



Tip Sheet



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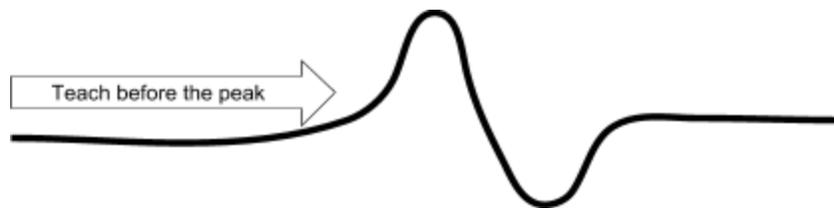
How to Teach BEFORE the Peak

(Part of the “Teach Before The Peak Mini-Series”)

Think for a moment about a time when you were most ready and able to learn. You were probably not in a state of total relaxation, nor were you completely agitated. Rather, you were likely feeling “just a bit on the edge”... feeling curious, ready to engage, and maybe even a little frustrated.

Learning occurs when there is a slight disruption in the current flow and direction of our attention. Learning also occurs when we want to figure something out, feel connected, and accomplish a task.

In these situations where you feel slightly agitated or slightly dysregulated, and when you are willing to ask questions and take risks, is when your best learning takes place.



However, if too much emotion continues to be added to the situation (e.g., increasing levels of frustration, anxiety, fear, doubt, fatigue) you actually reach a “no-learning-peak”.

Thus, your chances of learning, accomplishing the task, or even persisting, becomes a challenge and success is unlikely. You may already recognize this peak as a period of time that your brain goes off-line and into what we call fight, flight, or freeze mode.

Much like you, children experience this same peak in their learning process. It's important for you, as a child's guide, to not only understand what to do to prevent a child from reaching a “no-learning peak”, but also how to engage a child in true learning within their “zone,” which may include slight disruptions and escalations.



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To learn more about teaching **BEFORE** the peak, [watch this training video](#). It walks you through the following steps for more effective and efficient teaching (and learning):

1. Be in a state of observation as you teach. Do what you need to maintain this state.
2. Recognize and respond to increased or increasing challenges children experience.
3. Establish or find a rhythm of engagement between you and children. For example, you provide information → children receive and actively respond in a manner that creates a rhythm between the two of you.
4. “Crank up the volume” by adding challenges that purposely intrigue and disrupt the flow, but that allow you teach within the “zone of proximal development” or that perfect zone where children are not underwhelmed or overwhelmed.
5. Maintain (regain as needed) the rhythm of offering information or bidding for children’s engagement, and supporting them to receive and actively give something back.