

"REVOLUTIONIZING POLITICAL SCIENCE EDUCATION: CUTTING-EDGE TEACHING METHODS AND STRATEGIES"

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Abstract

This article explores the potential for revolutionizing political science education through the implementation of cutting-edge teaching methods and strategies. Traditional methods of teaching political science have often relied on lecture-style formats, passive learning, and rote memorization. However, in the face of evolving technologies, changing student demographics, and the demands of an interconnected globalized world, it is crucial to adapt and modernize political science education. The abstract highlights the need to embrace innovative pedagogical approaches that foster critical thinking, active engagement, and practical skills development. It emphasizes the importance of equipping students with the knowledge and tools to become informed, responsible, and active participants in the political process. The article presents a range of cutting-edge teaching methods and strategies that can revolutionize political science education. These include experiential learning, simulations and role-playing exercises, case studies, technology integration, flipped classrooms, and collaborative projects. Each method is discussed in terms of its potential benefits, implementation challenges, and practical examples. Moreover, the abstract underscores the significance of interdisciplinary approaches in political science education, as it allows students to explore the complex intersections between political science and other fields of study such as economics, sociology, and environmental sciences. The abstract concludes by emphasizing the transformative potential of these innovative teaching methods and strategies in cultivating active citizenship, fostering critical analysis of political issues, and preparing students for dynamic careers in political science and related fields. In summary, this article aims to inspire and guide political science educators in reimagining their teaching practices by incorporating cutting-edge methods and strategies. By embracing innovative approaches, educators can create dynamic learning environments that empower students to become active contributors to the study and practice of politics.

Keywords: Political Teaching methods, political teaching strategies, students learning, conclusion...

Introduction:

Have you ever wondered how political science, the intricate tapestry of government systems, policies, and historical precedents, can be taught effectively? The teaching-learning process in political science is a unique beast, requiring not just the sharing of information, but the

cultivation of critical thought and active engagement¹. This task is no small feat, yet with the right pedagogical strategies, it's not only possible but can be incredibly rewarding for both the teacher and the students. Let's explore some of the most effective teaching strategies tailored specifically for political science education.

The most effective methods for teaching political education involve innovative teaching methods, such as independent inquiry, that highlight subjectivity and reflect practical value. Additionally, the integration of computer technology can enhance the effectiveness of ideological and political education by accurately addressing students' demands and improving their understanding. The extension model, which involves community leaders and religious recitation, is also widely used and effective in political education². These methods aim to increase public knowledge, promote civic engagement, and encourage citizens to participate in policy-making and other political activities, ultimately strengthening democracy³.

Objectives:

After going through this article, you will be able to:

- Describe the scope of teaching Political Science at Degree level;
- Discuss the need for teaching-learning of Political Science;
- describe the various teaching-learning methods in Political Science; and
- explain the role and significance of several teaching- learning resources in Political Science.

Methodology: Political methodology, broadly defined, addresses the tools of inquiry that are appropriate to the study of political science. And study relied on secondary sources, these tools include, qualitative approaches, and specialized techniques for solving particular problems.

EXPLANATION

If you are looking for new tools to diversify your daily classroom activities, register as a teacher on the website to start a free trial period (only this week)! Happy Numbers offers a curriculum in which students study mathematical procedures consistently. They increase and deepen knowledge using descriptive visual models, supplemented by manipulative mechanics and expressive animation⁴. In this article we have listed and made a review of the most popular approaches that might be useful for teachers. The list of teaching methodologies you could use with elementary-aged students is a long one. An approach effective for one teacher may not necessarily be useful for another because every method uses different tools and techniques for achieving common educational goals. That's why many teachers try to extract some ideas from different approaches, mixing and incorporating them into one unique teaching approach depending on the students' and school's needs and other circumstances. Besides that, keep in mind that no matter which of explore a topic exhaustively, often with the help of preparatory readings and research. Develop the ability to lead discussions and presentations, as students

¹ <https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/46731/1/Unit-7.pdf>

² <https://teachers.institute/pedagogy-of-social-science/effective-teaching-strategies-political-science/>

³ <https://typeset.io/questions/what-are-the-most-effective-methods-for-teaching-political-3805w2nbsv>

⁴ <https://thelimitlessclassroom.com/happy-numbers-in-the-classroom/>

typically take turns directing the seminar. Engage in high-level academic discourse, refining their analytical and reasoning skills. For seminars to be effective, it's crucial that they are well-structured, with clear objectives and expectations. Teachers should also be prepared to guide the conversation while allowing students to maintain control over the seminar's direction. Besides that, keep in mind that no matter which of the methods listed below a teacher chooses, nowadays it seems quite difficult to implement any approach without relying on technology. That is one of the reasons why Happy Numbers was created: to help teachers incorporate their ideas into one digitally-guided learning experience and let students benefit from it, without losing their interest⁵.

Teaching Methods in political science

❖ Teacher-Cantered Instruction

Recognized as the most conventional approach, the teacher-cantered methodology is based on the idea that the teacher has the main responsibility in the learning environment. Teachers are in charge of the classroom and direct all activities. Typically, in this approach, students are seated at individual desks that face the teacher. While group work may take place, most classroom time is spent with the teacher explaining concepts and assigning individual work. In other words, students passively absorb the information while the teacher actively delivers it^{6 7}.

Advantages:

- ❖ It highlights the importance of the teacher's role as facilitator. Although the teacher-cantered approach has been criticized for encouraging passive learning, no one can deny that students need the assistance of a teacher to develop their skills.
- ❖ Having been built on behavioural theory, this teaching method facilitates control over changes in student behaviour through direct instruction. It might be helpful to use the core of this approach and modify it depending on the teacher's and students' needs, gradually shifting the focus from the former to the latter.

Disadvantages:

- ❖ Critics cite lack of stimulation student motivation. Indeed, the teacher-cantered method, used blindly, may not allow students enough freedom of mind and creativity.
- ❖ It is poor at promoting analytical thinking and problem-solving skills. Not having enough opportunities for students to make their own choices may result in lack of decision-making skills and even inability to think critically.

This and other comparativist theories developed and proven by many scientists are described and analyzed in "A Comparison of Teacher-Cantered and Student-Cantered Approaches in Educational Settings" article.

Small Group Instruction

Small group instruction (SGI) usually follows whole group instruction and provides students with a reduced student-teacher ratio, typically in groups of four to six students. SGI allows

⁵ <https://thelimitlessclassroom.com/happy-numbers-in-the-classroom/>

⁶ <https://onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/teacher-centered-vs-student-centered-learning/>

⁷ <https://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/teacher-centered-education/45667711>

teachers to work more closely with each student on a specific learning objective, reinforce skills learned in whole group instruction, and check for student understanding. This teaching method is based on constant activities around workstations: groups working with the teacher and groups working independently on varied activities, such as using manipulatives or computer/online resources. If you liked the article and want to find more effective small-group instruction strategies for your lessons, check out the activities and ideas provided by Happy Numbers and start a free trial (which is available only this week) right now! Speaking of digital resources, they have been showing their huge potential lately, and Happy Numbers is no exception. The platform has been effectively used by many experienced teachers to improve their small group instructional techniques. The Happy Numbers curriculum perfectly integrates the main principles of the approach and helps teachers to plan their lessons accordingly^{8 9}.

Advantages:

- ❖ Lessons are adapted to each student's level. This allows teachers to provide targeted, differentiated instruction to small groups of students in a natural way. It helps the instructor to more closely evaluate what each student is capable of and construct strategic plans around the assessments.
- ❖ It promotes students' social adaptation skills. Students who find it difficult to ask questions and participate in a large group setting may benefit from working in a small group setting, where they feel more at ease and less overwhelmed.

Disadvantages:

- ❖ It takes more time and effort to prepare materials and organize workstations for each student group. Teachers need to think through each type of activity that will be provided at workstations: they should be equally engaging and effective.
- ❖ Students might feel pressure to always be involved, always contributing to lessons, and always taking some kind of role in group work.

Student-Centered / Constructivist Approach

As we consider shifting the focus from teacher to students, the rest of the approaches from this list are considered to be student-centered or constructivist. With the development of the educational sphere and society in general, the idea of a student-centered approach has become more popular, and there are good reasons for that. Student-centered classrooms include students in planning, implementation, and assessments. Involving the learners in these decisions places more responsibility and ownership on them rather than on the teacher. Also, teachers must become comfortable with changing their leadership style from directive to consultative. Meanwhile, students may work in small groups, access centres, and move about the classroom freely^{10 11}.

Advantages:

⁸ <https://kindergartenkorner.com/2021/04/happy-numbers-a-free-math-website.html>

⁹ <https://www.hmhco.com/blog/how-to-implement-small-group-instruction-in-the-classroom>

¹⁰ <https://www.learnupon.com/blog/learner-centered/>

¹¹ <http://essentialschools.org/benchmarks/student-centered-teaching-and-learning/>

- ❖ Students play a more active role in their learning and develop a sense of responsibility.
- ❖ Thanks to teachers avoiding transmission of knowledge directly, students have a chance to stimulate their analytical thinking, by “making sense of what they are learning by relating it to prior knowledge and by discussing it with others,” according to American educational psychologist J. Brophy.

Disadvantages: There is a risk of facing some behavioural problems by giving students independence, especially when it comes to young children. To avoid such problems, teachers must lay a groundwork by creating a model of correct behaviour: having the freedom to do what you want means being ready to take responsibility for the process and the results.

- ❖ This method works best when the instructor makes the lesson interesting. Without this, students may get bored, their minds may wander, and they may miss key information.
- ❖ The student-centered approach can be difficult for teachers to master or perfect, and it doesn't always guarantee a 100% outcome. However, the results can be very positive if teachers still employ the approach partially, blending these techniques with other types of lessons.

Project-Based Learning

A relatively new teaching method, project-based learning falls within the student-centered approach. As the name suggests, in project-based learning students complete projects. However, these are big, meaty projects in which students acquire knowledge, research, think critically, evaluate, analyze, make decisions, collaborate, and more. Typically, projects are created in response to an open-ended question such as “How can our school be greener?” or “How was our city planned in the past and how could it be planned in the future?” Another important part of the projects is that they relate to real-world problems. The projects shouldn't just apply to the classroom but have an impact, too. For example, students might make a radio show for the whole school to hear. Or, they might write a letter to the town council and attend a meeting to express an opinion¹².

Cooperative learning

As the name suggests, cooperative learning involves a lot of group work. However, it also requires a lot of structure and intervention on the part of the teacher to make learning as effective as possible. Some commonly used cooperative learning strategies include “think-pair-share.” Discussions in small groups or pairs can also be effective, as can a “jigsaw” approach. In the jigsaw model, students are broken into small groups to read or learn from a certain perspective. Then, changing their groups, members spread the information and share it with others¹³.

Case Study Method: Real-World Political Analysis

Political science is not just about theories; it's about real-world applications. The Examining historical and contemporary political events in detail. Encouraging students to apply theoretical knowledge to analyze real-world situations. Promoting a deeper understanding of the

¹² <https://www.pblworks.org/what-is-pbl>

¹³ <https://www.powerschool.com/blog/project-based-learning-benefits-examples-and-resources/>

complexities and nuances involved in political decision-making. Case studies should be carefully chosen to be relevant, challenging, and illustrative of the political concepts under study. Teachers can enhance this method by incorporating role-playing or simulation elements, bringing the case study to life¹⁴.

Debate computation

A debate can be defined as a generally formal and often public discussion of a topic, during which persuasive arguments from differing sides of an issue are presented. This definition of what a debate is entails understanding debate as an organized discipline which is often competitive. Debating is the act of engaging in debate, meaning either competing to win in an intellectual contest of debate, or, in colloquial terms, having a reasoned discussion about a topic. Using debates in the classroom provide students the opportunity to work in a collaborative and cooperative group setting. By having students discuss and organize their points of view for one side of an argument they are able to discover new information and put knowledge into action.

Dramatization

Dramatization is a method in teaching and learning that involves non-verbal communication, creates informal and flexible environment, and supports experimentations. Knowing theater techniques can be useful but is not prerequisite to implementing dramatization in teaching and learning. Dramatization is the acting out of a story, real-life situation, event, feeling, or idea. There are many forms of dramatization, such as plays, puppet theater, radio theater, pantomime, pageants, processions, parades, clowning, dance, skits, role plays, simulations, interviews, dialogue sermons, monologues, etc. The purpose of a dramatization is to enable the participants to experience, understand, and communicate, in a new and exciting manner, what is being dramatized. In television, a dramatization is “the preparation of a television drama from a work which was not previously in dramatic form, for example a prose narrative¹⁵”.

❖ lived experience

The things that someone has experienced themselves, especially when these give the person a knowledge or understanding that people who have only heard about such experiences do not have: The organization has a strong focus on the lived experience of mental illness. Ex: For Mind, a person with lived experience is someone with personal experience of mental health problems. Or, people that have experienced marginalisation which may affect their mental health. This may include lived experience of poverty, racial trauma, or other forms of prejudice or discrimination.

❖ Innovative teaching

The study found that innovative teaching methods, such as independent inquiry, are more effective for political education than traditional teaching methods. The extension model and religious recitation involving community leaders are the most widely used and effective methods for teaching political education.

¹⁴ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0038022920970318>

¹⁵ <https://openspace.etf.europa.eu/blog-posts/dramatization-teaching-and-learning#:~:text=Dramatization%20is%20a%20method%20in,dramatization%20in%20teaching%20and%20learning.>

❖ Current event

Political science is a social science dealing with systems of governance and power, and the analysis of political activities, political institutions, political thought and behaviour, and associated constitutions and laws. Ex: Climate and Environment, Climate Crisis, Cyber Issues, Economic Prosperity and Trade Policy etc

TEACHING STRATEGIES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Teaching strategy is a more hands-on method of introducing new information to the student. For example, a teacher might draw a picture on the board that illustrates how an animal eats its food. The teacher may then show the students videos of animals eating their food in order to help them learn more about how this process works¹⁶. The Important issue in teaching is the identification of particular behaviour that helps effective teaching and learning to occur. These positive behaviours that aid effective learning are referred to as teaching strategies. A teaching strategy is therefore an educational technique, method or plan of classroom actions or interactions intended to accomplish specific teaching/learning goals¹⁷. Though, they are many, we shall focus on:

- ❖ Set induction
- ❖ Establishing appropriate frame of reference or use of examples
- ❖ Planned repetition
- ❖ Stimulus variation
- ❖ Using questions effectively
- ❖ Closure (summarizing)

Set Induction

Set induction is a strategy for opening up the hall of knowledge to the students in an atmosphere of positive mental set for an involuntary attention to the lesson. Without proper set the students may not be energized, the lessons would be dull and uninteresting and the students could be bored and fatigued. Set induction is a pre-planned action by the teacher to arouse the interest of the students, create atmosphere of curiosity and motivation, and energize, direct and sustain students' attention throughout the lesson. Set induction could be achieved through so many devices, e.g. Short story, dramatization, creative questions, brainstorming, deviant behaviour, etc. Use of Examples or Establishing Appropriate Frames Clear understanding is often difficult in the absence of appropriate frames of reference. Examples should, of course, be appropriate and relevant to the subject matter, age, the culture, and experience of the students¹⁸. Verbal examples may be in the form of analogy or metaphor (the human eye and the camera lens; the heart and the engine are all analogies). My mother is an angel; the laboratory is a mad house; his wife is a Satan, are all metaphors. Concrete examples are, of course, better than verbal ones because of the imagery. All mechanical representation of reality, all stimulations are good teaching examples.

¹⁶ <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/09/study-shows-that-students-learn-more-when-taking-part-in-classrooms-that-employ-active-learning-strategies/>

¹⁷ <https://www.teacherstrategies.org/teaching-strategy/>

¹⁸ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365174137_Teaching_Learning_Process_in_Political_Science

Planned Repetition

Repetition is a sound strategy in teaching. But it has to be planned to be useful. Planned repetitions enable the student/learner to over learn-that is, learning beyond the threshold of forgetting.

- ❖ Simple Repetition - Repeating words, concepts, formulae, etc., immediately after it is mentioned.
- ❖ Special Repetition – Repetition of key words, either or concepts at certain stages in the course of the lesson to stress its importance.
- ❖ Cumulative Repetition - Repetition of major points so far made in the course of the lesson before continuing with the rest.
- ❖ Massed Repetition – Repetition of all the major points, made in the lesson. This Is often called summary.

Stimulus Variation It is said that variety is the spice of life but monotony kills interest. Good and effective teaching involves varying learning experiences and teaching strategies during the lesson. This helps to sustain interest. Always sitting down in a class to read out lesson notes is no teaching. In teaching it is often desirable to appeal to all the five senses whenever possible. Stimulus variation is achieved through movements. Gestures, pattern of interacting pacing around, voice modulation, maintaining an uneven speed in the lesson, silence, professional charisma, etc¹⁹.

Effective Use of Questions

Ability to use provocative, answerable and appropriate questions is a very important skill in all teaching. Proficiency in preparing factual, conceptual, thought provoking, discussion stimulating questions, is a vital skill in teaching. Closure Rounding off Evaluation occurs again as the last process in teaching. It is not just how well the student has done, which is determined through examinations, but also how well did the teacher do, and even how well was the system designed and operated²⁰. Thus evaluation implies evaluating the students, the lesson/teacher and the institution. Hence we say in education that if the student has not learnt then the teacher²¹.

Conclusion:

Political science education demands a dynamic and thoughtful approach to the teaching-learning process. By incorporating a variety of pedagogical methods such as lectures, discussions, debates, seminars, and case studies, educators can create an inclusive and engaging learning environment. This not only imparts knowledge but also hones the skills necessary for students to become informed citizens and potential political leaders.

Having discussed the complexity of teaching, discovered the vitality of planning for teaching, using suitable strategies and shunning things we need to avoid for the sake of

¹⁹<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/382017051> Repetitions as a participation practice in children's argumentative peer interactions

²⁰<https://teaching.cornell.edu/using-effective-questions>

²¹<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256837974> Best Practice Strategies for Effective Use of Questions as a Teaching Tool

reaching educational objectives for the all-round development of the learners; it is evidently clear that the teacher who fails to plan for teaching has simply plan to cheat the students, the employers, the parents and the society at large. The most effective teaching method will depend on the specific learning goals, the subject matter, the students' learning styles and abilities, and the context in which the learning is taking place. Different teaching methods may be more or less effective depending on the situation.

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