

List of Activities

Included is a list of activities that could be conducted during your “Habit Presentation” or adjusted for your “Habit Presentation.” You are NOT restricted to conducting these activities, and you are encouraged to “think outside of the box” and look for activities that will enhance the class’ understanding of your habit.

- **Carouseling** - put up a different question on each wall and groups of students have 5 minutes at each to answer. They may not repeat what others wrote.
- **Case Study** - A real world article that applies the subject to a problem. Case studies use real-life stories and primary source materials that describe what happened to a community, family, school, or individual to prompt students to integrate their classroom knowledge with their knowledge of real-world situations, actions, and consequences. Incorporate current news events related to the concepts/skills covered in class.
- **Debate** - Have them take sides and have at it. You might want to do a brief intro on **acceptable** debate tactics. Debates staged in class can be effective tools for encouraging students to think about several sides of an issue.
- **Fish Bowling** - A select few students have a guided discussion while the rest of the class listens.
- **Jigsaw** - Each group is assigned a topic. New groups are formed from one member of each group. They then discuss with each other what they learned in the first group.
- **Journaling** - Students write down their thoughts on the subject.
- **Small Group Problem Solving** - Each group has a different problem to tackle.
- **Role Playing** - make them pretend to be characters, cogs in a machine, or parts of a process
- **Chalk-Talk** - Another word for brainstorming
- **Board Games** - I’m going to use [RoboRally](#) to teach programming. I’ve suggested [Wealth of Nations](#) could be used for economy. (a simple Google search will allow you to find these programs)
- **Jeopardy/Trivia** - Always fun, try finding a [PowerPoint Template](#).
- **Critiques** - Art, Designs, Professional Examples, be sure to put in poor examples as well as good ones.
- **Open Ended Essay** - No right answer, you’re looking at their thought process for answering subjective questions.
- **MindMapping** - Give them all the vocabulary/concepts and they have to map it into the correct hierarchy.
- **Think-pair-share** is a simple activity you can use in any classroom format. Give students time to think and write a few points or statements about a topic, turn to their neighbor for a short discussion, and then share the results with the rest of the class or with a small group.
- **Minute Papers** provide students with the opportunity to synthesize their knowledge and to ask unanswered questions. Write down everything they can in 60 seconds. Give students a few minutes at the end of class to answer anonymously the following questions in writing: What was the most important thing you learned today? What important question remains unanswered? Variations of these questions, and the student questions and answers they generate, enhance your students’ learning process and provide you with feedback on students’ understanding of the subject material. Answer the most frequently asked questions at the beginning of the next class.
- **Writing activities** of many kinds offer students the opportunity to think about and process information. For example, in addition to minute papers, you could pose a question and then give students time to **free write** their answers. You could also give students time to free write about topics.
- **Brainstorming** is another simple technique that can involve the whole class in a discussion. Introduce a topic or problem and then ask for student input, which you record on the board.
- **Games** related to the subject can easily be incorporated into the classroom to foster active learning and participation. Games can include matching, mysteries, group competitions, solving puzzles, Pictionary, etc
- **Group work** allows every participant the chance to speak, share personal views, and develop the skill of working with others. Cooperative group work requires all group members to work together to complete a given task. Break the class into groups of 2-5 students. Give each group articles to read, questions to answer and discuss, information to share, subjects to teach to other groups, etc.
- **Subject Summaries** asks the students to summarize similarities and differences among two different methodologies, theories, opinions, or a research finding.
- **Research or independent study** is an effective way for deep learning to occur. Ask students to suggest research projects, field trips, or other course activities. Encourage use of professional journals.
- **Use Technology** to encourage active learning. Have students do a Web activity, prepare a Power Point presentation, watch a video clip, etc.
- **Simulations, role-playing, or labs** are also active learning methods that can fully engage the students.
- **Make lectures more “learning-friendly”**. Use a cooperative learning strategy called “turn to your partner”. At various times, stop lecturing and give the students a mini assignment, reinforcing the lecture, that they complete in a pair, or ask them to compare notes so they can both be sure they have all the information.
- **Spice up lectures with challenging questions** in which you invite the students to discuss - sometimes argue about - the topic in hand with their classmates.
- **Provide red, yellow and green cards** to your students to use in communicating with you during a lecture. If they are following you, they put up a green card. If they are starting to get lost, yellow. If the students are disagreeing or completely lost, the red goes up.

- **Questions:** wait after a question has been posed or after asking “what are your questions?” (up to a minute), to allow the person to collect his or her thoughts, and to make sure he or she has had the chance to respond fully. (Note: if you ask “do you have any questions?”, few students will respond. Use “what are your questions?” so students understand that you expect questions).
- **Four Corners:** Four Corners is popular with teachers *and* students. Number the corners of the classroom from 1 to 4 or label the corners. You can ask the whole class questions and depending what their beliefs or feelings about the particular topic, they move to that corner. For example, if you wanted to see how many students like the *Twilight* movies, you would ask “On a scale of 1-4, with 4 meaning ‘Loved It!’ and 1 meaning ‘Highly Disliked It’, how much do you like the *Twilight* movies?” Then, if a student “Loved It,” they would stand by the number 4. This activity generally works with questions that have some quantifiable range.
- **Chain Reaction:** You can easily adapt this game to many areas of the curriculum. The teacher writes a category on the chalkboard -- foods, for example. Each student writes the letters A to Z on a sheet of paper. The students have five minutes to create an alphabetical list of as many foods as they can think of. Then the game begins. The first student must tell the name of a food. The second person must give the name of a food that begins with the *last* letter of the food given by the first person. The third person must name a food that begins with the last letter of the second person's food and so on. One at a time, students are eliminated. Other possible categories: cities; songs; things in nature (for older students, animal names or plant names); people's first names (for older students, famous people's last names or, more specifically, authors' names).

Missing Piece (Time: 20-40 minutes)

Purpose

To reveal a “missing piece”—unanswered questions, areas of confusion, wonderings about a topic, preferred topics to study: most commonly used to deepen understanding

Process

1. Cut colored construction paper into pieces to create puzzles. Make sure that for each puzzle you have enough pieces that you can hold back one piece (the “missing piece”). For example, a group of 4 works with a 5-piece puzzle, but they start with only 4 of the pieces. Distribute puzzle pieces to students (all but one piece in each puzzle).
2. Thinking about a topic of study, students write on their puzzle pieces a question, concept, or fact they do not understand, or something they find interesting.
3. Students form with others in color-alike groups (e.g., all yellow puzzle-piece holders form one group). Group members then respond to each other's questions or statements.
4. To elicit remaining questions, hand each group their missing puzzle piece and ask them to write on it questions their group hasn't answered.
5. Teacher, with help from students, addresses the missing pieces with the whole group.

Examples

Questions to elicit the missing piece:

- *What questions do you have about the test topics?*
- *What do you still need to know about geometric shapes?*
- *What do you want to know about the planets?*

Audience Assessment

Each student fills out his/her own piece of the puzzle and all participate in the final discussion of missing pieces.

Variations/Extensions

- Students write on the missing puzzle pieces information or ideas that they *do* understand or find interesting and the class discusses.
- Students choose topics they know, and teach others.
- Students research a topic and report back to class.

Resources Needed

Puzzle pieces cut from colored construction paper

Say Something! (Time 10 minutes or more, depending on the length of the reading and how often students are asked to stop reading and say something)

Purpose

To discuss and create deeper understanding for a text while a class reads it together: most commonly used for processing

Process

1. In pairs, students read a section of a textbook, article, etc., and then each says something about what they just read. Speakers can make a personal connection, note something they found interesting or confusing, or a main point of the section.
2. They continue to read and “say something” until they are finished with the reading. Stress that students should say *one* thing, not lots of things.

Examples

Students might say:

- *I think I know where this story is going—Marvin is going to get lost in the woods, I'll bet.*
- *Yeah, and the author is setting things up for some stormy weather to make it scarier.*

Audience Assessment

Each partner must contribute each time they pause to discuss.

Variations and Extensions

The teacher guides what learners say during the reading, for example:

- *Predict something that you think will happen.*
- *Say something that you want to remember about what you just read.*

Resources Needed

Text to read

Talking Cards (Time: 10-20 minutes for the basic writing and sorting Process, depending upon the complexity of the topic.)

Purpose

To write and then sort ideas and opinions so each voice is “heard” anonymously—the cards do the “talking”: most commonly used to deepen understanding

Process

1. Pass out small notecards to students
2. Pose a question or topic for response
3. Students write one comment per card
4. Collect and shuffle cards
5. Select a couple of students or distribute cards to student groups to sort and label them according to predetermined categories
6. Groups summarize ideas represented under each category and present to class

Examples

Talking Card topics:

- Write down ways to save energy and ways that it is wasted.
- Write down anything that gets in the way of this classroom being a place where everyone can succeed.

Audience Assessment

Each student must write ideas on the cards for others to see. Students can be held responsible for the compiled list of ideas or information generated in the process.

Variations and Extensions

- Categories are not predetermined; they emerge from the responses to an open-ended question.
- Once the cards are sorted and topics generated, students can choose topics to research.
- Students can write about or discuss the connections they see among the ideas or information generated.

Resources Needed:

Notecards, chart papers for posting ideas

Think-Pair-Share

This is a well known collaborative structure that is adapted here for classroom work with English learners. As the name indicates, the activity has three moments:

Think: The teacher asks one or two questions for students to consider. In order to see what they are thinking, and to provide further scaffolding to them if needed, the teacher asks students to jot down key elements of their answer using words or phrases, but not complete sentences. Depending on the complexity of the questions, the teacher may assign between three and five minutes for students to jot down their ideas. In the meantime, the teacher circulates around the classroom monitoring and checking what students have written. An empty piece of paper may be an indication that the student needs support from the teacher.

Pair: Students are asked to form dyads. There are many ways of doing this, depending on time available, the nature of the questions, or even what time of the day it is (classes immediately after lunch may require opportunities for movement).

Share: Dyads orally share their responses with each other. All students should be ready — if called upon — to present to the class their partner's responses first, and then their own.

Interpreting a Graphic

The purpose of this task is to provide a structure for gathering and sharing visual information about a scientific structure, process, or concept. Participants are asked to individually interpret a graphic that is provided to them (text or a handout). On the left side of the matrix, students indicate what they learned from the graphic's caption as well as from the illustration. They also write down any questions they may have. Students then share what they learned in a Round Robin format. As students share, the others in the group either check off the same observations that were made or they add novel elements that they learned from the other students in the boxes on the right. After sharing, each group discusses the questions and try to answer them. After a short amount of time, the teacher asks students to share their interpretations and questions with the whole class. This discussion is the starting point for a more formal explanation of the concept by the teacher.

The diagram below illustrates the format for the "Interpreting a Graphic" form:

Interpreting a Graphic

Title of Graphic:	
Caption	
What did you learn from the caption? What questions do you have about this caption?	What else did you learn about this caption from your group?
Illustration	
What did you learn from this illustration? What questions do you have about this illustration?	What else did you learn about this illustration from your group?
Questions we all still have about this caption and illustration:	