



Engaging Strategies for Use in the Classroom

Written Activating Strategies	Description of Strategy
Conversations	Using a small segment of engaging text or an appropriate question or statement to prompt student thinking about the topic or concept of the upcoming lesson, ask each student to begin writing in response. After 2-3 minutes of writing, have them exchange their papers (or pass them around) and spend 1-2 minutes responding to the writing/thinking on the paper they receive. Then have them pass the paper back (or on to a third person) and continue the process. Limit the time, using a timer or other signal, so that students are always left thinking they have more to say.
Plus/Minus/Intriguing	The teacher should write prompts, controversial statements, etc. (related to the focus of the upcoming lesson) ahead of time to which students will be asked to respond. Have them identify the statements they agree with (+), the statements they disagree with or question (-), and the statements they find intriguing (I).
5-3-1 (alone, pair, group)	Pose a question/topic related to the focus or essential question of the upcoming lesson. Then have students individually brainstorm 5 answers. Then they work in a pair to come up with the 3 best. Then the pair joins with another pair to come up with the 1 most important.
Snowball Fights	Write preconceived notions on separate pieces of paper (these could be like the controversial statements you might include on anticipation guides), with enough pieces of paper so that every student receives one (you may have multiple copies of each notion). Ask students to respond to the statement on their paper, but not to put their names on their papers. Then they wad up the paper and toss the “snowball” (either in a box or to a designated center spot). Then each student in the class gets one of the tossed snowballs. Students then look at the snowball they received and respond to the prompt (set a time limit of 1-2 minutes tops for the response). They should then wad up the paper again and toss it, repeating the process again. Then, after the students respond to their second snowball, they should form groups of 4 to share both the preconceived notions or topics and the student responses.



Engaging Strategies for Use in the Classroom

Non-Written Activating Strategies	Brief Description of the Strategy
<p>Stand the Line (1 step in, 1 step back)</p>	<p>Put a piece of masking tape down the center of the classroom. Have students stand on either side of the tape, about two steps away. Pose a series of prompts for which students must take a stand. Direct students to take one step in/toward the line if they agree, or one step back from the line if they disagree. Randomly ask given students to share their thinking verbally. This is a kinesthetic version of an anticipation guide.</p>
<p>Red Light, Green Light</p>	<p>In an open area of the classroom or hallway, engage students in the childhood game of Red Light, Green Light. When you turn as they freeze, ask one of the participants to respond to a question/prompt related to the focus of the day's lesson. If they are unable to do so, they must return to the starting line. The first student to reach you must make a prediction related to the upcoming learning or forfeit his "win" and start all over.</p>
<p>Kinesthetic Tic Tac Toe</p>	<p>Draw or outline with masking tape a large tic tac toe grid on the floor (you will need to have each square about 3 X 3 or 4 X 4). Create a paper version of the grid with different prompts for the given content of an impending lesson in each square. Distribute the paper Tic Tac Toe grids to students and tell them that when you give the signal (clapping hands, flicking lights, etc.), they are to step into a square with 1-2 other people and converse with each other in response to the prompt in that square on their paper. Each time they hear/see the signal, they should move to different blocks, with different people and respond to the prompts for those blocks. Repeat the process until students have had multiple opportunities to reflect about the different aspects of the content. (Note: Be sure to establish where the top of the grid on the floor is in relation to the top of the paper version.)</p>
<p>Meet and Greet (or "going to a 'Math'—or other content-- party" or "Speed Dating")</p>	<p>Ideal for a vocabulary preview or concept preview, each student is given 1 word or term to learn about (and write on an index card or perhaps do a Frayer). Then the teacher models how a person would introduce him or herself to a stranger in professional, polite conversation. The introductions in this "meet and greet" are actually the vocabulary terms being introduced and discussed. As in interpersonal conversation, the parties ask each other questions about themselves, etc. The idea is that the students go around the room, meeting and greeting all the different people/terms in the room.</p>