

The AAA Model in the Online Classroom

Bringing the Student into A Model for Promoting Critical Thinking
in the Asynchronous Online Discussion Boards



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Session Agenda

- Review of the AAA model
- Facilitator's role in the discussion board : Utilizing the AAA model
- Review of factors that may affect student engagement in the discussion board
- Does teaching students to use the AAA model increase student engagement and analysis on the discussion board?
- Possibilities, limitations, and conclusions
- Questions, thoughts, comments?



Learning Objectives

- Participants will learn how teaching students to engage the AAA model can further enhance critical analysis in discussion development.
- Participants will learn to apply the AAA model in the discussion board to promote continuous development of critical analysis.
- Participants will learn to nurture a more enjoyable and rewarding course experience by promoting enriched interactions with the AAA model.



The AAA Model

- The **AAA** model is your “roadside assistance” for responding to and guiding students to critical thinking in the asynchronous online discussions.
- Your “map” to responding to students and encouraging critical thinking in the asynchronous online discussion boards is as simple as:
 - **A**cknowledge!
 - **A**dd!
 - **A**sk!



Acknowledge!

- **Acknowledge** – A recognition of the student's efforts.

John,

I appreciate you sharing about the stages of sleep and how within each stage of sleep there is a potential for sleep disturbance. This is critical information to understand as we look at the importance of good sleep patterns.



Add!

- **Add** - Adding new information for the student and class to consider.

A sleep disorder is a condition that occurs within our sleep patterns (Hooley, Butcher, Nock, & Mineka, 2017). Insomnia, sleep apnea, and narcolepsy represent three varying types of sleep disorders. Other sleep disorders include sleepwalking and sleep terrors.



Ask!

- **Ask** - Asking a question that will enhance learning and move the discussion forward.

If you were employed as a technician at a sleep laboratory, share information about two sleep disorders you would be likely to encounter? What are the symptoms of those disorders, and how are they treated?



The AAA Model

Acknowledge! Add! Ask!

John,

I appreciate you sharing about the stages of sleep and how within each stage of sleep there is a potential for sleep disturbance. This is critical information to understand as we look at the importance of good sleep patterns.

A sleep disorder is a condition that occurs within our sleep patterns (Hooley, Butcher, Nock, & Mineka, 2017). Insomnia, sleep apnea, and narcolepsy represent three varying types of sleep disorders. Other sleep disorders include sleepwalking and sleep terrors.

If you were employed as a technician at a sleep laboratory, which sleep disorders would you be likely to encounter? What are the symptoms of those disorders, and how are they treated?

Dr. P

Hooley, J.M., Butcher, J.N., Nock, M.K., & Mineka, S. (2017). *Abnormal psychology* (17th ed.) New York, NY: Pearson Education, Inc.



Summary of the facilitator's role in the discussion boards – Utilizing the AAA Model

- Your responses to students in the discussion boards directly relate to enhanced student engagement and critical thinking.
- You have learned how to break down the three parts (the **AAA** Model) and now understand how this will assist you as you make substantial responses to students in the discussion boards.
- You have composed a substantial discussion response utilizing the **AAA** model.



Do the interactional strategies that course facilitators use promote a culture of participation in the online classroom?

- “Participatory culture shifts the focus...from individual expression to community involvement.”
- “In a participatory culture, members also believe that their contributions matter and feel some degree of social connections with each other (at the least, members care about others’ opinions of what they have created).

(Jenkins et al., 2007, p.5)



Research on factors that affect student engagement and analysis on the discussion board

- There is a good deal of literature on factors that affect student performance and engagement in online learning.
- Most of the literature is theoretical in nature -grounded in theories of motivation, learning, etc.
- There are some qualitative studies that consider student perception of the online learning experience, as well as pre-post studies that evaluate performance factors such as student participation, course success, etc.
- Experimental investigations to identify causal relationships are limited.



Hrastinski (2008)

- What is online participation?
- What factors affect the learner's perception regarding learner engagement and participation?
- Reviewed 36 studies focusing on online learner engagement and participation
- Most studies were qualitative in nature
- Some tracked active participation in class activities and use of course learning tools



Hrastinski (2008)

Stressed the importance of...

- Improving measures of learner engagement
- Treating online participation as a complex process

- How do we measure “doing, talking, thinking, feeling and belonging” (Hrastinski, 2008,p.1760)



Chakraborty and Nafukho (2014)

- Strengthening student engagement
- What do students want in an online course?

- Literature review focused on empirical research into online teaching strategies
- Reviewed 9 studies

- Surveys, case studies, interviews
- Some assignment content analysis



Chakraborty and Nafukho (2014)

Concluded that...

- Several factors contribute to engaging learning experiences for online learners
- “Right” technology and content
- Consistent and timely feedback
- Positive learning environment
- Community building



Yukselturk (2010)

- Reviewed factors affecting student participation in an online discussion board
- 196 online students
- Identified some correlational relationships between demographic factors and online participation level
- Other factors students cited included
- Not having enough interactive activities in the discussion

Stressed the importance of creating social environments that promote open communication and interaction where students feel comfortable commenting and asking questions.



Abrami et al. (2011)

How can we use evidence and theory to improve practice in online education?

- Meta analysis of studies that focused on different instructional strategies (interactional treatments) that were designed to facilitate online interaction (Bernard et al., 2009).
- Three types of interaction
 - Among students
 - Between the instructor and students
 - Between student and course content



Abrami et al. (2011)

Concluded that...

- These strategies, in general, did positively impact classroom participation and student learning.
- Implementing strategies to increase student-student interaction had the highest impact.
- Followed by student-content strategies then student-instructor strategies.



Will teaching students to use a student-student interactional strategy (AAA Model) increase engagement and analysis on the discussion board?

In discussion board peer interaction, it's typical to see...

- Students move in
- Post their two responses to minimum requirements
- Then move on



Introducing the AAA Model to students

- First trialed in 3 courses in the 1901A term
- Currently in the fifth term teaching students to use the model across four courses each term
- Described and introduced with a PowerPoint slide and examples in Unit 1 Seminar
- Written praise on the discussion board for use of the model



Peer Responses—The AAA Model Introduced

- Responses are substantial and further the discussion
- Comment vs. Discussion
- The **AAA** MODEL (Courtesy Dr. Julee Poole)
 - **Acknowledge**
 - **Add**
 - **Ask**
- Example
 - I really enjoyed reading your discussion post. I think you chose an interesting behavior to work with and provided a clear and precise behavioral definition. It was helpful that you included the context in which the target behavior occurs (**AKNOWLEDGE**)
 - In terms of planning for criterion for mastery, it is important to reduce this behavior to zero occurrences since it could result in harm to the client or others. (**ADD**)
 - Given the potential for harm, what ethical considerations do you think should be taken into account when working with clients with self-injurious behaviors? What steps would you take to minimize harm to the client and those around him? (**ASK**)



Retrospective review of results before and after the AAA Model

- PS 512 Introduction to Research Methods
- Typically, the first course in the ABA sequence
- Typically, the first class a student has taken with me
- Students have likely been exposed to instructor use of the AAA Model in other Purdue Global Psychology courses (Graduate and Undergraduate)
- Some modeling in their responses could be expected



Data Reviewed Over Four Terms of PS512

- Measured...
- Number of peer responses/per thread pre- and post- the AAA Model introduction
- Number of questions posed by students pre/post the AAA Model introduction

Results – Responses/Thread

TERM	Mean Response/Thread
1804A (Pre)	2.3
1901A	1.8
1902A	2.3
1903A	2.4
1904A	2.6



Results – Questions/Thread

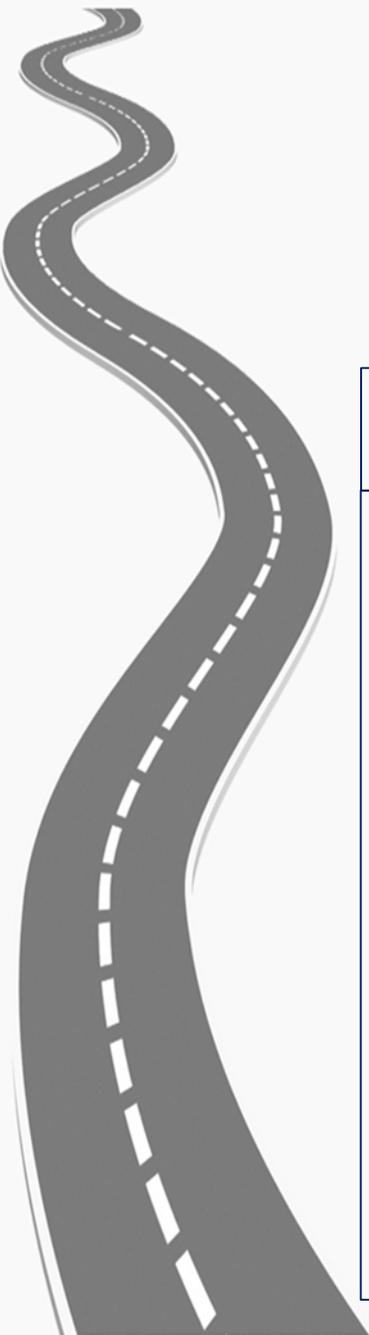
TERM	MEAN QUESTIONS/THREAD
1804 A (Pre)	0.50
1901 A	1.3
1902 A	1.0
1903 A	0.96
1904 A	1.2





Summary - Results

- No clear change in number of responses per discussion board thread after introduction of the AAA Model.
- Increases in number of questions asked per discussion board thread noted across all courses after introduction of the AAA Model.



Possibilities and Limitations

Possibilities

- Students introduced to the AAA Model at term start ask more questions in peer responses.
- Student use of the AAA Model is associated with increased engagement and analysis on the discussion board.

Limitations

- AB design does not control for extraneous variables over time and across courses.
- There may be a general improvement in quality of student performance and engagement over the past year.
- Students have been influenced by exposure, over time, to instructor use of the AAA Model.



Conclusions

- Students report a positive experience using the AAA Model.
- Anecdotally, improvements were noted in student engagement over the past five terms.
- The investment to teach and promote the AAA Model is small.
- The AAA Model provides a template to help students structure discussion board responses.
- It is worthwhile to continue teaching the model while exploring means to demonstrate causal relationships between teaching strategies and student engagement and performance in the online classroom.



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Questions? Thoughts? Comments?



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