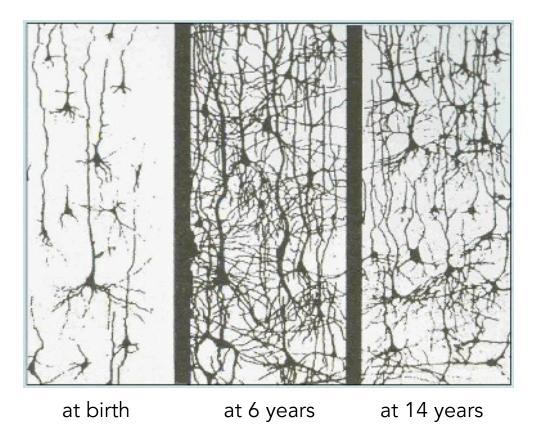




Greg Dunn



Synapse Density - see, think, wonder

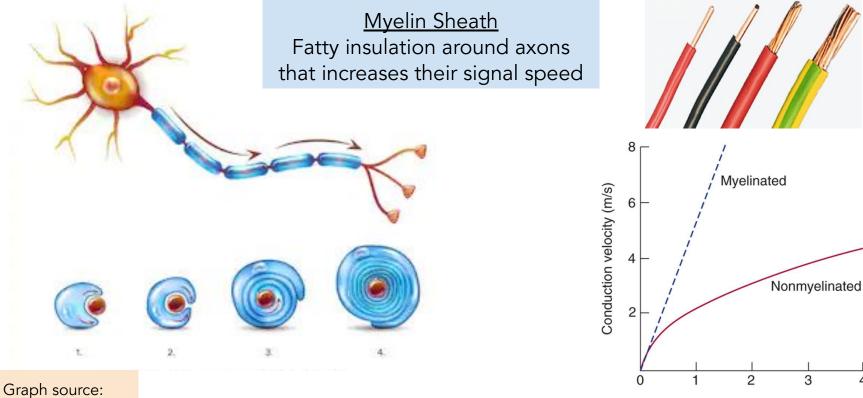


Synaptic growth

Pruning

<u>Demystify</u> learning with neuroplasticity vs. growth mindset

<u>Myelination</u> insulates axons, making electrical signals



Doctorlib.info

Fiber diameter (µm)

Λ







The Power of Plasticity, the Impacts of Stress, and the Awesome Responsibility of Educators

DR. GREG DUNN AND EVA SHULTIS

s a Biology teacher and Mind, Brain & Education research translator, discovering Dr. Greg Dunn's neuroscience artwork felt like finding a Rosetta Stone of scientific communication. In a single blast of perception, his images convey a level of complexity that takes more than a thousand words to approximate. The opportunity to collaborate with him through The Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL) and share his art with the students and educators we work with is an honor and a delight. He actually created the first piece in this article, Myelination II, with educators in mind: we had a conversation about the foundational concept of neuroplasticity, in which I bemoaned the lack of images that do it justice. The next time we spoke, he had created one. The second image, Winding Paths to the Self, achieves his self-proclaimed goal of "hitting the viewer in the limbic system" (the emotional processing center of the brain) and is even more powerful if you understand the biological story it's telling. This article is inspired by and in conversation with Dr. Dunn's two images and my attempt to tell the story they evoke for me, as well as the sense of purpose and selfauthorship I draw from them as an educator and a human with a brain.

The Most Important Concept To Understand About Your Brain

The power of our brain lies in its neuroplasticity: its ability to change in response to experience. The brain is a living structure that continuously modifies itself, and any learning we do involves a physical change in its synaptic connections: the approximately 30-nanometer sized gaps between one neuron and the next, where neurotransmitter molecules such as serotonin, dopamine, or adrenaline carry the signal forward. Researchers estimate there are 86 billion neurons in the human brain, and each neuron can form a synaptic connection with 1,000 to 10,000 others, generating a level of complexity that's hard to wrap your mind around. This network of connections holds our memories, thought processes, and patterns of behavior. A single neuron is not intelligent on its own - rather, our intelligence emerges from the concerted action of circuits of billions of neurons, just as waves emerge from the movement of countless water molecules. Similarly, our personality and sense of identity emerge from the lifelong strengthening, weakening, and reconfiguring of the connections that make up our most-traveled neural pathways. In this way, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. And just as you can't step in the same river twice, our

THE CENTER FOR TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING



Empty Vessel Instruction

Why is this not learning and effective for brain changing?

What can make it better?

Memory is the residue of thought



Prof. Dan Willingham, UVA

Learning happens when you think hard



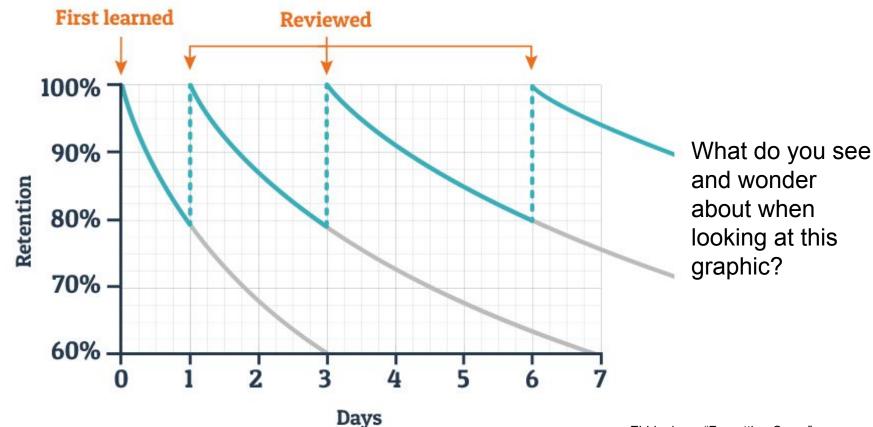
Prof. Rob Coe, Durham University (UK)

Neuroplasticity aligned and myelinating promoting teaching and learning strategies

(which do you already use?)

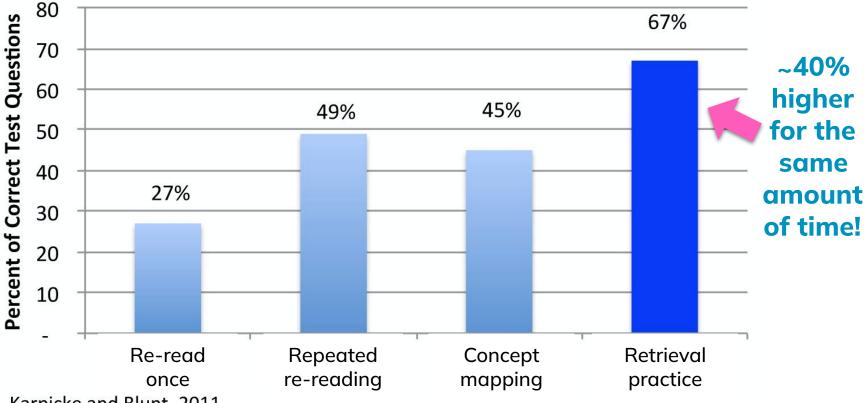
- Retrieval practice
- Metacognition and Visible Thinking Routines (Check out Project Zero)
- Using teacher "wise feedback" to improve as a learner
- Spaced and interleaved practice
- Elaboration and concept mapping
- Feeling a sense of academic and social belonging

Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



Ebbinghaus "Forgetting Curve"

Comparison of studying for the **same time** with different methods



Karpicke and Blunt, 2011

Let forgetting be your friend



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Amygdala Cognitive load **Corpus Callosum** Hippocampus Limbic System **Myelination** Neuroplasticity **Neurotransmitters** Prefrontal cortex Pruning

Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



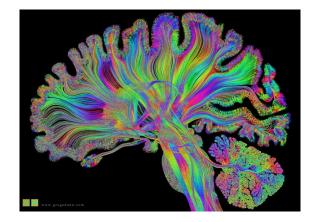
"All in" Low technology CFUs



Multiple modality and multiple sensory Instructional Design: Engages More Neural Pathways

The brain processes information through **multiple channels** (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile).

When students engage in learning using more than one modality, they **activate more neural connections**, strengthening memory and comprehension (Mayer, 2009; Sousa, 2017).

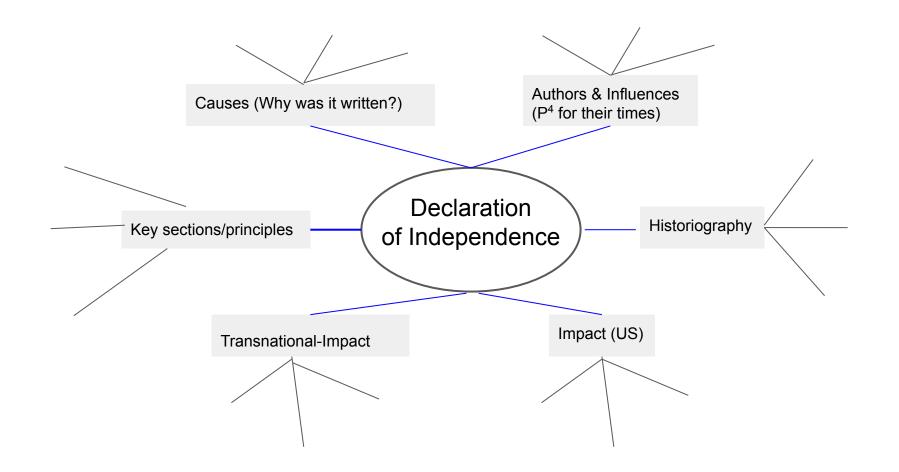


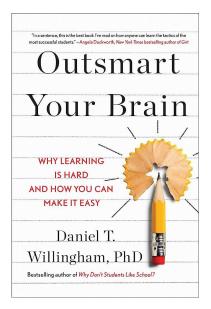


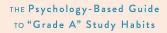
MULTIPLE MODALITY NOTE TAKING

"One day into dual coding"

From the blog, The Effortful Educator: Applying Cognitive Psychology to the Classroom











Regan A.R. Gurung PHD John Dunlosky PHD REURO BRAIN SCIENCE AND THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION TERCE

GLENN WHITMAN AND IAN KELLEHER



ACE THAT TEST A Student's Guide to Learning Better

Megan Sumeracki, Cynthia Nebel, Carolina Kuopper-Tetzel and Althea Need Kaminske Illustated by Karis Tiller

@

Neuroteach Global Student from the CTTL: <u>https://www.thecttl.org/neuroteach-global-access-program/</u>



Brain Changing Deeper Dive



Belonging as a **Condition for** Learning, Growth, **Development and Achievement**

The emotion and cognitive areas of the brain are highly interlinked, so emotional factors, like stress, anxiety, happiness, and belonging need to be considered when thinking about ways to improve learning.











THE CENTER *før* TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING [™] at st. andrew's episcopal school The emotion and cognitive areas of the brain are highly interlinked, so emotional factors, like stress, anxiety, happiness, and belonging need to be considered when thinking about ways to improve learning.



Emotion uses many of the same areas of the brain that learning uses. When a student is learning, emotion and cognition are operating seamlessly in the brain. Learning is improved when teachers consider each student's emotional needs.



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What is Belonging?

Belonging defined

"A universal human need that is fundamentally linked to learning and well-being. It describes an individual's experience of feeling that they are, or are likely to be, accepted and respected as a valued contributor in a specific environment. When students experience a sense of belonging in a learning environment, there are both immediate and long-term positive consequences for their academic performance and well-being."

Healey & Stroman, 2021

This should not surprise us

We used to believe that we were thinking beings who feel. We now know that **we are feeling beings who think**.

> paraphrasing celebrated USC neuroscientist, António Damásio

All Learning is Emotional, Social, and Cognitive



Every child needs at least one teacher who has an **irrational** belief in them.

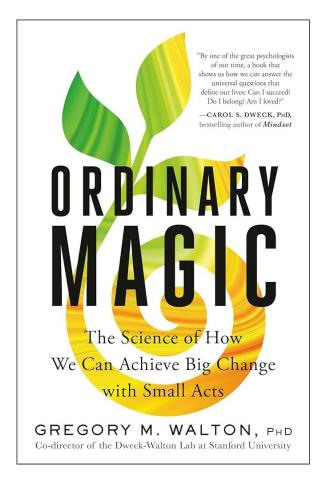
Paraphrasing Urie Bronfenbrenner, psychologist and co-founder of Head Start

All Learning is Emotional, Social, and Cognitive

Gregory Walton Ph.D.

Michael Forman University Fellow and Professor of Psychology at Stanford University





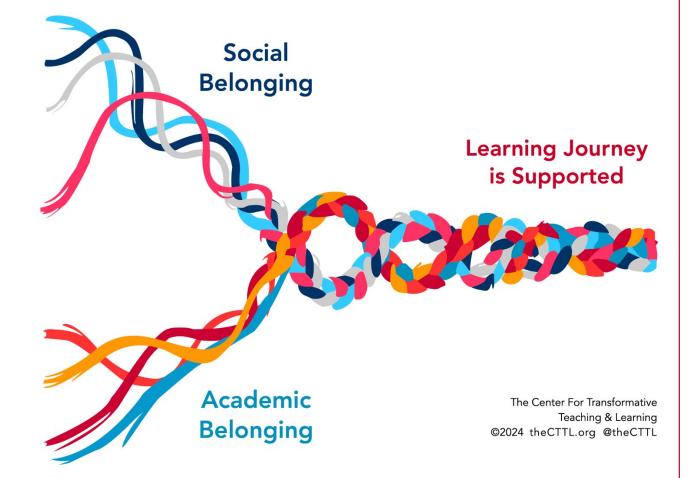
All Learning is Emotional, Social, and Cognitive

The Belonging Braid: Social Belonging & Academic Belonging are Interwoven

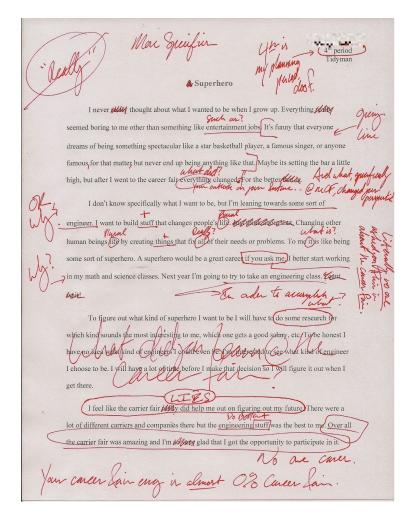
includes: Race & Ethnicity Gender Age Sexuality Language Socioeconomic Status Religion Family Structure Ability Neurodiversity Curriculum & Pedagogy

Social Identity

Academic Identity includes: Neurodiversity Effective Learning Strategies Self Efficacy Sense of Purpose & Relevance Motivation Feedback (receiver & giver) Creativity Voice Curriculum & Pedagogy



What do you think of this?



What do students need to make feedback useful?

- Emotionally, I take the feedback well
- The feedback is <u>timely</u>
- It's the right amount not too much
- I can understand the feedback
- I know what my next step is
- I have a chance to use the feedback
- My teacher believes I can improve as a learner

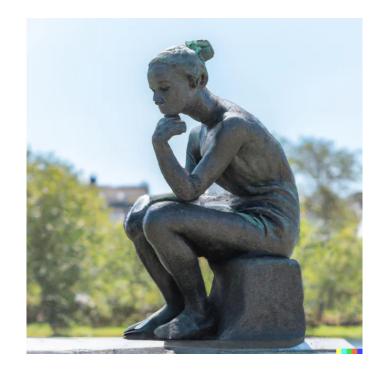
"You made a strong effort explaining the causes of the Civil War! Let's build on that by making your argument even clearer with more specific evidence. Keep going—you're on the right track!" "This is confusing and doesn't make sense. You need to redo it."

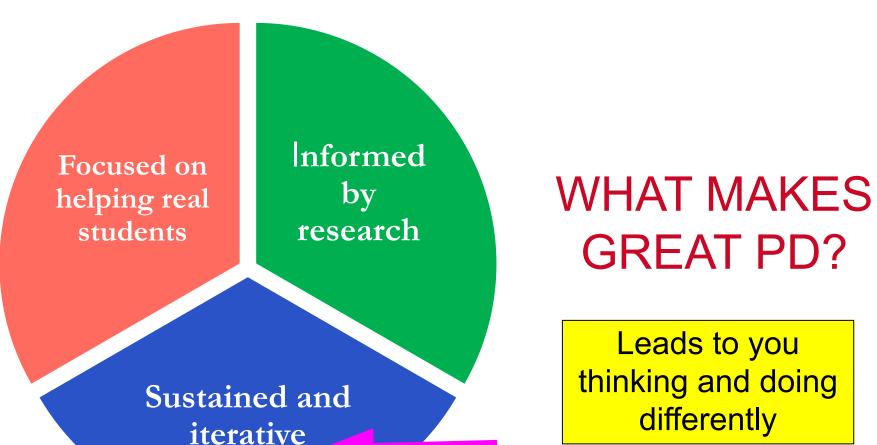
Students receive the feedback well, emotionally

You mention 'taxes' as a cause of the American Revolution. Try naming a specific tax, like the Stamp Act, to make your point stronger."

"Your argument lacks coherence and is insufficiently supported by primary sources." Before this session I used to think

but now, after this session, I am thinking





Teacher Development Trust (2015)







Save the dates of these extraordinary learning events being brought to you by the CTTL!

SCIENCE OF TEACHING AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY | JULY 15-18, 2024

The Academy is the Center for Transformative Teaching & Learning's flagship Mind, Brain, and Education (MBE) conference for pedagogical, leadership, and professional development. The Academy is an opportunity to invest in understanding how the brain learns and how to create learning experiences that

USA FESTIVAL OF EDUCATION | SEPTEMBER 28, 2024

for teachers to learn, grow and connect with other like-minded individuals in the field of education. Learn more at https://educationfestusa.com/

CTTL SPRING MBE WEBINAR | APRIL/MAY 2025

SCIENCE OF TEACHING AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY | JULY 14-17, 2025

settings worldwide. This is the only place to get the CTTL's MBE Strategies tools. Learn more at thecttl.org/2025-academy.

Learn more about these events and other CTTL resources at https://thecttl.org. Email us at info@thecttl.org for support.



\bigcirc THE CENTER for TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING SCIENCE OF TEACHING AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

July 14-17, 2025 9-4 p.m. ET

St. Andrew's Episcopal School (MD), Frederick County Public Schools (MD), and Virtual











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Thank You!

Stay in touch

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