TRANSFORMING LEARNER ENVIRONMENTS

FOR A PROJECT-BASED COURSE

	Connect/Attend	Imagine/Inform	Practice/Extend	Refine/Perform
WHAT TO DO	Let them "create their own adventure" – everyone doing their own thing based on a common starting point. Give them a few examples and a rubric to start them on the right path.	Let them find the information themselves and explore the world they chose. Teacher acts as a facilitator and helps to create a "plan" that helps students find the information. Make sure you keep them on the right track!	Provide guidelines for the decomposition of the knowledge so that they can practice it effectively (otherwise they may jump to conclusions and/or never finish the assignment).	This is where T's can be damaged b/c the prof can really determine whether or not they processed the details/practice. Give them opportunities to express themselves according to the rubric. Be careful –you may get something you weren't expecting, but is right.
WHY YOU DO IT	Capitalize on their "big picture" mentality and enthusiasm for messy problems and tasks.	Teacher steps in here to put the student on the right track and help them fill in the holes and details of their research. It is often helpful to also put a transforming student on the same team as a performing student so that the two can build something complete and creative together.	These students like to jump to conclusions. If the teacher steps in to be a kind of "devil's advocate" it will keep this student interested.	If you give them the freedom suggested in connect/attend and imagine/inform, without a rubric or plan for them to follow, they may never reach *your* objective for the assignment.

PERFORMING LEARNER ENVIRONMENTS,

PROJECT-BASED COURSE

	Connect/Attend	Imagine/Inform	Practice/Extend	Refine/Perform
WHAT TO DO	Provide a set of "choose your own adventure" options. They will want some kind of explanation / guidelines delineating what each option entails in workload, teamwork, etc.	Help them ask the questions that will lead them to the answers by having team discussions with the professor present, showing examples, providing information-rich resources, using metaphors, etc. Encourage creativity – in fact make it a project requirement.	Help them dissect, analyze, find similarities/differences – DO NOT *completely* provide it for them. *May* want to let them tutor others here regarding details.	Encourage creativity and critical thinking in their final project. Teach them to answer the question: WHAT IF? And don't let them get away with less (even if it *looks* perfect).
WHY YOU DO IT	Makes them take some responsibility for their learning – increases intrinsic motivation.	Capitalize on their ability to find expert knowledge, but you have to make sure they are synthesizing that knowledge into connections.	These students are afraid of voicing what they see as the "wrong" answer. As the teacher, stay involved in their practice time in order to encourage critical thinking.	They need to be able to tell you what *they* think about the content of the assignment, but they are afraid of contending the expert knowledge.

CONFORMING LEARNER ENVIRONMENTS,

PROJECT-BASED COURSE

	Connect/Attend	Imagine/Inform	Practice/Extend	Refine/Perform
WHAT TO DO	Provide a set of "choose your own adventure" options for project subjects, outcomes, and/or formats. (They hate this, but it makes them wake up and *feel* something) Make certain that they have seen examples and have access to you as they try to decide which to choose – otherwise they get very frustrated.	Provide a set of answers to the *common* questions they will most likely ask (like an FAQs sheet). Structure the assignment in such a way that they will have to go look for answers to critical thinking style questions in the course resources. Give them the opportunity to report to you frequently and help them make connections, but DO NOT give them the answers.	Allow significant practice time – let them try it over and over if they need to *without punishment or evaluation*. Again, provide feedback, but don't give them the answers. Provide as many examples (both good and bad) as you can so that they can see what is, and is not, acceptable.	Give them ideas for creative outlets (can be the examples given in Practice/Extend, but needs to have their own What If? twist.) Not only must they achieve the outcomes as stated on the rubric, they must also comment on what *they* think about their findings.
WHY YOU DO IT	Takes them out of their comfort zone so that they are paying attention for the rest of the assignment. At this point in the assignment, they will search for comfort through dependency on the prof – possibly by coming to you begging for the answers – DON'T give in, or all of your efforts to get them to think critically will be for naught.	You are trying to decrease their dependence on you. By giving them an explicit structure to guide them, and support materials, they will have to look to other sources on which to depend. You must be involved, but only to answer the uncommon questions – not to approve or disprove their ideas yet.	They need TIME to process the information gathered in Imagine/Inform – to synthesize the information and *then* begin to dissect it. The more practice examples provided to them, the better they are able to make connections, which is the beginning of critical thinking. Only after some practice can the prof approve or disapprove student ideas.	At first, they don't even realize that they have ideas that vary from the expert knowledge. By making them be creative, they have to think more deeply about their learning – and they take responsibility for their learning, thus decreasing their dependence on experts for knowledge. (It's intensely motivating for them)

RESISTANT LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

ANY TYPE OF COURSE

	Connect/Attend	Imagine/Inform	Practice/Extend	Refine/Perform
WHAT TO DO	"Recognize the adventure" – ELICIT an emotional reaction (preferably a positive one) from your student by showing them the gaps in their thinking. Try using a messy problem/case with no predictable outcome or a develop a non-standard answer to a problem.	Be careful- once they recognize the adventure they could jump to any of the other orientations. Watch them carefully as they participate in the learning – give them immediate feedback on their activities, so that they don't feel like they are being "tricked and manipulated" at the end of the whole process if they end up doing something very wrong as an end-product.		THEY MUST SHOW OFF! Focus on the things they've learned/done well first, followed by any critiques, followed again by something that the student did well on in the project.
WHY YOU DO IT	**Connect/Attend** - CRITICAL part of Resistant learner's learning process – if you don't do something that makes the students recognize that they have something new and exciting to learn, they will remain resistant throughout the assignment/lesson. Put them advantageously off-balance as much as you can, but don't discourage them by pushing too hard.		**Refine/Perform –** CRITICAL part of Resistant Learner's emotional attachment to subject matter. If they are not recognized for the effort and learning achieved, they feel like they have wasted their time and have also been "tricked and manipulated". It is possible that the teacher will lose them for the rest of the class and they may actively (or passively) rebel.	