"Identifying Critical Content"

Focus Statement:	**Desired Effect:**
The teacher continuously identifies accurate critical content during a lesson or part of a lesson that portrays a clear progression of information that leads to deeper understanding of the content.	Students know what content is important and what is not important.

Examples of teacher behaviors:	**Examples of student behaviors:**
• Teacher highlights critical content that portrays a clear progression of information related to standards or goals • Teacher identifies differences between the critical and non-critical content • Teacher continuously calls students' attention to accurate critical content • Teacher integrates cross-curricular connections to critical content	• Students can describe the level of importance of the critical content addressed in class • Students can identify the critical content addressed in class • Students can explain the difference between critical and non-critical content • Formative data show students attend to the critical content (e.g., questioning, artifacts) • Students can explain the progression of critical content

Instructional Techniques

1. Verbally cue critical content	• State the important information directly succinctly, and assertively. • Raise or lower voice to indicate critical content. • Pause at key points during instruction.
2. Use explicit instruction to convey critical content	• Explicitly identify the critical content for each chunk of information. • Demonstrate critical skills, strategies, and processes by modeling, "think aloud," and showing student work exemplars. • Chunk critical content into "digestible bites:" one concept followed by student practice/questioning; handouts that fit on one page; distributing information in chunks.
3. Use dramatic instruction to convey critical content	• Select and rehearse one type of dramatic instruction: role play, skits, dramatic reading, hand gestures, coordinated movement. • Allow student to summarize critical content. • Involve many students.
4. Provide advance organizers to cue critical content	• Define the scope of the organizer by i.) giving students the big picture as a reference (day-by-day frames, construct concept map); ii.) build connections from past knowledge; iii.) metaphor
5. Visually cue critical content	• Effective photos and short videos • Very short slide presentation • Word wall
6. Use storytelling to cue critical content	• Connect a short (3-4 min), simple story to critical content • Begin with the end in mind (engage, not entertain)
7. Use what students already know to cue critical content	• Ensure that students understand critical vocabulary and basic facts • Ensure that students understand basic relationships • Provide students with illustrative mental models/have them formulate their own