Objectives vs Activities

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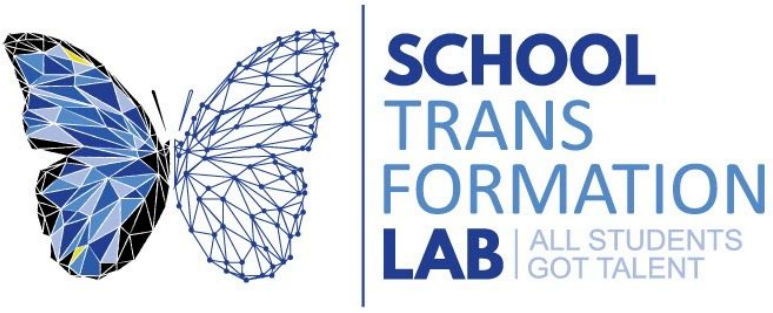

The majority of teachers who engage in systemic change proposed in this training, confuse activity and goal. This happens even to the best, even after reading the whole book "Sauver l'école ?". This paper attempts to clarify this crucial distinction in successful change.

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The heart of the confusion

Many teachers are "directional" and are used to provide activities. When asked to formulate a goal for the students, they often offer an activity.

It is not about ensuring that students do a specific number of exercises anymore. If some do not do any exercise because they have innate knowledge, great. It is about proposing objectives, tests to enable them to prove their achievements.

Examples

Let’s start with examples from kindergarten to higher education.

Objective Being able to lace my two shoes in less than 60 seconds.	*Activity optional* Watching a video on the tablet Training to the first part of the knot 10 times. Practicing on a shoe on a table. Buying lace shoes.
Objective To be able to jump with feet together without shoes on a 1m high table, to show your agility and leg muscles.	*Optional Activity* Up and down the stairs 10 times the Lion of Waterloo, to tone legs.
Objective Among all the statues of the Sablon (Brussels), identify, from their photo, craft 5 randomly selected statuettes. Parameter: choice of 5 statuettes	*Optional activities* Go to Sablon with his parents. Watch a video on the Sablon. Play a memory card game on these statuettes.
objective Score 4 goals of 5 drive shots from 30m, without goalkeeper.	*Optional Activity* Playing football with his friends 30 minutes.
Objective	*Optional activities*

Write (in front of the teacher) a story of 50 to 70 words, staging an invention of the seventeenth century in a romantic style. This test is successful if the text to 80% of the criterion-referenced assessment grid given during the course.	Read Baudelaire. Correct the text of another student according to the evaluation grid. Choose 3 inventions of the seventeenth, and then improvise a story told to a fellow for each invention and choose with him the best invention / story.
Objective Be able to convert a given monetary amount between two currencies, based on prices of a copy of a newspaper. Parameters: monetary amount and both currencies.	*Optional Activities* *How many Euros are 4500 USD after the course of the given newspaper?* Read the corresponding chapter in the syllabus.

Criteria

This the synthesis of criteria for distinguishing objective and activity.

Objective / test	**activity**
Necessary (making of) Required Objective and predictable Anti-Cheat, random. Correctable by other students.	Non-essential (sometimes not supplied) Optional (not done by the student) Multiple Answers provided in advance. Correctable by the learner.

They are explained below.

Objective / Test

Need

You must propose a target. The idea is not to remove the frame, but to move it from imposing activities to imposing goals.
Good news, formulating a goal asks very little work. But this work is essential if you want to give more freedom to students in how to learn, in the way of achieving the goal you set.

Required

Succeeding a test is mandatory for students who are asked to try again until they succeed.

Objectivity

Most of the goals are clear and uninterpretable. The student manages to jump 1m high, or not yet. He completed 10 equations with maximum 2 errors, or not yet. 8 out of 10 criteria are respected for his drawing, or not yet.
The non-ambiguity is easier to express in scientific fields that for humanities such as literature or art.

Consider the 25 meters swim certificate. In most pools, it is terribly ambiguous. Distance is clear. But the criterion "swim breaststroke properly" is rarely explained to the students. This means that no student from the group would be able to judge another student on an evaluation grid. Two lifeguards might give a different result. A student who would see himself swimming on video would be unable to analyze the quality of its movements to predict whether it would succeed or not. In this example, there is a working search criteria to do for the sport teacher, followed by class work to show examples of videos of swimmers who meet these criteria or not.

To caricature, this exercise of objectification is more natural for a teacher or a scientific or accounting branch bathing in rationality, than for a teacher of a cultural branch bathed in aesthetics. The latter will usually need to get out of his comfort zone to get there.

Ultimately, aesthetic criteria can be quantified via the public: your play should be played in nursing homes to collect an average rating of 8/10 from the spectators.

The objectivity of the tests will have two additional side effects: the results will be less challenged and you will no longer judge. The test will decide and you will see the success or failure with the student as a coach, as an ally.

Predictability

An objective / test cannot contain any surprises or other "overshoot bonus." When the teacher annonce conjugating verbs 10 regular verbs, he is not slipping two irregular verbs to "distinguish the best students" even if these verbs have been seen earlier. It no longer makes sense to “identify the best students” since the more advanced can now be 5 chapters ahead. But above all, respect for the scope originally planned for the test is the foundation of trust that enable you to say: "make mistakes is not a fault, it is necessary to learn."

This does not ban difficult or cross testing. For example, you might decide to check spelling on history copies, as long as you quantify and clearly specify in advance the goal for both orthographic and historical aspects. But keep the tests in the proximal development zone of students: ambitious but achievable.

Indicate that you will give 10 regular verbs is not enough. How the student could train? How could he say "I finished my training with the prediction to pass the test?" It should be specified in advance from which 30 verbs you will randomly choose the 10 during the test.

Correctable by other students

An objective and predictable test is almost always correctable by another student, under your anti-complacency supervision. Your students will pass so many tests that you need to delegate most corrections to get away. Inviting students to correct, you train them to evaluate work with objective criteria, leading them look at self-criticism when they return to their own learning.

What brings the correction activity to you, who perfectly knows that topic? For a student who has already passed the test, it's a useful reminder. Often, tests are correctable by students who do not even have themselves started to learn this topic. This gives them a taste upfront. For example, a written division is correctable by a 7 year old with a calculator. On the contrary, evaluation of sentence constructions will likely require a more advanced student.

Anti-Cheat

A test must be kept in a controlled environment, away from temptations of cheating. This monitoring is possibly provided by a reliable student. The students certainly do not have access to the solutions during the test.

By cons, for correction, solutions ready for use can prevent the palaver between students.

Random

An integral test is sometimes possible, as the entire recite a poem or succeed a figure of gymnastics. Some materials that are too large to be fully tested. You then enter a variable in the statement. Each test attempt will be different depending on the values decided randomly at the beginning of each test session.

For example, a language vocabulary test may involve 10 words randomly selected from a much larger list. In a spelling example, one can dictate sentences 5 randomly chosen from a very long text agreed in advance. Each time a student attempts to pass the test, he will have 10 different words or 5 different phases dictated. The student needs to practice all the material from which to have a good probability of succeeding the corresponding test.

In mathematics, the test can be to properly draw five straight y = ax + b, knowing that a and b are whole numbers randomly selected by the teacher during the test. When correcting, a smartphone application can draw the lines of the solution.

The rule: it must not be possible to pass the test without knowing the material, based solely on memorizing answers from the previous attempt.

Activities

Optional

Unlike goals, you do not necessarily offer learning activities. Either way, your students will improvise explaining each others. At worst, if no one knows this topic, if it is not explained in the textbook and is not easily found on the Internet, then some students will beg an explanation that you will provide with pleasure. Your strongest students will understand it and explain it back to their classmates.

Optional

While students must pass the tests, they can escape your activities. They are optional and intended to help students who do not have innate knowledge and are not self-taught. Eventually an literate student could pass all your tests / examinations of all tropic provided for one year, within the first week of September. If he already knows, why to lie? Why slow him down when he could be one of your strengths? Why couldn't he, during your course, study the topic of another teacher?

Multiple

Feel free to offer multiple learning activities. It may be two videos made by two different teachers that explain the same concept. Some students prefer paper exercises and other are willingly go to a computer or a smartphone.

Do not run out to collect those activities. Relying a school book from an editor can provide 80% of what you need. Do not hesitate either to rely on some students to find themselves the resources that you never knew existed. These resources will accumulate over the years.

Solutions provided upfront

For the training activities, students need corrected exercises. The immediate detection of errors enable them to learn and stay motivated in their training.

This means, for example, the Latin teacher put his version "teacher" of the textbook with all translations available to its students. Since learning activities became optional, why to hide the solutions? A student who is not yet able to pass a test will decide to train with an exercise without intent to "cheat" during this exercise. In mathematics, for example, prefer exercises that provide not only the final solution, but also the whole path from the question to the solution.

The heart of the systemic inversion is there: students will not want to cheat the activities, as this would prevent them from learning. On the contrary, during the real tests, some will still try to cheat, if they have the opportunity (at least initially, as their intrinsic motivation has not taken over).

Book Folders "Sauver l'école ?"

Records given to the 10 year old pupils of Chapter 6 are available on the Internet:
http://johnrizzo.be/annexe-de-sauver-lecole/#dossier
this link is accessible from JohnRizzo.be/diff

As it is a google document, you may get a robot-translated version from the menu *Tools* > *Translate document* from French to your own language.

They have been written for 10 years olds but are transferable to almost all ages. Commenting few. Each file corresponds to a cycle of 2 to 4 weeks.

Material 4P Round 1

Binary success criterion

In this first document, many goals have unfortunately not yet binary success criterion. For example, F1 proposes to measure reading speed but does not indicate from how many words per minute the test is considered successful.

M1 offers such a binary goal multiplication tables. You have reached 1500 points on the internet game or not.

Explanation

Sometimes a material point is re-explained as M3 whose description contains a page for associative and commutative. But the description is focused on the explanation of the test and refers to the textbook for a more thorough explanation of the subject.

Appendixes

From page 6, an appendix echo the "Possible values" for statements. It starts with a list of 30 verbs to know for F2, and the page numbers in 2 editions of Bescherelle (French grammar book). Note that the teacher did not painfully search for the page numbers. They were provided by the first students who worked on F2 and then added to them the file to share with other students (page reprinted). This kind of contributory activity slowed slightly but meaningfully the fastest students.

Solutions in appendix

Solutions are given apart, pages 9 and 10. This enables the student to take with him to the test statement without the solutions. For example, for the divisible numbers page 7, we say to students passing this test to the 3rd column of numbers (the column selection is the random parameter). They can take the corresponding numbers at ease from page 7, without the solution from page 9.

These solutions enable other students to correct tests unambiguously. For F2 (conjugation) the Bescherelle book is enough to correct and our document does not contain the conjugation of 30 verbs. M4 (written subtraction) either, the document does not give solutions because a calculator can readily provide them. As against M2 (numbers divisible), page 9 enables a student who does not have the correct understanding of the test, to correct the test of another student, while a calculator would not have been enough.

Material 4P Round 5

disguised Activity

F10 (Déclic - grammar textbook) is an example of non-compliance with criteria that distinguish a goal of an activity. Complete a text with blanks (grammar) is not a goal that will be tested in anti-cheat conditions. This is a classic activity evaluated by the teacher.

In a class used to desynchronization, to the testing and stickers system, it is not at all problematic. The teacher monitors from far that students do not just to copy all the answers without trying. They show him their textbook and he encourages them to identify their mistakes thanks to the corrected textbook of another student. They will rectify their answers to the eraser.

Creative goal

The more students are autonomous and used to the system, the more goals can be complex, cross-cutting and creative. F9 (creation of a fable) encourages the student to submit his text to the teacher at different stages of evolution. This can start by coming to tell "Sir, I have no idea." Drafts versions succeed and improve, giving the teacher a good visibility on the creative process, which is more interesting than the final result. With each release, he gives advice to the student, such as the fact discuss a wobbly aspect of scenario with another designated student.

A student for whom this creation is easy will present only two versions: the draft and the final version. Others will it take 5 to 10 iterations. The final text is quickly corrected in front of the student because the teacher oversaw the whole evolution.

This contrasts with the habit of giving this type of work students as homework, with corrective work for the teacher ... home too.

Material 4P Round 6

Made by students

The last round document is more mature and the students are more mature. It has been largely developed by the most advanced students in the class during the previous cycle. This explains some regression of complexity in the goals against round 4: students have made very scolar choices.

Role of class leaders

From the first objective, F14 (vocabulary), we read that it is now the class leaders who organize the tests. Give the randomness of the statement should be as easy as dictate 20 words.

Exam

Each objective distinguishes tests (obtaining a sticker) from the summary recap exam. For example F14 indicates 20 words will be dictated during the test and only 10 during the exam.

The concept of deferred exam encourages the review, to study again.

Original material

E7 (advertising) does not come from a textbook. The science/culture program is very vague for this year and this school system, a great freedom was possible. Advanced students poking the school library to find it.

It is the only subject for which there is no test or sticker. The multiple choice questions crafted by the teacher are for single use: once given, they do not enable to repeat a failed test. They are then kept for the exam. Note that at this point, the class is very autonomous and drilled to prepare, to study before a test or exam.