

You Are Smarter Than You Think! Newsletter

Volume Ten

Spring 1999

One Unit Makes All The Difference!

It Is Spring!

Welcome! Isn't it wonderful that spring is finally here? It is a period of new growth and in keeping with the season I'll be telling you about some new ideas in the use of the You Are Smarter Than You Think (YASTYT) learning system. If you are not getting the results you would like or if your attrition rates are killing you, I think you will find the following articles helpful in solving these problems.

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For those who are new, this newsletter is free for the asking. For questions, comments, or to be added to the mailing list, call Renée Mollan-Masters at (541) 482-3506 or e-mail: yastyt@mind.net

√ One Unit Makes All the Difference!

How would you like to get 75% of your first-year nursing students voluntarily using the YASTYT learning system?

How would you like to impact your attrition rates so that you aren't losing half of your first semester students? How would you like to do all of this without increasing your current workload?

The nursing program at Queensborough Community College in New York has successfully done this. Last January they offered a one-unit six-week class specifically designed to teach students how to apply the YASTYT learning system. Sixty-five individuals (75% of their first semester nursing students) voluntarily participated and although the hard statistics are not yet in, students and teachers alike

were very enthusiastic about the class.

How was this accomplished? All incoming nursing students were required to participate in a student orientation, during which they were confronted with the nursing school's attrition rate. They were

told frankly that half of them would not be there by next semester. The specifics of why students have so much trouble were discussed and they were shown how certain learning techniques such as rereading the textbook several times, highlighting the text book

indiscriminately, and memorizing, etc. will not work in nursing. Then a solution was presented. The students were offered a one-unit class that would teach them how to learn more effectively and increase their chances for success.

Those students who chose to participate attended a one-hour class for six weeks, facilitated by faculty members who taught the class as a part of their advising responsibilities. The classes had 7



to 14 students and were scheduled right after lab time when students were already on campus. Attendance was required at every class in order to earn the one-unit. The YASTYT book was the required text.

What Is the Application Journal?

It is a tool that helps students learn how to apply the **You Are Smarter Than You Think** learning system. It systematically takes a student through the YASTYT book in a six-week period of time.

During the first 10 minutes of the weekly meetings, the instructor would ask the students to talk about how things were going. The class would then break down into groups of three or four and work on the Application Journal. At the end of each period, the students would discuss their answers and turn in their finished Application Journal sheets. They were then required to follow through on the assignments given in the Application Journal. The instructor kept a folder on each student which contained their completed work.

Some students took the class even though they felt they didn't need it. Their participation was poor. However, things changed after the first test. Generally the nonparticipating students did not do as well on the test as everyone else in the class. These results got their attention and changed their behavior for the positive.

The benefits from the weekly meetings were far-reaching. The students were able to get extra help with spatial mapping and outlining skills. The students

bonded with each other an important element in student success. At the end of the six weeks, the students were actively involved in deciding which instructors to take the next semester. They weren't looking for the easiest

instructor but rather the one who would work well with their particular learning

needs. The instructors also learned from the students and came to realize that what they were doing during testing was increasing the students' anxiety. As a result the instructors made changes.

I believe this class was successful for three reasons. First, the students were able to earn one-unit of credit. Second, the orientation process showing students why they needed the class increased attendance. Third, the ability of the teachers to use their advising hours for the class increased their commitment to making the project work.

In my opinion, this college has found a win win solution by using the YASTYT learning system. In my Fall newsletter I will share with you the specific results. If you would like more information, please contact Maureen Wallace in the nursing program at Queensborough Community College.

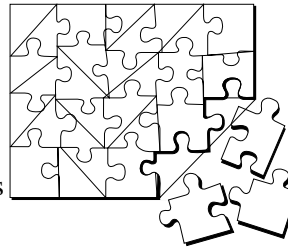
√ Critical Thinking and YASTYT - A Perfect Match!

If you had to list the three greatest deficiencies of most incoming students, what would they be? Computer skills? Effective learning? Critical thinking?

One of my pilot schools in Wisconsin was concerned that many of their nursing students were weak in the three above-mentioned areas. So Beth Luedtke a nursing instructor at Waukesha Community College created a one-unit class to teach all three of these skills at the same time. A strange combination, yes, but a wonderful synergetic union. Let me explain.

Critical thinking can't be learned without long-term memory usage. The benefit of the YASTYT learning system is that it enables students to learn in this way. By using the Application Journal via the Internet, the students' computer skills improved. So when the class was finished the students knew how to learn using long-term memory, how to think critically and how to use the computer.

Here is how Beth did it. The students were introduced to the class during orientation. Those who wished to participate were required to buy the You Are Smarter Than You Think book and have an e-mail address (most school computer labs can assist with this).



The first meeting instructed them to download the YASTYT Application Journal from the Internet (address below) and meet together in groups of three or more an hour before each class to work on the Application Journal together and e-mail their responses to their instructor. During class the students worked on the critical thinking aspect of the course.

The response was terrific. One student wrote: "What I like about the Journal is its simplicity, openness, and the opportunity it gave me to become computer literate."

Where Can We Download the Application Journal?

The Internet address for the You Are Smarter Than You Think Application Journal is:
www.waukesha.tec.wi.us/tic/beth/yastyt.html

It was also said: "On my first test, without YASTYT, I got a 77. On my second test, using YASTYT, I got a 94. On my third test, applying the system halfway, I got a 84".

If you would like more information, please contact Beth Luedtke at Waukesha Community College in Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

√ Some Thoughts

"Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing worth knowing can be taught."

Oscar Wilde

"Spoonfeeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon."

E.M. Foster

"We learn through experience and experiencing, and no one teaches anyone anything. This is as true for the infant moving from kicking to crawling to walking as it is for the scientist with his equations. If the environment permits it, anyone can learn whatever he chooses to learn; and if the individual permits it, the environment will teach him everything it has to teach."

Viola Spolin

"If you are truly serious about preparing your child for the future, don't teach him to subtract—teach him to deduct."

Fran Lebowitz

"We teachers can only help the work going on, as servants wait upon a master."

Maria Montessori

Worn To a Frazzle?

(The Cat's Pajamas - A fictionary of Familiar Phrases by Tad Tuleja)

Woven cloth has always had a warp and a woof. The strength of the cloth comes from the warp. In Anglo-Saxon times the warp was made of a strong reed known as a *frazol*. Hence, when the woof was worn down, the fabric was worn to



the frazol and ready to fall apart.

Are you worn to a *frazol*? I sure hope not. May your summer renew your spirit. May the fall help you to realize your catalytic power as a teacher. Until next fall know that I am only a phone call away. Have a great summer.

