

What is Active Learning?

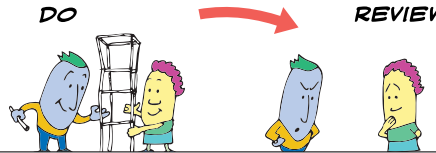
In this chapter we explain what Active Learning is, how it works, what the evidence is for its value and why it sometimes frightens educators who are not familiar with it.

The Active Learning process uses a sequenced approach which always includes these elements:

Do

Students take part in an activity in the whole class, in a group, in pairs or alone.

eg Students are presented with a scenario to study – they may read and discuss it, script it and/or role play the situation.



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Review

Students review and reflect on their learning.

- eg Using a series of open questions:
- What do you think each of the characters in the scenario was thinking?
 - What might they be thinking about?
 - What could each of the characters have done differently?

Learn

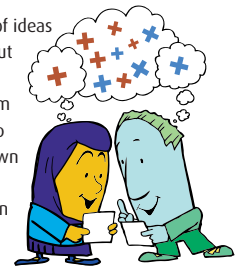
The educator helps students to learn from their experience.

- Was there something new about the situation?
- Was there anything surprising?
- Is there anything you can apply to your own practice?

Chapter 5 Methodologies

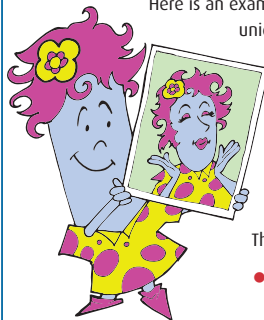
Brainstorming

Brainstorming (sometimes called 'Ideas Storming') is a method of generating a lot of ideas quickly. In a large class it will probably be better to have students work in groups, but in a small class it may be possible to work all together. Identify the theme for the brainstorm. Give each group a large sheet of paper and a felt-tip pen, and have them select one person to scribe. The scribe's task is to write down all the ideas the group comes up with. Make clear that every idea is acceptable, the scribe should write down exactly what has been said and the groups should aim to get lots of ideas written down without getting into discussion. Giving a slightly different task to each group in order to compare responses can sometimes be useful.



What is Beautiful?

Here is an example of a brainstorming activity that can lead on to work about body image, uniqueness and celebrating difference.



Display the word 'beauty' on a flipchart or board and ask the group to think of words that come to their minds when they think about that word (eg pretty, cosmetics, youth, ugly . . .) – accept names of celebrities too. Ask for responses, write up each one exactly as it comes, without comment, and discourage the group from discussing or commenting at this time.

Then discuss with the group some of the following:

- What do you notice about the kinds of words we have listed? Which are positive and which are negative?
- Did any words surprise you? If so, which ones and why?
- Which apply to people? Which apply to non-humans?
- Did you disagree with any of the words in the list? If so, which words and why?

Create small working groups and give each group a large sheet of paper and felt-tip pens. Allocate one of these tasks to each group:

- come up with a definition of the word 'beauty' in words or pictures
- write down expressions that include the word 'beauty' (eg beauty sleep)

Bring the class back together, ask them to look at what other groups have written and discuss the issues raised.

Alternatively, explore with the class the meanings of sayings such as 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder' or 'beauty is only skin deep', then have groups discuss their views on the sayings or lead a class discussion.

As a final reflection you might ask students individually to write down the name of one person, one place and one thing that they think is beautiful, and for each one to add a sentence about why they think this.