



Why Aren't They Getting It?

What everyone can learn from teaching science

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It's not unusual to hear the lament, "Why aren't they getting it?" from science faculty. This muttering is most likely to be heard when examinations or laboratory activities are being graded.

Of all the subjects taught in college, the sciences have the lowest student retention rates and overall class grades. In addition, interest in taking college science courses is diminishing in the United States. More and more American students are avoiding upper-level science courses and science careers. Why?



Unfortunately, there are many factors contributing to the decline in science performance by college students. Many of the variables are well beyond the control of college faculty. For example, it's difficult to change academic perceptions and general feelings about pursuing scarce, modestly paying science jobs. However, there are some simple ways to improve student attentiveness, interest, and performance in college science classes. The teaching strategies provided below are accepted by the science education community and have ample research supporting their effectiveness.

Mix It Up

People tend to teach the same way they were taught in the classes they favored. Traditionally, science classes were conducted using factual lectures