

A new article or obvious cognition-and-culture relevance by [Michelle Ann Kline](#) on "[How to learn about teaching: An evolutionary framework for the study of teaching behavior in humans and other animals](#)" in [BBS](#) (2015) 38, with commentaries by, among others, Mikołaj Hernik and György Gergely, Laurie R. Santos, Melissa Koenig, Richard Moore and Claudio Tennie, Paul Harris, Thomas C. Scott-Phillips and Dan Sperber, Michael G. Shafto and Colleen M. Seifert, Sidney Strauss, Denis Tatone and Gergely Csibra, and a response by the author (freely available [here](#))

Abstract: The human species is more reliant on cultural adaptation than any other species, but it is unclear how observational learning can give rise to the faithful transmission of cultural adaptations. One possibility is that teaching facilitates accurate social transmission by narrowing the range of inferences that learners make. However, there is wide disagreement about how to define teaching, and how to interpret the empirical evidence for teaching across cultures and species. In this article I argue that disputes about the nature and prevalence of teaching across human societies and nonhuman animals are based on a number of deep-rooted theoretical differences between fields, as well as on important differences in how teaching is defined. To reconcile these disparate bodies of research, I review the three major approaches to the study of teaching - mentalistic, culture-based, and functionalist - and outline the research questions about teaching that each addresses. I then argue for a new, integrated framework that differentiates between teaching types according to the specific adaptive problems that each type solves, and apply this framework to restructure current empirical evidence on teaching in humans and nonhuman animals. This integrative framework generates novel insights, with broad implications for the study of the evolution of teaching, including the roles of cognitive constraints and cooperative dilemmas in how and when teaching evolves. Finally, I propose an explanation for why some types of teaching are uniquely human, and discuss new directions for research motivated by this framework. Keywords: Cooperation; cultural transmission