

## Easy Tech for Better Prep

### Technology for First Exposure

#### 1. Finding Tools and Content in Your Discipline

- Lectures & Demos: utubersity, iTunesU, Kahn, YouTube, OpenYale, MITOpen
- Other Content: Google, Wikipedia, University and Government Reference Sites
- Courses: Udacity, UoPeople, Coursera, EdX, OpenYale, MITOpen
- Learning Modules, Assignments, Tests: Merlot, Google
- Games: Merlot, SeriousGames, EducationArcade, iTunes (apps) GameScene, TheProblemSite, FreeOnlineGames, GameNode, MiniClip

#### 2. Podcasts

- Videos of lectures are a type of podcast
- Real podcasts are better: *teach to the many, not to the middle.*
  - use chapters: organize and give students more control
  - time is no longer an issue
  - use multiple, redundant and alternative examples
  - add something for advanced students (the others can skip)
  - recycle
- Start Small
- Share
- Make a Podcast: find out how on [teachingnaked.com](http://teachingnaked.com)

### Improving Student Preparation for Class

#### 1. Exams before every class

- Use your LMS
- Also creates more class time
- JiTT
- Better Multiple Choice Tests: Bloom Levels

#### 2. Undermining Google: Using Summary Sights

- Describe (what is the emphasis/bias of this site?)
- Compare (chart the differences)
- Evaluate (which site is “best”? provide a structure)
- Critique (is there a bias or mistake in Wikipedia site?)

## Better Multiple Choice Exams

KNOWLEDGE (recall and recognition)

- Which of the following are important theories of X?
- Identify which of the following are symptoms of X?

COMPREHENSION (understanding examples, meaning, and extrapolating)

- Which of the following is an example of X?
- Which of these are summaries of X?

APPLICATIONS (organize or solve with new situations or terms)

- Which of the following Y might be most useful to X?
- What would be the best way to improve X?

ANALYSIS (breaking apart, compare and contrast, generalizing)

- Which of the following statements from article X are fact/opinion?
- Which of the following facts (all true) are most relevant for the argument X?

SYNTHESIS (combining elements into a new patterns)

- Which of the following statements about X (all true) would be best evidence in SUPPORTING the argument Y?
- Which of the following are restatements of the thesis in article X from a person who disagrees?
- Which of the following develop the thesis of X further?

EVALUATION (presenting and defending judgments)

- Which of the following statements about X (all true) would be best evidence in REFUTING the argument Y? (Same set of answers to chose from.)
- Which of the following represents the strongest argument for why...?
- Which critique of X is most compelling?

### Question (Analysis Level)

The following are all true statements about Jimmie Lunceford and Duke Ellington. Which of them are most relevant to why each (or both) are important to the history of jazz? (Check all that apply. Partial credit is available.)

### Answer (and percent correct for each answer) Average score = 0.89 out of 2 points.

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| Y - Lunceford and Ellington both treated jazz as a serious art form.  | 69.725% |
| N - Lunceford was famous for his slightly old-fashioned 2-beat swing feel (instead of the increasingly common 4 swing feel).  | 45.872% |
| Y - The Lunceford band was extremely well rehearsed and could play together very precisely.   | 55%     |
| Y - Ellington was interested in the unique and individual timbres (sound and way of playing) of each member of his band and mixed these particular textures rather than just using the entire section as a similar sounding unit. | 95.413% |
| Y - Duke Ellington performed for floor shows for a white audience at the Cotton Club from 1927-1932.  | 53.211% |
| N - Lunceford band performances often included hand motions and stage antics like throwing trumpets up in the air.  | 59.633% |
| Y - Ellington's most famous soloists included Johnny Hodges, Cootie Williams, Tricky Sam Nanton, and Ben Webster.   | 42.202% |

## Reading and Writing

### 1. Motivating Reading

- Consider the length of reading assignments in relation to your learning outcomes.
- Tell students *why* they are reading in advance.
- Analyze the opening *before* you assign the reading.
- Tell students in advance why the ending is important.
- Email students between classes about specific passages.
- Encourage students along the way using twitter or email.
- Require students to reflect on the entire reading in writing before class
- Give a reading quiz before every class
- Structure class activities or assessment to reward those who did all of the reading.
- Avoid punitive measures.
- Coordinate courses across the curriculum.

### 2. Using Summary Sites:

- Know and understand the competition: sparknotes, Wikipedia, CliffsNotes, PinkMonkey, gradesaver, enotes, bibliomania.
- Convince students to read just a few chapters first.
- Ask students to read the summary first and discuss how it changes the experience.
- Ask students to compare summary sites.
- Make your assignment more about style or character than plot.
- Ask an unusual question (that won't be answered by the summary)

### 3. Writing to Process and Prepare for Discussion.

- Write a short essay before class (see below for better prompts)
- Tell students it will be read by other *students*.
- Share essays online before class on a discussion board.
- Bring essays to class and have students respond in writing to each other.
- Position Papers
- Index cards.

### 4. Better Writing Prompts

- What does the text say?
- Explain or translate a concept into a new context: try "Explain this to Martian."
- How do you/others interpret this text?
- How do you understand this text?
- Why is this text important?
- How does this text do a good or poor job of conveying its message?
- Why is this passage important?
- Why is this passage disturbing?

### 5. Peer-Review Writing

- Peer-Review Rubrics
- Calibrated Peer Review (CPR)
- Inkshedding