Strategies for Encouraging Participation

Student Constructed Quiz

Rather than writing reading or comprehension quizzes yourself, have your students write them! This type of low-stakes formative assessment is an effective way to create group coherence as well as class-wide engagement. The strategy below rewards Type A students while simultaneously ensuring most everyone else will participate as well.

- Assign students to compose 3 test questions for a class period in which the assigned reading is scheduled for discussion. Your aim is to have them create questions difficult enough so that their classmates must have read the text with a modicum of attention in order to answer them correctly.
- Ask for 2 objective and 1 subjective questions; you might also ask students to write their own brief answer to the subjective question. It's best to require that Quiz Questions be typed to circumvent any "in class productions".
- The assignment's grade is for the creation of the quiz. The question/answer session in class (no matter how you conduct it) is a formative assessment activity, and should involve minimal, if any, points.
- Offer a few extra credit points to students who submit their questions online 24 hours before class. This practically ensures that your Type A students will get their gold-star cookies, and gives you the extra benefit of getting to look at what in all likelihood will be the best quiz questions in advance.
- When class begins, have students sit in their groups and quiz one another. Or you can collect quizzes you've read in advance, or random quizzes, and verbally quiz the class for a few minutes.

Use polling software.

UNT recently adopted REEF Polling as the centrally supported student response option. You can view videos or attend CLEAR webinars to learn how to use the program, and as it requires students to use their phones in class, you won't have problems getting the students on board! The instructor prepares questions in advance, and then polls the students—answers are anonymously shown to the whole class via computer. Instigating class discussions using this program is as easy as a) polling, b) asking students to find a person whose answer was different than theirs, and c) allowing them to debate the correct answer before d) providing the correct answer (or is there a correct answer?) at some point before class ends.

Reading Quizzes With a Twist

Create a brief multiple-choice quiz and provide each team with 1 or 2 copies. Ask them to collaborate on their answer, and provide some visual prop that indicates their choice (e.g., 3 differently colored cards or straws). When each group has agreed on the answer to the first question, have them place their indicator on their team's table, or hold it in the air. Then announce the correct answer and give each group a few minutes to discuss their answers (whether they were correct or not). This has the added bonus of reinforcing the cooperative aspect of group work along with the correct answer!

The Feedback Sandwich

We all know constructive feedback is vital for student moral. Nevertheless, there are times when it's a struggle to come up with positive remarks on a truly discombobulated submissions. So how do you encourage a student when the response is fairly negative? Make a feedback sandwich.
- Top slice: find and remark on something—*anything*—the student did well. Make sure whatever you're commenting on is a genuinely good aspect, however.
- Middle slice: this is where you deliver a direct critique, as constructively as you can manage. Focus on the specifics of the assignment and, if possible, align this with the evaluation rubric, as that can take a bit of the sting out of your remarks. so to take the sting out a bit.)
- Bottom slice: conclude with another positive, but genuine, remark, and conclude with an invitation for the student to rethink how he or she can revise the paper or rethink the next assignment.

If you can manage to make your feedback sandwich tasty, or at least palatable, you can motivate students to improve, rather than reinforce the idea (that too many of them have bought into at this point) that they might as well not even try.

Gallery Walk

This activity requires students to physically move around the room. You prepare texts and/or images (this may include student work) and place them at eye-level around the room. Organize the images so that a few students may cluster around each one, but far enough to discourage crowding. Instruct your students on the activity's goals: they might take informal notes, or ask them to answer a series of prepared questions as they walk around the room. Perhaps ask students to identify similarities and differences among the

texts and images, or record impressions about what they saw. One important objective to keep in mind is that students should disperse themselves around the room.

Formative Assessments. Monitors student learning, provides feedback.

- Cold-calling: using randomly chosen student ID cards to call on students
- Draw a concept map in class to represent their understanding of a topic
- Clickers / Reef
- Think / Pair / Share
- Wikis
- Self-Assessment with the teacher designed rubric
- Write a postcard as someone other than themselves, describing an event or topic
- Jot down 3 things a fellow student might potentially misunderstand
- Doodle their notes
- Low stakes Flash quizzes / online quizzes like Flubaroo (ungraded or 5 points)
- Metacognition: end of class period summary notes
- Check for transfer skills: identify a similar situation from a story, ad, current event
- Text rendering: Teams each highlight the same text then compare w/other teams
- Submit one or two sentences identifying the main point of a lecture
- Research proposals / Prospectus for early feedback

Summative assessments. High stakes evaluating student learning.

- Annotated bibliography
- Portfolio
- Final project
- Infograph (timelines / graphs / tree maps)
- Team debates
- Performance / Demonstration
- Team Presentation
- Midterms and Finals
- Essay Exam
- Oral Exam