Visible Learning For Teachers: Maximizing Impact On Learning
Synopsis

In November 2008, John Hattie’s ground-breaking book Visible Learning synthesised the results of more than fifteen years research involving millions of students and represented the biggest ever collection of evidence-based research into what actually works in schools to improve learning. Visible Learning for Teachers takes the next step and brings those ground breaking concepts to a completely new audience. Written for students, pre-service and in-service teachers, it explains how to apply the principles of Visible Learning to any classroom anywhere in the world. The author offers concise and user-friendly summaries of the most successful interventions and offers practical step-by-step guidance to the successful implementation of visible learning and visible teaching in the classroom. This book: links the biggest ever research project on teaching strategies to practical classroom implementation champions both teacher and student perspectives and contains step by step guidance including lesson preparation, interpreting learning and feedback during the lesson and post lesson follow up offers checklists, exercises, case studies and best practice scenarios to assist in raising achievement includes whole school checklists and advice for school leaders on facilitating visible learning in their institution now includes additional meta-analyses bringing the total cited within the research to over 900 comprehensively covers numerous areas of learning activity including pupil motivation, curriculum, meta-cognitive strategies, behaviour, teaching strategies, and classroom management. Visible Learning for Teachers is a must read for any student or teacher who wants an evidence based answer to the question; “how do we maximise achievement in our schools?”

Book Information

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The bad reviews are true. I was excited to read this book so I paid the high price. But it doesn’t have useful information. It takes the author 30 pages to outline how to write a lesson the way we were taught in school (if you were taught the Madeline Hunter way). I bought this book because I stumbled across a chart of ranking effects of influences on student achievement. The list is just a list. I hoped the book would expand on what each item on the list fully meant and gave examples. In the most boring way, the author tells you what to do but not how to go about it. Most of it is common sense. I’ve gathered two excellent tips: 1. Learn more about SOLO taxonomy 2. Learn more about National Board Certification (apparently, going through their PD program AND becoming certified will ensure that you’re using some of the influences with the greatest impact.) You can find the list of 150 influences for free anywhere but the top 10 and their explanations can be found here: http://visible-learning.org/glossary/

This book has become the foundation for all of the work I do. I serve as a Special Education administrator and now reference this as we look to trying new strategies, providing professional learning for teachers, and prioritizing time for different things (e.g. test prep vs. progress monitoring). It’s a regular reference for me. The only con is that it’s not available on Kindle yet so I can’t have it with me everywhere I go!

Whether you are a classroom teacher, school leader, or involved in training educators, you should always keep a copy Visible Learning for Teachers close by. This is both a great reference for educational research and a comprehensive guide for planning and presenting meaningful instruction to students of all levels. Hattie’s work can also serve as a standard against which other educational publications can be measured. I have noticed that he is widely quoted and misquoted by other authors who seem to be trying to ride the wake of his astounding work. Read Hattie first.

Visible Learning for Teachers gives teachers the benefit of research couched in practical applications. Teachers will find it to be helpful in establishing best practices in the classroom.

I persisted with this because I wanted to learn. However, I found it hard going. Surely this could
have been written in a more accessible manner? Hattie is a statistician and this imbues everything in this book. Everything comes back to test scores. There are some commonsense recommendations, although I’m left with the empty feeling that a numbers man is trying to tell me how I should teach. If you think there is more to teaching than marks, ranks, and grades, then this is not the book for you. The recommendations are worth considering, but not for taking as gospel. Give me the more open-minded Project Zero work any day.

If you are looking for an accessible, informative book that can greatly improve your teaching, this is not it. Hattie makes some good points, and with careful (and arduous) reading you can glean some helpful strategies, but he did not write this for a teacher who wants to be inspired by a text and has little free time to dig for meaning. The book is mind-mindbogglingly tedious and dry.

This is an excellent book, much more teacher-friendly than Visible Learning. It was a good read, really dense, and takes apart many myths we have as educators and tells us the numbers regarding strategies we use.

I’d been meaning to read Visible Learning but simply did not get around to it. Dr. Hattie released this distillation of his studies along with his own suggestions for teachers and leaders. The student must become their own teacher while a the teacher must become the learner (of their own teaching impact). Good stuff!

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