

Use Active Learning to Engage Hibernating Students



1. **Essential Questions:** Determine the lesson's intended goal. Use one essential question per lesson that students must answer by the end of the lesson. Make sure the question is at the highest possible level of learning. To be effective, these queries should require analysis and application, an extended response, and cover multiple skills.
2. **Activating Strategy:** Get students actively thinking or connecting to that day's material. Cochrane teachers often use video clips to immediately engage students by piquing their interest and then helping them connect to the lesson.
3. **Relevant Vocabulary:** Limit vocabulary to that which is appropriate for your students, and ensure that it is actively used in context. Students should interact with the words throughout the lesson. Teachers must use strategies for teaching vocabulary that are relevant and effective, including a graphic organizer or an experience.
4. **Limited Lectures:** Limit lecture time to between 12 and 15 minutes, and then engage students in a short activity. Alternate lecture times with student activities such as turning and talking, drawing a picture, summarizing or describing the lecture, or discussing with partners or groups.
5. **Graphic Organizers:** Help students visualize and categorize what they're learning with graphic organizers. Be sure to link new information to old information. Use colorful charts in notebooks, computers, or foldables.
6. **Encouraging Student Movement:** Actively engage students through physical activity of some sort. Possible student movement strategies include gallery walks, team work or rotating stations, "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down" activities, or having them perform body movements to answer questions.
7. **Higher-Order Thinking Questions:** Use at least three higher-order thinking ("HOT") questions during the lesson. Ensure that you are challenging students; ask the same question, but consider requiring advanced learners to respond in an alternate way. Vary response strategies by having students write, answer in a classroom or partner discussion, or complete homework.

8. **Summarizing:** Close the lesson with a summary and assess students through their answers to the essential question. Determine whether you need to re-teach or can move on. Use a variety of summary assessments, such as writing prompts, short activities, discussions, illustrations, or exit tickets.

9. **Rigorous Activities:** Designing challenging activities and moving at a brisk pace is a must. Eliminate idle time by creating lessons that are 100% active.

10. **Student-Centered Approaches:** Clearly demonstrate that your students are the center of your focus and attention. Use technology as a tool to engage students and help them to see real-world applications of their learning. Approach teaching as a partnership — your job is to plan, and your students' job is to work and learn. Consider yourself a facilitator rather than a giver of knowledge.