

Classroom activities to engage students

1
Elizabeth Karakehagias
Educational Consultancy Group
educongr@hotmail.com



6/06/2011

1

Why develop activities to engage students?

- It discourages students from misbehaving
- They become excited about their learning
- They are motivated to learn

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

2

When planning activities consider these questions.(1)

- What will you do?
- Why are you doing it?
- How will the activity further your course objectives?
- How will you introduce this activity?

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

3

When planning activities consider these questions (2)

- Will you form groups?
- How will you monitor students' interaction and learning?
- How will you foster positive interdependence?
- What problems/challenges do you expect?



Elizabeth Karakehagias

6/06/2011

4

When planning.....

- Plan activities that involve and engage students where they are manipulating the information, physically and mentally
- Students need to be moving around, working in groups, discovering information for themselves
- To get students actively thinking and moving, you have to start thinking "outside the box"

Elizabeth Karakehagias

6/06/2011

5

How can you make gaining information engaging? (1)

- Break students into groups/teams/pairs and give each group different questions to report to the rest of the class (think-pair-share)
- Have them create a poster to illustrate the answer
- They may want to create a rhyme/poem/song



Elizabeth Karakehagias

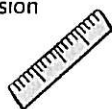
6/06/2011

6

How can you make gaining information engaging? (2)

- If you have chronological information you want your students to remember.....
- Type it up, cut it into strips, give each pair/group an envelope with the strips, have them put them in order. This promotes team work, cooperation, collaboration, peer learning, discussion

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

7

How can you make gaining information engaging? (3)

- Have students retell a section of the text/book from the point of view of one of the characters
- Create a mobile that represents the information
- Give students "clues" to look for words, pictures around the room that relate to your topic of study

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

8

How can you make gaining information engaging? (4)

- **Make a class paper chain of information**
- Each student write a piece of information/fact on a strip related to the topic you are studying
- Join them and display them around the room
- Each student can take their piece home

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

9

How can you make gaining information engaging? (5)

- Put students on a "scavenger hunt" and once they find the item, they must explain why it is on the list
- Give students a "passport" that they must stamp at each "stop" on their trip (place "stop" signs around the room or school with an activity at each "stop")

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

10

How can you make gaining information engaging? (6)

- Give incomplete text and have students guess what happens next, but they must justify what they write. This will show their level of understanding of the text, help them develop written language and sequencing.
- Let students make artifacts and give a speech as famous historical person or character

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

11

How can you make gaining information engaging? (7)

- Have students make a "Picture Dictionary"
- Introduce "read, cover, write" method to help them learn dictation and spelling
- For reluctant writers, use cartoons and ask them to fill in the speech bubbles, then have them report (indirect speech) what the characters are saying

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

12

How can you make gaining information engaging? (8)

- Use recipes, cut them into strips and have students put them in the correct order (method)
- Give them text without a heading, have them read the text, provide a headline and have them explain their headline
- Give them a headline and ask them to write a text

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

13

How can you make gaining information engaging? (9)

- Make multiple copies of the alphabet and play scrabble
- Make different dice with words, verbs, adjectives, nouns, singular plural, syllables to reinforce grammar
- Ask students to write a journal of what they have learned or have done in class

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

14

How can you make gaining information engaging? (10)

- *Ask them to...*
- Insert full stops, commas and other punctuation marks in a paragraph
- Join beginnings and endings
- Put paragraphs in correct order
- Change verbs/nouns/adjectives in a text, from singular to plural

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

15

How can you make gaining information engaging? (11)

- Dramatize text
- Write a report
- Write a survey
- Write a quiz about a topic
- Introduce the topic/research to another group of students



Elizabeth Karakehagias

6/06/2011

16

Steps to engage students (1)

- ✓ Take the time to identify types of learners in your classroom
- ✓ Build positive relationships with your students, meet or greet them as they come into the room
- ✓ Choose curriculum/level carefully
- ✓ Be certain to give clear instructions



Elizabeth Karakehagias

6/06/2011

17

Steps to engage students (2)

- ✓ Explain to the students the nature and value of the activities
- ✓ When students do not see the connection between the content and activity, they question – “Why are we doing this?”
- ✓ Show students you care
- ✓ Give feedback



Elizabeth Karakehagias

6/06/2011

18

Steps to engage students (3)

- ✓ Proper and consistent schedules, discipline and encouragement are factors that promote engagement
- ✓ Plan well-structured lessons to cover the learning styles of your students – visual, auditory or kinesthetic
- ✓ If can use an overhead projector, you will help students who are visual learners, the verbal explanation will help auditory learners and writing the information will help tactile learners



6/06/2011

19

Steps to engage students (4)

- ✓ Student-active learning shifts the action from you to the student because you aim is to engage students in actively doing or thinking about a problem, rather than passively listening or writing what you tell them to write
- ✓ Classroom discussion helps to create a community of active and engaged learners
- ✓ Be flexible and have a back-up plan if what you thought was a brilliant idea, bombs out!



Elizabeth Karakehagias

6/06/2011

20

Don't forget.....

Reflect on and evaluate the activities because you have a different group of students each year with different needs

"No matter how well planned, how interesting, stimulating, colourful or relevant the lesson is, if the teacher does all of the interacting with the material, the teacher's, not the student's brain, will grow."

• Pat Wolfe

Elizabeth Karakehagias



6/06/2011

21
