Book Review

Visible Learning: Feedback.

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Visible Learning: Feedback by Hattie and Clarke is a new addition to a vital area of learning research. In this new book, the authors explore the theory and practice of feedback, targeting those interested in effective teaching, the process of learning and education and how to improve it. They provide evidence, suggesting that helpful feedback is about asking the right questions and encouraging appropriate lines of inquiry. This leads students to pursue learning and increase their knowledge. The authors also propose that feedback is most valuable when the recipient understands three essential aspects of effective feedback: when it is applied to their learning, as students can track where they are (actual knowledge level), and when they understand what to do next. This developmental process is ongoing, constantly shifting and changing according to the student's needs.

One of the most intriguing premises of this book is that feedback typically has very little effect, or none at all; it is often focused on grades or what is missing, without identifying learning gaps and how improvement can be achieved. Too many educational settings lack an evaluative culture for both effective teaching and learning. Throughout this book, the authors grapple with how teachers and students react to feedback and how it is interpreted and the power and variability of feedback (the importance of surface deep and transfer learning, the power of teacher- student and peer-peer feedback, etc).

Visible Learning: Feedback is comprised of five chapters designed to combine research, theory and teaching expertise, -and principles and practicalities of feedback. The first chapter starts with a comprehensive description of the different forms and their effectiveness, and examples of its variability. In the second and third chapters, essential factors that develop a feedback culture in educational settings are discussed, what include the context of surface, deep, and transfer paradigms. Students must take an active role in maximizing feedback, including the degree of learning according to the structure of observed learning outcomes. The last two chapters offer a number of ideas on effective feedback and how teachers can consistently encourage it.

Visible Learning: Feedback is a powerful book that references statistical evidence from 134 meta-analyses, in turn finding feedback to be the most influential factor in learning and achievement, as well as relevant strategies. This book aims to resolve the paradox of its variability and effectiveness, and examines the relevant factors of effective feedback. This includes framing the feedback into three major questions, such as 'where to next and how to improve.' The authors highlight how teachers' model, receive, interpret, and remodel practice given the impact of their teaching. They show how errors or misconceptions can also become opportunities for learning, supported by growth mindset thinking.

This book also includes comments about assumptions that are tacitly about feedback. This includes an assessment of what has been delivered, based on learning intention and success criteria. The authors purport that an effective 'teacher' must be interested in student feedback as it pertains to their impact, and whether it is at the correct level, with the necessary amount of information to initiate and maintain interest: "...*we need to focus more on the receiving, the skill, will and motivation of the learner when interpreting the feedback, and as much as possible include feedback that helps the learner move forward.*"

The book should be available to those in the teaching profession or in any field that deals with necessary concepts and training. It is an relevant book for educational and developmental psychologists who work with students, teachers, and school systems—as it offers suggestions on how students can be more stimulated within a learning environment.