

Instruction Or Discovery

Education

The long argument over how much guidance to give, and where it landed.

Guided instruction

- Explicit explanation and modelling first
- Worked examples before problems
- Guided practice with checks throughout
- Strong evidence for novices
- Risk: passivity if practice is thin

Discovery or enquiry

- Learner finds the principle themselves
- Motivating and closer to real practice
- Works when learners have the prior knowledge
- Weak evidence for novices
- Risk: pupils learn the wrong pattern

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Guidance helps most when knowledge is least. Enquiry earns its place once pupils have enough to enquire with.

Kirschner, Sweller and Clark 2006 set out the case against minimal guidance. Guided enquiry, with structure and feedback, is a different