

SMALL TEACHING

TEN MINUTE STRATEGIES THAT IMPROVE LEARNING
(AND MAKE TEACHING MORE FUN)

SMU Dedman School of Law

Adjunct Faculty Meeting

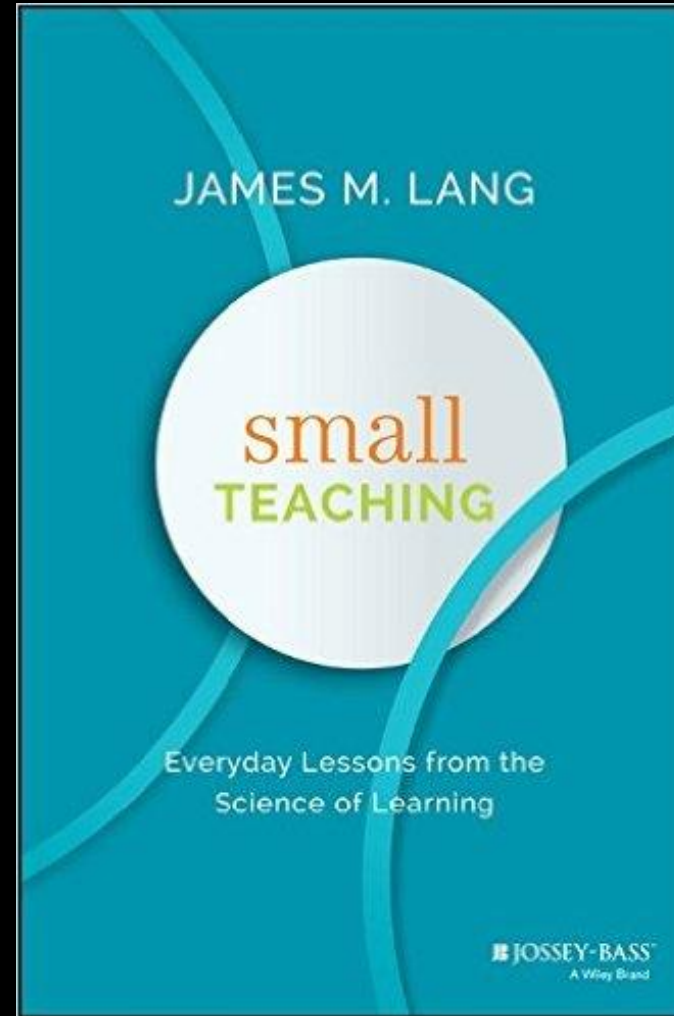
April 5, 2016

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE? WHAT DO YOU WONDER?



HERE'S THE IDEA:

- Small but powerful changes in course design and teaching method
- Easy to implement
- Well supported by research about how humans learn



WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?

- Brief (5-10 minute) classroom learning activities
- One-time interventions in a course
- Small modifications in course design or communication with your students

3 AREAS IN WHICH SMALL TEACHING CAN HELP:

- **KNOWLEDGE:** Help students remember more
- **UNDERSTANDING:** Help students use what they have learned in new contexts
- **INSPIRATION:** Motivate students to work harder at learning and to be excited about your course and their futures



KNOWLEDGE

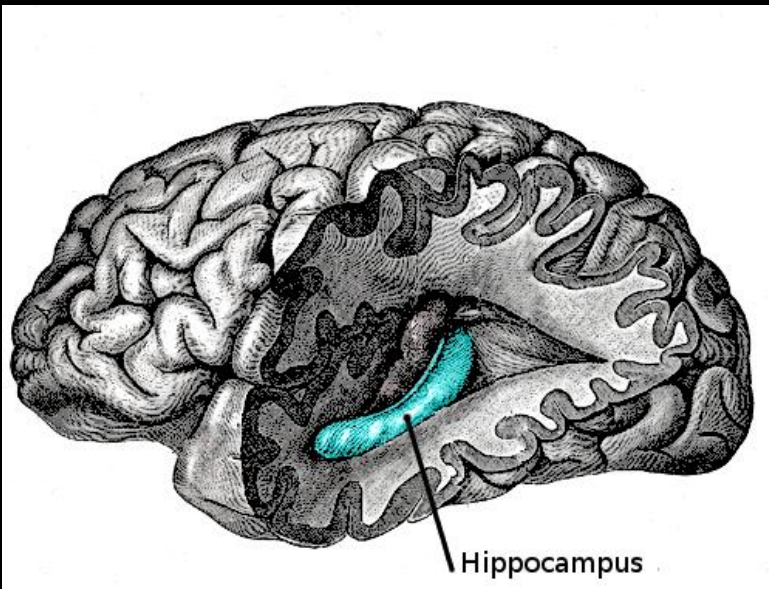
Retrieving
Predicting

RETRIEVING



- Opening Questions
- Closing Questions
- Think/Pair/Share
(Turn to your neighbor and paraphrase for her . . .)

PREDICTING



- 5 minutes, beginning or end of class: Hypothetical raising issues for next topic. How do you think the law will apply?
- Phased hypothetical. How do you expect X will respond?
- Circle back to compare predictions to learning
- Table assignment: how might this work in your class?



UNDERSTANDING

Connecting
Practicing

CONNECTING



- First class mass brain dump
- Skeletal outline on board at class outset
- Structured handouts to fill in during class
- End of class/discussion list/social media: list 3 ways class topic appears outside classroom
- Concept maps
- End of unit/semester: “Minute Thesis”

PRACTICING

- Law application problems throughout semester
 - Small groups
 - Think/Pair/Share
 - Clickers
 - Role Plays
 - Stations
 - TWEN quizzes
- FEEDBACK!

“Practice isn’t the thing you do once you’re good. It’s the thing you do that makes you good.” - Malcolm Gladwell



INSPIRATION

Motivating
Growing

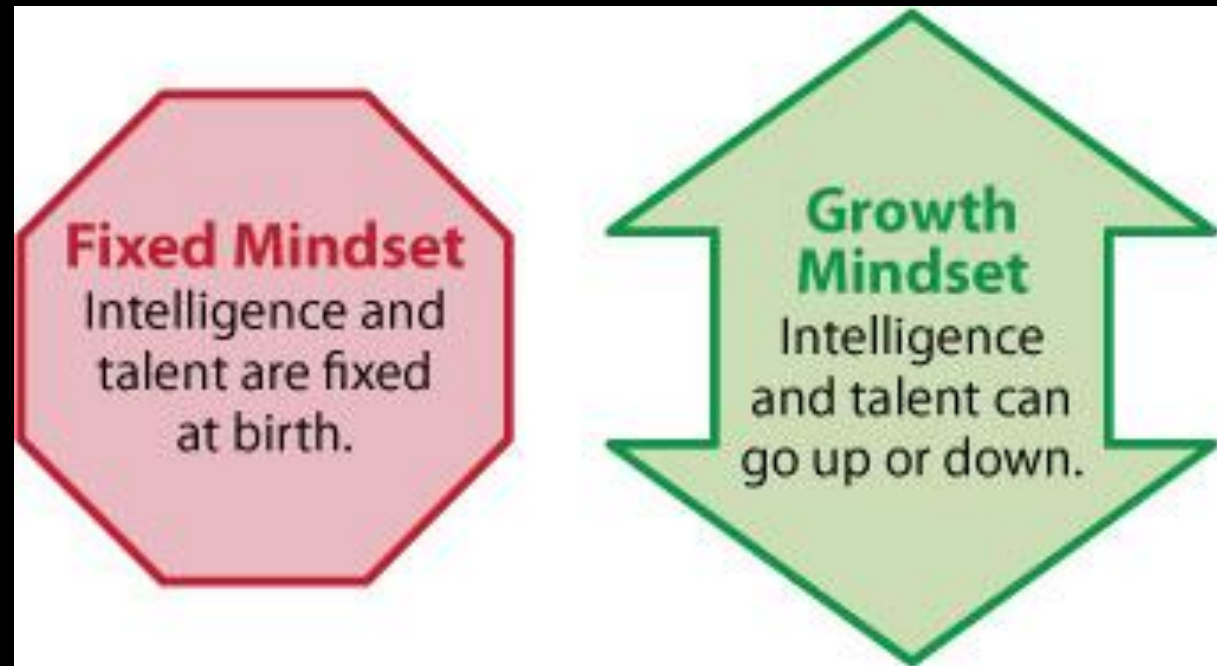
MOTIVATING



- Get to class early (or stay late) and spend a few moments getting to know your students
- Use electronic communications and social media to create communities and connect with students
- Open class by giving students something to wonder about: story; question; shocking fact
- Explicitly invoke purpose: why does your subject matter?
- Share your enthusiasm

GROWING

- Reward growth: is there a way to let students practice and take risks, fail and get feedback, then try again without having grades suffer?
- Make the classroom a safe place to take a risk
- Growth Talk: students can improve through hard work, effort, perseverance (not “you’re so smart,” or “either you will get this or you won’t,” both of which discourage additional effort)
- Share ideas about successful study tactics (your own and/or those of past students)



CLOSING QUESTION

- Describe one strategy discussed today that you might use in your class (and how you'd use it)
- What “small teaching” idea would you like to know more about?