

## Direct Instructions

Note: Direct Instruction is one of several educational theories that are a source of knowledge about teaching. A brief summary is included to illustrate what people mean when they talk about educational theories.

Direct Instruction is a theory of education based on the assumption that the best way to teach is with scripted lesson plans that cannot be changed. Critics argue Direct Instruction gives total control of lessons to the teacher. Students are not allowed to learn by exploration and discussion; it is not included in the lessons.

### Steps in a Direct Instruction Lesson

- **Introduction / Review:** The first step is for teachers to gain the students' attention. Students are told what they will know or be able to do at the end of a lesson and why the knowledge or skill is important to them. This step can be in the form of a review and eliciting prior knowledge or it can be an introduction to new information.
- **Development of Lesson:** When the teacher is sure students understand what they will have learned from the lesson, s/he shows them what the learning outcome will look like by modeling what they will know or be able to do. This step includes clear explanations and lots of examples, both verbal and visual. It is a small lecture. The teacher continuously checks for understanding by asking questions and encouraging students to ask questions if they don't understand.
- **Guided Practice:** When the teacher is confident that students understand what they are expected to learn, they begin to practice under the strict guidance of the teacher.
- **Closure:** After a sufficient number of error free trials, the teacher reviews the lesson including the learning outcomes and assigns independent practice worksheets.
- **Evaluation:** Student progress is assessed during the lesson and or as a culminating event or both. For those students who haven't learned, the lesson is repeated.

Although there are Direct Instruction lessons for reasoning and comprehension, Direct Instruction is more effective for learning basic skills in reading, mathematics, spelling and handwriting. There are variations within the class of teaching theories called Direct Instruction.