Fostering Student Engagement in Literacy Instruction in the Upper Elementary Grades

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Active Engagement

Why we need active engagement in schools today…

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhiCFdWeQfA
Introduction

Turn to the person next to you. Briefly introduce yourself. Share one thing you currently do successfully to actively engage students in your classroom, school, or district.

Research

*High correlation between active engagement and student achievement.* (Willingham, Pollack, & Lewis, 2002)

*Students retain 70% of the information in the first ten minutes of a lecture but only 20% in the last ten minutes.* (Meyer & Jones, 1993)

*Instruction that promotes passivity and rote learning tends to be the rule rather than the exception.* (Yair 2000; Goodlad 2004)
Cognitive Engagement

Research by Barbara Taylor, David Pearson, Deb Peterson, Michael Rodriguez (2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Growth</th>
<th>Lower Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher Level Thinking</td>
<td>Lower Level Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Skill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Learning</td>
<td>Passive Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Support Stance</td>
<td>Teacher-Directed Stance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Passive Participation

Students are…

- Reading: Round robin, turn-taking
- Writing: Sharing the pen, turn taking
- Speaking: Oral turn taking/Recitation or repeating info
- Listening
Active Participation

Students are:

• Reading independently, chorally, and with partners
• All students manipulate materials in writing
• Responding orally through activities such as turn and talk, choral response, etc.
• Participating with hands-on materials

The teacher is:

- Listening to students talk
- Watching and giving feedback
- Coaching
- Modeling (Brief explicit demonstration of how to do something)
Common Core Standards

3.1.1.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
4.1.1.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says and when drawing inferences from a text.

Close Reading

“Close reading is when a reader independently stops to reread and observe the choices an author has made, reflecting on those observations to reach for new understandings.”
Christopher Lehman
Try it-Close reading

1. First read: What did you notice?  
   Active learning: Tell a partner what you notice.

2. Reread: Decide what you are going to reread for. What is your lens?  
   Active learning: Take notes. Share with a partner.

3. Analyze what you’ve collected. Which details fit together? What patterns do you see?  
   Active learning: Mark text, star, circle as you analyze your notes.

4. Use your analysis to reach a new understanding of the text.  
   Active learning: Based on your patterns, share with a partner your thinking about the text.

Try it-Common Core Standards

1. Teacher demonstrates asking strong questions on a small portion of text
2. Guided practice - Students practice writing strong questions (may use sentence stems) as the teacher reads.
3. Students share a question (or questions) with a partner.
4. Students bring a question to literature circle
5. Students share thinking and then read to find the answers.
Whose voice?

Teachers dominate talk time in class. Flanders (1970) reported that teachers of high-achieving students spent about 55% of the class time talking compared with 80% for teachers of low-achieving students. An optimal goal has been set for student talk time at 80%.

Supporting student talk

Conversation supports:
1- Rule: Talk when no one else is talking.
2- Whip
2 Assign Rotating Roles (Discussion Leader, Presenter)
3- Campfire
4- Use Sentence Stems (I agree because… While I see what you’re saying about… I see that a different way. I think… I want to add on…)

Tip: Teacher nods, but avoids passing judgement
“Teaching isn’t telling”

* Students don’t learn simply from listening to information
* Good teachers share content and then provide opportunities for students to engage with it- by discussing it, applying it, digging deeper, teaching it to someone else, etc.
* Teachers support student inquiry and ask questions to propel them forward

What is needed for active learning to take place?

A learning community has been established in which:
* Procedures for independent and group work have been mastered
* Students know what the learning goals are and have the prerequisite skills to work on them
* Students support each other when they have questions or need help
Small group activity

*Form a group of four.
*On your own worksheet, describe a challenge you currently face in structuring active learning in your classroom.
*When you hear the chime, pass your form to the person on your left. Respond to the dilemma you receive from the person who passed it your way.
*We will do this three times, so you have three responses from your peers.

Small group activity

Form a group of four.
On your own worksheet, describe a challenge you currently face in structuring active learning in your classroom.
On the chime, pass your form to the person on your left. We will do this three times, so you have three responses from your peers.
This time, take a minute to read and reflect on the suggestions you have been given. What next steps would you like to try?
Sharing Out

- What issues came up?
- Did you receive helpful suggestions?
- What can be learned from working with others?
- What are your next steps?

Group sharing

Ancient Chinese Proverb
Tell me, I forget
Show me, I remember
Involve me, I understand