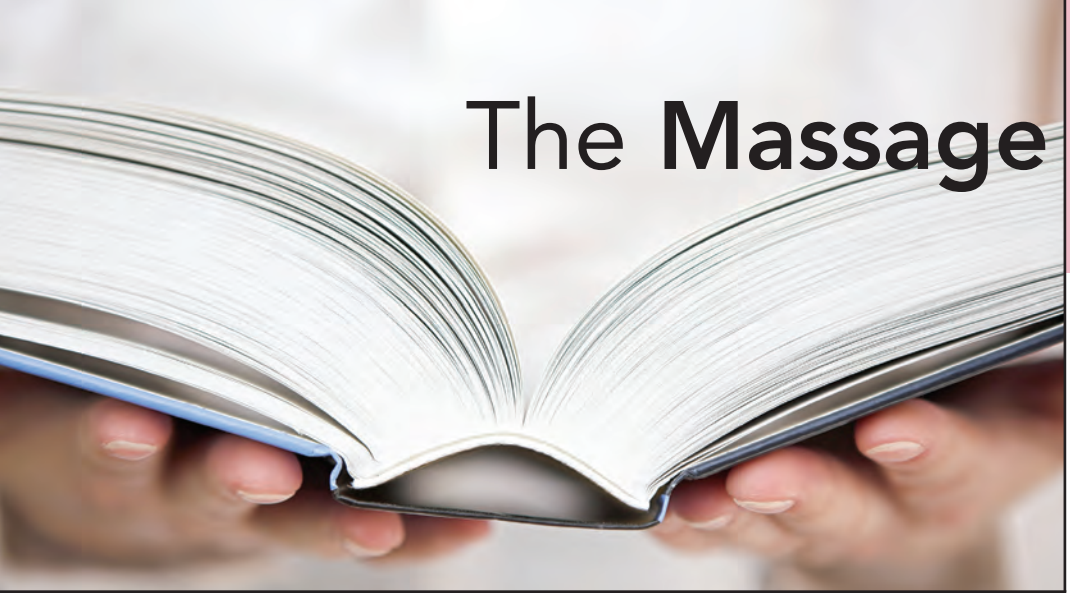

The Massage Educator

issue 2, 2010

5 When five or more teachers from your campus join ABMP as individual members at the Certified, Professional, or Practitioner level, you may be eligible to receive a membership discount through ABMP's Affinity Program. Details @ 800-458-2267.

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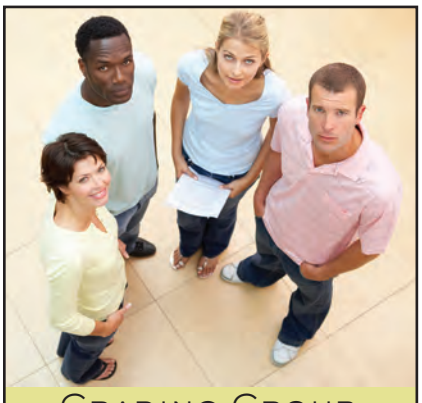
Higher-Order Thinking

Meaningful Instruction for Students

In *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook 1: Cognitive Domain* (commonly called *Bloom's Taxonomy*), simple learning behaviors (knowledge, comprehension, and application) are involved in more complex learning behaviors (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation). The taxonomy helps educators plan experiences that teach students higher-order thinking. Higher-order thinking leads to creative thinking (the generation of ideas, processes, experiences, or objects) and critical thinking (the ability to evaluate ideas, process, experiences, or objects).



Grading Group Projects

page 2

How to Think

Higher-order thinking helps students raise achievement levels because they learn *how* to think, not *what* to think. Education researchers believe that teaching strategies for higher-order thinking promotes students' participation in the learning process, and increases receptivity to new knowledge and the ability to actively apply information in their own lives.[1]

Common processes are:[2]

- **Observing.** Students learn to gather facts directly through their senses and to scrutinize—from a variety of perspectives—a situation or piece of information.
- **Abstracting.** To generate new ideas, a student must break out of normal thinking patterns, allowing prior knowledge to stimulate creative thinking.
- **Questioning.** Asking good questions is key to gathering useful information. Students must identify what they already know and what they would like to know. In some cases, questioning may lead to hypothesizing, where students recommend possible solutions based on existing knowledge and experience.
- **Connecting information.** The ability to connect seemingly unrelated pieces of knowledge or information lies at the heart of innovation. Mapping

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KWL Charts

KWL charts help students focus and learn better and faster. Have students make three columns on a piece of paper; label the columns K for know, W for wonder, and L for learn. Before a lecture, ask students to write (in the K column) everything they know about the topic. Have students share their findings in pairs or in a group. Next, have students list two things they wonder about the topic, then share their findings. Finally, lecture, then ask students to write what they learned, then share at least one learning with the group.

Grading Group Projects

Guidelines for Success

ABMP recently hosted a Teaching Massage webinar with Mary Kathleen Rose titled "Managing and Capitalizing on Group Dynamics in the Massage Classroom." During the webinar (which is archived and viewable at www.abmp.com), a massage instructor asked an important question, "How do I grade group projects fairly and in a way that builds better group dynamics?" Most massage educators can relate to this question. We want to use group work as a way to encourage cooperative learning environments, but is the same group grade fair for everyone? One or two students usually take leadership roles and complete the majority of the group's work.

Let's look at some strategies for setting up useful group projects and grading group work.

1. **Define student roles and tasks clearly.** If group projects are going to be successful, it is important that each student's role and task list is defined clearly. For example, ask students to outline the behaviors and characteristics they would like to see in their group leader. Ask them to also identify the behaviors and characteristics they would like to see in their group followers. View each of these roles as equally important and hold students accountable to the behaviors defined by and for the group.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

"We are usually convinced more easily by reasons we have found ourselves than by those which have occurred to others."
—Blaise Pascal

Enhance Your Campus Culture

Research conducted at the K–12 level suggests that schools with strong cultures have highly motivated students and teachers. Here are five tips for building your campus culture. Visit the instructor section of www.abmp.com for additional ideas from webinars, handouts, and forms.

1 **Develop shared sayings and stories you tell students.** For example, one school might share the saying, "We focus on massage in clinical settings" while another says, "We help you stay well by reducing stress."

2 **Mark important rites of passage with rituals.** Host a new student family night, where students bring a family member to selected classes; offer rewards (perhaps for the best community service project); and enjoy celebrations (like a summer BBQ).

3 **Involve students in change at the campus.** Hold a student roundtable meeting each quarter and encourage students to make recommendations to staff and faculty about positive changes they'd like to see.

4 **Pay close attention to, and uphold, the policies and procedures.** A lack of consistency by the faculty can undercut the function of a school campus.

5 **Ask yourself, "How do I view my school?" and look at the answer carefully.** Do you view the school as succeeding or failing, stuck or evolving, responsive or chaotic, proud or ashamed? You likely communicate this view to students through off-hand comments and through your attitude.

Higher-Order Thinking continued from page 1

(creating graphs or pictures that represent a topic) helps students identify connections and seek information links.

- **Making analogies.** To make an analogy, a student must recognize that two objects, methods, or ideas are dissimilar but have some qualities in common.
- **Recognizing patterns.** Students can learn to identify and work with patterns by focusing on how parts fit together to form whole systems and by breaking systems down to understand the relationship between parts.
- **Problem solving.** Students can learn processes for defining a problem, identifying multiple solutions, and choosing the best one. Over time, students develop better resources for approaching problems and making decisions.
- **Synthesizing.** When students can synthesize information, they can integrate many pieces of knowledge to form a new whole.

These tools do not need to be taught in any particular order. They are not usually taught independently, but through the methods the instructor uses to set up the class, to work with students to engage the senses during learning, to teach and reinforce processes, and to encourage students to share in a safe environment. For example, use of the KWL chart (described on page 1) is a great way to teach students observing, questioning, recognizing patterns, and synthesizing skills.

Sample Activity: Asking Good Questions

This activity was adapted from *The Whole Brain Solution: Thinking Tools to Help Students Observe, Make Connections, and Solve Problems* by Tricia Armstrong.[3] Have students journal a self-assessment about the questions they ask in class. Ask them to complete these sentences:

1. The best questions …
2. I would ask more questions if …
3. My best ideas come when …
4. My school work would improve if I would ask questions that …

5. My daily life would improve if I would ask questions that …
6. I would ask better questions if I …

ABMP Resources

Many higher-order thinking tools can be taught through use of ABMP's Student Success Curriculum available to ABMP member schools at www.abmp.com in the "Resources for Schools and Instructors" section under "Curriculum." Also, review ABMP's resources for Student members, which are also available to school members and instructors who are professional members; these include graphic organizers that help students learn abstract information, make connections between pieces of information, and recognize patterns.

Notes

1. *A. Rogers,* Teaching Adults, 3rd edit. *(New York: Open University Press/McGraw Hill Education, 2002).*
2. *R. J. Wlodkowski,* Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: A Comprehensive Guide for Teaching All Adults, Revised edit. *(San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999).*
3. *T. Armstrong,* The Whole-Brain Solution: Thinking Tools to Help Students Observe, Make Connections, and Solve Problems *(Portland, Maine: Pembroke Publishers Limited, 2003).*

Win a Massage School Makeover!

A fortunate school is going to be the recipient of a Massage School Makeover, valued at more than $16,000. Sponsored by Massage Warehouse, *Massage Today,* and the World Massage Conference, and supported through donations of goods and services from a variety of organizations including ABMP, this contest is designed to help educate the massage community about the need to use professional grade products and equipment in massage schools and practices.

From May 1 through October 30, 2010, alumni, students, and schools can go to Massagetoday.com to nominate and vote for their school of choice to win the makeover, which will include 10 ABMP Student memberships and an ABMP faculty in-service; massage chairs and tables; linens and table warmers; a music and DVD library; a year's supply of lubricants, analgesics, and essential oils; and MUCH more. Each school nominated will be given free access to the World Massage Conference online (Worldmassageconference.com) and will receive product samples and other surprises.

The winner will be announced on November 16, 2010, during the World Massage Conference live broadcast. Visit Massagetoday.com for full contest details.

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2. Provide clear structure for group projects. Provide students with two detailed grading rubrics. One rubric outlines the grading criteria for the group, and the other outlines the grading criteria for individuals. (For information on writing rubrics, see Issue 4, 2009, of *The Massage Educator*, available in the "Resources for Massage Schools and Instructors" area of www.abmp.com.) So that students understand the grading criteria, distribute rubrics when you assign the group projects.

It is also helpful to create and provide students with a project planning form and group progress report form. Ask groups to complete the project planning form and turn it in as part of their first group meeting. The planning form lets you know the group's strategy for completing the project. If you feel the group strategy is faulty, you can step in early to help the team develop a better plan. On a regular basis, ask groups to submit a group progress report. With this, conflicts, schedule lapses, or failure to complete tasks can be addressed throughout the project, leading to a better end result.

Make sure to schedule time to work with groups by attending one of each group's meetings. This is an appropriate time to check in to make sure the group is following its plan and achieving the designated goals.

3. Follow common grading practices. University educators recommend that group projects consist of a group grade and individual grade that are averaged for each group member. The group grade is determined by the group's ability to meet the criteria outlined on the group rubric. Each student's individual grade might be composed of the average he or she receives by meeting the criteria outlined on the individual rubric assessed by the teacher, by scores received in a peer evaluation completed anonymously by group members, and by the scores the student gives herself on a self-evaluation.

4. Be ready to work through conflicts. It is highly likely that the individuals working on a project will run into conflicts at some point during their working interaction. You can prepare students to deal with conflicts if you teach them a process for conflict resolution before assigning groups. As the instructor, you should be ready and willing to spend time with a group to process conflicts during the course of the project. Students can learn as much from the conflict resolution process as they can from the group project.

Assigning group projects is a good way to build teamwork, communication skills, and accountability in students, as long as projects are well-structured and student roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.