



Scaffolding & Creating Micro-Learning for the TikTok Generation

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Three Big Ideas

- The learner's attention environment has changed
 - We can no longer assume attention. We must design for it
 - Scaffolding + micro-learning offer a practical response
 - The goal is to move students from entry to confidence to independence
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The Attention Environment Has Changed

- Students now learn in a constant interruption
- They are managing work, family, devices, alerts, and deadlines at once
- The issue is not laziness but rather it is competition for attention
- Learning has to become easier to enter, follow, and stay with

Why This Shift Cannot Be Ignored

- Educational content is thriving in short-form digital spaces
- TikTok has become a major place where users seek quick explanations
- Learners increasingly expect information to be fast, clear, and relevant
- If education feels harder to enter than everything else in their lives, we lose them early

What the Data Is Telling Us

- TikTok has 1.5 billion monthly active users
- #LearnOnTikTok has exceeded 858 billion views
- Educational videos on TikTok have engagement rates around 9.5%
- Educational content ranks among the platform's most popular categories
- This does not mean school should become TikTok. It means learners are showing us what kinds of entry points grab attention

Why Micro-Learning Works

- Micro-learning delivers one focused concept at a time
- It reduces overload and creates clearer entry points
- It supports flexibility, momentum, and immediate application
- It works well for learners balancing multiple responsibilities
- Smaller learning moments can still lead to deep learning

Scaffolding Matters More When Attention Is Harder to Secure

- We already know scaffolding works
- The question is how to use it more intentionally in today's environment
- Scaffolding helps students start without feeling overwhelmed
- It reduces uncertainty and builds confidence early
- It creates the support needed for students to keep going



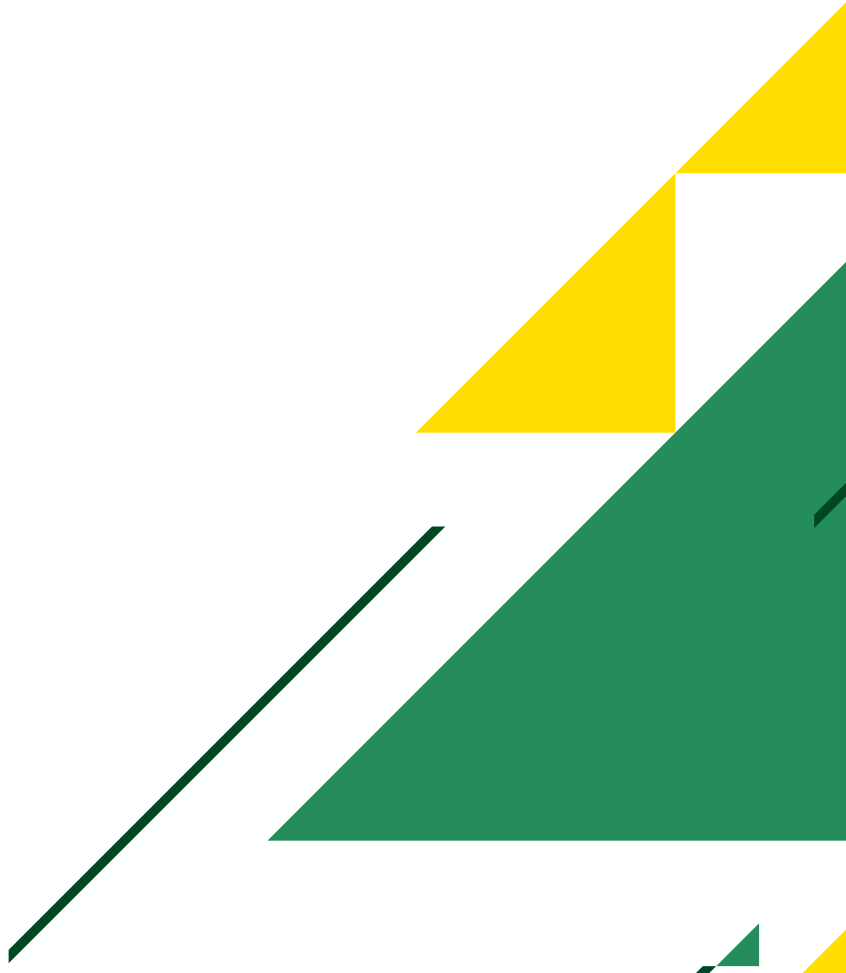
A Stronger Combination

- Micro-learning helps us size the learning step
 - Scaffolding helps us support the learner through that step
 - One improves access; the other improves progression
 - Together, they help learning feel more manageable and more effective
 - They are not about making learning smaller, but rather they are about making learning smarter
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What This Looks Like in Practice



- Break large content into smaller, focused pieces
 - Use mini-lessons, examples, prompts, and guided practice
 - Give students one clear step at a time
 - Build in quick moments of feedback and application
 - Gradually remove support as confidence grows
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What Students Gain

- Clearer entry points into learning
- Less overwhelm at the beginning
- Better pacing and stronger momentum
- More opportunities for success early on
- Greater confidence and independence over time
- More meaningful persistence through challenging material

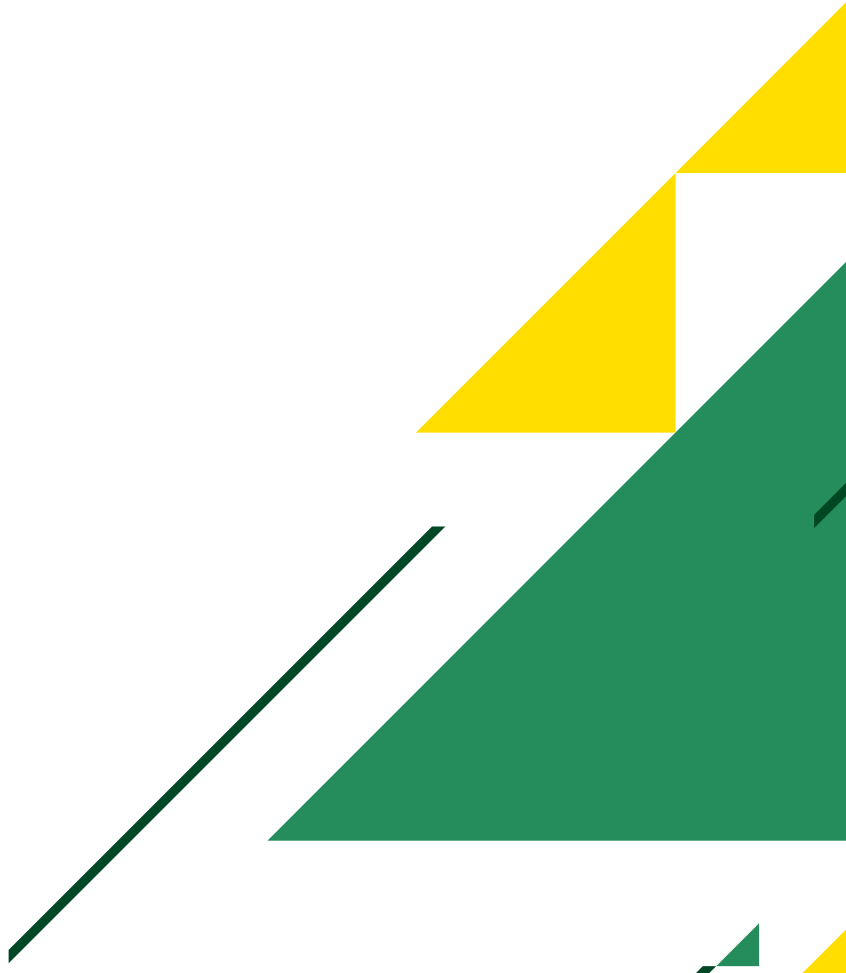
What Educators Gain

- Better alignment between learner needs and course design
- More intentional use of attention
- More opportunities for formative feedback
- Better visibility into where learners get stuck
- More flexible and effective pathways into rigorous learning



What We Still Have to Watch For



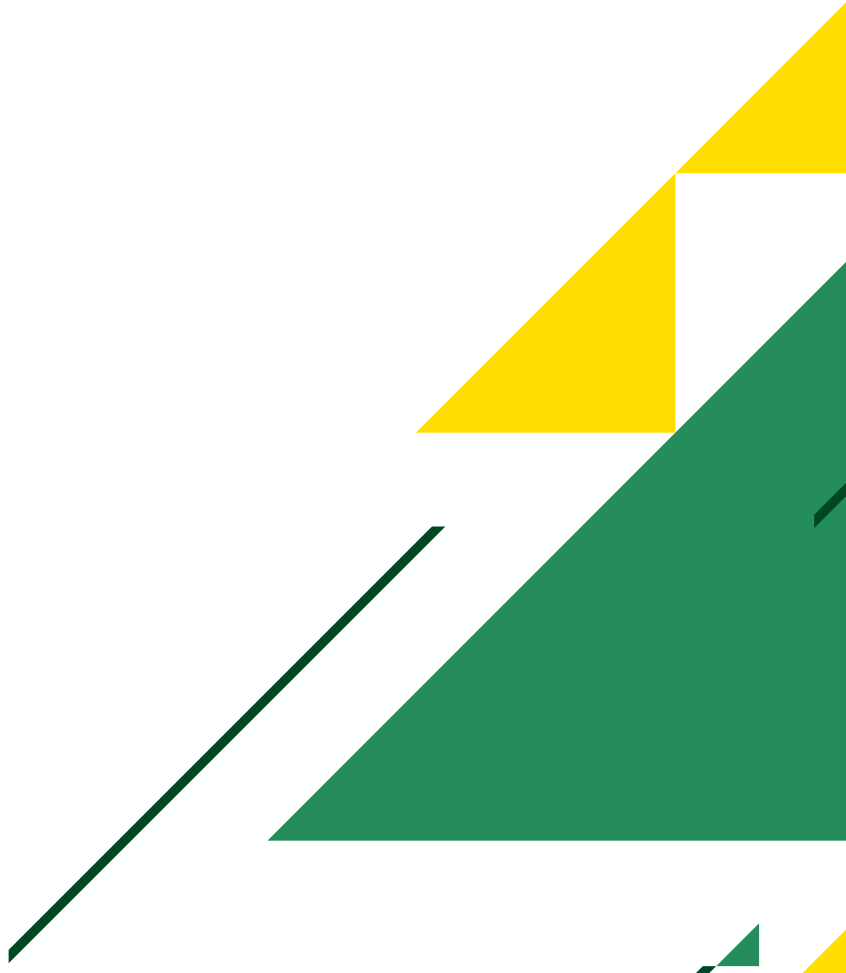
- Micro-learning is not ideal for every complex concept
 - Poor design can make learning feel fragmented
 - Too much support can create dependence
 - Too little support can create frustration
 - The goal is not short for the sake of short
 - The goal is purposeful, structured, effective learning
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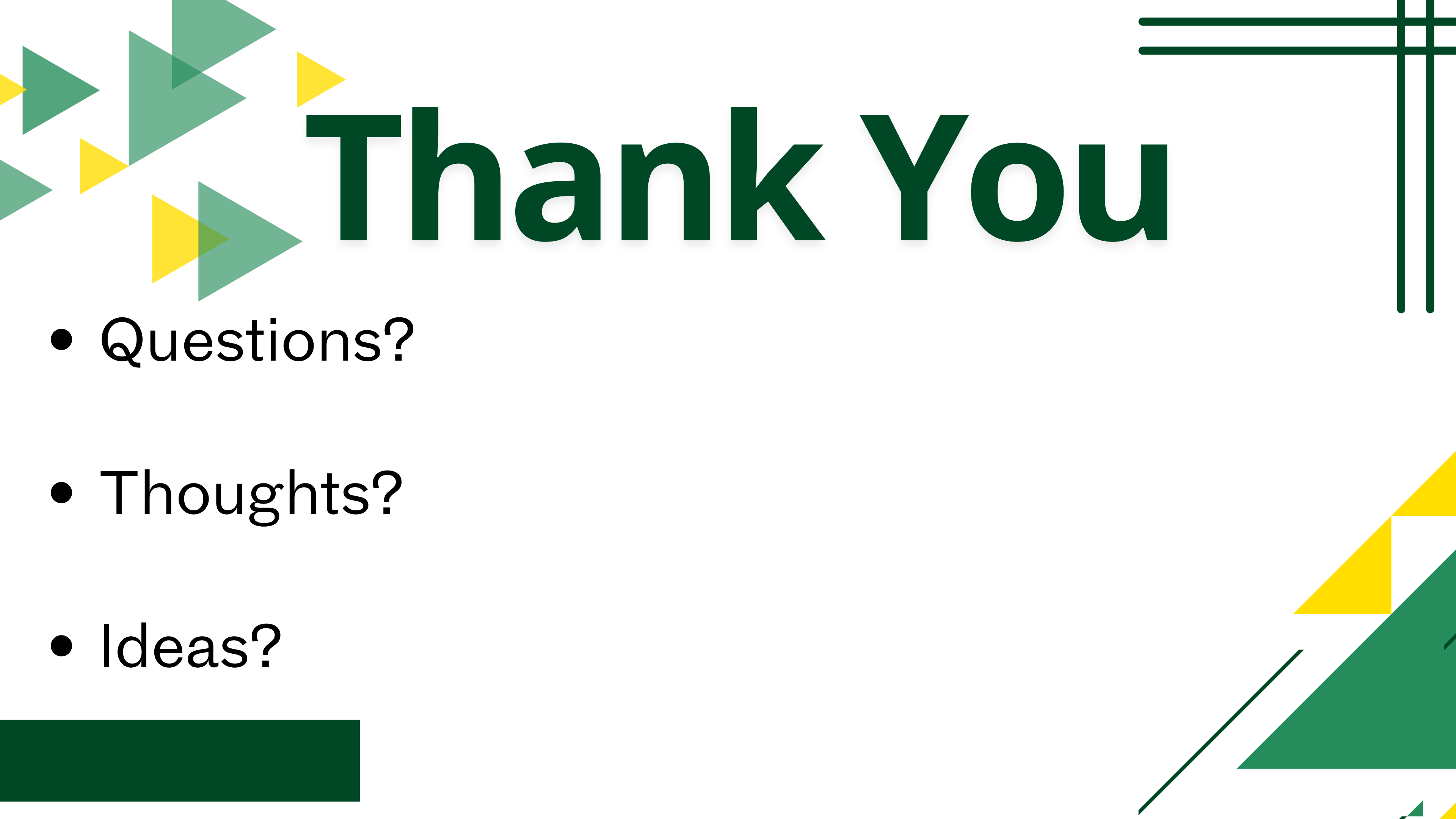
What This Really Means for Us

- Attention is not disappearing, it is changing
- Our learners do not need lower expectations
- They need a stronger design
- Scaffolding and micro-learning help us respond with intention
- Better design makes learning easier to enter, easier to sustain, and more likely to stick



Final Thoughts

- Do not ask: “How do we compete with TikTok?”
 - Ask: “How do we design learning that is clear, structured, and worth staying with?”
 - Shorter does not have to mean shallower
 - Smaller steps can still lead to deep learning
 - Better attention design can lead to better learning
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Thank You

- Questions?
 - Thoughts?
 - Ideas?
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