

SELF-PACING

What does the research say?

The Modern Classrooms instructional model was born from a reality any teacher understands: due to a variety of factors, students learn at different speeds.

Wanting to inquire further, we asked the Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University **“What does academic research say about self-pacing?”**

What do we mean when we say “self-pacing” in education?

Self-paced approaches to learning are those where students are provided learning tasks that they complete at **a speed that is customized to their personal levels** of mastery. In these learning environments, students can progress through the material based on their learning needs. They can **take longer with material they might struggle with, skip topics that cover material they already know, or repeat topics** as needed (Bray & McClaskey, 2010).

Does self-pacing truly help kids learn?

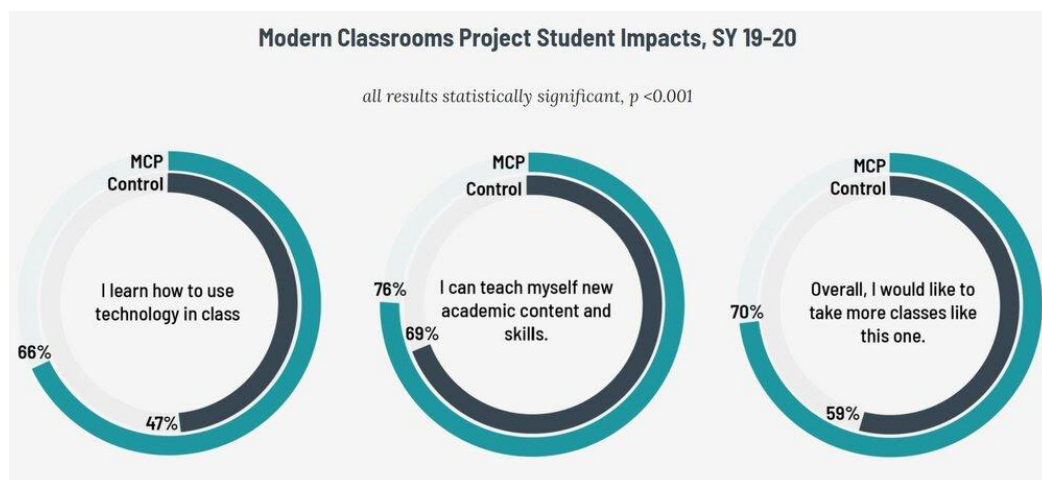
Research has long demonstrated that students learn at different paces, and, for any age group, the variations in rates of learning are considerable (Davies, 1973; Eurich, 1962). In recent years, research on the neurology of learning has reinforced these findings (Hall, Meyer, & Rose, 2012). Given these conclusions, it is perhaps not surprising that student-centered instructional approaches -- those that value and attend to students' individual learning needs -- have been shown to have **numerous benefits over more traditional forms of teaching** (National Research Council, 2000). Perhaps most importantly, self-paced learning environments provide students with a direct outlet to practice and develop **skills in self-regulating their own learning**. Strong self-regulated learning skills in the form of skills with planning, managing, and controlling the learning process, have been correlated with **faster learning and higher achievement** (Kizilcec, Perez-Sanagustén, & Maldonado, 2017).

What do students think of self-pacing?

Research has found that self-paced learning environments are perceived by students as **useful** (Svenningsen, Bottomley, & Pear, 2018) and **motivating** (Lambert, Gong, & Harrison, 2016). They can also **increase students' interest in a subject** (Balentyne & Varga, 2016) and can **increase the value they see in the content** they are studying (Balentyne & Varga, 2016).

Data from the students we impact echoes this point!

Learn more about what students and teachers say about our instructional model [here](#).



Since students **learn at different speeds**, Modern Classroom educators create instructional videos for their students to access after they have proven mastery of

prerequisite skills or material within the unit. By **valuing mastery over speed**, creating differentiated instruction, and implementing best practices for self-paced learning, our teachers enhance students' confidence and learning outcomes. The Modern Classrooms Project equips and empowers educators to create self-paced classrooms in which **all students truly learn**.

Learn more about [The Modern Classrooms Project](#) and access our [free online course](#).

References

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Read the full literature review by the [Center for Research and Reform in Education](#) at Johns Hopkins University [here](#).