

# Instructional Practices and Resources

## Active Learning

ENG workshops follow an **active learning** model. Active learning means that instructors are encouraged to provide engaging, hands-on learning activities that cultivate student engagement and active participation. In other words, rather than lecturing, instructors facilitate learner-centered activities that enable students to push themselves to learn and apply new concepts.

Examples of activities that promote active learning:

- Classroom discussion
- Feedback
- Collaborative activities
- Guided discovery
- Critical thinking/analysis
- Reasoning
- Modeling (I do, you do, we do)
- Connecting with other disciplines
- Presentations
- Making connections to real-life applications/giving context
- Problem solving
- Hands-on activities (e.g. writing on the board, classroom debates, etc.)
- Group/pair work
- Cues/questions
- Activating prior knowledge
- Summarizing
- Student self-assessment
- Goal-setting

## Learning Styles

As the facilitator, it is important to be inclusive of different learning styles, especially given that the students in the program tend to come from diverse backgrounds. Being mindful of different learning styles can make you more effective as a facilitator.



Source: <https://teach.com/what/teachers-teach/learning-styles/>

The table above suggests that students often fall into one (or more) of the following learning styles: visual, auditory, read & write, or kinesthetic. It is often most inclusive for students when facilitators cover multiple learning styles through their instructional methods. For example, when teaching about a bell curve in statistics, a teacher could describe the bell curve aloud, while using a power point slide with a photo and written caption to maximize the lesson's effectiveness.

### Pausing and Prompting

Wait time is especially important for critical thinking situations. Often, teachers will ask a complex question but not wait too long for the complex answer; instead, they will begin prompting students or even answering the question. It can be beneficial to sustain the pause. If, after waiting 15-30 seconds, it becomes clear that the students do not know the answer, try to prompt them and guide them to discover the answer on their own.

### Movement

Moving around the room is often extremely helpful. This can come in the form of moving about when lecturing, floating from student to student to provide one-on-one guidance, or even gesturing while presenting. Individual attention can go a long way in helping a student overcome a difficult concept, motivating someone, or even just communicating a point more clearly. Thus, as a facilitator, try to actively seek out students who might need help during individual activities.

### Positive Reinforcement and Encouragement

Positive reinforcement is a subtle yet effective way to motivate students to participate. For example, simply saying "thanks for volunteering" to a student who has raised his/her hand will communicate to other students that this behavior is appreciated and exemplary. In a similar vein, acknowledging good behavior (listening, participating, being prepared, being responsible, helping other students, etc.) will simultaneously motivate students to continue the behavior and encourage other students to follow suit.

Encouragement is also a highly effective teaching habit. Some students may be more reserved toward participating or sharing answers, and it is one of your roles as a facilitator to empower them to do so. While a facilitator might not always know the reason for the reserved behavior, it is helpful to consistently encourage.

### Teaching suggestions

These practices often help in the classroom, but may need to be adapted depending on the students you are working with and the situation you are in. (Source: Wojo Womack)

1. Project your voice.
2. Check in and have students teach back to you what you just covered. (Not just regurgitate.)
3. Move around the room as you speak if possible.
4. Be mindful of your pace. (Slow and steady vs. fast and energetic.)
5. Continuously use positive reinforcement, but vary your delivery.
6. Describe/Explain, Bullet Point, Model/Example, Bullet Point Recap.
7. Use the Multiple Intelligences approach whenever possible

## 1. Identify and play to their **strengths**

### The Be's

These practices often help in the classroom, but may need to be adapted depending on the students you are working with and the situation you are in; there is no “one size fits all” approach to teaching. (Source: Wojo Womack)

- Be genuine. (Know what you have to offer. Bring all applicable traits, experiences and knowledge to bear)
- Be persuasive. (Reciprocity [Incentive], Consistency [Buy in], Consensus [Social Proof], Relating [relate to, aspire to, or compliment them], Authority [Expert or knowledgeable].)
- Be prepared. (Material, Equipment, Supplies, etc...)
- Be knowledgeable and aware. (Know the material, know your students, know the culture.)
- Be deliberate, clear, and concise. (Premeditate your actions and they should be a means to a specific end. Understand your intentions vs. their perception. Use less words.)
- Be confident. (Not arrogant. Comfortable in your position in the class, school, life.)
- Be approachable. (Students should feel they can talk to you.)
- Be “fair”. (Establishing norms and protocol.)
- Be consistent.

### 6 Principles of Persuasion

These principles can be helpful in connecting with your students and having a cooperative learning environment. (Source: Wojo Womack)

- **Reciprocity** – More likely to do something for someone because that person did something for you.
- **Scarcity** – Less of something makes it more valuable.
- **Authority** – Perception of credible, knowledgeable expert or someone in charge.
- **Consistency** – Getting them to take a baby step. Then they are more likely to continue. Commit a little.
- **Liking** – Similarity, complimentary, cooperate towards mutual goals.
- **Consensus** – Everyone else is doing or not doing it. Social cues.

### Self-Assessment Questions: Know who you are and what you bring to the table

The following are a series of question that will give you perspective on who you are and what views, philosophies, and principles you bring to the classroom. If your students also answer these questions, you may find common ground or at least some understanding of where they are coming from, who they are, and what they are bringing to the classroom. (Source: Wojo Womack)

- Do you make friends easily? What is the first thing you do when meeting someone new?
- What is something about you that everyone seems to like? (What personality traits have you been complimented on or recognized for?)
- When was the last time you yelled or screamed at someone and why?
- What are your top three skills?
- What are your top three personality traits

- What is something you can do that you don't think anyone in the room can do?
- What is one thing you have always been curious about?
- What is your essence? (Ex. The essence of a knife is the blade. You can change materials and handles, but without a blade a knife is not a knife.)
- If you couldn't be you who would you be and why?
- What is/was your greatest fear in the classroom?
- What is something people assume about you?
- What is one thing about you that would make you mad if someone got it wrong and told other people the wrong thing? What is something you wouldn't care about if they got wrong?
- What is most important to you in life?
- If you had to sell everything you own because of an emergency. What is the last thing you would sell and why?
- What do you spend most of your energy or time doing? What do you do the most?
- What is something you find extremely fun?
- What is something you strongly dislike?
- What is the best thing about your life right now?
- What is the worst thing about your life right now?
- What is the best/worst thing about school?
- If everyone in the world had to listen to you for 30 seconds what would you say?