

New Teacher Academy **Short, Fun Activities**

Index Card Match

Active Learning: 101 Strategies to Teach Any Subject by Mel Silberman;
Simon & Schuster, 1996.

This is an active, fun way to review class material. It allows students to pair up and quiz their classmates.

Directions:

1. On a separate index card, write down questions about anything taught in the class. Create enough question cards to equal one-half the number of students.
2. On a separate card, write down answers to each of these questions.
3. Mix the two sets of cards and shuffle them several times so they are well mixed.
4. Give out one card to each student. Explain that this is a matching exercise. Some students have review questions and others have the answers.
5. Have students find their matching cards. When a match is formed, ask the matching students to find seat together. (Tell them not to reveal to other students what is contained on their cards.)
6. When all the matching pairs have seated, have each pair quiz the rest of the class by reading aloud their question and challenging classmates to tell them the answer.

VARIATIONS

1. Develop cards containing a sentence with a missing word to be matched to cards containing the missing word. Example: "The President is the _____ of armed forces. (*Commander-in-chief*)"
2. Develop cards containing questions with several possible answers-for example, "What are ways to defuse a conflict?" Match them with cards that contain a corresponding assortment of answers. When each pair quizzes the group, have them obtain several answers from other students.

Memorizing Words

Source: *Five-Minute Activities* by Penny Ur and Andrew Wright;
Cambridge University Press, 1992

Use this activity for vocabulary enrichment.

Directions:

1. Divide the boards into two halves.
 2. Write in one half vocabulary words which the students have only just encountered and which you would like them to remember.
 3. Ask the class to pick one of the new words and to suggest a word they know which it reminds them of in some way.
 4. Write this "reminding word" on the other side of the board.
 5. Having written the "reminding word", erase the new word.
 6. Do this with each of the vocabulary words until they have all been replaced by the "reminding words".
 7. Ask the students what vocabulary word each "reminding word" was linked to.
 8. Write the vocabulary words again and erase the "reminding words".
-

Erase-a-text

Hands-on English, Vol I, No. 4

This activity helps students read and study a short, unfamiliar text intensively.

Directions:

1. Write the text on the board (a sentence or two is enough) and discuss any new words. Ask one or two students to read the text aloud.
2. Next, carefully erase one word and ask a student to read the text again, supplying the missing word from memory.
3. Erase another word, and call for a volunteer to read the text.
4. Erase another word. As more and more words disappear, students will be challenged to recall them, and will focus intently. See if any students can read the text with only one word remaining!
5. Finally, follow up with a dictation of the text, to give the students a chance to put it all together again.

Jumbled Sentences

Source: *Five-Minute Activities* by Penny Ur and Andrew Wright;
Cambridge University Press, 1992

Use this activity to review grammatical points.

Directions:

1. Pick a sentence out of material the class is studying and write it on the board with the words in jumbled order. For example:
early the week I to during have sleep to go
2. The students work out and write down the original sentence:
I have to go to sleep early during the week. or
During the week I have to go to sleep early.
3. If there is time, give a series of similar sentences, and the students do as much as they can in the time.

A variation is to dictate the jumbled sentences instead of writing them on the board. The students write them down as you dictate and then suggest the solutions orally.



Questions About A Statement

Source: *Five-Minute Activities* by Penny Ur and Andrew Wright;
Cambridge University Press, 1992

Use this activity for practice in forming questions.

Directions:

1. Write a sentence on the board that is a true, false, or absurd statement
2. Ask the students to see how many questions they can ask about it. For example:
The moon is made of green cheese.

Possible questions:

Has the moon always been made of green cheese?

Is the cheese light or dark green?

Is the cheese hard or soft?

Is all the moon made of green cheese, or only part of it?

Why is the moon made of green cheese?

How was it made?

What does the cheese taste like?

3. If there is time, students try to think of answers to the questions.

A variation of the activity is to tell students “the answer” and ask them to list as many questions as they can think of where that would be an appropriate answer. For example:

The answer is “time management”. List as many questions that you can think of where “time management” is the answer.

Twenty Questions

How To Kit Literacy Games for Adults NWT Literacy Council
http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/adultlit_res.htm

Directions:

1. Choose any person, place, or thing that students might be familiar with. For example, you might choose Jon Stewart, a skate board, an armadillo or a number.
 2. Participants try to guess the item, but can ask only questions with “Yes”, “No”, or “I don’t know” answers. For example: *Is it a person? Is the person a male? Does he live in the US? Is the number greater than 100? Does the animal live on land?*
 3. The game is over if twenty questions have been asked and no one has guessed the right answer.
 4. If someone guesses the right answer, that person can choose the next item and answer the questions.
-

Chalk Talk

Source: **THE EDUCATION ALLIANCE** at Brown University
www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/changing_systems/teach_to_student/ChalkTalk.pdf
 2007-05-14 - Text Version

Chalk Talk is a silent way to reflect, generate ideas, check on learning, develop projects, or solve problems. It can be used productively with any group—students, faculty, workshop participants, or committees. Because it is done completely in silence, it gives groups a change of pace and encourages thoughtful contemplation. It can be an unforgettable experience.

Materials: Chalk board and chalk or paper roll on the wall and markers.

Directions:

1. The facilitator explains VERY BRIEFLY that Chalk Talk is a silent activity. (No one may talk at all. Anyone may add to the chalk talk as they please.) You can comment on other people's ideas simply by drawing a connecting line to the comment. It can also be very effective to say nothing at all except to put finger to lips in a gesture of silence and simply begin with #2.
2. The facilitator writes a relevant question in a circle on the board. Sample questions:
 - _ What did you learn today?
 - _ So what? Or now what?
 - _ What do you think about social responsibility and schooling?
 - _ How can we involve the community in the school, and the school in community?
 - _ How can we keep the noise level down in this room?
 - _ What do you want to tell the scheduling committee?
 - _ What do you know about Croatia?
 - _ How are decimals used in the world?
3. The facilitator either hands a piece of chalk to everyone or places many pieces of chalk at the board and hands several pieces to people at random.
4. People write as they feel moved. There are likely to be long silences—that are natural, so allow plenty of wait time before deciding it is over.
5. How the facilitator chooses to interact with the Chalk Talk influences its outcome. The facilitator can stand back and let it unfold or expand thinking by:
 - circling other interesting ideas, thereby inviting comments to broaden
 - writing questions about a participant comment adding his/her own reflections or ideas

