

Active Learning Strategies

Compiled by Carolyn Rosales and Thatcher Carter

Feel free to contact us directly if you have any questions about these activities ☺

Class Annotations on the Document Camera: about 10-15 minutes.

Tasks: Pull up a passage from the reading on the document camera. Students will yell out responses to the reading or questions and you write them on the page. Thatcher will try to add funny annotations like smiley faces and quick drawings, so they can see how their ideas can be represented in nontraditional ways. (TC)

Growth Mindset Intervention: Using Intelligent Practice: 10 – 15 minutes

Tasks: Link to instructions:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6yRv64QsMWpazl3c0FiaVhsRkU/view?usp=sharing>

Materials: Link to Numbers handout:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1y47r_Uls6V1wArA74MWGwnjvR04tSixs/view?usp=sharing

(CR)

Organization Breakup Breakdown: Groups of 2 - 3; 30 minutes

Materials: Index cards

Tasks: Students will write their thesis statement and each topic sentence on index cards (1 sentence per index card). They will then shuffle their cards and give them to a partner. Their partner will attempt to locate the thesis and each topic sentence and place them in order as they think it appears (or should appear) in the essay. Depending on how easily the student is able to recognize and place the thesis and topic sentences, students will discuss the necessary revisions of transitions, key terms, parallelism, logic or other organizational concerns. This activity could also be used at the paragraph level where students break down a body paragraph. (CR)

Paraphrase 3X: groups of 2-3, about an hour.

Tasks: Give each group a quote from the reading, a golden sentence, and they have to paraphrase it (sometimes on the board, sometimes on a worksheet). Then, they rotate quotes, and they have to paraphrase another group's quote but in new words. Then, they rotate again, they have another group's quote that has already been paraphrased twice, and they have to paraphrase it a third time. (TC)

Popcorn sentences: about 10 minutes.

Tasks: For a new reading, ask students to call out golden sentences in no particular order, and we hear the sentences one after another, creating a little poem of golden sentences. (TC)

Poster Annotations: Groups of 3 - 4; about an hour.

Materials: poster paper

Set up: Type up important quotes from the reading in a large font, full paragraphs and sometimes multiple paragraphs. Tape these to posters and give one to each group (3 - 4 students each).

Tasks: Students have to annotate the passage right on the poster. Then, they summarize the main idea at the bottom, using a TAG and a page citation. (TC)

Speed dating: 4-5 questions, about 35 minutes.

Tasks: You can project the questions on the overhead, so no materials needed. Ask students to sit down with desks facing each other (alternatively, they can stand facing each other if room permits. Jan Andres has even taken her students outside on a nice day). Students will discuss the projected question with their partner. As they discuss, you can walk around the room and eavesdrop, taking note of any interesting points. When time is up for 1 question, relay what was overheard and ask them to add anything you may have missed before moving onto the next question. Students will rotate to a new partner for each question. (TC, CR)

Text Experts: Groups of 3 - 4, full class session

Tasks: Groups are assigned a section of the article for which they will become experts. In groups, they will define key terms, identify important points and evidence. They will then break up into different groups, ensuring that each new group has at least 1 person from each of the article's section. Students will teach their section to this new group. Alternatively, students can create posters about their section. During a gallery walk, students can rotate in and out of role of "presenter," giving each student the opportunity to share their group's poster with a small audience of students. This activity can be adapted to create student experts on grammar concepts, essay elements, book clubs, etc. (CR)

Textmapping: Groups of 3 - 4; at least 45 mins depending on length of article(s).

Materials: Poster paper (preferably long butcher paper, but regular poster paper taped together would work also), Markers, An enlarged copy of the article(s), Post it notes, Highlighters

Setup: Tape the pages of the article on the large pieces of poster paper so that it is spread out enough that you can have multiple students working on the textmap at a time. On one side of the poster paper, add a legend for how students should annotate the textmap. For example: *Highlight in blue any evidence that illustrates the growth mindset; Highlight in yellow any ideas that demonstrate the fixed mindset; Underline in red any ideas with which you disagree, etc.*

Tape the textmap to the wall/whiteboard.

Tasks: Break students into small groups and assign them a section of the article to review. Students will spend a few minutes sharing annotations they did for homework, defining words, locating key points. Then, instruct students to annotate the class textmap following the legend you have provided, but also adding their own annotations. On future class sessions, you could ask students to find passages from other articles and physically attach them to the main foundational textmap via post-its or direct writing on the textmap. (CR)

Thesis Musical Chairs: 4 - 5 rotations, 20 mins

Tasks: Students will write their working thesis at the top of a blank piece of paper. They will stand up and sit at a desk with a thesis statement that is not theirs. They will then write down any compliments, suggestions, and questions below the thesis. They are instructed not to touch the thesis itself. After about 4 minutes, they stand up and sit at another desk with a new thesis and repeat these steps. At this second rotation and thereafter, they are instructed to place a check mark or star next to any comments a previous student had made that they also agree with. After 4 - 5 rotations, students will return to their original thesis, read over comments, and begin revisions. (CR)