



# OPCE Creating Smart & Good Schools Newsletter

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## Introducing the Smart & Good "Spa": Strategies for Rejuvenation

Welcome to the first issue of the "Smart & Good" Spa—Strategies for Rejuvenation! Each newsletter will focus on one strategy to build PERFORMANCE character in every classroom—no matter what the subject matter.

Why are we calling this a "Rejuvenation" - just like a real spa helps refresh and rejuvenate your mind and body, we believe these strategies can help rejuvenate your teaching and classroom. We all get comfortable doing the same things day after day, year after year. We form habits, good or bad, that are difficult to change. We often fear change because we don't know if it will be make things better or worse!

Remember why you chose teaching as a career? Most of you would say it was to help young people learn and be successful. But over the years, the demands of testing, content standards, scarce resources, and the myriad of day to day challenges has for many, "sucked the fun" right out of teaching. We believe these strategies will help make teaching more fun—and more effective. Each strategy is research-based and easy to implement. Most aren't new, and may be familiar to some of you, but perhaps you haven't tried them in awhile.

So what do you have to lose? Give them a try! Take a dip in the Smart & Good "Spa"!

*"Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens."*

—Kahlil Gibran  
(1883-1931); Artist, Poet, And Writer

### Spa Treatment #1: Guided Lecture Procedure for Active Listening

This strategy was adapted from Vacca, R.T. & Vacca, J.L. (1989). *Content Area Reading*. Harper Collins Publishing. It is appropriate for middle through high school. For younger students, lecture for shorter times and provide more support. Complete instructions are on page 2.



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# Spa Treatment #1: Guided Lecture Procedure for Active Listening\*

## **PURPOSE:**

A different approach to lecturing that focuses on developing active listening skills rather than note-taking during a lecture. It can be used with any subject matter, and works best when the lecture is short (about half of a class period or less).

## **DEVELOPS PERFORMANCE CHARACTER TRAITS:**

Self-discipline, teamwork, diligence, cooperation, self-assessment.

## **PREPARATION:**

Organize your lecture notes and extract 3-4 main objectives or concepts. Make a note of any new vocabulary or technical terms that need explaining

## **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

Lecture notes, chalkboard.

## **PROCEDURE:**

1. Instruct the students not to take notes during the lecture. Tell them to listen and try to remember as much as they can from the lecture. With younger students, limit your lecture to 10 minutes, adding to the length gradually throughout the year. Older students may be able to start with a longer lecture, but if they aren't used to listening and remembering, start with 10 minutes also and work up.
2. Write the 3 or 4 main objectives/concepts of the lecture on the board. Ask students to read and copy the objectives/concepts. Next to each objective/concept write any new vocabulary or technical terms that will be used in the lecture. If the definitions are not in the lecture, provide short definitions.
3. Lecture.
4. Immediately following the lecture, tell students to write down everything they remember from the lecture on the page they copied the objectives on. They should do this individually and as quickly as possible. They should be encouraged to abbreviate or use diagrams to note relationships.
5. Students then form small groups to review and discuss the lecture. **THIS IS THE CRUX OF THE ACTIVITY.** Students should compare what each one recalls to identify "gaps" in each individual's memory or understanding. Tell students to create an outline of notes in sequential order, identifying major ideas, relating these to pertinent details, and checking to make sure their outline fits with the objectives and new vocabulary you listed at the start. The teacher should be available to answer questions that arise during the discussion

## **FOLLOW-UP/REINFORCING ACTIVITY:**

The authors recommend that students be given a writing assignment in which they create a short narrative of the lecture's major concepts, pertinent details, and conclusions. It is suggested that they do this independently of their notes, which gives them an immediate self-appraisal of how much they retained and understood.