

TEACHING
the MAGIC *of*

F A ★

A Teacher's Guide

C I L ★

with Lesson Plans for

I ★ T A ★

The 11 Key Concepts

T I O N

Written by **Meg Bolger**
Co-Author of Unlcking the Magic of Facilitation

Mastering the Methods of Engagement: Facilitating vs. Teaching vs. Lecturing

Small Group — 30 minutes — Low Trust

Materials

- ❑ Large flip chart paper/sticky note paper (one sheet per group)
- ❑ Markers
- ❑ (Optional) Additional flip chart/sticky notes, or whiteboard, for facilitator use

Set Up

- ❑ N/A

Facilitator Framing

- This activity is about helping folks understand the difference among the methods of engagement of facilitating, teaching, and lecturing, as well as providing guidance on what circumstances can guide decisions as to which method is most appropriate.
- People often have a bias against lecturing (or a strong bias *for* one of the other two methods); it is important to highlight that all three methods have their pros and their cons, and no method is carte blanche “better” than the others.
- Sometimes groups need help moving away from the social roles or identities of “Teacher” or “Lecturer,” which results in muddier outcomes. Really hammer home that these are “methods of engaging a group [in learning, in a common purpose, etc.]” and use the language of “Educator” (e.g., instead of “Teacher”) and “Learners” (e.g., instead of “Students”) in explaining each method to help disentangle the social roles from the methods.

Goals & Learning Outcomes

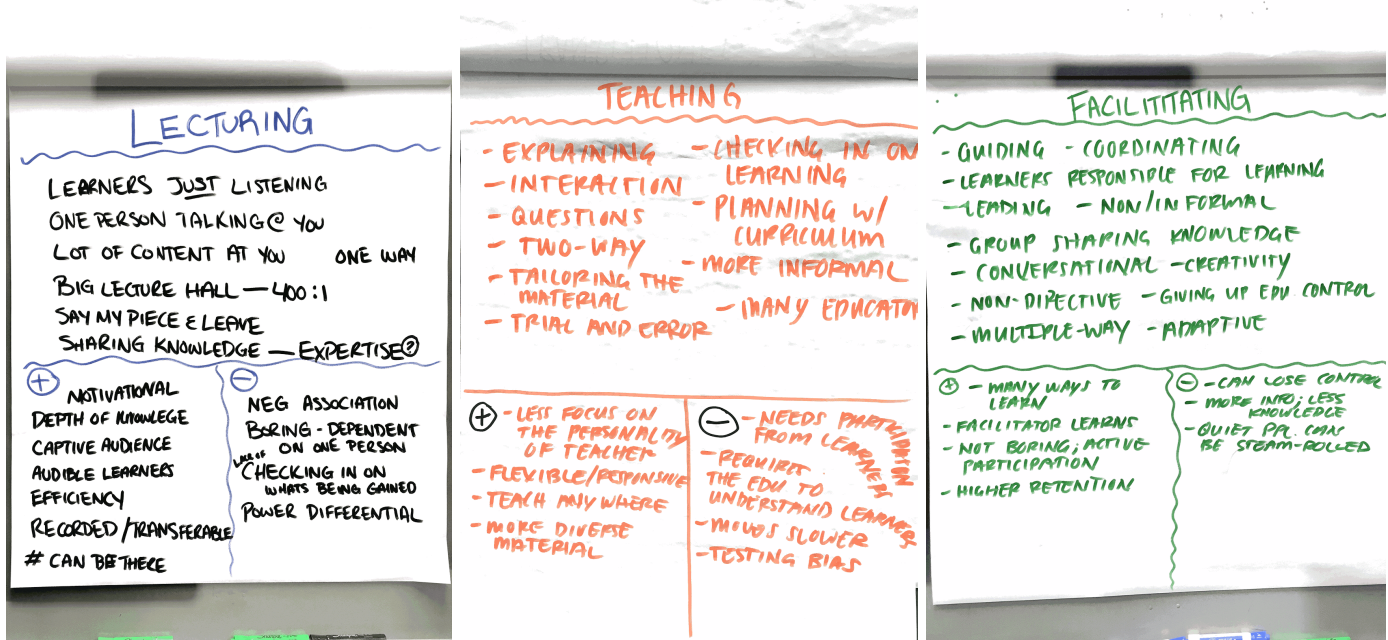
- Participants will be able to identify the differences between facilitating, teaching, and lecturing
- Participants will be able to describe at least two advantages and two challenges with each method of engagement
- Participants will be able to describe how they would chose which method of engagement to use in a given set of circumstances

Timeline

3 mins	Intro, framing, putting folks into groups
10 mins	Small group brainstorm
15 mins	Large group debrief
2 mins	Wrap up

Process Steps

1. Let folks know that the purpose of the activity is to investigate the differences between teaching, facilitating, and lecturing.
2. Split the participants into three groups (if the groups would be larger than 6-7 people, create 6 groups).
3. Give each group a single piece of large flip chart/sticky note (BAP)¹ paper and marker.
4. Assign each group an engagement method (facilitating, teaching, or lecturing).
5. Ask each group to define the term that they were given and then after defining the term to come up with a list of pros and cons for that style of engagement. What is that method of engagement good at and what makes it challenging. Provide the groups approximately 5 minutes to complete this portion of the activity. [See example of BAPs below!]
6. Wrap up the small group work. Ask each group to present out on their conclusions for what the term is and the pros/cons. If there was more than one group doing each term have the two groups present one after another.
7. After the term is presented ask if there is anything that the other groups want to add to the definitions or the pro/con lists. (Optional - make notes of the additions on a new BAP)
8. Once each group has presented, move into debrief questions.



Debrief Questions

What themes do you see across the three different engagement methods?

What are the biggest differences among them?

How might you decide which of these styles to use in what moment?

- The two biggest decision-makers we advocate are Agency and Active Participation. Helping groups understand these dimensions, and how they manifested in their definitions, pros, and cons of each method, can help them understand which situations call for which method.

Why do you think we find it important to highlight these different methods?

¹ We call these large flip chart size sticky notes BAPs. Originally standing for “Big Ass Post-it,” if that doesn’t float your boat, feel free to think of it as a “Big Adhesive Post-it.” Either way we love BAPs, and encourage you to embrace them too.

- In order to understand what factors are necessary to consider when choosing a method of engagement
- To highlight that no method is inherently better than another

In what areas of your life do you see yourself mostly using lecturing or teaching, when you could be using facilitating? How would that change those interactions?

- Asking people questions rather than (or before) telling them what you think can defuse defensiveness and still bring about fruitful discussions/ideas around a topic
- In facilitation we are admitting that we don't have all the answers and that there is valuable information within the group/individual. The person(s) you're speaking with may have more opportunities to add their thoughts/opinions.

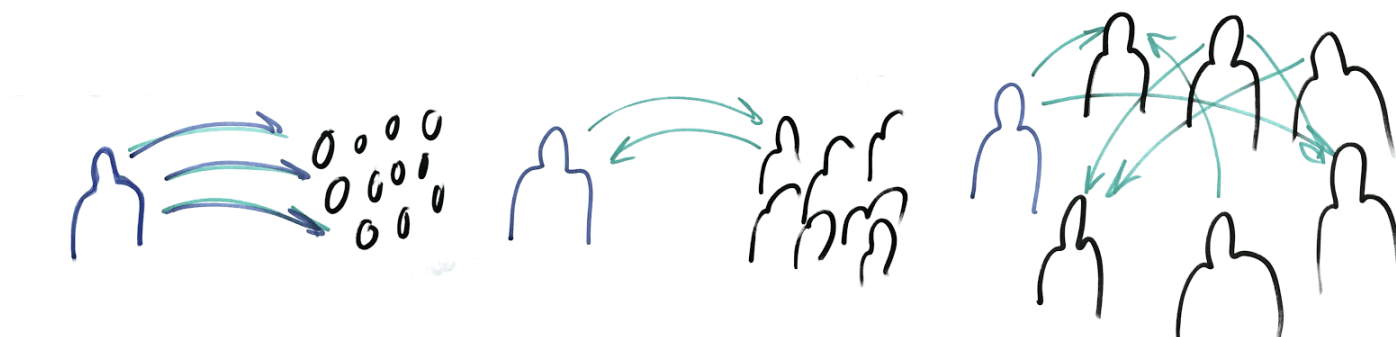
How have you seen these three different methods used in (this workshop, our work space, etc)?

Wrap Up

Feel free to wrap up this activity in a way that highlights what you most want the group to get out of the activity. If you are working with a group that will be using all three of these styles at different times, perhaps point out where in their work/curriculum they will most likely engage with those different styles, and when it would be most appropriate.

Additional learning tidbits you may want to include:

- The biggest difference between the styles is the amount of control the facilitator has and the amount of participation needed from the participants
- Lecture is a one way exchange of information (from educator to learner), teaching is a two-way exchange of information (between educator and learners), and facilitating is a multi-directional exchange of information (between all folks in the room) - it might be useful to draw this graphically on extra flip chart paper - like this!



- Switching engagement methods can be also be helpful for a variety of reasons beyond agency and participation: it can change the levels of energy, create variety, and help you mitigate conflict, just to name a few.

Notes

With this activity some participants may bring a strong bias for or against a certain method of engagement. Most commonly, we see lecturing as getting a bad reputation for being unengaging. It is important to walk participants out of the value judgement spaces and to highlight that each of these styles has merit and drawbacks. The purpose of the exercise isn't to talk about which style we think is best but to understand which styles are appropriate (and can be used strategically) in what moments. If the group resists this, use counter-examples to help them recognize the power of each method (some that come to mind are TED Talks for lecturing, Language Learning for teaching, and Ropes Courses for facilitating), as well as the drawbacks of each.