

The Learning Circle



MARTIAL ARTS
OF WEST END INC

The process of showing a technique and the students performing it by themselves the way you envisioned it.

The Learning Circle

The Learning Circle is a 4 step process of teaching the students how to do a technique or series of techniques. It is the process of showing the students a technique until they understand it and can do it by themselves effectively. In your mind you have a goal of how well you want the students to do the technique you are going to show them for the class. Now, how do you get from showing them the technique and then accomplishing it the same way you had envisioned them performing it. That is what we are going to uncover.

This is how you and instructors can easily accomplish this task in 2-3minutes. There are 4 steps and each step you will do 3 times.

1. Create A Vision
2. Do It With Students
3. Tell Students How To Do It
4. The Students Do It As A Team Without Your Help

Vision

When teaching a technique always begin with the VISION. Create a vision with excitement for what you want the students to do. The more exciting and dynamic you make this the more excited the students become. Think of a quick creative story for the students to envision while performing the technique. There are basically 3 visions you can create or ways the students perform a technique- 1- street (self defense)

2- sparring

3- graduation/show, or tournament.

****While creating the vision, always give a reason why they are doing the technique.****

Create Vision

Example: The class is standing at attention. The instructor is in front.

Excitement- "I am excited to show you a 3 move self defense technique today."

This is important. If you or other instructors are not excited to teach the techniques or you don't think they are going to help the students, then you need to get new techniques!

Why- "This is designed to protect yourself from an attacker who grabs you from behind. Let's pretend you are walking home from school tomorrow and a bully or attacker comes up from behind and grabs you."

Have an instructor, qualified helper, or student be the attacker.

Vision- "Watch these 3 moves carefully."

The instructor does it slowly, and then fast, to show the students the end result and to get the students excited (obviously do not hurt the helper). The instructor now shows the students what it will look like in the air, the way he expects the students to do it, before he teaches it to them.

The students are now excited to do the technique, they know why and when to do it, how it starts, what it should look like when it is completed and how long the technique is from beginning to end.

Another example:

Excitement- “Today we are working on a back hand reverse punch which is an awesome move to use when sparring.”

Why- “This is a dynamic sparring move to use as an offensive technique. When my opponent is waiting, I lunge in faster than he can react, hit him, score the point and move out.”

Vision- “Pretend the score is tied at a tournament or you are at the Olympics going for the gold medal and you only need 1 point to win the match. My opponent is right in front of me bouncing. I have to lunge in, pivot, punch my opponent, cover and shoot back out of the pocket before he can hit me back.”

Now the instructor demonstrates quickly and shows where to strike. He creates a dynamic visual goal for the students to achieve. At this point the students are excited and motivated to do the technique. Now, the instructor has to guide the student from seeing the move, to doing the move by themselves efficiently.

Now use the last 3 steps to get the students to do it as a team effectively.

Step 2- Do it with the students-

Example- “Follow me in steps. Block 1, step forward palm strike 2, and back kick 3. Good let's do it together again a little bit faster. Block1 , palm strike 2, and back kick 3. Excellent, now how many moves are there? Exactly, good answer, 3.”

This really helps students to remember how many techniques there are from start to finish especially when there are 5-8 techniques in a set.

“I'm going to do it 1 more time with you (pre-frame). Ready, follow along. Block 1, palm strike 2, back kick 3.” Now go to step 3.

Step 3- Tell The students how to do it-

Example- "Perfect, this time I'm going to tell you the techniques and you will do them without me." This allows the instructor to move around through the lines, watch students, and spot students troubled with techniques

"Ready team! Block 1, palm strike 2, back kick 3. Good a little faster, ready. Block 1, palm strike 2 and back kick 3. One more time with me helping you and then you have to do it all by yourselves as a team (pre-frame). Let's do it by the numbers you say them with me, ready and 1, 2, 3. Very good."

Depending on the level of the students and the amount of techniques will determine if you want to use the numbers or not. It works really well with beginners.

Step 4- Students Do It As A Team-

Example- "When I say go, all of you do it together using the numbers, ready begin."

The first time you will probably see a few stragglers. It is normal to have 5%- 10% of students make a mistake or forget the first time. They will get better each time. The first time you do something by yourself it is a little hard. It's good that you spot them so you can keep an eye on them and help them if they do not get it by the third time.

It is also good to make them responsible for learning the techniques. You really have to find the balance between giving too much help and the students' responsibility of learning. Your goal is to improve and sharpen their comprehension, cooperation, focus, and learning skills. If you keep doing it with them over and over you will weaken these skills. Let them know you will only show them 3 times and do it with them 3 times and it is their responsibility to get the techniques that fast. A lot of the time I will tell students they have to ask other students in class to help them. This is not being mean, just giving them responsibility and teaching them to use other tools to accomplish their goal.

Don't take advantage of this though; it is your responsibility to teach good enough that no one has a problem. That's the balance, but students must learn the skill of paying attention. Have the students who need help finish. You will be able to give the students who need help feedback in a few moments.

"Excellent class, this side of the room was pretty loud. Ready go! Wow, 1 more time with speed and loud kias or numbers (this is the third time). Ready go!" The learning circle is now complete and the students are off to the 5 Step Repetition Platform and disguised repetition drills.

At this point the instructor must evaluate his instruction. If the students are all doing it well he has scored and can go to the next step. If too many students are having problems then he must do less moves or re-explain and start over.

As you start the disguised repetition games and drills, especially Black Belt Practice time, you will now have time to move around and help the students you spotted earlier without interrupting the other students who are moving right along. There is no downtime this way. Everyone is doing the drills and the few who need help you are working with.

The students now understand the move and are ready for an exciting, dynamic experience as they master the technique or techniques for the day. 100-200 times in 10-15 minutes-
Millennium 5 Step Teaching Platform.

** For easy techniques many times I have condensed this process down to only doing each step 2 times but this is only when I knew the students were a higher level and the techniques were easy. I can spot that immediately from doing this process a million times. For forms you usually don't do it on a person so you can do it slowly explaining each move, then show them fast and then go to the next technique. It is important to make instructors do it 3 times to keep them from getting lazy!

Instructor Training Learning Circle Quiz

What is the goal of the Learning Circle?

What are the 4 parts of the Learning Circle? Shortly explain each step.

1.

2.

3.

4.

How many times do you repeat each step?

Why is the Vision so important?

Do you help the students who did not get the techniques on step four or keep going through the process? Please explain?

How do you know if you were successful when finished?

What would you do if you weren't successful?