



Using Gagne’s 9 Events of Instruction

Overview

Designing a learning experience for your students in Brightspace and not sure where to begin?

Robert Gagne has you covered.

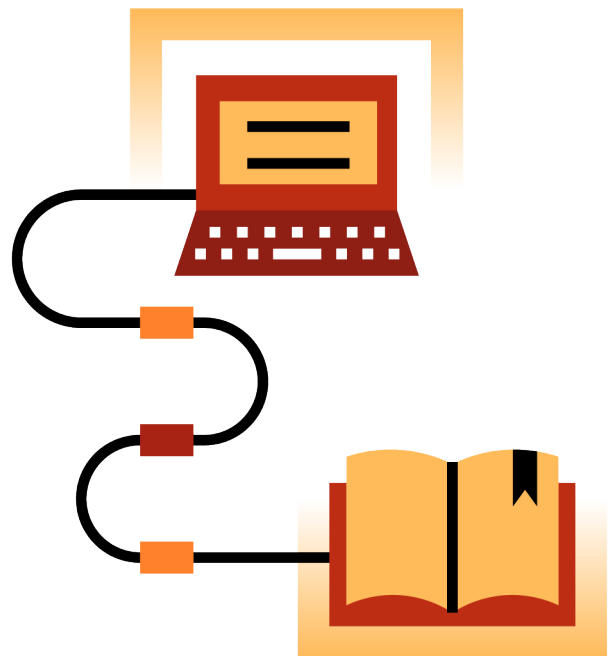
Based on his research from the 1960s, Gagne’s Nine Events of Instruction was originally used by educators in face-to-face classroom settings to structure purposeful and intentional learning experiences that typically occur in schools. Teachers found this framework to be especially beneficial in giving their lesson plans a structure and for designing engaging and meaningful instruction for all types of planned learning experiences.

With the recent proliferation of tech-supported learning in schools, Gagne’s 9 Events of Instruction has gained considerable traction given the principles transfer to the online learning environment fairly well.

Hence, as a teacher currently using Brightspace to support the delivery of your instruction—be it web facilitated, hybrid/blended or online learning—Gagne’s Nine Events of Instruction is a great tool to help you get started on designing a sound learning experience based on how students internalise information.

How to use Gagne's Framework

1. **First**, decide on the learning objectives your students are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. Each of the objectives must be stated in performance terms using one of the standard verbs, i.e., states, discriminates, classifies, etc.
2. **Second**, Categorise these objectives into one of the five domains of learning. According to Gagne, there are five categories of human performance typically established by learning outcomes: intellectual skills, verbal information, cognitive strategies, motor skills, and attitudes. They do not follow any order, and any learned capability (learning outcome) is believed to have the characteristics of one or another of these categories.
3. **Third**, align your assessments with the learning outcomes students are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson.
4. **Fourth**, determine the instructional activities best fitting to accomplish your learning outcomes (different domains of learning are best taught a certain way) ensuring you set your students up for success when they get to the summative assessments at the end of the lesson. When deciding on the best choice of instructional activities to roll out, do factor in your students' prior experiences and knowledge, learning styles, interests etc.
5. **Fifth**, use Gagne's 9 Events of Instruction to frame and structure the chosen instructional activities. Based on the tool and pedagogical affordances of Brightspace, and other administrative factors, you will then decide which instructional events will be conducted through the LMS (asynchronously or synchronously) and/or face-to-face i.e., web-facilitated, hybrid/blended or fully online lesson. It is recommended that you use Gagne's steps in sequential order—starting with the first step and moving through all nine, in order. Reason being, as you utilize each step, the theory states that learners should become more engaged and invested in the subject matter.



Application

The following information includes an explanation of each of the nine events as well as examples of how an instructor could facilitate the Nine Events of Instruction in a Brightspace course.

Step 1

Gain your learner's attention (reception): Capture their attention and arouse their interest in the topic.

- Use effective hooks to quickly grab student attention and interest in the topic using humour, make an emotional connection, introduce a problem situation etc.
- In an online or hybrid lesson, create a Welcome widget on your course homepage to gain students' attention at the start of the course to give them a clear starting point, begin your course with a discussion activity on a controversial topic, and so on.

Step 2

Inform learners of objectives (expectancy): Allow students to organise their thoughts and prioritise their attention regarding what they are about to learn and do.

- Describe learning behaviours learners will display by the end of the lesson, desired outcomes, and goals etc.
- In an online or hybrid lesson, use the Brightspace html editor to create an introduction page for each module, including lesson learning objectives, drag and drop module documents into the Contents tool, and so on.



Step 3

Stimulate recall of prior learning (retrieval): Activate information and experiences the learner already has to help them form relationships between the known information and what they are about to learn.

- Recall events from previous lectures, integrate results of activities into the current topic, and/or relate previous information to the current topic
- In an online or hybrid lesson, use Brightspace discussions to facilitate reflection on how a previous topic is related to the current topic, use Release conditions to make available new learning material on condition student reviews a summary of what was learned in the previous session, choose between self-assessments and surveys depending on the question type to create an informal pre-assessment check point, and so on.

Step 4

Present the learning content (selective perception): Show and explain the material you want students to learn

- Content should be chunked well, organised logically and meaningfully, and explained and demonstrated using a variety of methods including lecture, readings, activities, projects, multimedia etc. to retain student interest.
- In an online or hybrid lesson, organise and chunk text using different containers (Unit, Lessons, Folders), use Brightspace HTML editor to include different content types including text, graphics, and multimedia (add an image, link, media, video note etc.), and so on.

Step 5

Provide guidance for learning (semantic coding): Make the learning content as easy to digest as possible by providing students with examples, strategies, hints and tips for better comprehension and recall.

- Provide expectations, include graphic organisers, study skills strategies, etc.
- In an online or hybrid lesson, make assignment rubrics in Brightspace visible to students so that they understand the expectations for a project or activity, set up intelligent agents with release conditions to provide study tips along the way, and so on.

Step 6

Elicit performance (responding): Have learners practice the new skill or behaviour for better retention

- Get learners to practice applying their understanding in a safe environment where they can fail and try again until they achieve the required mastery
- In an online or hybrid lesson, you may create low stakes assessments with Brightspace tools such as surveys or quizzes that provide relevant reporting on student performance for instructors to tap on and arrange for the necessary follow-up/intervention to bridge learning gaps, or other tools such as discussions or assignments but attached grade item has a small point value or no grade item attached, and so on.

Step 7

Provide timely feedback (reinforcement): Give students feedback on individualised tasks, thereby correcting isolated problems rather than having little idea of where problems and inconsistencies in learning are occurring

- Provide individualised, timely and ongoing feedback tied closely to the learning objectives students are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson
- In an online or hybrid lesson, use Brightspace assessment tools with auto-feedback such as quizzes and surveys, for tools with no auto feedback ensure an efficient system where feedback is delivered in a timely fashion is established so that the feedback does not lose its relevance, such as, when creating single user member specific groups with discussion areas to facilitate 1:1 feedback, peer feedback via discussions with rubrics, and so on.

Step 8

Assessing performance (retrieval): Test whether the expected learning outcomes have been achieved.

- Students to show that they have learned the material or skill effectively, without any help or coaching from the instructor
- In an online or hybrid lesson, you may use summative assessment tools such as quizzes and assignments where you could make it high stakes through the allocated grade point value or a single attempt/ submission only for instance, and so on.

Step 9

Enhancing retention and transfer (generalisation): Prepare students to apply information to new and unique situations for better retention.

- Provide opportunities for students to transfer the information from their short term to long term memory through consolidation and application to different contexts. The focus here is less on formal evaluation since that would have been achieved in the preceding step, but more on helping them demonstrate this acceptable level of mastery in the long term through multiple exposure.
- In an online or hybrid lesson, create a practice environment using tools with no attached grade items such as Brightspace portfolio (with aligned standards) to collect artefacts demonstrating students' connection of knowledge to real-world applications, create a blogging space using single user member specific groups with discussion areas for students to summarize/describe what they have been taught in their own words i.e. Teach-back, test this knowledge as part of a prior knowledge assessment in the subsequent unit via the self-assessment tool i.e. spaced retrieval and so on.