

PART 2—Advantages

Benefits of Flipping

Students Have the Time They Need to Understand

At some point, it seems that all instructors face the same question when presenting content in class. Think about what happens after you've covered the material you planned for the class period. In **listening**, this might mean that you've presented a listening strategy and played the listening passage; in **writing**, it may mean you've presented an organizational format, grammar point, or something you're expecting the students to then practice or produce; in **reading**, you might have presented a reading strategy; or in **speaking**, you may have presented a list of common words or phrases appropriate for a certain situation. Then, you ask some version of this question: *Does everyone understand?* and are greeted with versions of Yes or No or, as happens to all instructors at some point, no response at all. It is at this time that instructors are faced with a decision. Do you move forward for those students who understand (or claim to)? Do you ask them to work on the exercises in the book? The risk, of course, is leaving behind the students who don't understand. Or, do you stop and answer questions, making sure the students who responded with some form of No understand before you move forward? Do you play the listening passage again, answer questions, or explain the same content again in different words? The risk here, of course, is losing the students who are ready to move forward to boredom or frustration. In either case, you lose time. If you play a listening passage again, you lose that many more minutes. The more advanced the students, the longer their listening passages, including in some cases entire lectures. Instructors can't always afford that much class time.

In the flipped model, time is less of an issue for students because they can take as much time as they need or want to go over the material. Students can work at their own pace and work for as long as they want or need in any way they want or need in order to comprehend the content. For listening tasks, they can stop the audio or rewatch the video. For written content, they can read and reread. They can stop to look up vocabulary words if

desired. When students have tackled the content outside of class, they are all “on the same page” when they arrive in class and are much better prepared because they’ve spent their own definition of ample time with the content. Instructors know that they’re all at the same starting point and can begin with the activities in the book or those that have been prepared. The students seem to be more comfortable with this as well. This structure lessens the peer pressure that some students feel to finish with the “faster” students, and it lessens the frustration that other students may feel when it takes the “slower” students longer to grasp content. Stress levels are also reduced because students are free to reread or listen again, and no one has to know if they listened once or three times or if they stopped reading to look up one vocabulary item or ten. It doesn’t matter how many times students reread or relisten; in the end, they’re practicing and that’s giving them more time with English than when delivery of the material is confined to the classroom. While all instructors want to believe and hope that students go home and listen again on their own or practice more, we all know that this is not what happens.

Some activities from a reading textbook provide a simple example. The activities accompany a fairly long and challenging reading (a journal article) on stereotypes in the 5th edition of *Reader’s Choice*. In a traditional class, students might read the article in class, perhaps taking turns reading paragraphs aloud. Maybe the instructor also stops after each paragraph and defines troublesome vocabulary. Or, perhaps students are given a certain amount of time to read silently. In the end, Exercises 1 and 2 in Figure 3 are completed in class.

But in this traditional scenario, sometimes students struggle. They are not able to read at their own pace and may not have had time to re-read. Other students may be fine. Depending on the level and range of capabilities, the instructor may never have time to complete the Critical Reading questions or the Discussion/Composition questions provided (see Figure 4), which are far more interactive and require students to not only comprehend, but analyze, evaluate, and synthesize.

In a flipped model, students read the passage at home and are able to take as much or as little time as they need. When they come to class, students will have already checked any unknown vocabulary and don’t have to ask in front of their peers. Likewise, peers who already know those words aren’t waiting while the instructor defines something they already know. The instructor may choose to assign Exercises 1 and 2 in Figure 3 as part of the homework. Then only a few minutes of class time are required to check answers, and the bulk of class time is spent on the activities that require critical thinking, application of the content, more interaction, and other higher-order skills.

Figure 3. Example of Activities Traditionally Completed after Reading

EXERCISE 1

The following questions check your understanding of the main ideas in “The Stereotype of Stereotypes.” Indicate if each of the statements below is true (T) or false (F) according to the article.

1. T / F According to Yuch-Ting Lee, national stereotypes represent unjustified prejudices.
2. T / F Some researchers believe that we need stereotypes to deal with a large and dangerous world.
3. T / F Charles Stangor believes that stereotypes accurately reflect cultural or group differences.
4. T / F Charles Stangor believes that stereotypes can be used by the powerful to harm the less powerful.
5. T / F For much of the last century, psychologists and writers believed that stereotypes were invalid.
6. T / F Our ancestors may have used stereotypes to survive in a complex and dangerous world.
7. T / F Lee believes that understanding stereotypes can be helpful in understanding others.
8. T / F Lee and Baron see no dangers in stereotypes.
9. T / F The article demonstrates why further research is not necessary.

EXERCISE 2

Look back at the article to complete the following task. “The Stereotype of Stereotypes” presents a variety of points of view and research on stereotypes. Below is a list of researchers and writers cited in the article. Put a P next to the names of those who see positive effects of stereotypes. Put an N next to those who are reported to have negative opinions of stereotypes.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. ____ Yuch-Ting Lee | 4. ____ Gordon W. Allport |
| 2. ____ Charles Stangor | 5. ____ Reuben M. Baron |
| 3. ____ Walter Lippman | 6. ____ David C. Funder |

Figure 4. Example of Activities Not Traditionally Completed after Reading

Critical Reading

1. What does the title “The Stereotype of Stereotypes” mean? Do you think that we have stereotypes about stereotypes?
2. In Paragraphs 6 and 7, the author contrasts the views of Stangor and Lee concerning the effects of stereotypes. With whom do you agree? When does a useful generalization about other people become a harmful stereotype?
3. Yueh-Ting Lee (Paragraph 11) believes that people can use stereotypes to help with conflict resolution. Can you give an example from your own experience? Do you agree or disagree with Lee?
4. a. Did you enjoy the joke that began this article? Why or why not? When they work, what makes such jokes funny? When are they not funny?
b. The following question is meant in fun. Every culture has stereotypes and generalizations about other groups. If you or those in your home culture were writing the email message, what would be good and bad characteristics of different countries? Fill in the chart in the spirit of fun; be careful to respect the feelings of your classmates.

	Good	Bad
Food		
Car		
Art		
House		
Toilet Paper		

- c. Give examples of ways by which you might discover that your stereotypes are inaccurate.

Discussion/Composition

1. By and large, do you believe stereotypes are positive or negative? You will be debating this issue. In preparation, go through “The Stereotype of Stereotypes” and put a P next to any arguments that would support a positive view of stereotypes. Put an N next to negative arguments. Work with your classmates to develop a debate. (Do you believe that using a debate format to clarify your thoughts is a stereotypically North American way to proceed?)
2. If you were going to develop a high school curriculum on stereotypes, what would you teach? Work with your classmates to develop a list of ideas and a list of possible activities.
3. In Paragraph 5 the author says that many psychologists find Lee’s opinions “about as welcome as a cut in their research grants.” What does this mean? What does it tell us about scientists and their research grants? Can you make up other expressions using this phrasing, for example, “about as welcome as running out of gas in the desert”?
4. Below is a statement by Yueh-Ting Lee, quoted in the article (Paragraph 12).

Group differences, not prejudice, are the root cause of tension and conflict between various cultural and racial groups.

What does this mean? Do you agree or disagree? Which do you think is the major cause of cultural conflict: real differences between groups or prejudice? Support your position orally or in writing by presenting reasons and examples.

From: Silberstein, Clarke, & Dobson. (2008). *Reader’s Choice, 5th Edition*, pages 119–120, University of Michigan Press.