

Dear Parents,

I have the privilege of teaching your child World History this school semester. I wanted to let you know about an approach to teaching that I will be using this year in all my classes. It is called the “flipped” classroom. The basic concept behind a flipped classroom is that what was traditionally done in the classroom becomes homework and what was traditionally done at home (homework) is done in the classroom.

So what will this look like this year in my classroom? The direct instruction or lecture portion of the class will become the homework. This will primarily be in the form of watching videos that have been produced either by myself or occasionally someone else. As students watch the video, they will take notes on vocabulary, main concepts, and some examples (how they go about watching, rewinding, and taking notes will depend on the student and what they need.) Encourage students to try different strategies until they find their “best fit.” Afterward, students will take a mini-quiz, that will count as a homework grade, to gauge their competency with material before they come to class.

When students come to class the next day we will briefly discuss what they heard in the videos and answer any questions they may have. The rest of the class time will be used for applying the concepts from the video (homework in the traditional setting), working with primary and secondary documents, and doing activities intended to enrich the curriculum. By moving the direct teach portion of the lesson to homework it frees up more time in the classroom so that I can interact more with my students and provide more individual help.

There will still be assessment of student learning through formalized quizzes and tests. In addition, there will be some additional outside work such as reviewing for quizzes and tests, and occasionally finishing work that could not be completed in class.

Here are some of the benefits to flipped instruction:

1. It helps busy students. Many of our students are involved in activities outside of school and often have a hard time getting all their homework done. Students will be able to watch videos ahead of time from their home computer, smart phone, laptops, iPads or school computers at their convenience.
2. Parents do not have to worry that they can't help their child with the homework. In a traditional model, if a student had questions about problems they were doing at home, they had to go in for tutorials the next day. With this method, students are doing the work in the classroom and are able to get their questions answered immediately.
3. Flipping the instruction helps struggling students. By doing the work in the classroom, I will be able to monitor students more closely. I will be able to identify students quicker that have some misunderstandings or need more individualized instruction.
4. Learning is student-centered, not teacher-centered. Focus is not on the teacher teaching the content but on the student practicing and producing quality work.
5. There is more interaction between teacher-student and student-student. Since I won't be spending the class time on instruction, there is more time for me to answer student questions, work with small groups, and guide the learning of each student individually. There will also be more emphasis on students working collaboratively with other students to

facilitate the learning. They will be able to have more relevant social studies conversations and engage with each other.

I am really excited about the flipped class approach in my classes! If you wish to learn more about the flipped classroom, I've provided some links to articles and videos below. If you have any additional questions, feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

Ms. Kathryn Osborn

World History

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As soon as possible, I will compile all of your email addresses and send out my first Weekly update. I will attach the syllabus and this letter so that all of these live links listed below are easy to access! Here they are in case you want to get started early.

Article Links:

1. Why the Flipped Classroom: <http://bit.ly/WhyTheFlippedClassroom>
2. How the Flipped Classroom is Radically Transforming Learning: <http://bit.ly/RadicalFlipping>
3. The Flipped Class: Myths vs. Reality: <http://bit.ly/FlippingMyths>
4. The Flipped Classroom: What Does a Good One Look Like:
<http://bit.ly/WhatGoodFlippingLooksLike>
5. Flipping Classrooms: Does It Make Sense: <http://bit.ly/DoesFlippingMakeSense>

Video Links:

- What is the Flipped Classroom: <http://bit.ly/FlippedLearningVid>
- What the Flipped Class is not: <http://bit.ly/FlippedIsNot>