Teaching Strategies for Engaging Students

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August 2019

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What is Active Learning?

"Active learning is about dealing directly with the content, connecting it to and with what is already known, and figuring out how it applies. Learning is an active process and teachers need to use approaches, activities, and assignments that get students involved and engaged with course content, with learning, and with each other."
Maryellen Weimer, Active Learning: A Practical Guide for College Faculty

The First 5 Minutes

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<th>K-W-L</th>
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Active Learning Activities

- Think-Pair-Share (T-P-S)
- Group Discussion
- Gallery Walk
- Jigsaws
- Fish Bowl
- Case Studies
- Muddiest Point
- Peer Review
- Just-In-Time Teaching

T-P-S: Classroom Management

Pat is annoyed with an adult student, Natalie, who monopolizes most class discussions. Natalie’s excessive enthusiasm drives her to cut people off, even though some comments and questions are thought-provoking. Pat is worried that her behavior is negatively impacting the other students. How can Pat better manage the situation to make the course a positive experience for everyone?

"This Student is Driving Me Nuts!" Scenario adapted from http://depts.washington.edu/next/storyID_29685.php

T-P-S: Classroom Management

Recognition that you are working with an adult learner and consider best practice strategies for teaching adult students. Returning students have different expectations than traditional-aged students, such as expecting that class material can be related to her specific work experience.

Focus on discussion management techniques that engage as many students as possible. Natalie’s active voice may stem from wanting to self-direct learning rather than being fed information, but other students may need encouragement to speak up. Use small group discussions or activities.

Provide opportunities for her to share her experience and include her in the teaching. For example, she could give presentations on topics relevant to her. The act of preparing a presentation or teaching others increases learning.

If disruption continues, you may need to talk to her directly. For example, you could discuss with her privately that she is affecting the learning of other students. Her interruptions may be due to personality rather than her position as a returning student, and she likely will oblige if tactfully brought to her attention.

"This Student is Driving Me Nuts!" Responses adapted from http://depts.washington.edu/next/storyID_29685.php
Muddiest Point

On a notecard, take a minute or two to write down a concept from today’s presentation that confused you or about which you have a question. (Alternatively, write any question you have for us about active learning.)