



Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind

Engage for Deep Understanding

#3 Develop Context and Meaning

If labels put a name to the learning, and properties tell us the distinctive features of the learning, then context and meaning constitute the heart and soul of the learning.

Context lends learning a shape that makes it much richer than just a label.

A teacher can deliver a lecture on meteorological phenomena, but having students in your class recount real stories of their own encounters with scary weather makes the learning much more relevant and memorable.

Context and meaning help assign to a chunk of learning the values that are needed to build long-term buy-in, memory, and relevance.

[“Short Term” Solutions you can use \(p. 101\):](#)

1. Make it personal.
2. Generate and test hypothesis.
3. Teach vocabulary daily.
4. Deepen the meaning with brief writing tasks.
5. Get visual.
6. Establish meaning through metaphors.
7. Tag the text.
8. Build the learning in a model.
9. Use the power of role-plays.
10. Let students be experts.
11. Engage students in in-depth, authentic projects.