THE K. PATRICIA CROSS ACADEMY

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

Teaching Technique 18

Support a Statement

ACTIVITY TYPE

- Active/Engaged Learning
- Writing

TEACHING PROBLEM ADDRESSED

- Poor Attention/Listening
- Poor Note Taking
- Surface Learning

LEARNING TAXONOMIC LEVEL

- Foundational Knowledge
- Application: Analysis & Critical Thinking
- Learning How to Learn

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Support a Statement

In *Support a Statement*, the instructor provides students with a provocative statement and prompts them to locate details, examples, or data in their lecture notes or a reading assignment to support the statement.

1. Clarify your teaching purpose and learning goals for *Support a Statement*
2. Identify the learning task's underlying problem and craft the prompt
3. Set assignment parameters for completing the prompts
4. Develop a plan for learning assessment or grading
5. Communicate assignment instructions to students
6. Implement the technique
7. Reflect upon the activity and evaluate its effectiveness

Step-By-Step Instructions

In this section we provide you with guidance on each of the seven steps involved as you consider this technique.

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR TEACHING PURPOSE AND LEARNING GOALS

This is a flexible technique. You can use *Support a Statement* to support student reading of class assignments or their listening during lectures. You can adapt the assignment work with almost any body of content in your course. It can be done as an in class or out of class assignment.

Support a Statement encourages and supports many professors' desire for students to take a deeper approach to learning. It tends to motivate students. It also requires that students relate the information they have heard and recorded in their notes to the statement. It is a great tool to help students understand and be critical of what they are reading or hearing and thus, is a good technique for helping students learn how to learn.

Support a Statement is a good tool for assessing student learning. Student responses provide you with a quick glimpse into whether they are understanding foundational content. It also provides you with information about how well they can analyze information and think critically.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE LEARNING TASK'S UNDERLYING PROBLEM AND PROMPT

Review your lecture notes and ensure that there are sufficient details and examples for students to draw on to support the statement. If not, create a different statement or add examples to the lecture.

STEP 3: SET ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS

Determine whether students will answer the prompt in complete sentences or in bullet points. Determine whether they will complete the work in or out of class. Also, determine whether you will set the number of supports they include or whether you will have them find as many supporting statements as possible.

STEP 4: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT OR GRADING

You will probably want to use this technique for formative assessment only. You can score the responses with a simple plus, check, or minus system. You can also count the number of responses they have that are acceptable.

Step-By-Step Instructions (CON'T)

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STEP 5: COMMUNICATE ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS TO STUDENTS

For an onsite class, consider a handout, or alternately have them write the prompt on a sheet of paper and then record their responses. Online, post the prompt in the LMS. You can have students complete the work as an assignment or as a discussion prompt.

STEP 6: IMPLEMENT THE TECHNIQUE

- Craft a provocative statement related to your lecture notes or a reading assignment. The statement could be a conclusion, an inference, an opinion, or a theory.
- Tell students that they should take notes during the lecture, and offer the lecture, or alternately assign the reading.
- Provide students with the statement you have crafted, and ask them to find evidence from their lecture notes or the reading assignment to support the statement.
- Ask for volunteers to share their findings. Each new student volunteer or recruit should contribute only new supporting evidence.
- Proceed with volunteers until everyone who has something to offer has shared.

STEP 7: REFLECT UPON THE ACTIVITY AND EVALUATE ITS EFFECTIVENESS

When reflecting on the activity and how effective it was, consider the following questions:

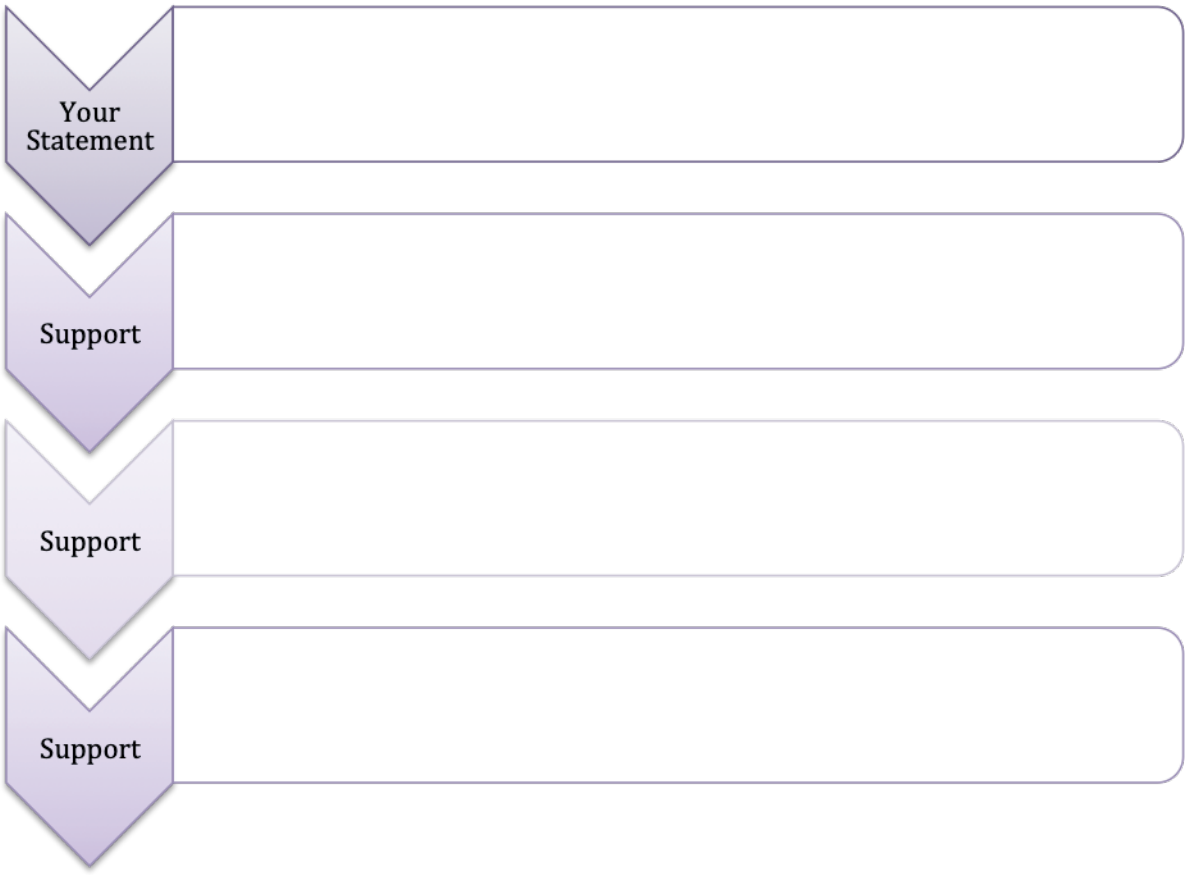
- Did the technique match the course learning goals and objectives?
- Did it meet my goals for this learning module?
- Was it appropriate for the students?
- Did the technique keep the students engaged?
- Did it promote student learning?
- Did it provide me with information about student understanding?

If you answer yes to all or most of these questions, next consider how you might improve the activity for the next use.

Support Materials

The materials in this section are intended to help you with the process of implementing this technique.

SUPPORT A STATEMENT TEMPLATE



VARIATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

- Provide the statement ahead of the lecture to give students a reason to listen actively.
- Combine this technique with *Advance Organizers*. For example, have students organize their ideas in a main idea and detail chart, an assertion and evidence chart, or a zone of relevance chart.
- Ask students to either support or refute the statement to give different perspectives. Consider using this technique in conjunction with a debate.

Support Materials (CON'T)

- Ask students to work in pairs or small groups to support the statement. If you do so, consider assigning groups different roles, with some groups trying to find affirming evidence and others trying to find negating evidence.
- Allow students to choose their own position.
- Ask students to craft their own statements and then have students work to affirm or negate.
- Ask students to generate their own ideas or experiences to support or refute the statement.
- Ask students to do outside research to come up with support or refutation, and consider using the technique in conjunction with a research paper.

Online Adaptation

This section is intended to help you with the process of implementing and assessing *Support a Statement* in your online class.

HOW TO START

- **In a Synchronous Lecture:**
  - Prepare by crafting a provocative statement related to your upcoming lecture.
  - Present the statement at its conclusion and give students a few moments to look at their notes to find supporting information.
  - Next, assign students to breakout rooms to discuss their findings. Then bring students together to report their findings to the class.
  - To vary this technique, consider asking students to refute a statement rather than support it.
- **In an Asynchronous Lecture:**
  - Have students submit their findings as an assignment through your course's Learning Management System.
  - Have students include a timestamp referencing when the information was presented in the recorded lecture.

Technique Template

Following are two templates to assist you as you think through how you might implement this technique in your own class. The first is a completed template, providing an example of how Claire Major adapted *Support a Statement* in her course, *Capstone Seminar in Higher Education*. The second is a blank template for you to fill out to tailor this technique for your course.

Technique Template

Sample *Support a Statement* Completed Technique Template:

Content from Claire Major

Capstone Seminar in Higher Education

Course Name

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS

What are the situational factors that impact this course? For example, is it on campus or online? How many students? Is it lower division or graduate? Are there student attributes such as attitudes, prior knowledge, reasons for enrolling, and so forth that should be taken into account as you consider this technique?

This is a course I will teach as part of our online masters program in higher education administration. It is a required course, and it is the last course students take in the program. I anticipate that approximately 15 students will regularly take this course.

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR TEACHING PURPOSE AND LEARNING GOALS

Why are you choosing this technique? What do you hope to accomplish?

Students who take this course must demonstrate that they met the competencies for the masters program in Higher Education Administration. Support a Statement will be a good opportunity for them to demonstrate not only foundational knowledge of our field, but also their ability to integrate information from across multiple courses in formulating a response.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE LEARNING TASK'S UNDERLYING PROBLEM AND PROMPT

What is the question you want learners to address, or problem you want them to solve?

For each learning module, students receive a case study they must complete in two steps: 1) Write a scholarly essay about the topic and 2) Create an action plan. Because I find that students do not always know how to support their thesis statements with details from the texts, I'll assign this technique in their first learning module to help them understand the process and to get a quick check of how well they understand the paper assignment.

STEP 3: SET ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS

What are the assignment logistics? For example, will this be assigned individually or is it group work? How long will the assignment take? Will students be submitting a product? What materials, resources, or additional information do you anticipate needing?

I'll use a prompt that matches the case and ask them to find supports from the texts they are using for the learning module. They will write responses in complete sentences with citations in APA format.

STEP 4: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT OR GRADING

If you decide to assess learning, how will you determine that learning has occurred? For example, will you use a simple +/check/- grading system? If you use a rubric, will you use an existing one or create one? What will be your criteria and standards?

I'll score their responses as "on point" support and "off point" support. I'll return the scores to them and ask if they have any questions.

STEP 5: COMMUNICATE ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS TO STUDENTS

How will you communicate assignment parameters to students? For example, through a handout? A prompt on a presentation slide? Assignment instructions in your online course?

I'll communicate the prompt in a discussion thread through the course Learning Management System (LMS) and will ask students to post their responses to the thread. They will all be using different texts in their responses (they choose their texts for their papers), so the prompt should generate responses.

STEP 6: IMPLEMENT THE TECHNIQUE

How will you adapt steps/procedures for your students? Are there any additional logistical aspects to consider?

I'll post the assignment and ask students to respond in two days, during the week-long learning module.

STEP 7: REFLECT UPON THE ACTIVITY AND EVALUATE ITS EFFECTIVENESS

Note: This step will be completed after you have implemented the technique.
Did this technique help you accomplish your goals? What worked well? What could have been improved? What might you change if you decide to implement the activity again?

I'll try to gauge whether students have a better grasp of supporting a thesis/argument with logical arguments and detailed examples from scholarly texts and research articles.

Technique Template

This template is intended for use when planning to implement ***Support a Statement*** in your class. Fill in the blanks below, and use the information provided elsewhere in the Instructor's Guide to assist you in your thinking.

Course Name

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS

What are the situational factors that impact this course? For example, is it on campus or online? How many students? Is it lower division or graduate? Are there student attributes such as attitudes, prior knowledge, reasons for enrolling, and so forth that should be taken into account as you consider this technique?

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR TEACHING PURPOSE AND LEARNING GOALS

Why are you choosing this technique? What do you hope to accomplish?

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE LEARNING TASK'S UNDERLYING PROBLEM AND PROMPT

What is the question you want learners to address, or problem you want them to solve?

STEP 3: SET ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS

What are the assignment logistics? For example, will this be assigned individually or is it group work? How long will the assignment take? Will students be submitting a product? What materials, resources, or additional information do you anticipate needing?

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If you decide to assess learning, how will you determine that learning has occurred? For example, will you use a simple +/check/- grading system? If you use a rubric, will you use an existing one or create one? What will be your criteria and standards?

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Note: This step will be completed after you have implemented the technique.
Did this technique help you accomplish your goals? What worked well? What could have been improved? What might you change if you decide to implement the activity again?

References and Resources

PRIMARY SOURCE

Content for this download was drawn primarily from "Active Learning Technique 22: Support a Statement" in *Interactive Lecturing: A Handbook for College Faculty* (Barkley & Major, 2018), pp. 309–312. It includes material that was adapted or reproduced with permission. For further information about this technique, including examples in both on campus and online courses, see the primary source:

Barkley, E. F., Major, C. H. (2018). *Interactive Lecturing: A Handbook for College Faculty.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

CITATIONS AND ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- Australian Catholic University. (2012). *Strategies for cooperative and collaborative learning in large lecture groups.* Retrieved from www.acu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/405768/Large_Group_Lectures_LTC.pdf
- Cooper, J. L., Robinson, P., & Ball, D. A. (2010). The interactive lecture: Reconciling group and active learning strategies with traditional instructional formats. *Exchanges: The Online Journal of Teaching and Learning in the CSU.* Retrieved from http://web.mit.edu/jrankin/www/Active_Learning/interactive_lectures2.pdf

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