AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION

Teacher's Guide for the ABF Teacher Training Program

2017

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This approved workshop is being conducted using training materials and approaches developed by Audrey Grant of BetterBridge

Introduction

The Teachers' Guide is a summary and starting point that introduces ideas and material that work. If we follow the advice, we'll have the tools to deliver top-quality bridge lessons. Our students will appreciate that we've put forth the effort to introduce them to the best bridge information using methods that educate and entertain.

Sound teaching methods are introduced through STEAM! – an overview of five essential ingredients for professionally presented programs. It works for all levels of instruction.

At times, the concepts might seem irrelevant, even revolutionary, and contradictory to common sense. If we respect the material on face value at first, follow up with suggested reading material, and practise using modern teaching techniques, the results speak for themselves.

Students like to play cards in a bridge class. Play concepts are developed through a Card-by-Card description of play and defense. This is very popular with students, but a challenge to implement. It's worth the time and effort to perfect the Card-by-Card techniques.

To some, these implementation tips might seem irrelevant, but teachers who are involved regularly with classes of various sizes know that it takes practice to be successful using modern theories. The result of ignoring the advice is costly, and at times embarrassing, since it can result in a loss of class control.

If you're reading this material, it's likely you're continuing or starting a journey to be a gifted teacher. It's a joyful adventure!

Audrey Grant & Joan Butts

S - Safety

If we were introducing a physical sport, it would be accepted that a responsibility of the instructor is safety — even "safety first." In a mental sport, protecting the students is often overlooked, the assumption is that a teacher is accountable for simply delivering the facts.

Making sure the participants are in a comfortable environment requires close attention to detail of what is happening in our class, and the desire to implement methods that improve class atmosphere.

THREE PRACTICAL SAFETY TIPS

Providing a safe environment is a challenge. These following three practical safety tips are simply a start to promote awareness of how important this aspect is.

1. Start each new class with the Teachers' Guarantee

Simply state at the beginning of each new class:

> **I'd like to start by giving you the Teachers' Guarantee: I won't ask you to answer any questions during the course, unless you volunteer.**

It's straightforward to implement this tip. The obstacle is the instructor's lack of commitment to deliver the statement. It can be a challenge to appreciate the contribution this simple assurance has on making our bridge classes an amazing adventure for our students.

Experienced teacher Richard Strauss of Chicago shared this at a teachers' meeting:

> I decided to give the Teachers' Guarantee to my beginner class. There were twenty students who started the class, and twenty-four who completed the course. This is the first time in my career — and I've taught for a long time — that I had an increase in attendance in the Absolute Beginner Class. I think the Teachers' Guarantee was a big reason for this. The students felt very comfortable and told their friends.

2. Try to Avoid the "Well Done" Approach to Teaching

Why use the word 'try'? Why not be more bold and copy the Nike slogan, "Just do it!" Here's the aim:

> Give up praising an individual student, during class time, when other students can hear, for a right answer; or an idea that fits with the instructor's philosophy of the game.

Alfie Kohn, in his highly acclaimed PUNISHED BY REWARDS, writes about why praise is so difficult to avoid: it's so deeply rooted that we think it's common sense to praise students.

> There is time to admire the grace and persuasive power of an influential idea, and there is a time to fear its hold over us. The time to worry is when the idea is so widely shared that we no longer even notice it, when it is so deeply rooted that it feels to us like plain common sense. At the point when objections are not answered anymore because they are no longer raised, we are not in control; we do not have the idea; it has us.
>
> The idea is that the best way to get something done is to provide a reward to people when they act the way we want them to. The core of pop behaviorism is 'Do this and you'll get that.'

Mr. Kohn's argument is that even a 'well done' can discourage students' desire to do their best. A reviewer in the LOS ANGELES TIMES observed that Kohn backs up the theme in PUNISHED BY REWARDS with solid, exhaustive evidence. I read the book at a time when I suspected there was a better method than praising students during class, but hadn't yet found research to document this aspect of teaching. Mr. Kohn's book directed me toward a way to get better results in my bridge class. It's worth reading (www.AlfieKohn.org).

Now most educational writers agree with the ideas put forth by Alfie Kohn.

Dr. Thomas Gordon's TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING has sold over a million copies. He's well respected in the educational field, has been nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize, was a consultant to the White House Conference on Children, and has representatives world-wide. This excerpt is written with younger students in mind, but applies equally to adult learners. He writes:

Praising, Agreeing, Giving Positive Evaluations

While teachers easily understand the terrible hurting power of negative evaluation, they are often shocked to learn that, contrary to commonly held belief, praise is not always beneficial to students and often has very negative effects.

- A positive evaluation that does not fit a student's self-image may evoke anger: "I am *not* a good student."
- Students interpret these positive messages as attempts to manipulate them, a subtle way of influencing them to do what the teacher wants.

  "You just say that so I'll work harder."

- Students correctly infer that if a teacher judges positively, there can also be a negative judgment at another time. They also correctly infer that to judge implies superiority.

- The absence of praise in a classroom where praise is frequently used can be interpreted by students as criticism:

  "You didn't say anything good about my drawing, so you must not like it."

- Praise is also frequently embarrassing to students when given publicly. Most students despise being held up as the "good example" as much as being exposed as the "bad example."

- Students who are praised a lot may grow to depend on it, even demand it.

  "Look, teacher, look at my paper"
  "Isn't this a good drawing?"
  "Look teacher I'm sharing with Rodney."

- Finally students sometimes infer that teachers who praise them don't really understand them, that the positive evaluation is used to save the teacher from having to take the time to understand what the students are feeling.

Anthony D. Frederick, author of SUCCESS AS A TEACHER, part of the Idiots Guide series, writes:

> Early in my career, I used to give lots of gold stars and smelly stickers! I've reached some new conclusions.
>
> The body of research to convince us that there is a better way to conduct a class than to rely on praise given to an individual student during class time is vast. It's worth our consideration.

3. The Delicate Balance Between Fact and Opinion

> There are no whole truths; all truths are half truths. It is trying to treat them as whole truths that plays the devil.
>
> —Alfred North Whitehead, THE AIMS OF EDUCATION

Teachers decide what to teach. What are the facts? The easiest approach is to present a body of material that we're convinced is correct, and sell it to our students. Simple as that.

Although right answers are comfortable for the instructor, there are challenges. History proves that 'facts' can change with the times. A more open-ended approach is attractive to the student. Students will encounter methods that we don't teach.

Bridge can be divided into bidding, play and defense. The bidding usually gives the best opportunity for different opinions among the experts and the students. With only one right answer, students feel it's a guessing game to see who gets it. One student in an evaluation wrote:

> Now that I know there's room for judgment it makes me think more.

It's a delicate balance, and we need to be open-minded about right answers. The teacher can use more attractive language such as the 'Guideline' of 20 rather than the 'Rule' of 20. The possibility of opinion puts the class at ease.

Play and defense are more exact sciences. One line of play results in taking more tricks than another. So the nature of the game, with the three categories of bidding play and defense gives a chance for a philosophy that combines opinion and fact; the lesson plans reflect this philosophy.

T - Timing

Most bridge lessons are advertised as two hours in length with a specific starting time and finishing time. Straightforward; yet in practice a common complaint of students is that classes start late. A quieter complaint is that the teacher goes beyond the advertised time. The teacher may feel that there isn't enough time to 'cover' the material within a two-hour class. We have to ask ourselves a few questions to clarify our attitude toward timing.

The Basics

Do we believe in starting a class on time? What seems to get in the way of being prompt? Is going beyond the advertised schedule giving extra value? Do most students want this extra time? If students come late, what methods do we use to try to get them there on time?

The bottom line is that we start and end on time, as advertised. No excuses. If students arrive late, they quietly come into the class, without interrupting, and we carry on. It usually self corrects if we make no comment. It's almost a matter of integrity: we meet student expectations by starting and finishing promptly, as agreed.

The Break

Is it important to have a short break after about fifty minutes in a two-hour class? It's common practice at tournaments to have a hospitality break. Although the procedure was first introduced to accommodate smokers, it's now accepted that most players appreciate the chance to get up from the table after about an hour, for many different reasons. Experience has shown that it is a good idea to have a break after between 50-60 minutes.

Do we announce at the beginning of our lesson that there will be a break in about an hour? It's important to mention this at the beginning of the class for players who would be uncomfortable having to stay in the same place for two hours.

Play of a Deal

The basic structure for the lessons is that four deals are played during the class. We have to decide ahead of time how long we're going to give the class to bid and play a deal. The next challenge is to have the students follow the suggestions. How do we do this?

Students will usually follow along with the suggested time allotted, if they agree ahead of time that it's reasonable. We could say something like this:

> Players bid and play a deal at different rates. Some of us are comfortable taking a long time, even thirty minutes per deal. Others like to finish quickly, in about five minutes. It's been agreed by the card players of the world that in most situations seven or eight minutes is what the majority of players prefer. So in our class, we can bid and play as many cards as we can in that time. Then we'll turn all of the cards face up on the table. I will let you know when the bidding should be complete, the lead made, and the dummy on the table.

Length of the Course

The ideal time for the length of a bridge course is dependent on many factors. Three of the most common considerations are: the schedule for the teacher, the schedule for the students, and the availability of an appropriate venue. Golf clubs, for example, often want only a four-week course. On the other hand, continuing education courses can be scheduled for eight or more weeks. One- or two-day festivals have been gaining in popularity. The course material is flexible. Details are under the section on material.

E - Energy

The quality of energy in a class is key to success. When we enter a room with a skilled teacher, we can feel the productive, positive energy.

> Good teaching is one fourth preparation and three fourths theatre.—Gail Godwin, THE ODD WOMAN
>
> Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.
>
> —Ralph Waldo Emerson

How does the teacher keep the class energized? Here are a few ways:

Motion

Action creates energy. It can take the form of laughing, singing, moving from one place to another, or just being asked to raise our hand.

> One of the simplest ways to involve people in an audience is to ask for a show of hands in response to a non-threatening question. Just the physical act of raising their hands can boost their energy level and receptivity.
>
> —Malcolm Kushner, PUBLIC SPEAKING FOR DUMMIES

Asking the group for an opinion works as long as we're careful to keep the Safety factor in place. For example, the North hand in the first deal in IMPROVING YOUR JUDGMENT 1 — OPENING THE BIDDING, could be passed or opened 1♠. In the lesson plans, the suggestion is that when the 52 cards are face up on the table after the deal has been played, all four players look at the North hand and offer an opinion about the opening call. The teacher says:

> Suppose we're the dealer and hold North's hand. Would we open the bidding or pass? Let's see what our colleagues think.
>
> If you would open the bidding with the North hand, raise your hand.
>
> If you would not open the bidding with the North hand, raise your hand.
>
> There's only one right answer!

Then there has to be a conclusion, and the teacher says:

Play with someone who has his or her hand up the same time you do!
Opening the bidding can be a matter of judgment.

The teacher gives the information about how we could value this hand using the Guideline of 20, and decide to open 1♠. Then the reasons for passing are presented.

Talk

Providing the opportunity for the students to talk to one another and exchange ideas creates magic in our class. They are animated, they laugh, they learn, and they enjoy the kind of experience that puts them in a good position to easily learn the game.

In the first half-hour of the first lesson of "Play Bridge: A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner" for example, after the students have played only two hands, one in notrumps and one with a trump suit, they're asked to discuss these questions:

Do you prefer playing in no trumps or with a trump suit?

Did you like the choice of the trump suit in the first hand?

It may seem too early to have a discussion with such limited experience, but it gives the students a chance to reflect on playing the first two hands and to talk about them. There will be different, valid, opinions.

Transitions

The lesson plans include a section called Transitions. A hand is created on the table in front of one of the players, and all players talk about the hand, exchanging ideas. Then the teacher gives general information about the hand sharing the opinions from the best players in the world. Here's an example from IMPROVING YOUR JUDGMENT 1 — OPENING THE BIDDING.

You're the dealer in the South position. What's your call?

♠ x x
♥ A K Q x x
♦ A K x
♣ x x x

Most students suggest 1♥. Some always open with a five card major suit even with a balanced hand and 15–17 points. Others would open 1NT. Here is the material, in the lesson plans, following this example.

With so much concentration in two suits, we might consider opening 1♥, even though the hand is balanced and we have 16 high-card points plus 1 for length.

In fact, US expert Larry Cohen, watching world champion Mike Passell holding this hand, commented, "I usually opens 1NT with a five-card major, but this hand would be the exception." Larry predicted that Passell would open 1♥.

Passell proceeded to open 1NT, showing that even experts can disagree on the best opening bid!

Activity

We all know that our students like to play deals. It's so important to their learning, that every one of the lessons in the "Play Bridge" books provides four hands for the students to play. The concepts for the lessons are presented through these four deals.

Playing a Deal

The first step is that the students experience the deal by bidding and playing without interference from the teacher. It starts with what the participants know. Then they turn it face up on the table, dummy style, with the high cards at the edge of the table.

Next the bidding is discussed, carefully, making sure that no student is put on the spot. It's emphasized that it's much easier to come up with an opinion looking at all of the hands, after they've been played, and talking with three other people at the table.

After presenting information about the bidding, the teacher can walk the students through the Card-by-Card description of the play and defense. This creates a holistic approach that appeals to students with a wide range of experience and skill.

A - Attitude

What do we need to do to advance our craft as a teacher? Most of the time, the focus is mainly on the subject matter. We try to improve our bridge skills. Our classes improve when we focus on teaching bridge as two words: teaching and bridge.

> Clearly, subject matter knowledge affects teaching performance, however, it is not sufficient in and of itself. Teacher training programs that emphasize content knowledge acquisition and neglect pedagogical coursework are less effective in preparing prospective teachers.
>
> — James H. Strong, QUALITY OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

A Practical Attitude

Parker J. Palmer, in THE COURAGE TO TEACH, shares a practical, expansive view of what it takes to improve our ability as a teacher. He writes:

> The question we most commonly ask is the "what" question — what subjects shall we teach?
>
> When the conversation goes a bit deeper, we ask the "how" question — what methods and techniques are required to teach well?
>
> Occasionally, when it goes deeper still, we ask the "why" question — for what purpose and to what ends do we teach?
>
> But seldom, if ever, do we ask the "who" question — who is the self that teaches? How does the quality of my selfhood form, or deform, the way I relate to my students, my subject, my colleagues, my world? How can educational institutions sustain and deepen the selfhood from which good teaching comes?

He has no quarrel with the what, or how, or why questions, except when they are posed as the only questions worth asking.

> All of them can yield important insights into teaching and learning. But none of them opens up the territory I want to explore in this book: the inner landscape of the teaching self.

Attention to Detail

Attention to detail is an attitude that yields outstanding results in our classroom. To succeed we need to have the attitude that success is not automatic; like any sport or activity it requires focus and practice.

Knowing the Material

Improving our familiarity with the material to be presented doesn't come from playing a lot of bridge; it comes as a result of careful study of the texts and the lesson plans. We need to order the text and the hand deals and them before the class. We need to read the plans aloud, to decide where we are going to put the emphasis. The plan is a script. The success depends on the delivery.

Practising the Method

Teaching with an emphasis on bidding, play and defense is a challenge. To deliver the Card-by-Card is an art: it takes many hours of practice before we are ready to do it in front of our class.

> It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.
>
> —John Wood

M - Material

The textbooks introduce students to up-to-date methods that represent the way the game is played today. Teachers may use any textbooks they choose, and apply the methods, but the recommended books contain teaching manuals and tips for presenting the material.

The first book "Play Bridge: A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner" (Joan Butts) is for beginning players and those who wish to brush up on fundamentals of the game.

The second book, "Play Bridge 2: A Workbook for Help with Play" (Joan Butts) was written in response to a need for material for Help with Play after beginners classes, and for fundamental play lessons. Many teachers concentrate on bidding theory and neglect play, so this book covers the essential techniques for playing a hand of bridge. "A Guide By Your Side" (Kathy Johnson and Joan Butts) is a summary of the basics, for use at the table in supervised sessions and lessons.

Overview of the **Bridge for Beginners Series**

1. Play Bridge: A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner

- The Mechanics
- Opening The Bidding
- Responding to No Trumps
- Responding to Suit Openings
- Opener's Second Bid
- Responder's Second Bid

Play Bridge: A Teachers Manual

- A guide for teachers, emailed free

2. Play Bridge 2: A Workbook for Help with Play

- Winners and Losers
- Promotion
- Length
- Finesse
- Trumping
- Discarding and Combining Your Chances

Both texts come with deal records, hand records, bri files, and individual travellers for practising the hands.

3. A Guide By Your Side

- Opening
- Responding
- Scoring
- Defence
- Competitive Bidding
- Card Play

4. 12 videos to match each chapter of "Play Bridge: A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner", and "Play Bridge 2: A Workbook for Help with Play"

These are available on the ABF website.

Bridge for Improving Players: The Next Step

By Audrey Grant, these texts are useful for players with a wide range of experience and skill. They are designed to be multi-level.

Competitive Bidding (Audrey Grant)

- Preemptive Opening Bids
- Overcalls
- Takeout Doubles
- The Competitive Auction
- Additional Practice Deals

3. Popular Conventions (Audrey Grant)

- Stayman
- Transfers
- Blackwood and Gerber
- Strong Two-Bids
- Additional Practice Deals

Overview of the Improving Your Judgment Series

The Improving Your Judgment series is for advancing and experienced players who wish to brush up on a specific aspect of the game. There will be several textbooks/ courses, each with four chapters/lessons and sixteen additional practice deals. The first two books in the series are:

1. Opening the Bidding

- Opening at the One Level – In First and Second Position
- Opening at the One Level – In Third and Fourth Position
- Obstructive Opening Bids
- Strong Opening Bids
- Additional Practice Deals

2. Doubles

- The Takeout Double
- Responding to a Takeout Double
- Doubler's Rebid and the Subsequent Auction
- Balancing and Other Doubles
- Additional Practice Deals

The Student Textbooks

Each student textbook is designed with the reader in mind. There are several special features.

- Practice Deals. There are four practice deals included in each chapter. They highlight the concepts introduced during the chapter and include a discussion of the suggested bidding, play, and defense. In each set of four hands, every player is declarer once.
- Additional Deals. Sixteen additional deals are in each book. They're carefully constructed so that:

Course Schedule

Although the Teachers' Manual is broken into four lessons, the material can be adapted in a number of ways. The challenge in writing a manual is to have just the right amount of material to fit into a two-hour lesson, or two one-hour segments. However, there is no such thing as an ideal class and the teacher will need to be flexible in adjusting the lessons to meet the needs of the class.

The Four-Week Course

Each lesson is 2 hours long. The four deals are played in the two hours, with the focus on the bidding and the play of the hand. The teacher can choose whether to walk through Card-by-Card on each deal or to simply go over a summary of the play and defense, referring the students to the description of the deal in the textbook.

The Six-Week Course

There are sixteen extra deals in the text that are ideally suited for two lessons of supervised play. The deals can be played, turned up dummy style, and discussed. The students look at all fifty-two cards, and discuss the bidding and play. The declarer's ABC's for planning the play can be reviewed and applied to each hand. Or, the students can "bid" the hand first and then turn it face up, ready for discussion.

The Eight-Week Course

After the first four weeks with Card-by-Card, introduce four weeks of supervised play. Play four deals each week and include transitions instead of Card-by-Card.

Length of Individual Lessons

The lessons are designed for a two-hour class. They can also be used for two one-hour classes.

It's not advisable to have classes of more than two hours in length, although it may seem as if the players are appreciative of the extra time we spend. More important is to present what was advertised. If the class is advertised as two hours, it's important to deliver the material in that time.

STEAM: The Teachers' Checklist for Success

The goal of the STEAM checklist is to keep focused on aspects of teaching that make sure our players are satisfied customers – pleased they have decided to invest in bridge lessons. The letters are not in order of importance; the word could have been TEAMS or anything else. STEAM seemed like the best choice.

Safety

It's critical to keep the participants comfortable. There are several important techniques to accomplish this:

- At the beginning of each class let them know that, unless they volunteer, they won't be asked a question
- Allow for different opinions and avoid the "right answer." For example, some players already know and prefer to play a 16–18 1NT range. Bridge Basics introduces the more popular 15–17 point range. The responses are the same, so respect the students' opinions and move the class along.
- Keep Away from the Table. A play-focused approach gives the participants a chance to experience the play of the hand. Don't watch them while they're playing, or come over to suggest a bid. This tends to make other players at the table uncomfortable.
- Give Clear Instructions. Take the time to become skilled at giving students the best instructions for constructing hands on the table so that they won't feel they aren't doing the right thing.
- Avoid interfering with the learning process by praising a student for work well done. It's one of the illusions of teaching that this enhances the desire to learn. Alfa Kohn's book, PUNISHED BY REWARDS, is an excellent resource if you still aren't convinced.

Timing

It's important to respect time.

- Start on time, have a short break after about an hour, and finish on time. It's that straightforward.
- Give the participants 7½ minutes to bid and then play as many cards as they can in a deal … keep the class moving.
- End on time; it's just as important as starting on time. Giving extra value doesn't apply when we go beyond the advertised time.
- Balance the class with time for the students to listen, talk about concepts, read information, and play deals.

Energy

Energy is important. Keep the atmosphere upbeat.

- Provide an opportunity for the students to talk to each other. In the first lesson, there is an icon placed in several spots to give the general idea. After that, the teacher has to be aware to regularly ask the students to talk among themselves.
- Play at least four deals in every two-hour lesson; avoid too much attention to bidding in isolation.
- Use a microphone.

Attitude

Play the odds for customer service. Small, seemingly unimportant habits can make a difference.

- Most classes prefer the teacher to be professionally dressed.
- Avoid questionable jokes and remarks.
- Be prepared. No matter how many times we have given the lesson, review the plans before the class.
- Have the material ready.
- Do your best, even though conditions will change from moment to moment.
- Continue to learn.
- Be aware of how the class is being received by the students: does your attendance increase, stay the same, or decrease – and why.

Material

Use the best bridge material and teaching philosophy available

- Offer several methods for learning. Some students prefer to read and will read ahead and reread material presented in the lesson; others use the textbook sporadically.
- Some are note-takers, writing down reactions and the material presented by the lecturer, even though the information is in the text. They write in the text, underline key points, record notes in the margin. Others don't have notebooks and would never write in a text. Some students have highly developed listening skills; others find it difficult to hear.
- Some find talking a powerful tool for absorbing information; others don't like to share thoughts with others.

The Cards-on-the-Table Method

The Cards-on-the-Table Method is used to develop concepts in bidding, play and defense. It is the practical way to implement a highly evolved educational theory which offers the students an excellent way to learn the game. Using the cards has the following advantages:

- Clarifies the Presentation
    - Students can see a hand face-up on the table better than one written on a flip chart.
    - Bidding Boxes work better to complete the picture than the traditional blackboard.
- Provides for a Student-Focused Class
    - Players face each other, rather than the teacher.
- Increases Class Energy
    - Participants are moving the cards and moving the bids from the Bidding Box.
    - The position of having four people facing each other promotes conversation among the players.
- Encourages an Activity Based Approach

- Playing the practice deals is an active way to experience the game.
- Playing carefully constructed hands handles individual differences and allows the material to be presented to players with a wide range of experience and skill.

- Cards Enable a Play-Focused Lesson Series
  - Bridge is a trick taking game; focusing on play is important.
  - Playing the cards develops sound card play techniques.

A Frequently Used Layout – 13 Cards Face Up on the Table

This pattern is used to discuss bidding concepts. In place of using a flip chart, players construct a hand, dummy style, in front of one direction. After talking about the hand, a few cards are moved, and another hand is discussed. This is referred to as Transitions. We need to be clear about how to implement this method.

Step One: Get the Cards into Suits

From the full deck, each player takes one suit. There are various ways to get the deck divided into four suits.

a) The Teacher Suits the Deck

The instructor can have the deck already sorted into suits and put in a duplicate board, or in front of each player. The players take the cards out of the pocket in front of them, or pick up the cards on the table, and are ready to construct the hand.

Even then, the instructions have to be clear. If we're using the model of having the cards suited ahead of time, here is the detail necessary to keep control of the class:

> Each player is going to have one suit. There are thirteen cards in one suit in the pocket of the duplicate board (or on the table) in front of you. Take these thirteen cards out of the pocket (pick up the cards). One player will now have all the spades; one player all the hearts; one player all the diamonds; and one player all the clubs.

Although this much detail might seem unnecessary, experience has shown that the students are appreciative of the time saved in class when specific instructions are given on the front end. What might happen if we're not this specific? A player might shuffle the cards and start to deal them out.

b) The Students Divide a Deck into Suits

Another way to have the cards divided into suits is to start by having one player deal the cards. (Or each player may already hold thirteen cards from an earlier deal.) The instructions would then be as follows:

> North, deal the cards so that each player has thirteen cards. Turn the cards face up on the table, in columns, dummy style. There will be 52 cards face up on the table. North, keep your hand intact. Now East, South, and West, put your spades on top of North's spades, your hearts on top of North's hearts, your diamonds on top of North's diamonds, and your clubs on top of North's clubs.
>
> East, South, and West now take one suit from the North hand. North, pick up the remaining cards. You should each now be holding thirteen cards in one suit. One player is going to have all of the spades, one player all of the hearts, one player all of the diamonds, and one player all of the clubs.

Step Two: Constructing a Hand on the Table

To get four people at a table to construct a hand with thirteen cards, face up, in front of one direction, use an age-old maxim: "Tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, and tell them what you've told them." Even some experienced players need to be reminded about 'dummy style.' Otherwise, they'll put the hand right-side up to themselves so they can see the hand but it is upside down to the other three players.

a) Tell Them What You're Going to Tell Them

Give instructions that set the objective.

> We're going to construct a hand in front of North, face up, dummy style, with the cards in columns. The high cards will be at the edge of the table, just as if this hand is the dummy. If the hand is in front of us, dummy style, it will be upside down to us but right side up to the other three players. A good trade. There

> will be 13 cards face up on the table. All other cards will be face down or placed in our Bidding Box, not in our hands. No one at the table will need to hold any cards. We're going to look at interesting bidding ideas, and we'll be able to see the cards more easily if they're right in front of us on the table rather than on a flip chart.

b) Tell Them

There are several ways we could ask the player with spades to put the ♠A-7-6 face up on the table. We could simply say, "Put the Ace, Seven, and Six of spades on the table." A statement like this is likely to lead to confusion. First of all, everyone has to listen to the numbers before the suit is given. This spends class energy in an unproductive manner. There is no information where or how the cards are to be placed. Better instructions would be:

> The person with the spade suit will be first to put cards face up on the table in front of North. There are going to be three spades in the hand. The spades are the Ace and two low spades. Put them in a column, face up, in front of North. Turn the remaining ten spades face down on the table. Only three cards are on the table, the ♠A and two low spades. Are there any questions so far?

The instructions continue in a similar manner:

> The player with hearts will go next. Put four hearts in front of North, face up, beside the spades. There are two high cards and two low cards. Put the ♥K, ♥Q and two low hearts in front of North. There should now be seven cards face up on the table: three spades and four hearts. Are there any questions?

Although this might seem far too tedious and time consuming, experience has shown that the opposite is true; it saves time. If we give the instructions only once, the hands are unlikely to be accurately constructed at many tables and there will be questions! "What were the spades?" "We only have twelve cards, could you read the hand again?" "How many diamonds were there?" "Could you come over here and tell us the hand again." It's very easy to lose control of the class if we're not specific when giving directions.

c) Tell Them What You've Told Them

Once the hand has been constructed, review it briefly with the entire class. The instructions could be:

> There should now be thirteen cards face up on the table. In spades there are three cards, the ♠A and two low spades. In hearts there are four cards, the ♥K, ♥Q and two low hearts. In diamonds there are four low cards. Finally, there should be two low clubs.

Now there are unlikely to be any questions. If we're not working with an assistant, however, we should have a hand made up ahead of time, in a board in the North pocket with the other directions sorted into suits. In the event a table still doesn't have the correct hand, we can take away the deck of cards that the students were using and quickly replace them with the board.

Once we carefully give instructions for the first hand, there are few problems moving cards to get to another hand pattern. The participants are ready to be an active part of constructing a hand.

Avoiding Table Clutter

Even with clear-cut instructions, there will be times when, for example, one player puts the ♠A-x-x face up on the table, and leaves the remaining ten spades also face up, creating table clutter! Or, a player could throw the suit carelessly on the table. We can simply say:

> If there are any cards face up on the table other than the 13 cards, or if any suit is not arranged so that it can be seen easily, could any player at the table adjust the cards.

Although this could sound intrusive because one player might handle another player's cards, it is usually not seen as this. The alternative is to be at the mercy of any player who, for whatever reason, didn't hear the instructions or can't arrange the cards in a neat manner. In practice, the four players are being directed - almost being given permission - to work with each other, to work as a team.

In the manual, such specific instructions for constructing each hand are not given. For example, here is the information for the first hand in Lesson One:

Construct the following hand in front of East.

East
♠ x x x
♥ A K

The teacher needs to know how to direct the students to put thirteen cards face up on the table. Although this seems like such an easy thing to do, it requires practice and skill. The price is high if we are not detailed enough and lose control.

13 Cards for Developing a Play Concept

Thirteen cards in a single suit can be used to illustrate a play point, such as how to take sure tricks or how to use promotion, length, or the finesse to develop the tricks needed to make the contract. Usually this pattern develops from having 27 or 52 cards face up on the table. To move to a single suit face up, the following instructions could be given:

> Turn your hearts, diamonds, and clubs face down. Leave the spades face up. There should now be 13 cards only face up on the table, all of the spades. All other suits are turned face down.

PLAYING A DEAL

There are thirty-two deals in each Better Bridge textbook. Four are at the end of each lesson. The deals are used to show the bidding concepts in the context of an entire deal, along with some play and defense concepts. An additional sixteen deals are at the back of the book. There are Color-Coded Cards that accompany each book. To distribute a deal, give the students the following information:

> We're going to play the first deal, Deal #1. The first step is to put the Color-Coded directional guide card (North/South/East/West) in the middle of the table. North is shaded red, East is blue, South is yellow, and West is green.
>
> Now look at the back of one of the cards. The numbers are from 1 to 32. Arrange your cards so that #1 is in the upper left-hand corner. We're going to distribute Deal #1.
>
> Deal #1 will be shaded one of four colors: red, blue, yellow, or green. If a card has Deal #1 shaded red, put it face down in front of North. If Deal #1 is shaded blue, put the card face down in front of East. If Deal #1 is shaded yellow, put the card face

down in front of South. If Deal #1 is shaded green put the card face down in front of West.

After the cards are distributed, each player should have thirteen cards. If we're North, all thirteen cards for Deal #1 will be shaded red. North's numbers will also be underlined. That indicates that North is the dealer on Deal #1. East will have 13 cards in which Deal #1 is shaded blue; South will have Deal #1 shaded yellow; West will have Deal #1 shaded green.

Bid and play Deal #1. North is the dealer. You have 7 minutes to play as many cards as you can.

If you finish before that time, turn all four hands face up, dummy style, and discuss the deal with the others at your table. You can consider the best contract for both sides and how the auction should go.

52 Cards Face Up on the Table

After the deal has been played all fifty-two cards are placed face up on the table. There is a caution to using the cards to illustrate bidding concepts when all the cards are face up. The cards have to be visible for all of the players: neatly arranged, in columns, dummy style. To achieve this, instructions have to be detailed. The same techniques are used. The teacher tells the class what will happen:

We're going to have 52 cards face up on the table so that we can talk about the bidding and play on this deal. So that all the players at the table can see the cards, were going to place the hands in front of each player, dummy style: in columns with the high cards about three inches in from the edge of the table. Your hand will be 'upside down' but you will be able to see the other three hands, which are 'right side up'; it's a good trade.

Then we tell them:

Put your cards face up on the table, dummy style.

Finally, we tell them what we've told them:

There should be fifty-two cards neatly turned face up on the table. Each hand should be dummy style in columns. If you see

a card that is face down on the table, even if it is in front of another player, turn it face up. If any hand is difficult to see, any player at the table can adjust it.

In the Manual, all this is covered with an instruction such as:

> **It's time to look at the deal so, even if you haven't completed the play, turn your hand face up and arrange it dummy style in front of you.**
>
> **All 52 cards should be face up on the table, arranged neatly in columns, dummy style, in front of each player.**

Discussing the Deal

When all fifty-two cards are face up on the table, the bidding and play are discussed. During the bidding conversation, the key is to focus the players' attention on the appropriate hand. In the Manual, directions to the class are in boxes:

> **Focus on the East hand.**

Some sections on play instruct the students to have only the lead and two hands face up on the table, and to arrange the suits so that they face each other. Here's an example for Deal #1:

> **East and West, turn your hands face down.**
>
> **North, keep the order of your suits intact. South, place your suits, dummy style, opposite North's suits: spades opposite spades; hearts opposite hearts; etc.**
>
> **East, lead the ♦K.**
>
> **Only 27 cards are face up on the table … the North and South hands and East's lead. Focus on the North-South hands.**

North (Declarer)
♠ K Q J 10 9 8 7
♥ 10 5
♦ 6 3
♣ 8 6

West **East**
♦K

South (Dummy)
♠ 4
♥ Q J 8 4
♦ A 9 7
♣ J 10 9 7 4

After the play in one direction is discussed, the play in the other direction might be discussed.

CARD-BY-CARD

A unique feature of the lesson plans is a card-by-card description of how the hand is to be played. The students are very enthusiastic about 'watching' a hand being played. This is a time for clear instructions. We want to let the students know what is going to happen.

> We're going to play the cards one at a time. Take the guide card and push it toward East, who will be the dummy on this hand. Who is on lead, if the declarer is West? (North)

The key is to say the direction first and then the card played. For example:

> North, ♠Q. East, ♠3. South, ♠2. West, ♠A. Who won the first trick? (West). Turn down the first trick. Who won the first trick? (West). Who's on lead? (West). West plays the ♦4 to trick two…

Success is in the details! Otherwise, we lose control.

The TTP is also available online for those who want to reinforce, or for those who cannot attend in person. Go to the ABF Education website http://www.abf.com.au/education/abf-education-program/abf-teacher-accreditation-program-online-exam/

Watch the video and then complete the exam and submit if for five points.