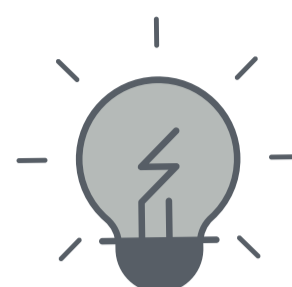


MAINTAINING ENGAGEMENT



THEORIES AT PLAY

Situational interest arises spontaneously due to environmental factors that teachers can control, such as task instructions or relevance cues. Studies indicate that students' **perceived relevance** of course material is positively associated with engagement, learning, and participation.

Bernacki, M. L., & Walkington, C. (2018). The role of situational interest in personalized learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 110(6), 864.

Fedesco, H. N., Kentner, A., & Natt, J. (2017). The effect of relevance strategies on student perceptions of introductory courses. *Communication Education*, 66(2), 196-209.

1) OFFER MEANINGFUL CHOICES TO STUDENTS

WHEN STUDENTS CHOOSE TOPICS FOR APPLICATION OR THE CONTEXT FOR LEARNING, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ENGAGED.

ALLOWING STUDENTS TO CHOOSE THE MODALITY OF ASSIGNMENT COMPLETION (E.G., VIDEO, ESSAY, MAP) OR SELECT FROM ASSESSMENT OPTIONS (E.G., EXAM, ORAL PRESENTATION) ENSURES AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.

2) ORGANIZE TEXTS/LECTURES INTO STORIES

ORGANIZING INFORMATION USING COLOR CODING OR ANNOTATION/NOTE-TAKING MODELS HELP ACTIVATE MEMORY INTEGRATION. STUDENTS CAN ALSO TRANSLATE INFORMATION INTO STORIES (E.G., FLAME CHALLENGE).

HIGHLIGHTING EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS AND FREQUENTLY ASSESSING STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING HELP KEEP ENGAGEMENT LEVELS HIGH.

3) CONNECT TO STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

ADOPTING NEWLY LEARNED CONCEPTS IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES IS THE FASTEST WAY TO LEARN ANYTHING (E.G., LANGUAGE IMMERSION). STUDENTS WILL BE ENGAGED WHEN CONTENT MAKES SENSE ON A PERSONAL LEVEL.

ASKING STUDENTS TO CONTINUE NOTE-TAKING HOW A CONCEPT OR SKILL IMPACTS THEM ON A DAILY BASIS OUTSIDE OF CLASS HELPS LEAD TO MEANINGFUL LEARNING.

CELEBRATE SUCCESS!

Engagement depends on finding the sweet spot between difficulty and pleasure. When students face new challenges, it is important that feedback identifies success as well as opportunities for improvement. Purposely setting students up for public success (the public audience being inherently challenging) is a surefire way to increase engagement.

For more guides, visit:

**Center for Teaching and Learning
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