

## Teaching Tips from Library Resources

This month's teaching tip comes from the book *Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning* by James M. Lang. The book provides practical, research-backed strategies to enhance student learning. These techniques are easy to integrate into existing courses and can significantly impact student engagement and retention with minimal effort. This resource is found via the Reta E. King website and is available in [eBook format](#).

An example of a tool instructors could use in a face-to-face setting includes utilizing the concept of retrieval practice. This involves encouraging students to actively recall information they've learned, rather than simply reviewing their notes or textbooks. For instance, the instructor can start each class with a brief quiz or ask students to write down everything they remember about a previous lesson which helps strengthen memory and long-term retention.

A tip for asynchronous online courses is to incorporate interleaving into course design. This involves mixing different topics or types of problems within a single study session, rather than focusing on just one topic at a time.

Examples include:

**Module Design:** Instead of organizing a course into modules that each cover a single topic, mix related topics within each module. For example, if teaching a psychology course, a module could include activities on both cognitive development and social behavior.

**Assignments:** Design assignments that require students to apply multiple concepts. For instance, a case study could ask students to analyze a scenario using theories from different parts of the course.

**Quizzes and Exams:** Create assessments that include questions from various topics covered in the course. This encourages students to retrieve and apply knowledge from different areas, rather than focusing on one topic at a time.

**Discussion Boards:** Use discussion prompts that require students to draw connections between different topics. For example, ask students to compare and contrast theories or to apply multiple concepts to a real-world problem.

**Feedback:** Provide feedback that highlights connections between different topics. When grading assignments, point out how students can integrate various concepts to deepen their understanding.

Interleaving topics helps students build a more integrated understanding of the material, which can enhance their ability to transfer knowledge to new situations and improve long-term retention.

For those interested in other pedagogy focused literature, please visit the library's third floor where you will find the [TLPEC collection](#) of resources.