Read the responses to classroom situations below and (a) indicate the scenario you would most likely choose and (b) the ones you would least likely choose, and the pros and cons for each.

1. DEBRIEFING WHEN CLASS HAS RUN LONG: The lesson has run longer than expected. The bell will ring in 10 minutes. Do you debrief the class by saying--?

(a) Who can tell me what “predict” means. (Several students raise their hands). Good, Petra can you use “predict” in a sentence? (Petra says, “I predict the weather will be nice tomorrow.”). “Good! How about “evaluate?” What do you do when you “evaluate? Tiedra, how would you evaluate our lesson today?” (Tiedra answers, “It was interesting. I learned much”). “Very good. I’m glad you liked it. Goodbye everyone.”

(b) “Okay, today we talked about how to evaluate information and a little bit about making predictions. Count off by twos please. Okay, good. I want every 1 to find a 2 and work together to remember what we did today and what we learned. Then before we leave I’ll call on some pairs to hear what you learned.”

2. INTRODUCING AN ACTIVITY: You’ve just given instructions for a classroom activity. Do you...?

(a) Model the new activity yourself and say, “Any questions?” And if you get none, you say, “Okay, let’s go to work!”

(b) Ask your students if they remember the activity they did last week. Model the activity for them again and ask if there are any questions? No students respond. You assume they understand and you say, “Okay. Let’s go!”

(c) Ask a pair of students to model the activity in front of the class. Then, ask another student, “So, what are you going to do when I say ‘Go to work?’” The student repeats the instructions, getting them mostly correct, but there are a couple of problems. So, then you ask another student, until you feel that most of the students know what they are supposed to do. Then you say, “Okay. Let’s go!”
3. NOT ALL STUDENTS HAVE COMPLETED A CLASS ACTIVITY: You’ve given your students 10 minutes to complete a short exercise individually. At about the 8 minute mark most of the students are done (some have even begun to chat), but four students still don’t seem to be making much progress. Do you....

(a) Announce that everyone can take another five minutes and then go back to correcting the homework that students turned in at the beginning of class.

(b) Announce that time is up and that everyone needs to turn in their assignment whether it is finished or not.

(c) Ask some of the students who typically finish early to help the ones that are not yet finished, insisting, “Please don’t just tell them the answers. Ask them questions to help them find the answers.”

(d) Announce that everyone can take another five minutes and then go back to correcting the homework turned in this morning. When five minutes are up, you notice the slower students still haven’t finished, but you say nothing, and let them continue working even though the other students are restless.

4. CLASS RULES: To get things off to a good start, for your first class...

(a) You write your class rules on the board. As student come in, you ask them not to talk but to busy themselves by copying the text off the board. When class starts, you explain each rule on the board and ask students if they understand. If there are no questions, you go onto to an explanation of the next rule.

(b) You write your class rules on the board and then you work with each rule, first asking a different student to read each rule and then asking another student to say (1) what they think the rule means or (2) why the rule exists.

(c) You write 10 common class rules on the board. You have a student read each one off, and as needed, you explain why the rule exists. Then you ask students to vote on the five rules that are most important to the class and which they will be willing to follow.

(d) you ask the students (possibly in their home language so they can participate better), what kinds of rules are good to have for a class and which ones are most important and then you ask the class as a whole to choose the class rules you will all respect in your class.
5. CONTENT BASED INSTRUCTION WHERE ENGLISH IS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION BUT USED BY FEW PEOPLE IN DAILY LIFE: You teach high school biology in a country where English is the medium of instruction but in a country where only 2% of the population speaks English as a mother tongue. When teaching the chapter on “infectious disease” last year your students seemed particularly challenged by the content. Because you are a citizen of this country you suspect that part of the challenge is that local explanations and treatments of disease can be at odds with the explanations provided by western science. Do you decide this year that you will...?

(a) Provide the lessons in local language instead of lecturing in English and to supplement you lessons in English you provide a lexicon of key expressions on infectious diseases showing local language & English equivalents.

(b) Start the class by eliciting information from the students about how common diseases are caused, identified, and treated. Afterward you engage the students to discuss other explanations they know about how diseases are caused and treated.

(c) Go through the unit on infectious diseases a sub-unit at a time. To begin each sub-section, you discuss with the students up to five English expressions that relate to infectious diseases, then provide an activity to practice making statements about infectious diseases in English using the expressions, and then describing how that idea might be expressed in the local language. As you work through the unit, you explain a section in English and then encourage students working in groups to reconstruct the sense of the English passage in local language and discuss where western and local perceptions about their treatment and cause are different. Short, low-stakes quizzes on important expressions for discussing infectious diseases in English and in the local language are given. At the end of the school term, students are given a practice test that represents the key concepts on infectious diseases that are frequent on the national exam so that they will be prepared to give well-constructed answers in English.

(d) Since you are not an English teacher, and it’s really not your job to teach your Bio students English, you decide to support students with a list in English of the important concepts at the beginning of the first sub-unit on Infectious Diseases (you decide that these concepts are important concepts because they are the ones in bold in the text) and tell students that they should make sure that they know the meanings of all these concepts.
6. WHAT DO STUDENTS DO BEFORE CLASS STARTS?

(a) Students are supposed to put their homework in the homework box, check their name on the class roster, and sit quietly at their desks before class. The teacher works completing administrative tasks. If students become loud they will be hushed by the teacher. Class starts when the teacher decides she is finished with her administrative tasks.

(b) Students enter the class to find a task written on the board (or possibly a handout to complete). The tasks are designed to be quite easy and fun. They introduce the students to vocabulary or concepts that will be needed to the day’s lesson. For example, “fill in the boxes with the letters of a six-letter word that means both a fruit or a color” or “fill in the five letter word for the meal you eat at the middle of the day,” or “Why is it important to eat a good lunch and what are some foods you like to eat for lunch?” or “what is a food that is red?” Then to start the class the teacher calls on some students to provide the answers they found (or the ideas that they had) and then the lesson begins by stating the topic of the day’s lesson (in this case, eating healthy).

(c) The teacher writes an extended text on the board the represents the essence of the day’s lesson. As soon as they enter, students are supposed to start copying the text off the board into their copy books.

7. English Practice Activities: student who typically does not participate well, can’t answer a question the teacher asks. So, the teacher asks...

(a) The question to another student who can provide a correct answer. The teacher thanks the 2nd student and goes on to ask a new question to a different class member.

(b) The question to another student who does provide a correct answer. The teacher thanks the 2nd student and asks different question to the first student (the student who wasn’t able to answer the previous question).

(c) The question to another student. The second student provides a correct answer. The teacher asks the second student to clearly repeat the correct answer. After an instant the teacher calls on the first student and asks him the answer to the same question. This process continues until the first student participates by providing the correct answer.
8. HANDLING HOMEWORK ASSIGNED LAST CLASS: The textbook homework (assigned last class) gives students a fill-in-the-blank activity where students must insert the correct vocabulary word to complete the sentence. There are fifteen such sentences the students were expected to complete for today’s class.

(a) The teacher asks the students to turn in their homework. When the homework is collected, the teacher begins teaching the dialogue that starts off the chapter. The following class the teacher returns the homework with any mistakes corrected but no other feedback. The teacher only tracks which students turned in homework, not how well they did it.

(b) Looking at the homework assignment in the textbook, the teacher asks the first student in the row closest to her to read his answer to question 1. She evaluates the student’s answer. Then she follows the same process with the second student in the first row. The teacher follows a consistent pattern: teacher question, student response, followed by the teacher’s evaluation each time, row by row. Since there are 15 homework items and 28 students, the teacher asks for the answer to many homework items twice. Because her approach is so systematic, it is easy for students to know if they will be called on or not for any particular homework question.

(c) The teacher puts students in pairs and asks them to compare their answers. If they have different answers they are asked to discuss to decide which answer is correct (It is a fill-in-the-blank activity for vocabulary learning, so each blank has only one correct answer). When the pairs have finished, the teacher calls on pairs in random order. One pair member reads their answer and then the teacher asks the rest of the class if they agree. If there is disagreement, the teacher tries to prompt the class as a whole to determine the correct answer.

9. TEXTBOOK ADAPTATION: You are an English teacher in a developing country. The textbook the national ministry of education purchased was published in the US and many of the situations and expressions are not relevant or used in your country. Do you--

(a) Simply teach the text as it is because it is a good textbook and you are also too busy to adapt the text. Besides, it makes you feel good that the book helps you learn about the culture and the differences in American English and think maybe your students need to learn it as well.

(b) Review the textbook in advance of the lesson to see what content needs to be adapted to fit the situation in your country. It’s not that you ignore teaching about cultural differences between the US and your country, but when you practice lesson content you base it on situations you might reasonably encounter in your country, and the variety of language that you can imagine people using. While you like having the opportunity to introduce your students to some aspects of American culture and language, you want them to be comfortable using the
English that’s most likely needed in your country and in cultural situations your students are likely to encounter.

10. COVER A CHAPTER EVERY CLASS: You are supposed to cover a chapter every class. Do you...

(a) Cover a chapter in the first class and then assign one or two homework activities for the students to complete as homework before the next class. Then the second class you ask the students to turn in their homework and you then teach the second chapter and assign their homework from the textbook for chapter 2. The third day the students turn in the homework for chapter 2 and you begin the class by reviewing the common mistakes in the homework for chapter 1. Then you teach the content for chapter 3 and assign the homework for chapter 3. However, you find you are unable to complete grading the homework for chapter 2 before the following class on chapter 4 and so that entire lesson is taken up with chapter 4 with the homework for chapter 4 being assigned to be turned in the next class. So, in that next class, you collect the lesson 4 homework, review the common mistakes on homework 2, teach the content of lesson 5 and assign homework for lesson 5 (to be turned in for the next class) where you will review the mistakes on the homework for lesson 3.

(b) For the first lesson, look at the possible homework items in the text and assign perhaps two or three items from a few different homework sets to help students review the genuinely key concepts (knowing that students cannot be expected to master the material at this pace). Then next day, as students enter, you ask them to find the answers to the homework you have written on the board. In pairs (as each student enters) you ask students correct each other’s homework. Then you start class by reviewing the homework and use students’ observations or questions based on the correction activity to guide the discussion. Then the homework is turned in (for you to review and grade on a check or non-check (was not turned in)) basis after school. Then the next class you facilitate lesson two in a similar way, and so forth.

11. WRITTEN FEEDBACK: When correcting papers or assignments you...

(a) Correct every mistake and make many marginal comments. This way the student can know all the mistakes s/he made, and know that you are competent and really want to help.

(b) Try to always begin by commenting generally on something positive in the paper. The teacher only corrects those problems that are directly related to the assignment. If there are other systemic problems (e.g., a specific error in spelling, punctuation, or word choice) the teacher may mark examples of the error one or two times, explain the problem, and then encourage the student to go back through the assignment on her/his own to try to find and correct any similar errors if they appear in other places on the assignment.
12. APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT: In terms of classroom assessment, do you...

(a) Typically give multiple choice tests so you can cover a lot of the content in each unit and because multiple choice tests are easy to grade because since there is only one right answer. If students have questions when they get their assessments back, you ask them to look in the textbook because that’s how you learn.

(b) do a lot of formative assessment (e.g., you ask a sampling question and students either give thumbs up for true or thumbs down for false), and reteach when it is needed. Every third to fourth class you give a short, low-stake quiz on key items of the syllabus to see how well students are learning and maintaining content. If you see patterns of difficulty, you reteach. For the final exam you focus only on the key content for all of the course, telling students in advance what they will be tested on and how they will be scored, and to the extent possible, telling students what kinds of items will likely be on the test (e.g., complete the sentence, multiple choice, matching, short essay questions) and give the practice each kind of test item.

(c). Provide homework that allows students to practice the content of the lesson in communicative activities (even though it takes some time create relevant activities). Because this time of homework is more demanding (as well as authentic!) you typically assign homework with only two to four items and usually focus on both what is correct and what is communicatively appropriate. You score homework as “great” (when a clearly exceptional effort was made), “good” (and you aim for most students to be “good”) and “nice try” (for those who had problems or didn’t complete the homework). Only those who don’t turn something in get 0.

13. ASSESSING WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: For writing assignments...

(a) For writing assignments, you employ an analytic scoring sheet (and evaluate work on the basis of vocabulary, spelling punctuation, word choice, grammar, and reasoning). It makes grading more straightforward. You read each assignment carefully and comment fully in the margin, and calculate grades based on the scoring sheet.

(b) You develop in advance a checklist for students to self-assess their writing assignment before turning it in. The checklist focuses on elements that students can easily see or evaluate (spelling, beginning each sentence with a capital, assessing if there is a topic sentence and a conclusion, etc.). Then, after each student has done a self-assessment, he or she exchanges her assignment with another student and they go through second “peer-assessment” checklist [again, with criteria any student can readily evaluate, but with the peer assignment there is more focus on “is the writing easy for anybody to understand?]. Then students are provided time to revise the assignment based on the feedback. Then the twice reviewed writing assignments are submitted to you for grading. You are able to read and evaluate the
assignments more quickly because they have already been edited twice (by the student and the student’s partner) before you see them.

14. ORAL FEEDBACK: In terms of giving feedback, do you--

(a) Generally correct mistakes as soon as they occur by saying, “No, I’m sorry, it’s correct answer.” Or perhaps by providing a recast (repeating the mistake with a rising question intonation that encourages the student to rethink the answer)? Are you quick to stop the interaction (a dialogue or role play) when you hear an error because mistakes must be corrected before they are learned wrong?

(b) Always avoid interrupting student interactions (roleplays dialogues, interactions in games) until after they are finished. Usually you don’t identify who made the mistake (assuming that if one student could make an error, any student could). You typically only correct errors that relate to the focus of the activity and you don’t correct every error (for example, errors in dropping the third person singular “s” if that is not a focus of the activity). When giving feedback to mistakes your feedback is affectively positive (“nice try…but.”, “Oh, I can see why you did that but…”, “Oh, almost…” “Good job but...”). Also, sometimes you ask other students in the class if they can identify an error a student made, rather than you always making the correction.