Remote & Hybrid Teaching: This is What Works

Remote Teaching: 4 Best Practices

In fully remote models, students learn entirely from home through a mixture of live cast (i.e. Zoom) lessons and pre-recorded asynchronous lessons.

The solutions to the issues of remote learning require first letting go of past ideas of what works in good teaching. Holding tight to pre-pandemic expectations and structures only slows the process of developing and implementing excellent virtual expectations and structures. In some ways, we must unlearn what we have learned and open our imaginations to a new model of teaching and learning. This starts with a willingness to accept that **quality is more important than quantity.**

High expectation, rigorous, academic remote teaching is NOT achieved by more instructional minutes or more homework. Nor is it achieved by mimicking a physical classroom model in an online platform. It is achieved by building more engaging, more interactive virtual lessons where students' physical, emotional, and intellectual needs are met through a combination of brain-compatible teaching techniques and physical movement.

Here are the "Top 4" best practices that we have seen make the biggest difference for teachers and students in remote learning.

Lesson Design	Reduce teacher talk in live cast lessons and increase silent think time, silent independent work, work done on paper or whiteboards with pencils/pens, work done with physical manipulatives, work done in breakout groups, and interactive class discussions.	Check out our webinar **"The Engaged Brain"** to learn dozens of simple ways to accomplish this.
Movement	Have students stand and/or move for at least 1-2 minutes every 15-20 minutes in every live cast class. Every live lesson. Every day.	See **more about movement** in the classroom in this quick video and more about movement in virtual lessons in our webinar **"The Engaged Brain."**

Scheduling	Reduce time on Zoom and increase break time between live cast lessons. • Maximum of four 60-75 min zoom lessons 4 days per week for middle and high school classes. • Maximum of three 30-45 min Zoom lessons for elementary in the morning. Afternoons, if using a full day schedule, are used for small group instruction, asynchronous lessons, and/or Specials (PE, Art, Etc)	See [samples of sane school schedules](#) in our strategies archive.
Homework	• No homework for elementary schools. • Limit of 10-15 minutes of regular daily homework for each middle and high school class. Exceptions include essays and projects. Note that "asynchronous lessons" and "homework" are not the same thing. If you are required to create a 30-minute asynchronous lesson for students, the 30 minutes students spend watching and interacting with a pre-recorded video lesson or reading is the "lesson." Anything they have to do beyond that 30 minutes is the "homework" for that lesson.	See [more about homework](#) in our strategies archive, including research, explanations, and evidence.

What have you found that works for remote & hybrid learning at your grade level?

Share with us: support@consciousteaching.com

Hybrid Teaching: Some Solutions

The hybrid model is where kids are separated into two or more cohorts and each cohort rotates through spending some time attending in-person classes and some time learning online. This allows for smaller numbers of kids to be on campus at one time and limits possible virus exposure. There are two main variations of this model (staggered and simultaneous) with each presenting unique problems for teachers.

HYBRID - STAGGERED: The first variation is the HYBRID STAGGERED model in which students attend in-person classes part of the time and learn asynchronously part of the time. This model comes in two main versions (described below). In either version, however, the staggered model works best when teachers create complementary asynchronous and live cast lessons that go together and can be taught in any order. In this way, teachers do not have to double prep lessons for two different learning groups.

VERSION 1:

• All students attend school virtually on Mondays. For the rest of the week, half the students in each teacher's class will attend live school on campus with their teacher on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with the other half attending in person on Wednesdays and Fridays. On the two days of the week that students do not attend school on campus, they learn from home through pre-recorded asynchronous lessons and/or learning packets.

• When Cohort A is at school on Tuesday and Cohort B is at home, they are not receiving the same lessons. They are each receiving one half of a 2-day complementary set of lessons. In other words, the live lessons a teacher teaches to cohort A on Tuesday will be repeated for Cohort B on Wednesday. The asynchronous lessons that Cohort B completes at home on Tuesday will be the same lessons Cohort A completes at home on Wednesday.

VERSION 2:

• Schools use an AM/PM model, with half the students attending in person in the morning and the other half attending in person in the afternoon. This version is most commonly found at the elementary level. On the half of the day that students do not attend school on campus, they learn from home through pre-recorded asynchronous lessons and/or learning packets.

• When Cohort A is at school in the morning and Cohort B is at home, they are not receiving the same lessons. They are each receiving one half of a 2-part complementary lesson. In other words, the live lessons a teacher teaches to cohort A in the morning will be repeated for Cohort B in the afternoon. The asynchronous lessons that Cohort B completes at home in the morning will be completed by Cohort A at home in the afternoon.
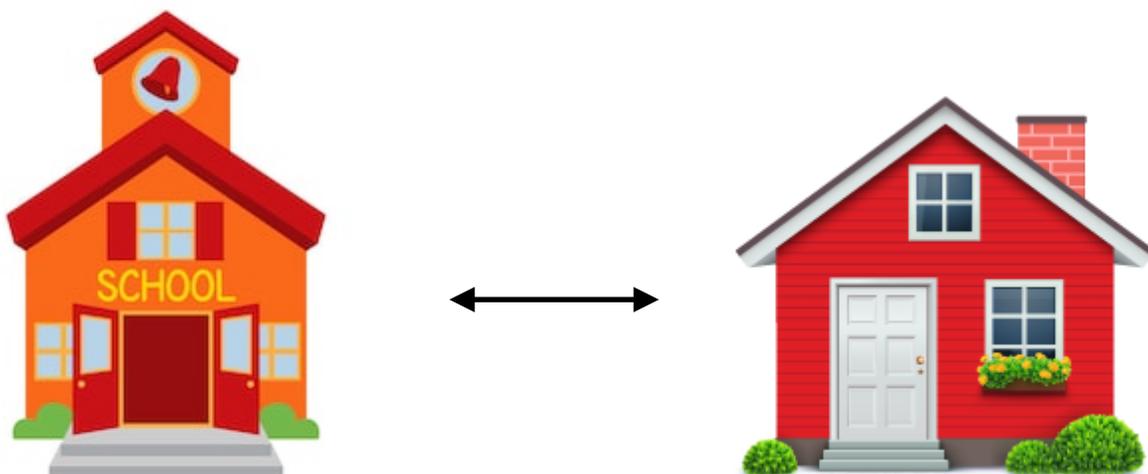
HYBRID - SIMULTANEOUS: The second variation is the HYBRID SIMULTANEOUS model in which teachers have half their students (Cohort A) attend lessons in-person and the other half (Cohort B) login to participate live in those same lessons virtually. Cohorts rotate daily or weekly. All variations of this model are difficult to manage, but here are three solutions that can help.

• **Solution 1:** Simultaneous instruction appears to work best when teachers prep their lessons online, like fully virtual lessons. Students who come to class in person have devices and login to the "virtual lesson," the same as the students who are still at home. The in-person students will see the teacher's lecture or direct instruction live, but they will see visuals and shared documents through screen share. This allows the teacher to focus their planning and eliminates the need to "double prep" the lesson for two different learning groups.

• **Solution 2:** When group work is assigned, the teacher creates online breakout groups and assigns a mixture of classroom-based students and home-based students into each group. This allows the teacher a little more control and oversight over what is happening and keeps the remote students more engaged. As the teacher circulates among the classroom-based kids, they can deduce much of what is happening in each group by what they see on the students' screen and by how the classroom-based students are behaving and interacting.

• **Solution 3:** Teachers utilize a modified "station rotation" several days a week, by breaking both classroom and remote students into three groups each. Each group rotates through a new station every 15 minutes. Classroom stations might include: independent work, collaborative group work, and small group instruction with the teacher. Online stations might include: independent work (either offline or each person in their own private breakout room), collaborative group work (in one breakout room together), and asynchronous learning (watching/interacting with a pre-recorded lesson from the teacher or an external learning video).

Hybrid Station Rotation
▷ Students separated into 6 groups (3 virtual & 3 classroom)
▷ Each group spends 15 minutes at each of 3 stations

Classroom Stations

Station #1 — Independent Work - in classroom

Station #2 — Small Group Lesson with Teacher - in classroom

Station #3 — Small Group Collaboration - in classroom

Virtual Stations

Station #1 — Independent Work - single breakout rooms or offline

Station #2 — Asynchronous Instructional Lesson

Station #3 — Small Group Collaboration - breakout rooms