

Strategy Toolkit for Criterion 3a: Engaging Students in Learning

Strategies to Activate Thinking, Process Learning, Summarize Learning, and Group Students

Source: The Danielson Group: www.danielsongroup.org

This resource outlines strategies to engage students in the content of the lesson through:

- Activating thinking
- Processing learning
- Summarizing learning
- Grouping students

The resource includes information on 24 unique strategies which are applicable across grade levels and subject areas.

Note: This strategy is presented as an example of one option for engaging students in learning. It is not an expectation that teachers implement this strategy, but instead is an exemplar to support teacher development.

Strategies to Activate Thinking

KWL	3-column poster. Students establish what they Know, Want to know, and at the end of the lesson they tell what they Learned.
Anticipation Guide	Students are given a series of statements that relate to a reading selection, lecture, or video. Students indicate AGREE or DISAGREE. After the information has been presented, students check to see if they were correct. EXTEND: Have students write correction in their own words.
Place Your Bets	This strategy can be used to create interaction, to test prior knowledge or review material. Use 'play money' like monopoly, create your own, or with adults it is imaginary money. Students work in triads or pairs to discuss or answer questions. When the team has come to consensus, they will bet an amount of money, based upon how secure the team is with their answer. The maximum bet is \$50 and the minimum bet is \$10. At the conclusion of the activity, students can total money. Ask those with 1 answer correct to stand up, then with two, then with three and finally teams will all 4 stay standing and 'win' the entire \$100. You can distribute a prize or prizes if you want.
Concept Harvest	Students all receive a sheet that has various concepts about the topic to be studied. Each student completes 3-4 of the concepts and then walks around harvesting ideas from others. Key is to get only one idea from a person.
5 Words 3 Words	Ask participants to individually write down five words that come to mind when they think of the topic to be studied. They then share their words with the rest of the group of 3-4 students and as a team come to a consensus on the three words upon which all of the group can agree.
Carousel Brainstorming	Post charts on the wall with key questions or ideas at the top. Groups are formed and one person scribes for the group and adds to the chart as they brainstorm. Groups move from chart to chart, read others' responses and then add to the chart. Teams will have different colored felt tip pens.



Strategies for Processing

Response Cards	Have students fold a sheet of paper in half the long way. On one side of the fold have them write t/f, Yes/No, 1 or 2, a or b, or fold three ways and list three categories (like the three branches of government). Then the teacher asks the class questions and the students respond by holding up the side of the card they think has the correct answer.
10–2	Students take notes on the top 2/3 of the paper. Then at a logical break (no longer than 7–10 minutes), give students a chance to read their notes. Then on the bottom third of the paper, students have two minutes to write a summary of their notes. Then they find a partner to share notes with. They add additional ideas from partner to their notes.
60 Second Power Write	Students take out a sheet of paper or prepared handout. If paper, students draw a line along the right, creating a margin. Fold the paper along that line. Students will take notes up to that line. When paper is folded the notes should not be visible. At an appropriate break, tell students to cover notes and use the clear strip to list important points given during input. When students have completed their list, they can meet with elbow partners, learning buddies or have teacher share feedback.
Pivot A/B	This is a paired activity. Students at their seats are asked to 'pivot' so they can sit knee to knee and eye to eye with their partner. Pairs decide who is 'A' and who is 'B'. Teacher determines if A or B goes first. The first one begins by telling all they know or remember about the prompt given by the teacher. Then they switch and the other fills in anything the first speaker may have missed. This creates accountability.
Cornell Note Taking	<p>Reach for the "STARS" – First introduce to students how to take Cornell Notes as they read my modeling the STARS strategy and then practice with the entire class. Students can then work in groups or with partners to gain more experience in note taking.</p> <p>S = Set up the format/paper. Name, class, date in upper right-hand corner. Add a title. Draw line one third of the way in.</p> <p>T = Take Notes. Paraphrase lecture/text in right hand column. Use abbreviations.</p> <p>A = After Class. Reread, edit, revise. Highlight key points. Fill in left column with questions, icons/symbols, and memory keys</p> <p>R = Review Notes Regularly. After class, weekly, before test. Cover right column and rewrite. Paraphrase. Rewrite.</p>
Graphic Organizers	<p>Graphic organizers are charts, graphs, or diagrams, which encourage students to see information as a component of systems rather than isolated facts. Students may complete these as they read or view a presentation. There are a variety of ways to use graphic organizers, including the following: semantic word map, story chart, Venn diagram, spider map, network tree, word map, and KWL chart. Other examples of graphic organizers are listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison-Contrast Matrix-Students determine similarities and differences between two people, things, solutions, organisms' stories, ideas, or cultures. • Branching Diagrams -Organization charts, hierarchical relationships systems, family trees • Interval Graphs-Chronological order, bar graphs, parallel events, number value. • Flowcharts - Sequential events, directions, decision making, writing reports, study skills. • Matrix Diagram-Schedules, statistics, problem solving, comparisons with multiple criteria. • Fishbone Diagram-Cause and effect, timeline.



Strategies for Summarizing

Ticket to Leave	Tickets to Enter/Exit - Teacher asks students a specific question about the lesson. Students then respond on the ticket and gives to teacher, either on their way out or on their way in the nextday. Teacher can then evaluate the need to re-teach or questions that need to be answered.
One Word S U M M A R Y	Have students write the topic down the left side of their paper one letter below the other. They then summarize their learning by creating a word or phrase starting with that letter that reminds them of the content studied.
3-2-1 Summarizer	Students are asked to reflect and respond to three prompts. Prompts can be designed to reflect content or skills being taught. For example, list three ideas that you remember, two points that require further clarification and one action you will take based on the new learning.
Learning Logs	Double-entry journals with quotes, summaries, notes on the left and responses reactions, predictions, questions, or memories on the right.
Most Important Point (MIP)	Graphic organizer with key component parts to text or concept idea. Or teacher asks participants to write their most important point on a post it and share with partner.
Numbered Heads Together	Students sit in groups and each group member is given a number. The teacher poses a problem, prompt or question and all four students discuss. The teacher then calls a number and the student with that number stands up in each group. Then the teacher calls on an individual student with that number to respond.



Grouping Considerations

Line Ups	The teacher poses a prompt such as opinion regarding content with a continuum of agree/disagree, or the prompt could be to line up by birthdays, timelines or anything that has a continuum to it. Then students silently line up based on the criteria. After lining up, the teacher asks different students along the continuum to explain their answers. When done, the line can be folded in half and new partners formed.
Inside Outside Circle	Divide students in half. One group forms a circle facing outward, the others find one person in the circle to stand opposite, so that the two circles face each other. Teacher shares prompt or questions. Partners discuss and teacher calls on individuals for response. Then the teacher asks the inner or outer circle to move to find a new partner for next prompt.
Four Corners	Teacher poses a question or prompt with four potential responses and identifies a corner of the room for each response. Students decide which they agree with or would like to discuss and move to that corner. Depending on the initial prompt, teacher may give additional suggestions for discussion.
Learning Buddies	This gets students up and moving. Create a graphic organizer, such as a clock with 4 appointments, 4 quadrants, 4 seasons, 4 domains etc. Have students identify a learning buddy for each of the 4 in the graphic organizer. When ready to do a paired activity, tell each student to pair with a specific partner of the 4 partners.
Gallery Walk	A cooperative learning strategy in which the instructor devises several questions/problems and posts each question/problem at a different table or at a different place on the walls (hence the name "gallery"). Students form as many groups as there are questions, and each group moves from question to question (hence the name "walk"). After writing the group's response to the first question, the group rotates to the next position, adding to what is already there. At the last question, it is the group's responsibility to summarize and report to the class.
1 Stay 3 Stray	In a group of four (could be more or less), students solve a problem or respond to a prompt. When finished the question or prompt assigned, one stays to teach others and the three stray to learn what other groups said to the prompt, problem or question. Then those that strayed come back and teach their colleague who stayed to explain their response to groups.

