Module 4: Active Engagement
Six Highly-Effective Teaching Strategies
Handout

This handout accompanies the module 4 video. You can use this handout to review information on the video and record your answers to discussion. Follow along as prompted during the video.

Section 1: Growth & Discussion

Discussion 1

How do you know when your students are engaged in your lesson?

Discussion 2

Agree (thumbs up) or Disagree (thumbs down) or Unsure (thumbs sideways):

Students involved in activities learn more than students who passively listen to a teacher.

A. Show your colleagues with your thumbs.
B. Find a colleague with a different thumb direction than yours, and explain your position.

Discussion 3

Write down you answer to the following question.

Using the traditional model of Bloom's taxonomy, which domain do you feel is the most important one for you to focus on with your students?

Discuss the domain you selected with a group of about four teachers. Share what you wrote down and explain why.

Discussion 4

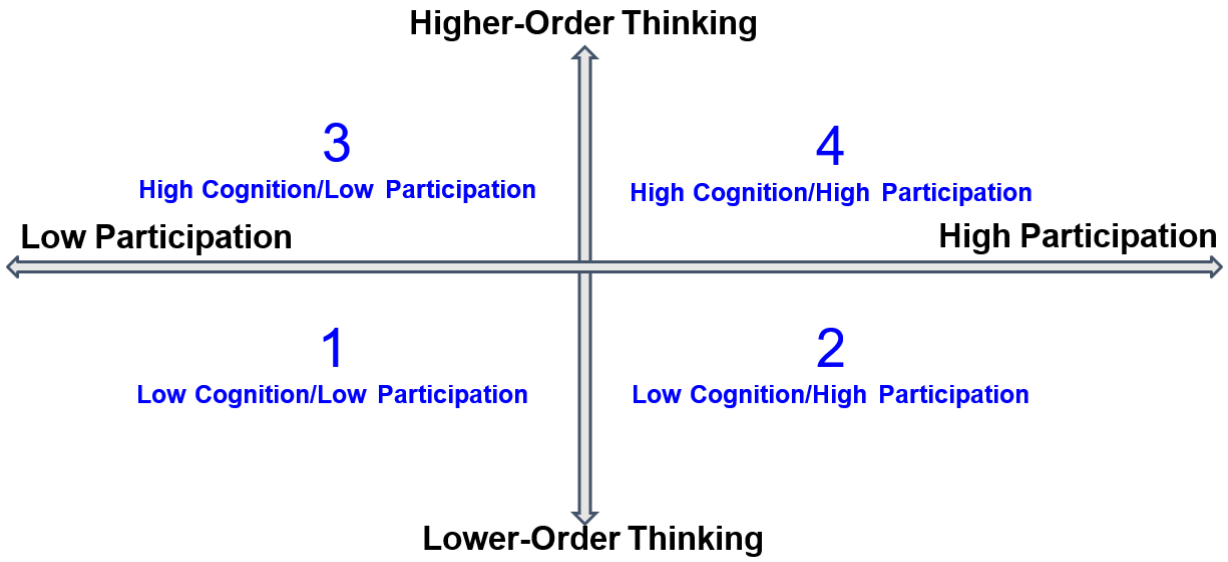
Discuss these two questions.

1. Why is the triangle a good shape for portraying Bloom's taxonomy?
2. What balance between lower and higher cognition should teachers target?
   50%/50%? 80 higher/20 lower?

Discussion 5

Consider the TPT Cognitive Engagement Model.

1. As a group of about four people, determine what percentage of lesson time effective teachers should spend in each quadrant.
2. As an individual, self-reflect on your lessons and fill in the percentage of time you typically spend in each quadrant.
3. As a group, brainstorm at least three ways you can increase the time your students spend in quadrant four.



Discussion 6

Application Time.

1. Consider Antonetti & Garver's (2015) *Eight Engaging Work Qualities* and the type of teaching approach you typically use (Direct Instruction, Cognitive Instruction, Constructivism), and write down at least three ways that you can achieve Quadrant 4 active engagement.
2. Share your three with a partner.

Eight Engaging Work Qualities

Actively engage students with learning activities that use any three of the following:

1. **Personal Response:** The work allows the student to react and have his own thoughts. Consequently, there is more than one right answer.
   Planning questions: How can I make multiple answers possible? What can students bring to the activity from their own lives and experiences?

2. **Clear/Modeled Expectations:** The student knows what success looks like; success has been modeled, and the student knows the criteria for his personal response.
   Planning questions: What do I want students to include in their answers?

3. **Emotional/Intellectual Safety:** The students are comfortable taking risks. It's ok to have a different answer or make mistakes on the way to eventually being right.
   Planning questions: How can I structure student talk to encourage different, less-obvious, or risky ideas?

4. **Learning with Others:** Students have opportunities to interact with others, sharing and analyzing their ideas with others so their thinking is enhanced or changed.
   Planning questions: What ideas will students compare or share? How will they explain, critique, or combine one another's ideas?

5. **Sense of Audience:** People whom the students care about will see their work. Students performance is improved because they want to make a good impression.
   Planning questions: Who (besides me and our class) would be a valued audience for this work?

6. **Choice:** Students get choice in how to gain information or demonstrate their learning. They have a sense of control.
   Planning questions: What is another activity (or two) that would allow students to learn the same standard yet select between their activities?

7. **Novelty and Variety:** Students' interests are piqued because the product, procedure, perspective, or place is new or different.
   Planning questions: What can we do to make this fun, goofy, or different (in procedure, product, perspective, or place)?

8. **Authenticity:** Students understand that the task has a real purpose or has connections to their world.
   Planning questions: What are the obvious real-world connections? Who does this in the real world? How could we simulate the real world in the classroom? How is this represented in the news?

(Antonetti, J. & Garver, J., 2011, pp. 82 & 93)

Active Engagement Strategies by Learning Theory

Behaviorists are primarily concerned with the transmission of knowledge through repetition, practice and testing, and reinforcement. Behaviorist primarily use a direct instruction approach. Promoting active engagement using a direct instruction approach takes intentional planning. Here are some useful direct instruction strategies to promote active engagement:

1. Essential Questions: A teacher can begin the lesson with an engaging question that connects to students' lives, invokes curiosity, and requires uncovering during the lesson.
2. Quick Checks for Understanding: In module three, we discussed assessment strategies that involve all students during the lesson. Examples include fist-to-five, thumbs up/down, whiteboards, post-it notes, quick writes/draws, and entrance/exit tickets.
3. Summarizing and Notetaking: Students should be taught how to take notes during the presentation and given opportunities during the lesson to summarize their notes with a partner or small group.
4. Five minute limits: It is essential that information presentation, whether through reading or listening, be interrupted every five minutes so *all* students can respond to the information in some way using quick checks, engaging questions, or summarizing.

Cognitivists are primarily concerned with the understanding or application of knowledge by connecting it to previous learning through manipulation and verbal and non-verbal representations. Cognitivists use hands-on learning, small group work, graphic organizers, and curricular integration within a teacher-directed context. Here are some useful strategies that cognitivists can use to promote active engagement:

1. Advanced Organizers: Teachers can provide visual aids, outlines, or note-taking tools that provide students with a framework upon which to attach their new learning. A great advanced organizer that promotes active engagement is a KWL chart. Students begin by working in small groups to record what they already know about the day's topic and plan what they want or need to learn.
2. Discussion Opportunities: Students need time to verbally process what they are learning. Using think-pair-share activities for higher-order thinking questions are a great way to achieve quadrant 4 lessons.
3. Cooperative Learning: Students can work in small, cooperative groups to discuss and solve tasks requiring both individual accountability and mutual interdependence.
4. Non-linguistic Representations: Students work alone or in small groups to demonstrate understanding through graphic organizers, physical models or manipulations, mental or illustrated pictures and pictographs, and kinesthetic activities.
5. Similarities and Differences: Students work alone or in small groups to compare concepts and identify patterns using words or visuals, like Venn diagram.
6. Generating and Testing Hypothesis: Students work alone or in small groups to discover and describe patterns, and then experiment to see whether their prediction is correct.

Constructivists are primarily concerned with students creating their own understandings and new knowledge through a student-driven, open-ended approach. Constructivists facilitate student-directed, project-based learning and help students develop standards for excellence. Active engagement happens naturally using this method. Students are actively engaged in the pursuit of their own learning goals as the teacher advises, instills curiosity, and helps students assess the quality of their work. Students work alone or in small groups.

Section 2: Planning and Implementation

You will teach a lesson in which you plan to actively engage your students. That means all students must be involved in a higher-order thinking task. The task should capture student learning through data captured on paper or video. An oral report of your student's work is not acceptable. Bring your student learning product to your next meeting and share with your colleagues.

1. Select an upcoming lesson you will teach.
2. Decide whether you will use a Direct, Cognitive, or Constructivist instructional approach.
3. Make sure the task contains at least three of the Eight Engaging Work Qualities.
4. Record what kind of student data will demonstrate their learning.

Use the following as your lesson preparation guide:

Lesson Topic: _____

Instructional Approach (circle one): Direct Cognitive Constructivist

Describe how your students will be actively engaged in this lesson (at least one), and the three Engaging Work Qualities your activity uses:

1) Activity _____

_____

Engaging Work Qualities? _____

_____

2) Activity _____

_____

Engaging Work Qualities? _____

_____

3) Activity _____

_____

Engaging Work Qualities? _____

_____

Section 3: Reflection and Revision

After you have actively engaged your students in a lesson, meet together and discuss how things went. Remember to bring some student work samples from that lesson that you can show your colleagues.

Use these questions as reflection prompts:

- How did you ensure *all* students were involved?
- How did you promote higher-order thinking?
- How do the student work samples demonstrate student understanding and critical thinking?

Section 4: Optional Extensions

Books

Himmele, P. & Himmele, W. (2011) *Total participation techniques: Making every student an active learner.* Alexandria VA. ASCD. http://www.ascd.org/Publications/Books/Overview/Total-Participation-Techniques.aspx

Articles

Jablon, J. & Wilkinson, M. (March, 2006) Using engagement strategies to facilitate children's learning and success. *Young Children.* https://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200603/JablonBTJ.pdf

Johnson, B. (2012) How do we know when students are engaged? *Edutopia.* http://www.edutopia.org/blog/student-engagement-definition-ben-johnson

Videos

Robinson, K. (2010) Changing Education Paradigms

https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_changing_education_paradigms

Wright, S. (2013) The Power of Student-Driven Learning https://youtu.be/3fMC-z7K0r4