

Intertextual Instruction

Research suggests that student learning improves when course content is taught intertextually. In other words, rather than just teaching students about a single text (a book, a film, an artwork, etc.), it is beneficial to encourage students to engage with numerous texts across several media platforms (literature, painting, sculpture, television, film, music, etc.), emphasizing their relationships both in homework assignments and in class discussions

	BOOKS	JOURNALS	FILM	MUSIC	PAINTINGS
SURREALISM	André Breton Malcolm de Chazal		Luis Buñuel Salvador Dali	Mark Romanek's music video for Nine Inch Nails' "Closer"	Man Ray Max Ernst René Magritte
VIRTUAL REALITY					
JOHN F. KENNEDY					

Steps Toward Intertextual Instruction

1. When teaching a given text or concept, think of other texts that connect to the assigned content in interesting ways. Look for texts that are more accessible than the course material itself such as artworks, viral videos, magazine ads and TV commercials.
2. Incorporate the additional text(s) into lectures, class discussions, homework assignments, etc.

For several classroom examples	References on intertextual instruction	And additional suggestions	oakland.edu/teachingtips
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Intertextual Instruction

Purpose, goal(s) or learning outcome(s) for strategy: Helping students to better understand the course content by showing its relationship to texts in a variety of different media.

Type of course: Undergraduate **Typical number of students in course:** 50

Ease in which strategy could be modified and/or applied to other courses: The strategy is particularly well suited to courses in the humanities, although it can be applied to other types of courses, as well.

Brief overview of strategy: Research suggests that student learning improves when course content is taught intertextually. In other words, rather than just teaching students about a single text (a book, a film, an artwork, etc.), it is beneficial to encourage students to engage with numerous texts across several media platforms (literature, painting, sculpture, television, film, music, etc.), emphasizing their relationships both in homework assignments and in class discussions. For example, when teaching the Surrealist writings of poets like André Breton and Malcolm de Chazal in my Modern Literature class, I ask students to engage with Surrealist artworks (including works by Man Ray, Max Ernst, and René Magritte), Surrealist films (such as Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí's *Un Chien Andalou*), and even relatively modern works inspired by Surrealism (e.g. Mark Romanek's music video for the Nine Inch Nails song "Closer"). This approach helps students to obtain a deeper understanding of Surrealism as a political and aesthetic movement, and it also keeps students engaged. (For example, a number of students who initially had little interest in poetry suddenly became involved when they saw the influence this movement had on modern music videos.)

Step-by-step instructions of strategy: (1) When teaching a given text or concept, think of other texts that connect to the assigned content in interesting ways. (It is often helpful to look for texts that are more accessible than the course material itself.) These may include artworks, viral videos, magazine ads, TV commercials, or any other works that are illustrative or useful. (2) Incorporate the additional text(s) into lectures, class discussions, homework assignments, etc.

Additional comments: Students are often quite adept at making intertextual connections themselves. Encourage them to do so, and feel free to borrow their ideas for future sections of the course. For example, after teaching *A Clockwork Orange* in my Modern Literature class (I teach both Anthony Burgess's novel and Stanley Kubrick's film adaptation), one student encouraged me to watch a recent episode of *South Park* that had alluded to a scene in Kubrick's film, while another directed me to an episode of *The Simpsons* with a similar homage. I thanked the students for their perceptiveness, found the relevant clips online, incorporated them into PowerPoint presentations, and used them in future classes.

Resources, citations, references for strategy: Nora Shuart-Faris & David Bloome (eds.), *Uses of Intertextuality in Classroom and Educational Research* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2004); Carmen Luke, "Pedagogy, Connectivity, Multimodality, and Interdisciplinarity," *Reading Research Quarterly* 38.3 (2003), 397-403; Ulrike H. Meinhof & Jonathan Smith (eds.), *Intertextuality and the Media: From Genre to Everyday Life* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000); David Bloome & Ann Egan-Robertson, "The Social Construction of Intertextuality in Classroom Reading and Writing Lessons," *Reading Research Quarterly* 28.4 (1993), 304-333.

Name of course that strategy is being implemented into: ENG 111 (Modern Literature)

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