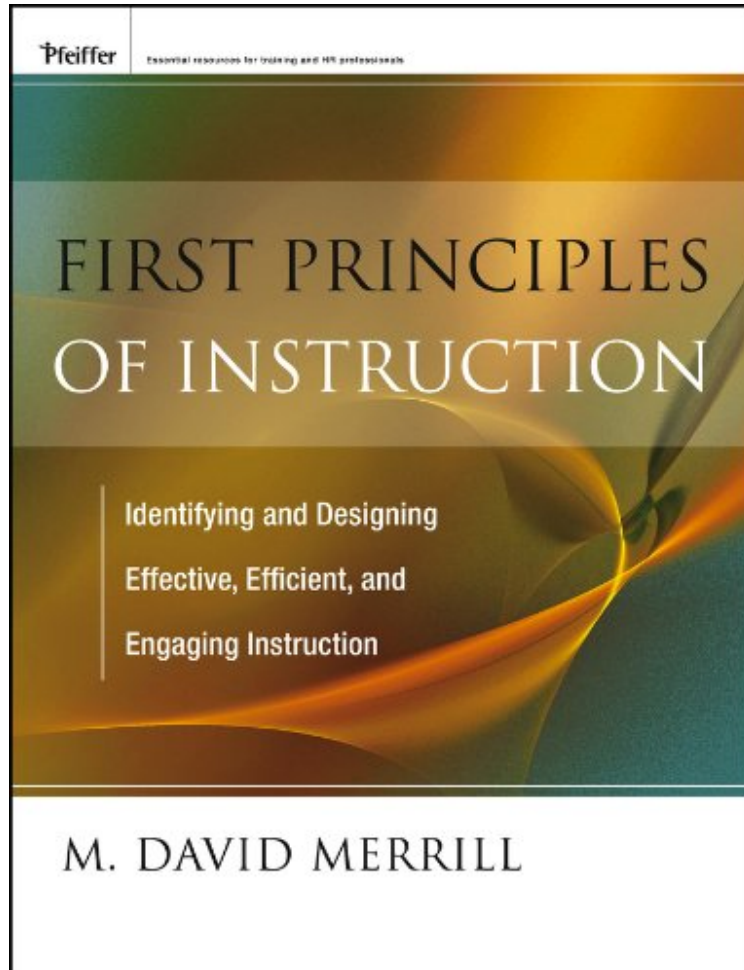


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First Principles of Instruction

M. David Merrill

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M. David Merrill : First Principles of Instruction before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised First Principles of Instruction:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A must have for professional instructional designers and teachersBy PragmatistWhat makes this book outstanding are the many examples which literally illustrate use of First Principles of Instruction. I have found these principles highly useful in designing courses I have taught, as well as with students who are learning to design instruction themselves. The five First Principles of Instruction are consistent with instructional theory, learning theory, and empirical evidence to support their effectiveness.The book is very well written and clear. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is seriously interested in promoting student learning.What I have observed in my own teaching experience, as well as from observing others who try to design instruction using First Principles is the initial challenge of identifying whole tasks which are authentic for students to do as part of the learning process. Many of us have been exposed or taught to organize instruction around a body of content to be covered. The challenge initially is to identify and sequence a series of increasing complex whole tasks

(authentic problems) for students to do, and as a consequence students do get exposed to the content you want them to learn. I would say that this is definitely the hardest part for the teacher or instructional designer. It means twisting our minds a bit, in order to think about teaching and learning differently than we have been long accustomed and conditioned by our past educational experience. If you say, "content in MY field can't be taught this way!" I would say, "if you really care about how well your students are learning, then keep an open mind, give it a try, do some tweaking of your courses or teaching, and see what happens." As the saying goes, "the proof is in the pudding." Furthermore, authentic, whole (real-world) tasks help students see relevance of what they are learning and how it can become part of their own lives. Rather than seeing learning as a series of exercises the teacher wants them to do, students should instead experience more meaningful learning. This kind of learning is highly motivating to students. And as any seasoned teacher knows, motivation is the key. If students really want to learn, then teaching becomes a much more satisfying and enjoyable occupation. Does this mean throwing out some of those dull and boring textbooks that students loathe? If so, I say, good riddance! On the other hand, existing textbooks (or parts of them) can be useful resources, if students see a reason to read them in order to carry out or solve authentic tasks and problems. If you are familiar with the 4C/ID model by Jeroen van Merriënboer (Ten Steps to Complex Learning), you will find much in common with First Principles of Instruction. Likewise, if you are familiar with the Elaboration Theory of Instruction by Charles Reigeluth, you will find much in common with First Principles of Instruction. If you are familiar with problem-based learning (PBL), project-based learning, or case/scenario-based learning, you will find much in common with First Principles of Instruction. What makes David Merrill's latest book stand out, in my view, is the clarity of writing and the many excellent examples illustrated in the book. The checklists provided are also useful as guidelines for instructional designers and teachers. The checklists included in the book can also be downloaded in digital form from the publisher's website, making them convenient to use. Can First Principles of Instruction be used in designing online courses for distance education or e-learning? Of course--no pun intended. For experienced teachers who are faced with the challenge of teaching online for the first time, I would recommend this book very highly. Many teachers and professors who are used to lecturing in face-to-face classes and answering student questions verbally should find this book very helpful in moving into this new medium for teaching and learning. I can attest to that in my own experience as a college professor for several decades. I can also say that after redesigning a face-to-face and an online course using First Principles of Instruction about 7 years ago, my student course evaluations improved considerably. And they were pretty good course evaluations before the redesigns. I might add that it would have been a lot easier to do these redesigns if I had Merrill's book to help me, but this book had not been written yet. I had to rely on published research journal articles at the time and to rely on my own resourcefulness in figuring out things myself. First, I redesigned one course, and then tweaked it over several iterations, and then I redesigned the next one based on what I learned from the first redesign. My nature is often to doubt what others say or write about. My style is to try things out myself, and to judge the empirical evidence. I am a scientific-minded person, so I want to see the evidence myself for myself. That's what I've done with First Principles of Instruction. Are they an answer to all our problems that we face as educators? No, but they can help move us in a positive direction by helping us to re-examine what we are teaching and what we expect students to learn, and then to do it better.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. 1st Principles Described By GradStudent Ordered this book after participating in a seminar related to first principles. I was interested in learning more; this book certainly answers the mail. Book is organized in three sections, description of first principles and guidelines for evaluating instruction, second section provides some application for applying the principles to design instruction, third section covers research supporting principles. The book is not a quick read, as each component is covered in pretty good detail. Thought the online component was good, and I liked the macro's for powerpoint and the way powerpoint was used to storyboard-preview instruction during development. I'd recommend this book for those designing instruction, particularly if you are not very familiar with prescriptive principles for designing instruction...this book provides a solid introduction to the concept of selecting and applying research-based instructional strategies by content type.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Powerful By A+ Nearly everyone has an opinion on what education should be. This book takes solid and repeated research on instruction and deftly molds that research into guidance for educators of all types. The guidance in this book is easily assimilated and includes direction for the learner including helping the learner to move from good to better to best, multitudes of examples, and a section on the research that the book is based upon. A must for serious students of instructional design and psychology.

This handy resource describes and illustrates the concepts underlying the "First Principles of Instruction"; and illustrates First Principles and their application in a wide variety of instructional products. The book introduces the e3 Course Critique Checklist that can be used to evaluate existing instructional product. It also provides directions for applying this checklist and illustrates its use for a variety of different kinds of courses. The Author has also developed a Pebble-in-the-Pond instructional design model with an accompanying e3 ID Checklist. This checklist enables instructional designers to design and develop instructional products that more adequately implement First Principles of

Instruction.