**Week of April 4, 2011**

**Interest Scale**

**Description:**

The *Interest Scale* is a way to gauge student interest in the topic being taught. The technique uses a chart with a marked scale in which students place Post-It notes on a scale of low to high to indicate their level of interest in the topic being studied.

**How this FACT Promotes Student Learning:**

Student interest is a strong, contributing factor to student learning. Providing an opportunity to express their interest level shows students that you value knowing their level of engagement in the learning process.

**How this FACT Informs Instruction:**

This simple strategy can be used to identify the level of interest before instruction, or during certain points in a unit when student interest in a topic may be waning. The teacher uses the feedback to modify lessons as appropriate in order to make the content more relevant and engaging to students. The strategy helps spot particular students or groups of students who may be disengaged and need differentiated strategies for motivating and interesting them in learning about the topic.

**Design and Administration:**

Start with having students identify their interest level before you begin instruction in the topic. Give them a few minutes to discuss what they think the topic is about. Make a chart with a range from high (10) to low (1) or a scale of your choosing, such as a thermometer chart. Give students Post-It notes and ask them to place them by the range value that matches their current level of interest. Encourage students to be thoughtful and honest. Encourage students to think about why the topic interests or does not interest them. Revisit during different points in the instructional sequence to allow students to reposition their Post-It notes according to whether their interest level has changed. If the level of interest in the class significantly drops, engage students in a discussion to find out why. Conversely, it is also helpful to have a discussion if the interest level rises to find out what led to increased interest.

**General Implementation Attributes:**

Ease of Use: High Time Demand: Low Cognitive Demand: Low

**Modifications:**

Students can be given the option of anonymously sharing their interest level. Have students write the number that expresses their level of interest on a slip of paper that is dropped in a box. These slips of paper are later analyzed by the teacher.

**Caveats:**

Students need to understand that expressing a lack of interest does not mean that the content of instruction will be changed. This FACT is intended to provide feedback to the teacher to help make the topic more interesting and relevant to students. Teachers should not take results personally, particularly since different topics have different levels of appeal to students’ interests. That does not make them any less important than topics that are very engaging. It is important to establish an environment of trust and respect in order to use this strategy effectively.

**Disciplines this FACT can be used in:**

This FACT can be used in science, math, social studies, language arts, health, foreighn languages, and performing arts.

***Keeley, Paige. (2008) Science Formative Assessment: 75 Practical Strategies for Linking Assessment, Instruction, and Learning. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press***