

Fox Curriculum

Curriculum design and instructional research

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THE DEN · ESSAY SERIES

I grew up in theater, and I never really recovered

An essay from The Den, the Fox Curriculum series on AI, writing, and learning.

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Translation to zero shame, a permanent instinct to hold a room, and an internal volume knob that only goes to "projected to the back row."

Extremely useful in a classroom. A genuine liability in a library.

I teach history like a spill-the-tea session. Less "here are the causes of the war" to more full reality-TV-recap energy, gasps included. Same content. Completely different level of attention in the room.

Ten years of that taught me the one rule that survives every curriculum framework I've ever read, most of which were clearly written by people who never had to compete with a phone for a teenager's attention span:

If it does not hold attention, it does not teach anything.

Curriculum design gets treated like a compliance exercise. Check the standard write the objective laminate something, go home. The actual job is getting inside how a mind learns something and figuring out the sequence that makes it stick, whether that's a 16-year-old in AP History or an adult sitting through a professional development session they would very much rather not be at.

I've built a UC-approved course from a blank page. I ran two years of formal action research on an AI tool before I trusted it near my students, because trust me, it's good is not a methodology. I write curriculum for subjects that were never mine to teach because someone needed it done and I am, apparently, constitutionally incapable of saying no.

None of that is separate from the theater kid thing. Same instinct to different stage to minus the jazz hands. Mostly.

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