

5 Easy Ways to Make Online Learning Stick

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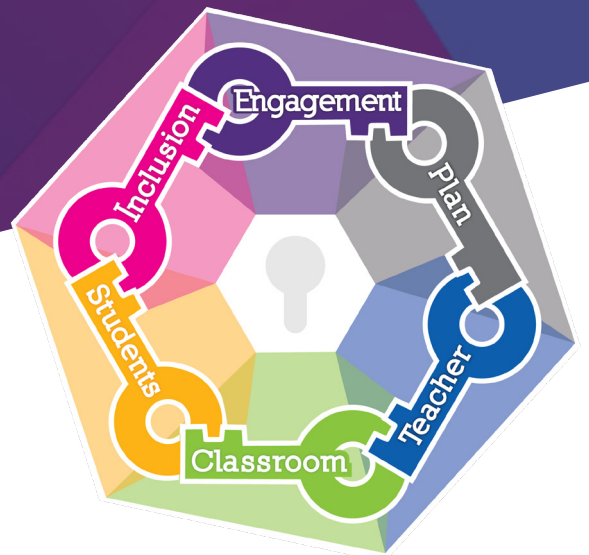


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Dear amazing educator:

We are living in challenging and unprecedented times.

As I write this introduction, many schools throughout Australia are closing and schools throughout California are shut until the end of the school year.

As a result, teachers are having to quickly move their lessons online, while others who already have an online presence are having to shift their focus to make sure that learning is sticking for all their students.

This eBook is for you if you're having to move your lessons to online learning platforms or you're already online but you want to make sure that the learning is sticking for all your students.

It's for you because even during these times of uncertainty, you care about the content or subject that you teach and even during times of challenge, you believe in the power of education.

Wherever you are in your online learning journey, the intention of this eBook is to provide you with 5 easy ways to make online learning stick.

By sticking I mean:

- Ensuring long term memory rather than short term memory.
- The content you care about is remembered by all of your students.
- Students can use your content, lessons or main learning.
- Students are transformed by your lessons.
- Students have different life choices because of their work with you.

Before we begin, let me share the good news.

While some things might change, core teaching principles do not. Consistently focusing on those principles helps ensure learning sticks for your students. And when you have the right system in place, you can make this happen in intentional and life-changing ways.

This is true for both face-to-face and online learning environments.

I hope this eBook helps support you with some of those core teaching principles and maximizes the ways you make online learning stick for everyone.

With deep respect,



Dr. William DeJean

Founder, Unleash Learning™

Easy Strategy #1

Focus on Student Engagement



If you want to make learning stick for all your students, remember to focus on what the research says.

It says:

Intentional and planned for engagement is what makes learning stick. And there are specific things the teacher and students need to be doing that help make this happen.

A simple way to think about the science behind learning is to think like a personal trainer rather than a teacher.

That's because a personal trainer knows that the way to get his or her client to gain muscle is by getting him or her to Lift the Weights throughout the session.

The same is true in learning.

When your students are **Lifting the Weights** throughout the majority of your lesson, you're creating the conditions where learning is sticking for them. That's why at Unleash Learning™ we like to say it's all about **"Lifting the Weights."**

Just remember, no educational research says just put materials online. What it says is have students *write it, speak it, explain it, summarise it, teach it, etc.*

That means if you want online learning to stick, ensure all of your students are Lifting the Weights for the majority of the session.

The key is know what the main ideas, topics, and content of your lesson is and ensuring ALL of your students are **Lifting the Weights** on that “it” for the majority of your online session.

During every online lesson you lead, ask yourself these questions:

- Who is Lifting the Weights?
- For how long?
- In how many different kinds of ways.

In the following pages I'll share with you a few ways to make this happen.



A reminder: If you or your school has taken [How to Unleash Learning](#), don't forget to review Module 1, Action Sheet 2 or if you've taken [The New Teacher Companion](#), review Module 2 and all your Action Sheets associated with this Module.



Want to learn more?

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch our Unleash Learning TV interview with Dr. Jared Cooney Horvath

Easy Strategy #2

Build Community



If you truly want to make learning stick for everyone (I know you do!) it's essential you build community.

Building community means:

- It's about us as a learning community rather than me as the teacher.
- Connection between students matters as much as the content.
- Feeling a sense of belonging matters.
- Working on engagement between students rather than just delivering content.
- Working to ensure students are Lifting the Weights with each other.

There are two great ways to do this.

1 Synchronous chats

These are live chats (discussions) where students are responding to questions and each other in real time.

2. Asynchronous chats

These are not live chats (discussions). Rather students log in at different times and respond to questions at different times.

If your online platform has these tools, please consider using it.

If used well, it can help you create a sense of belonging and support all your students fully Lifting the Weights throughout your session.

What you can do:

1. Post a content specific question.
2. Have everyone respond to that question in detail.
3. Have everyone respond to the responses of at least two other students.
4. Make sure students are responding to the key areas of your content that you think are most important.

To make the most of this process, please be sure to proactively set the ground rules with your online class.

For example, have them discuss in the chat feature a question like: What does it take to work well together?

Or post other kinds of proactive questions that help ensure safety, respect and professionalism.

Nothing builds community better than creating a location that is safe and supportive.



Need more support?
Our Collaboration Booster Cards
are a great resource
[CLICK HERE](#) to find out more



Easy Strategy #3

Use PowerPoint Well



Have you ever experienced “*Death by PowerPoint?*”

That’s when someone puts so much information on a PowerPoint slide (or equivalent technologies) that even if you tried to stay present, it’s nearly impossible to take it all in.

“Death by PowerPoint” might look like someone sharing slide after slide with bullet points filled with so much information, that you find yourself being overwhelmed.

Here’s something to remember:

The brain is not a fact factory machine. The brain learns best through symbols, stories, metaphors and pictures.

The good news is this. If you use PowerPoint well, you can end “Death by PowerPoint” and help make online learning stick.

Here are a few ideas:

1. Use PowerPoint as a Tool to Get Students Lifting the Weights.

Instead of simply putting content on your PowerPoint slides, put items that will signal to all your students to Lift the Weights. If you want them to be taking notes, put that on the slide. If you want them to respond in the chat, put that on the slide.

2. Cut Back

Whenever you can, cut your content down to the essence. Rather than showing 3 pictures on a slide, find one that represents the concept best. Rather than have 10 bullet points on a slide, try to get it down to 3.

3. **Replace Content with a Picture**

Rather than fill your slides with content, find a picture that best represents the content or main idea.

4. **Ensure you Have a Clear and Consistent Structure**

To lower the cognitive load of your students, use the same kind of structure and organisation to your PowerPoint slides. For example, if you use pictures, make sure the pictures are positioned on the same location of each slide. Make sure your fonts are consistent and the structure of your PowerPoint helps your students easily engage with your content for every online lesson you run.



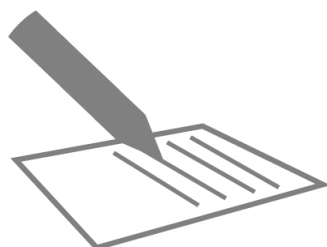
A reminder: If you or your school has taken [How to Unleash Learning](#), review Module 2, Action Sheet 4 for your How to Use PowerPoint Like a Pro cheat sheet.



Want more PowerPoint ideas?
[CLICK HERE](#)

Easy Strategy #4

Ensure They Take Notes



One of the most important things in an online teaching environment is to have your students take notes.

Taking notes is a powerful weightlifting strategy and helps:

- make content stick.
- ensure full student engagement.
- create accountability.
- students stay focused throughout the lesson.

Depending on the age of your students, it's the most important easy strategy I can recommend.

But not all kinds of notetaking have the same impact.

The research indicates this:

It's better to take notes with paper and pen than typing on a computer.

So I first want to invite you to consider having all your students take notes with paper and pen.

Next I want you to consider ensuring all your students are taking notes throughout each online learning session you facilitate.

The key to using notes well is having them use them, reflect on them, review them, share them and if possible submit them to you.

The more ways you get all your students taking notes throughout the online lessons, the more times you are getting all your students to **Lift the Weights**.

And when you do, you're making learning stick for everyone.



Want to learn more ways to use notes effectively?
[CLICK HERE](#)

Easy Strategy #5

Focus on the Closing of the Lesson Well



Have you ever read a book or watched a movie, but it wasn't until you had to tell someone what the book or movie was about that you truly knew if you understood it?

That's because when you're reflecting on the book or movie (speaking about it, writing about it, explaining it, discussing it, etc.) is when you're making learning stick for you.

At Unleash Learning™ we like to say:

The closing is the key moment of meaning making.

If you want to make online learning stick for all your students, focus on closing the lesson well.

To do this, ensure you consistently provide time at the end of your online lesson for all students to make their own meaning.

In a traditional model the teacher tells his or her students what the lesson was about.

In an Unleash Learning™ model, the goal is to ensure learning is sticking for all students.

To make that happen, at the close of the lesson create opportunities for all your students to reflect, think and make meaning.

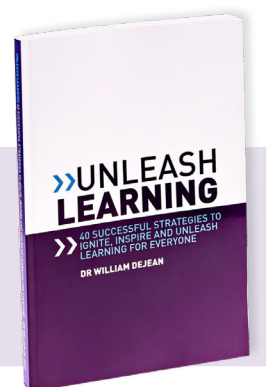
To do this have your students do one of the following:

- Write a detailed summary of their notes.
- Explain the main concept or ideas in the synchronous chats asynchronous chats.
- Have them underline main ideas in their notes and share the main concepts that they underlined.
- Give them the main ideas of the lesson and have them write about them in their own words.

The possibilities are endless. The goal is to help make online learning stick by focusing on the end of the lesson.



Want more ideas?
Go to page 101 of my book **Unleash Learning**
[CLICK HERE](#)



About the Author

Dr. William DeJean is the founder of Unleash Learning™ (www.unleash-learning.com), the school-wide system that makes learning stick for everyone.

Starting his career as a high school teacher, William inspired students to become the first in their families to attend university. For his successes, he received numerous recognitions including being selected Teacher of the Year among 26,000 teachers in San Diego County.

William holds a Doctorate in Education and has taught at universities in the United States and Australia. He is an internationally recognized researcher and consults across a range of schools, networks and regions throughout Australia and the US. He is a sought-after keynote speaker, including appearances at TEDx Canberra, Happiness and Its Causes and the Young Minds Conference and hosts Unleash Learning TV.

He lives in Sydney, Australia.



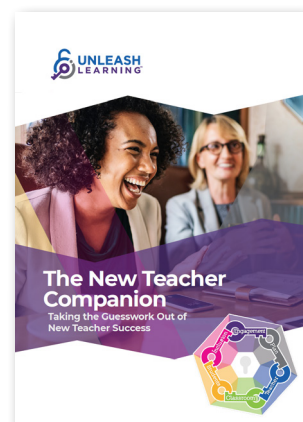
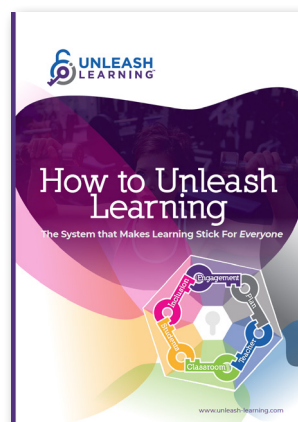
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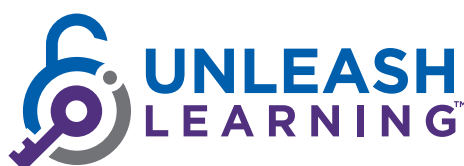
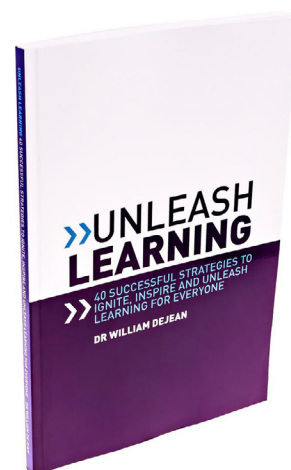
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or State



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