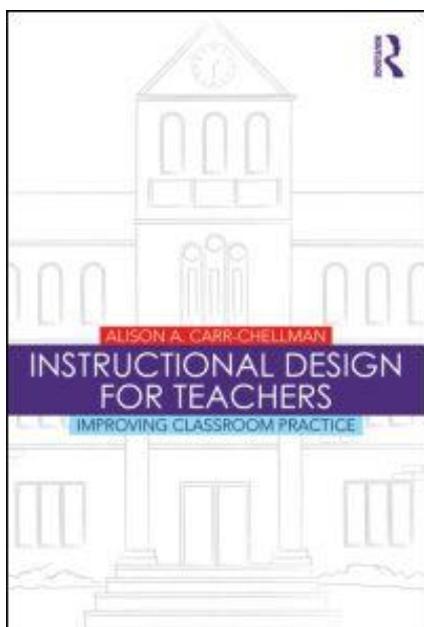


## **INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN FOR TEACHERS: Improving classroom practice**

**By Alison A. Carr-Chellman, 2010, New York, NY: Routledge  
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The key to successful learning in most formal instructional settings is effective instructional design (ID). *Instructional design for teachers* serves as an organized source of directions, which can help classroom teachers to integrate available resources to improve students' acquisition of the instructional goals. The book is consisted of 151 pages (+xvii) covering eight chapters which address a commonsense model of instructional design to guide K-12 teachers during their unique instructional settings, and during their adaptation from a behavioral approach to a more student-centered approach.

The author, Alison A. Carr-Chellman is a Professor of Education in the College of Education at the Pennsylvania State University. She is also the Head of the Department of Learning and Performance Systems, which has exceptionally strong and consistently top rating programs in the US. Dr. Carr-Chellman has published more than a hundred pieces of scholarly

work including articles, book chapters and books. She also co-edited the third edition of *Instructional Design Theories and Models* with Dr. Charles M. Reigeluth. Dr. Carr-Chellman studies the influence of emerging technologies on large systems of education. She particularly centers her research on systems thinking, diffusion of innovation, and large-scale impacts of online learning.

*Instructional design for teachers (ID4T)* provides us and particularly K-12 teachers with a practical instructional design model. The contents of the book guide the readers through step by step and easy-to-use directions with an emphasis on encouraging current and effective use of ID principles. The application of the model is not too highly analytical and detailed, which protects the teacher from losing sight of the overall learning context. The illustrated ID process further adapts the classroom teachers to more learner-centered implementations through framing questions, common errors, relevant heuristics and examples. These can also help classroom teachers to be more cognizant of learner diversity in formal educational settings whose learning outcomes are predetermined by authorities that are beyond the reach of classroom teachers

and learners. The author can be considered a relativist realist, that is, she is both a connoisseur in terms of the promises of the ID process and current trends in the field, but also aware of the reality of public school classrooms. Thus, she advises the readers of expecting the unexpected and remaining flexible. This flexibility may also help teachers to integrate constructivist notions, user-design, inquiry learning, and the standards-based curriculum into the ID4T Model. In this regard, her approach can help classroom teachers sustain a balance among learning components, engage learners in fruitful learning activities, and provide for the opportunity to collaborate towards a meaningful learning task.

The book begins with the theoretical model – something that should work effectively in theory. That is, how the model should work at its best is explained first. Even though the relatively long chapter explaining the ID model is somewhat like a summary of what we have read on ID so far; heuristics, common errors, samples and anecdotes like *The Beatitudes for Educators* and *The purple-fruit picking parable* make the reading enjoyable, and guide the teachers' in their everyday practices of ID in the classroom. Then, the author continues with special case issues illustrating how the model can work in different situations or through different approaches, which makes the unique contribution of the book clearer. Comparing the ID4T with other classroom-oriented ID models is not within the scope of the current review. One may suggest that the proposed model is generally linear in its orientation, looks like a pure behavioral model, its match to the realities of the K-12 classrooms may be reminiscent of the Heinich, Molenda, Russell and Smaldino Model (i.e. ASSURE), and the voice of the author might sometimes imply a product-oriented angle. However, the model has the potential to work well with public classrooms as it is simplified and presented in a concrete manner to facilitate effective implementation.

An instructional innovation cannot be diffused out of a sudden through rejecting previous practices, and omitting the current picture of formal educational settings. That is, a new instructional endeavor should build on the by-products of previous research and implementations in addition to the conditions of the current implementation settings.

In this regard, the book is a valuable contribution to the literature in terms of preparing and adapting classroom teachers, who are besieged by the realities of public schools, to ID fundamentals and current implementations. The classroom teachers are somewhat besieged because requirements and needs of instructional settings are usually determined at a much higher level than the preferences of learners or facilitators. Taking this reality into account, the author dispenses with the task of conducting full-fledge needs assessment, and proceeds with the remaining four steps of ADDIE, that is reflected through the ID4T model. She can be considered successful in guiding implementers to walk in somewhat objectivist settings with slightly relativist shoes. She is partially integrating research and design in her commonsense model through addressing both learning and research trajectories of the design research, and through emphasizing the importance of constant revisions, but modestly describing the process as a set of basic ideas. Considering the realities of formal instructional settings, she could be right in blending traditional atomistic design approaches and emerging holistic design approaches, an issue she implies while discussing systemic and systematic processes. A fair comparison regarding the presence of these two approaches within the book may suggest a dominance of the atomistic designs, but this is probably because of the realities of the formal instructional settings rather than the individual preference of the author.

A unique feature of the book is that it is highly reader-, but particularly teacher-friendly. The author begins with the premise that ID is not a rocket science, but applied commonsense. After the basic principles of the ID process are provided, different cases for different situations and approaches are addressed in an implementer-friendly way. Thus, the premise is confirmed in the book. The readers are likely to smile in most places and even learn some baseball while looking through the samples. Seriously, including the baseball example several samples are culture specific, which creates a mismatch between the reader-friendliness of the book and expectations of international readers. With long years of experience in authentic ID settings, the author will not have any trouble in adapting new examples to create a more powerful international reader. Aside from this trivial mismatch, the book promises ID scholars a contributive and quality pleasure reading as it can guide classroom teachers and novice instructional designers in writing better learning goals and objectives, preparing more relevant test items, addressing learner characteristics more effectively, selecting relevant materials and media, and implementing, evaluating and revising the instruction across a variety of situations and approaches.

#### **BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESS of REVIEWER**



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