

# Active Learning and Engagement Strategies

**Sneak Peek**

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## **Active Learning and Engagement Strategies**

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- Tool-41** Vocabulary Deck
- Tool 42** Student Engagement Self-Assessment

# Introduction

This collection of active learning and engagement strategies is being published by popular demand. This book pulls together strategies and exemplars from three of my books, *Instruction for All Students*, *Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners*, and *Why Didn't I Learn This in College?* plus a few new ones. The exemplars are from participants in the workshop series based on those books and from teachers **ASK Group Consultants** have had the opportunity to observe in action.

The first few pages are devoted to establishing a context for the whys and hows of active learning and engagement. First the research on active learning and engagement is reviewed and then I present my own work around planning standards-based lessons with a particular emphasis here on the necessity for and power of Framing the Learning for students.

To introduce the over sixty strategies described in this book, there is a listing of strategies by instructional purposes. These four pages (pages 7-10) provide a quick reference point for you to use when you are designing lessons and want to select a strategy to use when your goal is:

- Having students work in pairs or small groups
- Gathering pre-assessment data
- Accessing prior knowledge
- Surfacing misconceptions and naive understandings
- Establishing purposes for reading, listening, or viewing
- Processing and summarizing learning
- Checking for understanding and gathering formative assessment data
- Making learning visual
- Promoting student reflection, self-assessment, and goal setting
- Focusing on big ideas and key concepts
- Promoting the use of creative and critical thinking skills
- Ensuring relevance and real-world connections
- Facilitating the development of speaking and listening skills
- Building collaborative skills
- Building in movement
- Enhancing lectures
- Integrating technology
- Promoting vocabulary development
- Orchestrating the use of creative and critical thinking skills

Following the strategies and exemplars, you will find in the appendices an extensive self-assessment, guidelines for structuring small group work and setting up cooperative learning, an extensive array of products and perspectives

# Introduction

to use in creating real-world assignments and assessments, and thumbnails of tools and templates you can access at [www.justaskpublications.com/ALtemplates](http://www.justaskpublications.com/ALtemplates).

My goal in focusing on active learning and engagement is to help all of us build repertoires of ways to engage more students more of the time. It seems that we are getting to be pretty clear about what we are supposed to teach and what our students are to learn. It also appears, however, that many of us are not using best practice in instruction which includes active and meaningful engagement. The evidence for this is that one of the most frequently used teaching strategies is the **Whole-Class Question-Answer** strategy. The steps are:

1. The teacher asks a question.
2. Students who wish to respond raise their hands.
3. The teacher calls on one student.
4. The student attempts to state the correct answer.
6. The teacher asks another question and the process is repeated.

Recognize it? It often starts with “**Who can tell me ... ?**” Since this strategy, also known as a **recitation**, is used so frequently it is important that we ask ourselves just how effective it is. The bad news about this strategy is that the teacher is really the only one in the classroom actively engaged with all the questions and answers; many students may be simply putting in seat time while a few students answer the questions. For those students who are not auditory learners, the recitation may serve as background noise while they visualize who knows what. From what I can tell, the same six or seven students answer most of the questions through out their years in school.

**It is time to eliminate this instructional practice from our repertoires!** There is no research base to support it. Fortunately, there are many alternatives to **Whole-Class Question-Answer**. Read on, be validated by seeing strategies you already use, and identify a few you can add to your repertoire.



# Active Learning Strategies to Use If You Want...

## Students to work in pairs or small groups

Think-Pair-Share - 104	Sort Cards - 87
Learning Buddies - 52-54	Collaborative Controversy - 18
Discussion Partners - 30	Literature Circles - 56
Frame of Reference - 34	Walking Tour - 111
Graffiti - 35	Five Card Draw - 33
Numbered Heads Together - 63-64	Jigsaw - 136
Tic-Tac-Toe - 109	Collaborative Controversy - 18
Collaborative Strategic Reading - 17	All Hands on Deck - 12
Personal Opinion Guide - 14	Connection Collections - 20-22
ABC-XYZ: Words-1 - 11	Syllable Summaries - 96

## To gather pre-assessment data

Anticipation/Reaction Guide - 13	Exclusion Brainstorming - 31
Signal Cards - 84	Three-Column Charts - 105
Sort Cards - 87	Graffiti - 35
Frame of Reference - 34	Stir the Class - 90
All Hands on Deck - 12	Think-Pair-Share - 104
Take a Stand - 98-99	

## Students to access prior knowledge

Anticipation/Reaction Guide - 13	Graffiti - 35
Stir the Class - 90	Exclusion Brainstorming - 31
Frame of Reference - 34	Three-Column Charts - 105
All Hands on Deck - 12	Think-Pair-Share - 104
Sort Cards - 87	Learning Links - 55
Sensational Sentences - 122	Word Splash - 114

## To surface misconceptions and naive understandings

Anticipation/Reaction Guide - 13	Facts and Folklore - 32
Three-Column Charts - 105	Frame of Reference - 34
Think-Pair-Share - 104	Discussions - 28-29

## To have students "handle" their learning

Connection Collections - 20-22	Tic-Tac-Toe - 109
Sort Cards - 87	Five Card Draw - 33
Cubing - 25-27	Think Dots - 25-27
Manipulatives - 57	

# Active Learning Strategies to Use If You Want...

## **Students to set purpose for reading, listening, or viewing**

Walking Tour - 111-112	Exclusion Brainstorming - 31
Three-Column Charts - 105	Take a Stand - 98-99
Think-Pair-Share - 104	Personal Opinion Guide - 14
Anticipation Reaction Guide - 13	Frame of Reference - 34
Learning Links - 55	Paragraph Predictions - 65

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3-2-1 - 107	Graffiti - 35
Tic-Tac-Toe - 109	Learning Buddies - 52-54
Three-Column Charts - 105	Ticket to Leave - 110
Scavenger Hunt - 82-83	Connection Collections - 20-22
Think-Pair-Share - 104	Reciprocal Teaching - 80
Journals/Interactive Notebooks - 43-49	ABC to XYZ - 11
Biopoems - 15	Class Mind Maps - 59
Syllable Summaries - 96	

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Through the Eyes of ... - 108	Learning Log - 49
Interactive Notebooks - 43-44	Graffiti - 35-36
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Inductive Thinking Model - 41-42  
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Collaborative Strategic Reading - 17

## To ensure relevance and real-world connections

Connection Collections - 20-22  
RAFT - 77-79, 137-148  
Literature Circles - 56  
Rigor and Relevance Framework - 81  
Performance Assessment - 67-71

Frame of Reference - 34  
Interactive Notebooks, Journals,  
and Logs - 43-51  
Project-Based Learning - 72-73  
3-2-1 - 107

## To facilitate the development of speaking and listening skills

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Discussion Partners - 30  
I Have the Questions, Who Has...? - 40  
Through the Voice of ... - 108  
Socratic Seminars - 86  
1-3-6 - 24  
Stir the Class - 90  
Collaborative Strategic Reading - 17  
Scavenger Hunt - 82-83

Discussions - 28-29  
Five Card Draw - 33  
Learning Buddies - 52-54  
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Facts in Five - 24  
Reciprocal Teaching - 80  
Six-Step Vocabulary Process - 119  
Jigsaw - 136  
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## To build collaborative skills

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Literature Circles - 56  
Learning Buddies - 52-54  
1-3-6 - 24

Jigsaw - 136  
Inductive Thinking Model - 41  
Collaborative Strategic Reading - 17  
Facts in Five - 24  
Numbered Heads Together - 63-64

## To build in movement

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Stir the Class - 90  
Graffiti - 35  
Movement and Music - 62

Walking Tour - 111-112  
Learning Buddies - 52-54  
Five Card Draw - 33  
Take a Stand - 98-99

# Active Learning Strategies to Use If You Want...

## To enhance lectures

Discussion Partners - 30  
Graphic Organizers - 37-39  
Signal Cards - 84  
Interactive Notebooks - 43

Three-Column Charts - 105  
Anticipation/Reaction Guide - 13  
Exclusion Brainstorming - 31  
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## To promote vocabulary development

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Frayer Model - 117-118  
Tic-Tac-Toe - 109, 121  
Reciprocal Teaching - 80  
ABC-XYZ - 11  
Word Walls - 115-116  
Vocabulary Deck - 122  
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Biopoems - 16  
Graffiti - 35  
RAFT - 77-79  
Through the Voice of ... - 108  
Synectics Review - 97  
Rigor and Relevance Framework - 81  
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My Own Words - 121

Concept Attainment Model - 19  
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Inductive Thinking Model - 41  
List-Group-Label - 41  
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# Collaborative Strategic Reading (Klingner, Vaughn, and Schumm)

Klingner, Vaughn, and Schumm combined word identification, **Reciprocal Teaching**, and cooperative learning strategies to develop **Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)**.

In **CSR**, students work in heterogeneous groups of 4-5 students. The four step process they follow is:

- Given a reading, the small group accesses prior knowledge and makes predictions about what they will be learning.
- The groups then identify words or work parts that they do not understand and use a series of “fix-up strategies” to decode those unknown words that in **CSR** are called “Clunks.” The word identification/decoding strategies they are taught to use are:
  - Re-read the sentence for key ideas
  - Look for context clues in the prior and following sentences
  - Examine prefixes and suffixes
  - Identify smaller words inside the unknown word
- Next the students ask themselves “What is the gist?” of this reading or “What is the most important person, place, or thing?” and “What is the most important information about the person, place or thing?”
- The last step in the process is that students design questions to check each other on their understanding of the reading, collaboratively answer their own questions, and then summarize their learning.

When working in their **CSR** cooperative groups, students are assigned roles that ensure engagement and the inclusion of each of the four components of the process. The roles are:

- **Leader:** Decides what to read and the strategy to use next
- **Clunk Expert:** Leads groups through the four-word identification/decoding strategies
- **Gist Expert:** Guides the discussion around the important people, places, and things
- **Announcer or MC:** Ensures that all contribute to the process by calling on individuals to read or share their thinking
- **Encourager:** Provides feedback and encouragement

# **Collaborative Controversy**

## **(David and Roger Johnson)**

### **Purposes**

- To provide students the opportunity to use evidence to support an opinion or perspective
- To promote the development of strong speaking and listening skills
- To have students synthesize information they hear
- To assist students in learning to combine the best ideas to reach consensus
- To have team members collaborate to write a team report

### **Process**

- Assign pairs within heterogeneous groups of four
- Assign each pair a perspective and give students or have students identify materials that support their perspective on the issue
- Each two-person team in the groups of four prepares and presents their conflicting positions to one another
- Students argue strengths and weaknesses
- The pairs of students switch roles and, using the information provided by the other team, take the opposite view and present that perspective
- As the last step, students drop assigned roles and work as a team of four to reach consensus on the issue and write a team report

### **Teacher promotes controversy and thinking by**

- Presenting contrasting viewpoints
- Playing devil's advocate
- Encouraging students to probe and push each other for rationale
- Monitoring how students process their actions
- Emphasizing rational and spirited discussion/argument
- Restating the question
- Asking for clarification, rationale, example, implications. A key question is "What were the best arguments you heard from the other side?"

### **Sample Topics**

- Line-item veto
- Protecting endangered species
- Balancing the federal budget
- Expense of space exploration
- Censorship of Internet
- Need for instruction in cursive handwriting
- Dress codes in schools

# Concept Attainment Model (Jerome Bruner)

## Purposes

- To develop inductive thinking skills
- To practice identifying patterns and forming hypotheses

## Set-Up

- Identify the concept to be studied.
- Locate positive and negative examples of the concept. A minimum of twenty sets of examples is recommended with at least two-thirds positively representing the concept.
- Sequence the examples starting with several positive examples.

## Procedure

### Phase One:

- Inform learners that they will see positive and negative examples of an idea you want them to discover.
- Present data to the learners in pairs and label the data sets as positive or negative examples.
- Ask students to develop hypotheses about what attributes or patterns they are seeing. Prompt them to try out several hypotheses and extend their thinking by focusing attention on specific features of the examples.
- Track and record on the board or chart paper the possibilities they generate and delete those proven incorrect by the presentation of additional examples.
- Have students name the concept and the rules or definition of the concepts according to their attributes. If the students do not know the name of the concept, provide the name in phase two when student hypotheses are confirmed.

### Phase Two:

Students confirm their thinking about the concept by:

- correctly identifying additional unlabeled examples of the concept as positive or negative
- generating their own positive examples

### Phase Three:

Students analyze the processes and strategies they used, what they did when strategies did not work, and whether or not they explored more than one hypothesis at once, etc.

# A Connection Collection Exemplar

## Biography in a Bag

As a member of a team of anthropologists studying the leaders of the Renaissance or Reformation, you and your team are to collect artifacts representing significant information about one leader to place in a **Biography Bag**. All data will be documented in your individual journals. The leader for which your team is responsible will be identified by the Expedition Leader. The leaders to be studied are:

- Leonardo da Vinci
- Martin Luther
- Queen Elizabeth I
- John Calvin
- Raphael
- Michelangelo Buonarroti
- William Shakespeare
- Henry VIII
- Niccolo Machiavelli

Research findings should include information about:

- your leader as a person
- your leader as a leader
- your leader as a person influenced by the time in which he or she lived
- how your leader not only influenced his or her own country, but how he or she had an impact on another region of the world

In your teams, you are to conduct a study that yields sixteen important facts about your leader. After you identify the important facts, document them in your journals, locate or create artifacts that describe/relate to each of the facts you identified, and record the relationships in your journal.

When you have gathered all sixteen of the artifacts and placed them in your **Biography Bag** as well as recorded the information about the leader and the artifacts in your journals, it is time for each team member to write a brief report. This typed report should be one page long. It, and each of your journals, will be submitted to the Expedition Leader.

As the final step in preparation for your presentation, please decorate the **Biography Bag** to represent your leader.

After all the written reports are submitted, the teams will come together and present information about their leaders using only the artifacts in the **Biography Bags** to guide the presentations. These presentations will be made to the Expedition Leader and the other teams.

Tami Loftus, Rush-Henrietta Central School District, Henrietta, New York

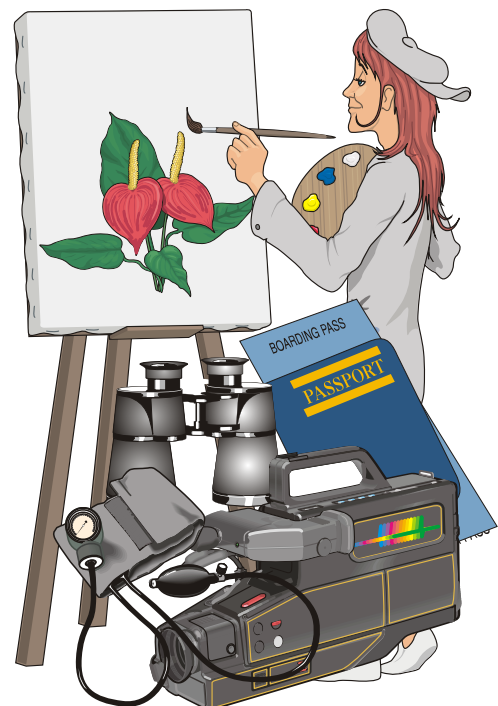


# Why Use Performance Assessment?

Carefully crafted performance assessments such as products, performances, and portfolios that require quality responses:

- promote rigor and relevance
- support the conditions identified as being present in brain-compatible learning environments: varied sources of input; active, meaningful learning activities; and timely, appropriate feedback
- require students to develop literacy as they integrate reading/writing/speaking skills with content knowledge
- promote student engagement by providing tasks likely to match the multiple intelligences and various styles, aptitudes, and interests of the students
- require students to practice, refine, and revise in order to demonstrate learning
- assess the essential to know components of the concepts under study
- give students and teachers insights into student thinking, learning-to-learn strategies, and habits
- reflect growth in social and academic skills and behaviors that are not easily demonstrated in paper-and-pencil assessments
- encourage creativity and originality
- promote the use of processes and information from the world beyond the classroom and school
- cause school work to be more like the world beyond the classroom through use of the knowledge and skills enumerated by the **Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills**:

- Core Subjects and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Themes
- Learning and Innovation Skills
  - Creativity and Innovation
  - Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
  - Communication and Collaboration
- Information, Media and Technology Skills
  - Information Literacy
  - Media Literacy
  - ICT Literacy
- Life and Career Skills




# Wonderful World of Words

## Frayer Model

(Frederick Frayer and Herbert Klausmeier)

This visual organizer is a recommended approach for learning and reviewing new words for new concepts. It helps learners build skillfulness at crafting rich definitions of concepts and vocabulary words. To accommodate young students and English language learners, definitions, examples and non-examples can be written or drawn.

<b>Essential Attributes</b> All have...	<b>Non-Essential Attributes</b> Some have, some do not have...	<b>Definition</b> A solid made of atoms arranged in an ordered pattern	<b>Characteristics</b> glassy, clear, colorless colored, evenly shaped, patterned
<b>Concept/ Vocabulary Word</b>		<b>Crystals</b>	
These are...	These are not...	metals, rocks snowflakes salt, and diamonds	coal, pepper, lava, and obsidian
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Non-Examples</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Non-Examples</b>

<b>Definition</b> Equivalent fractions are fractions that represent the same part of the whole or group.	<b>Examples Non-Examples</b> $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{3}{6}$ $\frac{1}{2} \neq \frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4} = \frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4} \neq \frac{7}{8}$
<b>Equivalent Fractions</b>	
 $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{3}{6}$	<p>Suzy got 5/8 of her number facts correct. Jim said that Suzy got half of them correct. Do you agree with Jim? Why or why not?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Word Problem</b></p>
<b>Visual and Numeric Representation</b>	<b>Word Problem</b>

Frayer Model templates are available online.

# Student Engagement Self-Assessment

Respond to each question by writing in the spaces provided an **F** if it is a practice you *frequently* include in your instructional design and delivery, an **S** if you follow the practice *sometimes*, or an **N** if it is a *new idea* you do not yet include in your practice. After completing the self-assessment, consider which of the practices you marked with an **S** or an **N** might have the most impact on learning if they were regular and purposeful components of your teaching repertoire.

## As I plan my units and lessons, do I

- \_\_\_ use the Common Core State Standards, state standards, and district outcomes along with key concepts, big ideas, and essential understandings to determine assessments and learning experiences for my students?
- \_\_\_ work collaboratively with my peers?
- \_\_\_ use multiple sources of data to inform my practice?
- \_\_\_ use technological applications such as mobile devices, Web 2.0, podcasts, digital dossiers, and wikis?
- \_\_\_ prepare for student questions about, "How am I going to use what I am learning?" by helping them see the relevance of their learning beyond the classroom setting?
- \_\_\_ use the input and feedback I receive from students to develop future lessons?
- \_\_\_ make sure that standards, and not activity-level thinking, drive my planning process?
- \_\_\_ incorporate 21st century skills in my plans in order to better prepare my students for their world beyond academia?
- \_\_\_ analyze the tasks and learning exercises I want my students to complete to make sure students have the prerequisite knowledge and skills to complete the assigned work?
- \_\_\_ think beyond the standards and think about how to help my students become informed and involved future citizens?
- \_\_\_ create intriguing, open-ended questions that promote deeper thinking by my students?

## To create a learner-centered classroom, do I

- \_\_\_ connect learning experiences to the communities in which students live and to the issues which are impacting the citizens in their communities?
- \_\_\_ ensure that all students understand that they are valued members of our learning community and that they bring much to our learning environment?

# Ordering Information

<b>Books</b>	<b>Page#</b>	<b>Item #</b>	<b>Price</b>
<i>Active Learning and Engagement Strategies</i>	15	11060	\$ 34.95
<i>Creating a Culture for Learning: Your Guide to PLCs and More</i>	9	11055	\$ 39.95
<i>Instruction for All Students</i>	14	11027	\$ 39.95
<i>Instruction for All Students Facilitator's Handbook</i>	14	11061	\$ 74.95
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