



PHOTOS: DARSHAN CHAKMA

7 Things All Teachers Should Know

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There is no cut and dried method of teaching that will guarantee a 100 percent chance of success. Every student is different and so is every teacher; results vary from person to person. Whether you are already working with your own method of teaching or trying to come up with one, it is important to keep the basics in mind. After graduating from Monash University, I have been teaching for the last three years. In these three years, I have managed to help my students – at my coaching centre Think Tank – achieve satisfactory grades. Things have gotten even better now that I have started anew with Cerebro Education in Dhanmondi, Dhaka and these are what helped me as a teacher and the students to achieve our goals.

1. Encourage studying as a habit

If a student spends at least 15-20 minutes going over what they have learned for the day, that brief time can make an enormous difference down the road in terms of retaining what is taught inside classrooms. Not only that, when exam seasons arrive, students are prepared to sit down and study for longer stretches because they already have an idea of what they are studying. Also, the habit of studying regularly makes it easier to avoid procrastination.

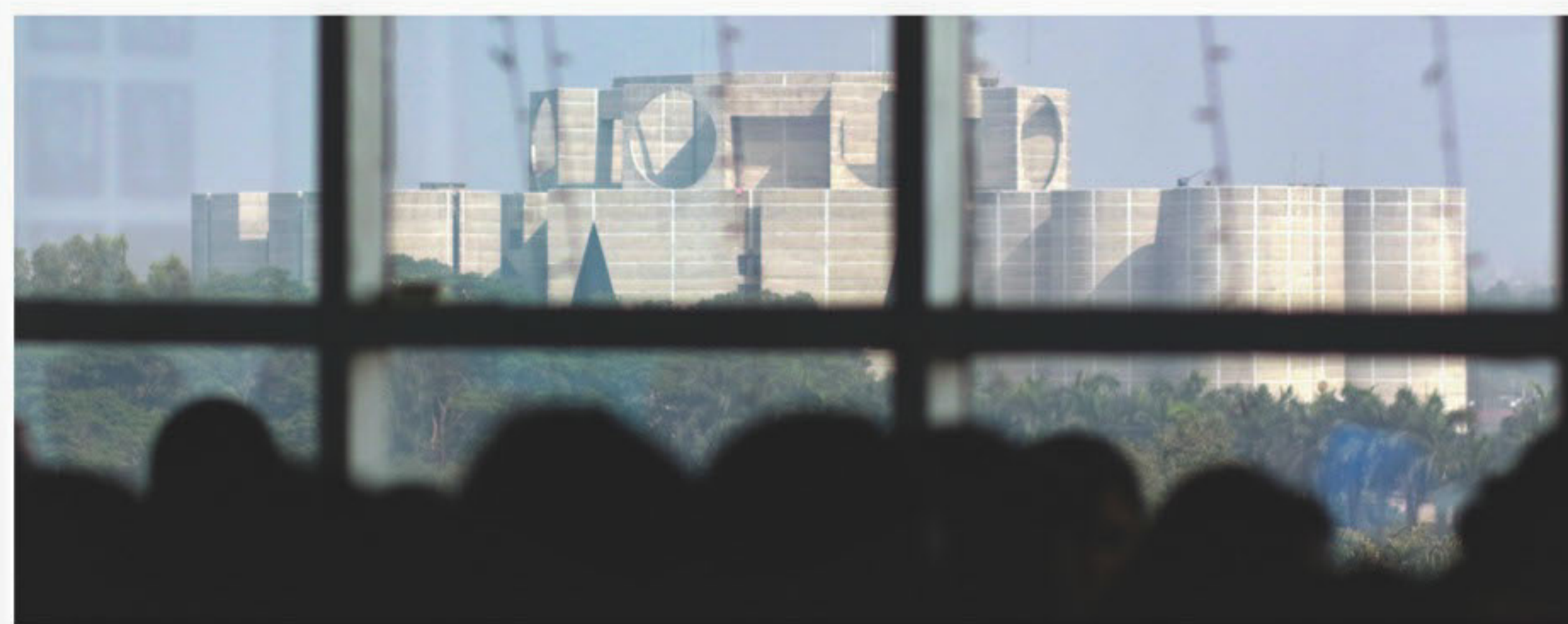
2. Use active learning processes

We all know the old school method of reading out loud while following the lines with the index finger. This has more merit than you think it does. Learning is a

process that can benefit greatly from different inputs. If a student is reading something out loud, highlighting the important bits and especially writing them down, they will fare much better than the student who is simply reading out the notes. Using more sensory inputs for learning increases retention.

3. Keep it short, keep it simple

When it comes to teaching, there is a common scenario here where things are



made as complicated as possible to showcase the expertise and knowledge of the teacher. This is detrimental to the progress of the students as their attention span is even shorter now. Adding to that, the teacher needs to understand that most of these students show up either from school or other classes through horrible traffic. They are tired enough as it is. So it is essential to make them do exactly what is needed. Learning the key points and knowing how to answer according to the mark schemes have

proven to be most effective.

4. The environment matters more than you think it does

If the environment is not comfortable enough, we really cannot expect the students to give us their full focus. A dingy or a stuffy classroom will not help kids pay attention to the right thing nor look forward to classes; in fact, it may actively make them avoid classes. At the very least, try to make sure that the room

is well ventilated, well lit, and has proper ceiling fan placements. That way, the students are comfortable and prepared to give their full concentration.

5. Take extra care of your batches

I teach in big batches. Batches have the huge advantage of bringing out the competitive spirit in students. There is an innate need in most adolescents to be the best and when placed with people of similar aptitude, this can raise the overall level of their performance. Batches let students see how their peers are doing

and this helps them know where they are in terms of academics. However, if the difference between the students is too much, it is a good idea to move them to different batches; otherwise, they can feel extremely demotivated.

6. Have the right attitude

The students need to know that they can come to you for help if they have any difficulty with their subject matter, which requires a certain amount of friendliness from the teacher's side. But friendliness can become a slippery slope. You need to set forward certain boundaries from the get go. This is essential for large batches where maintaining order can become quite a challenge.

7. Use technology

We are practically living inside the cyberspace. Students respond very well to technology and there is absolutely no reason that it should stay out of the classrooms. Keep a Facebook group to update your students and provide them with useful resources at home. They can also use it to ask you questions which you can answer at your convenience. Furthermore, show videos in class that explain the subject matter. Plenty of videos are available on YouTube that do a great job of illustrating complex subjects through animation.

With these tips in mind, nothing should stop you from getting the best out of your students. Let the good grades roll!

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