

Active Learning Techniques

1. **Small-groups**
 - a. **"Think-Pair-Share"** – Students think to themselves on a topic provided by the instructor, pair up to discuss it, and then share their thoughts with the class.
 - i. Reflective!
 - b. **"Co-op"** – Students work in groups to produce a particular group product to share with the whole class; each student makes a particular contribution to the group. Assign roles such as note-taker, presenter (shares with class), observer, time-keeper, devil's advocate. An example is using group posters.
 - c. **"Jigsaw"** – Students break into groups, each group works on a particular topic or aspect of a larger topic. Then, groups are rearranged so that each new group contains one "expert" on each topic. Each member presents his/her "expert topic" to the group.
 - d. **In-class Activities** – Towards the end of class, have the students break up into small groups (3-4) and answer conceptual questions based on the day's material.
 - e. **Scratch Card Assessment** – use the IF-AT scratch cards for group assessment. Great tool since students can be rewarded for getting to the correct answer in multiple tries

2. **Individual activities**
 - a. **"Minute papers"** – Instructor poses a thought question, students write a brief response, and students share responses.
 - i. Reflective!
 - b. **"Test Questions"** – Students individually come up with test questions. Instructor can compile questions into a practice quiz or point out examples of good questions.
 - c. **"Note-comparisons"** – Instructor pauses lecture periodically for students to share notes with their neighbors and fill in anything they missed.
 - d. **"Response Cards"** – Every 10-15 minutes, instructor pauses lecture to ask a content question. Students respond by raising cards that have the answer choices written on them. A good way to check for understanding before moving to a new concept.

3. **Games (great for review sessions!)**
 - a. **"Game-show"** – Substitute course material for the trivia in game show formats. You can write the questions or the students can. Real prizes like candy are an incentive and an energy provider. Examples include: Jeopardy, Taboo, Kahoot, etc.
 - b. **Snowball Fight** – Ask all students to write a question or a response to a question they have on a small piece of paper. Have them crumple up the paper, and toss it at least 3 different times to other students. Then ask students to share (anonymity will help shy students get their questions heard).
 - i. Also a great energizer!

- c. **“Team Quiz”** – Students divide into a few groups. Group A creates a quiz, then other groups have to answer quiz questions, if one group gets a wrong answer, other groups have a chance to respond. Then Group B comes up with quiz and so on.
- d. **“Heads Up”** – You can do this with the Heads Up app or use index cards. Write a term or concept on the front of the card and split the class into groups of 4. Try to have at least 2 cards per person, and each card should have a unique term/concept. Randomly choose one person to start. That person cannot see the word on the card, but instead flips it in front of his/her forehead so the groupmates can see the word. The objective is for the groupmates to guide the person to guessing the correct term using definitions/concepts covered in class.

4. Debate

- a. Teams prepare opening statements, give rebuttal, and summaries. This can be very dramatic and you will find the students really take on the roles. It might help to assign sides for a debate so that students feel less pressure to solicit personal biases.
- b. **“Fishbowl”**– Small group of students in the middle, rest of students circle around the outside. Group in the middle presents one side of an issue, those around the circle respond with questions from the opposite perspective.

5. Technology

- a. **Classroom Polling:** Use iClickers, plickers, Poll Everywhere, Kahoot!, Dot Storming, Socrative etc. to gauge student understanding before or after introducing a concept.
- b. **Discussion Boards:** You can use Canvas, Piazza, or FlipGrid to facilitate discussions.
- c. **Interactive Video/Modules:** – PlayPosit, publisher, etc.

6. Student presentations

- a. All the students can present in one class session or they can rotate weeks. Presentations can be individual or in groups.
 - i. Provide students with a sample lesson outline, give them specific, focused topics, and let them know if and how they will be evaluated (i.e. provide rubric).
- b. **“Role-play”** – Have students present group or pair role-plays. Then, the class can critique role play, ask questions, or discuss questions raised in the role-play.
- c. **Gallery Walk:** Split students into groups and assign each group a different topic/concept. Have them create a poster (using flipchart, a whiteboard, etc.) on that topic/concept and then have all groups walk around to each poster to learn the material.

