

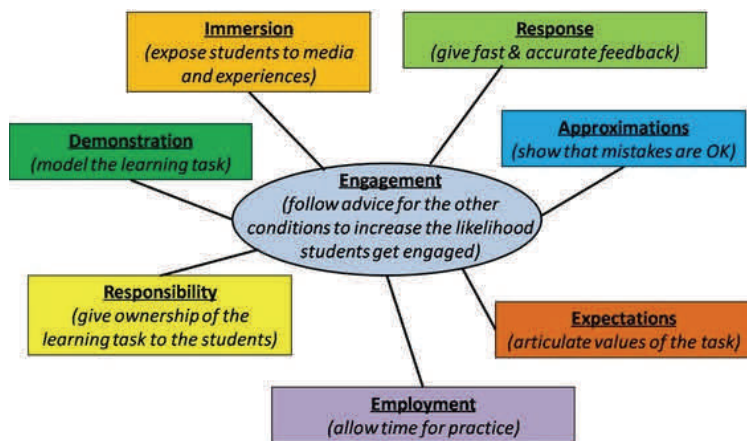
Coaches' Connection

Focus: Increasing Student Engagement

Seven Ways to Increase Student Engagement

Why do we want learners of all ages to be engaged during instruction? Because involved students learn more efficiently and are more successful at remembering what they learned. In addition, students who are engaged in learning are more likely to become passionate about learning in general. **Student engagement** is one byproduct of effective instruction that has major pay offs. Now that you know how to measure your students' level of engagement, how can you **increase** the amount of time that students in your class are engaged in your instruction? Here are some suggestions:

1. **Use the 10:2 method.** For every 10 minutes of instruction allow the students 2 minutes to process and respond to the instruction. This can be done in various ways by having them write what they have learned, questions they may have, or by discussing the content with a fellow student.
2. **Incorporate movement into your lessons.** Require students to respond to a question by moving to a certain spot in the room, writing on whiteboards, or standing (or sitting) when they are done thinking about the question, etc.
3. **Pick up the pace.** One misconception is that we must go slow for students to really understand and engage in a lesson. There is a lot of evidence that shows that when teaching is at a brisk instructional pace, students have more opportunities to engage, respond, and move on to the next concept (Carnine & Fink, 1978; Williams, 1993; Emsbarger et al., 2001).
4. **Provide frequent and effective feedback.**
5. **Allow students 5-7 seconds of 'think time' when asking a question.** At the end of the time draw a random name to answer the question.
6. **At the end of a lesson have students use the 3-2-1 method of summarizing** by having students record three things they learned, two interesting things, and one question they have about what was taught. Allow time to share their findings with a peer.
7. **Periodically pause mid-sentence** when teaching requiring students to fill in the blanks.



"To keep kids engaged, we need to bring passion for learning back into the classroom."
—Ainissa Ramirez, Educator



Brain Breaks



ROLL SOME BRAIN BREAKS

Directions: Roll one die for each of the columns. Perform the quick brain break that matches the number you rolled on the die. For example, if you roll a 1-2-4-3-6 you would perform the following brain breaks: 10 jumping jacks, 5 wall push ups, 5 wall push ups, 10 jumps over a pencil on the floor and take 10 deep breaths.

	Column #1	Column #2	Column #3	Column #4	Column #5
1	10 jumping jacks	Wiggle your whole body for a count of 10.	Bring R elbow to L knee and L elbow to R knee 5 times	Jump in place 10 times.	Rub your entire R arm with your L hand
2	Squeeze your R hand firmly with your L hand	5 wall push ups	Move the upper half of your body	Spin in a circle 3 times to the right	Touch L hand to bottom of R foot. Repeat 5x.
3	Move the right side of your body	Spread legs apart and bend at waist looking between knees. Repeat 5x.	Make 10 small circles with your arms	10 jumps over a pencil on floor	Give yourself a big hug for 10 seconds
4	Rub your entire L arm with your R hand	Touch R hand to bottom of L foot. Repeat 5x.	Twist at the waist 10 times with arms out to the side	Spin in a circle 3 times to the	Make 10 large circles with your arms
5	Touch R hand to L shoulder. Touch L hand to R shoulder. Repeat 3x.	March in place with knees high for a count of 10	Squeeze your L hand firmly with your R hand	Move the left side of your body	Touch R hand to L foot and then L hand to R foot 3 times
6	Run in place for a count of 15	Move the lower half of your body	Touch hands overhead and try to balance on one foot for 5 seconds.	Tap your feet on the floor while making small circles with fingers for 10 sec	Take 10 deep breaths

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Task Cards

Easy-Peasy Task Cards!

Task cards come in sets. Each card in the set has just one question or challenge. This makes them:

- a. inviting to students
- b. more fun than worksheets
- c. easy to manage
- d. all of the above

Did you know?

And also

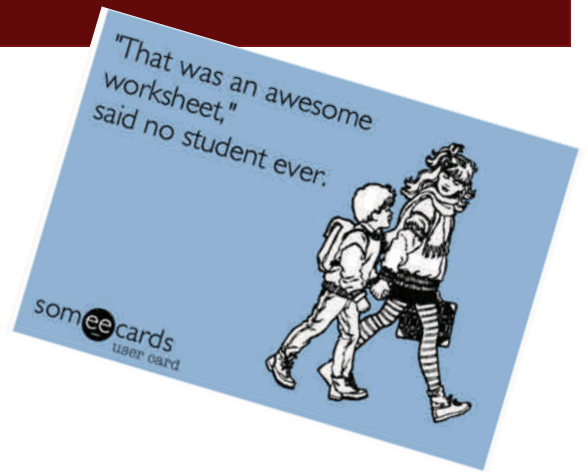
Student responses to task cards can be:

- a. multiple choice
- b. short answer
- c. open-ended
- d. any of the above

How cool is that?

Task cards can be used at any grade level for any subject.

What are some ways you can use task cards with your students?



Task Card Resources: (click on a link)

- **<http://www.teachingwithtaskcards.com/>
- **<http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Reading-Strategies-Task-Cards-24-FREE-Paragraph-Cards-391934>
- **<http://nicadez.blogspot.com/2012/09/the-invaluable-task-cards.html>
- **www.teachingwithamountainview.com/2012/11/task-card-corner.html

- FREE Task Card Sites:**
- ⇒ [Measurement Grades 4-6](#)
 - ⇒ [Powers of Ten Grades 5-7](#)
 - ⇒ [Active Reading Grades 9-12](#)
 - ⇒ [Reading Strategies Grades 3-6](#)
 - ⇒ Many more can be found by doing a quick search on Google.

Task cards are....

Versatile use them

- ◆ at centers or stations
- ◆ in pairs
- ◆ with small groups
- ◆ with the whole class

Differentiated

- ◆ Use for remediation
- ◆ Use for enrichment
- ◆ Target a specific skill
- ◆ Use for review and assessment.

Economical: Print, cut, and laminate once, use forever.

- ◆ Saves paper
- ◆ Saves money

Brain Breaks: An Energizing Time-Out

By Tiffani Mugarussa on April 8, 2013

Grades: PreK-K, 1-2, 3-5, 6-8



Everyone needs a brain break occasionally, especially little learners who have been working hard all day. Most teachers can sense when their class is getting antsy, but what they do about it can make all the difference.

Why a Brain Break

When looking at your daily schedule, are there particular times during the day when your students seem to lose focus? Perhaps it is during that precious uninterrupted learning time. I cherish the two-hour block I have at the end of my day, but unfortunately my students' attention spans aren't

always what I need them to be. This is when brain breaks can really help. They are a great way to re-energize your students, to get their blood pumping and their brains re-charged. It allows kids to get their "wiggles" out, which will, in turn, help them to stay focused on the next task.

When to Do a Brain Break

Brain breaks can be used before, during, or after a lesson. The key idea to a brain break is to wake up your students to keep them focused. Often, I will use a brain break after giving direct instructions to my class while we are still at the carpet. For example, if I've just taught a math lesson, I might ask my kids to count how many steps it takes them to reach their seats. Now they have a task to perform while they are transitioning. The majority of students will be so focused on counting their steps that they have little time for chitchat. As their teacher, you know your students best. When you see their eyes wandering away and staring at some inanimate object, it probably means it's time for a break.

What Breaks Are Best?

Depending on your classroom space, your breaks can be small motor-type exercises with simple hand movements or large motor exercises that involve lots of moving. My students love to dance, so any break that involves getting up and moving is their favorite.

For me, I need my brain breaks to be quick, meaningful, and easy. I don't have time to pass out paper to play tic-tac-toe type games or explain how a brain break works. I need it to be down and dirty. With brain breaks all the rage, there are a dizzying number of resources to get you started on building a repertoire of quick go-to breaks. So you don't have to wade through them all, I have created a list of some of my favorite brain break activities to share with you here.



- **Movement Songs:** Sing a song with whole-body movements such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" or "Shake Your Silly's Out" (by Raffie).
- **Recorded Movement Songs:** Students might enjoy songs like "Cha-Cha Slide," "Sid Shuffle," "YMCA," or the "Macarena."
- **Jump Skip Counting:** Students count by twos, fives, or tens while jumping with each count.
- **Exercise Movement Counting:** Same as jump counting, but using different types of exercises such as arm circles or knee bends.
- **Pretend:** Pretend to be various animals, transportation vehicles, or book characters.
- **Dance Party:** Put on some music and dance!
- **Freeze Dance:** Play music and have students freeze when it stops.
- **Line Up:** Have students line up using specific criteria such as age, last name (alphabetically), height, age (months of the year).
- **Simon Says:** Students do what Simon says.
- **Follow the Leader:** Students follow the movements of whoever is the leader.
- **Pattern Clap:** Clap your hands in different slow and quick patterns and have students copy.

I also like to utilize technology during my brain breaks. My class becomes ecstatic when they see me opening the laptop for a brain break. They know it means they really get to move about. I have scoured the Internet looking for the best kid-friendly clips to use in my classroom. I've saved them to my laptop using an online app called iLivid. It allows me to share the video clips without worrying about pesky YouTube advertisements or inappropriate content. My favorite online videos for brain breaks are by Mr. Harry's Kindergarten. A simple YouTube search for Mr. Harry's Kindergarten will give you a wide variety of songs to use. Here are three of my favorites:

- "Let's Get Fit"
- "Do You Know Your Alphabet?"
- "I Can Count to 100"

For more brain break activities you can visit the Michigan Department of Education.

Do you use brain breaks in your classroom? If so, I hope you will share some of your students' favorite ways to beat the blahs and re-energize their brains.

Technology Focus...

Using QR Codes in the Classroom

It's easier
than you think!



In case you didn't know, QR codes are short for Quick Response codes. You simply scan the code with your QR device (on most smart phones, iPod touches, and iPads) and it shows up as either plain text or a website. These codes are a great way to engage students and can be used in a variety of ways. One of the easiest ways to get started is to create a QR code of a website you would like your students to visit. How do you make a QR code? Simply visit any QR code generator website (google search QR code generator and you will find tons of them). Once there, simply type the text you want students to see or copy and paste the web address you want students to visit. Click generate, and your QR code appears instantly.

I have been creating task cards for my students that include a QR code with the answer. Students solve the problem, then check their answer by scanning the code. This is great for students who need immediate confirmation of a correct or incorrect answer. This also allows you to help students fix mis-understandings before they complete 10 problems all incorrectly.



I have also been using lots of QR code scavenger hunts in my classroom. I do this by creating 8 cards with problems on one side. I then put QR Codes with answers on different cards. Students solve the question on one card, then scan QR codes until they match their answer. They then answer the question on that card and continue the search. This is a wonderful interactive activity that keeps students engaged and practicing those math skills!

Taken From:

http://www.minds-in-bloom.com/2013/04/using-qr-codes-in-your-classroom-its_20.html

QR Codes for a Center Activity

<http://owlsareahoot.blogspot.com/2012/07/qr-codes.html>



FREE RESOURCE

Engage the class

Socrative is a smart student response system that empowers teachers to engage their classrooms through a series of educational exercises and games via smartphones, laptops, and tablets.

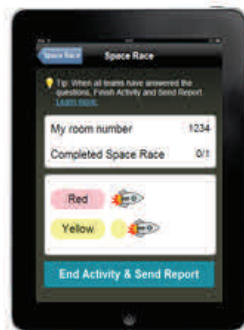
www.socrative.com

Super Easy To Use



Socrative takes teachers 3 minutes to set up and takes their classes 20 seconds to load. So easy. So fast. Try it now!

Use on All Web-Enabled Devices



Teacher Testimonials

"I never had such a reaction from the students before. Socrative immediately engaged all the students in the class."

- Prof. Wisam Al-Rawi, U Michigan

"Socrative saves me 80 minutes per week in grading time."

- Kristina Buenafe,
Boston Public High School Math
Teacher

Poll Everywhere

www.polleverywhere.com

FREE RESOURCE

This is how it works



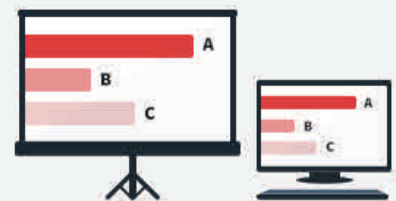
1

Ask your audience a question with the Poll Everywhere app



2

Audience answers in real time using mobile phones, Twitter, or web browsers



3

See your response live on the web or in a PowerPoint or Keynote presentation

Student Engagement: 5 Ways to Get and Keep Your Students' Attention

Using unusual information to capture "situational interest" keeps students guessing.

It's hot! But... the dog days of summer are almost gone. Did you know that the brightest star in the night sky was once believed to have caused the sultry heat of July and August? *(Now, take a three-second pause).*

Think back to your days in science class: Sirius is also called the "Dog Star." Ancient Greeks thought this bright star, part of the constellation Canis Major, was the reason for the hot sultry days of summer and the reason for the flooding of the Nile River. Interesting. *(Three-second pause).*

Yes indeed! Students and adults are captivated by unusual information. Why? *(Three-second pause)* It triggers [situational interest](#). Teachers who deliberately plan to trigger and maintain their student's interest can increase situational interest in students.

Students who are interested learn more. Why? *(You know what to do here!)* They are better suited to attend to the instructional activities occurring in class. Research findings regarding engagement and [student achievement](#) show an average gain of 27 to 31 percent.

To increase [student engagement](#), take time to incorporate the following concepts, from Marzano's [Art and Science of Teaching](#), into your lessons:

1 High Energy

The same part of the brain that processes movement also processes learning. When planning lessons, find ways to [incorporate movement](#). It doesn't have to be dramatic—using three different colored highlighters to highlight different types of information is still movement. Allowing students to "vote with their feet," by strategically placing answers around the room and having students walk and stand by their answers is a great way to add movement.

2 Missing information

Curiosity killed the cat, and it also increases student's "appetitive" state. Academically focused puzzles and games whet the "mental appetite" and provide an element of anticipation. Incorporate [academic games](#) into your lessons. They are great previewing and reviewing activities for students.

3 Mild Controversy and Competition

Students enjoy problem-solving with their peers. When controversy is not too strong, it can enhance learning by adding excitement and fun into classroom activities. Incorporate structured debates and group competitions to [enhance student achievement](#). Inconsequential competition can be PowerPoint-based "Jeopardy" and "Clue" games. Be mindful to ensure that all students are part of a "winning team."

4 The Self-System

The self-system is the system that controls what we decide to attend to. Everything we find personally interesting and valuable. Take a general inventory of your students' likes. Plan critical input experiences that reflect the learning goal, and things that give your students enjoyment, satisfaction, and pride.

5 Mild Pressure

Students are smart; they look for patterns in our behavior. Keep them guessing and also attentive. Students will raise their level of attention if there is a moderate chance they will be called on. Mild pressure can be generated during questioning. Don't stop calling on students once someone has given the right answer, and get several points of view to sharpen students' thinking.

Don't forget to provide adequate wait time before calling on the next student. **Allow at least three seconds before calling on the next student.** Build a bit of anticipation and tension with the three-second-pause rule for students to respond to questions. Works every time!

If you read this far, now you can explain the "three second pause." Have fun and enjoy.

Got tips and tricks for keeping students engaged? Share them with us in the comments section. Or pose us a question and we'll be happy to answer.

For resources on lesson planning for student engagement, see Dr. Marzano's book, [The Highly Engaged Classroom](#).



Keeping students engaged is easy. Not!

Professional Resources

Articles: (click the links below)

Using Engagement Strategies to Facilitate Children's Learning Success

<http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200603/JablonBTJ.pdf>

Whole Brain Teaching! Mirror

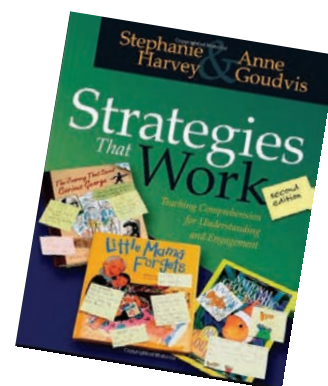
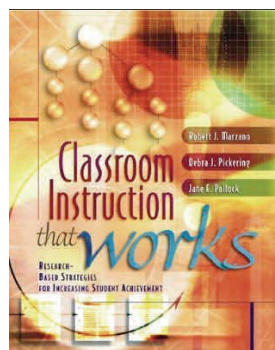
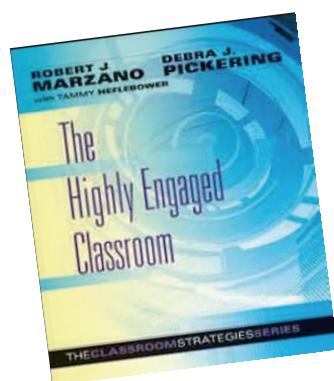
<http://misslwholebrainteaching.blogspot.com/2012/02/whole-brain-teaching-wednesday-mirror.html>

A Teaching Guide to Fostering Student Engagement

http://www.studentengagementtrust.org/engagementAcademy/docs/SET_Teacher_Resource.pdf

Main Idea: The Highly Engaged Classroom

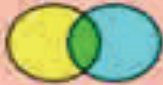
<http://www.centergrove.k12.in.us/cms/lib4/IN01000850/Centricity/Domain/1217/The%20Main%20Idea%20-%20The%20Highly%20Engaged%20Classroom.pdf>



Just **TWO MINUTES** a day of focused, DEEP abdominal breathing resulted in a 37% decrease in disciplinary events in elementary classrooms.



Marzano's High Yield Strategies



Similarities and Differences

Enhance students' understanding of and ability to use knowledge.

45 percent gain



Summarizing and Notetaking

Provide students with tools for identifying and understanding the most important aspects of what they are learning.

34 percent gain



Reinforcing effort and providing recognition

Teach that hard work leads to success; stimulates motivation and enhances achievement.

29 percent gain



Homework and Practice

Extend the school day and provides students with opportunities to refine and extend their knowledge.

28 percent gain



Nonlinguistic representations

Help students understand content in a new way. These can range from graphic organizers to physical knowledge.

27 percent gain



Cooperative Learning

Develop positive interdependence, accountability, interpersonal skills and small-group skills and group processing.

27 percent gain



Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback

Establish a direction for learning and students personalize instructional objectives. Providing frequent feedback that is corrective in nature positively impacts student achievement.

23 percent gain



Generating and Testing Hypotheses

Involve the application of knowledge and has practical applications in all curriculum areas: systems analysis, problem solving and historical investigations are three examples.

23 percent gain



Cues, Questions and Advance Organizers

Help activate prior knowledge, stimulate analytical thinking and promote deeper learning.

22 percent gain

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

According to Phillip Schlechty, there are five ways that students respond or adapt to school-related tasks and activities.



ENGAGEMENT

HIGH ATTENTION - HIGH COMMITMENT

The student associates the task with a result or product that has meaning and value for the student. The student will persist in the face of difficulty and will learn at high and profound levels.



STRATEGIC COMPLIANCE

HIGH ATTENTION - LOW COMMITMENT

The task has little inherent or direct value to the student, but the student associates it with outcomes or results that do have value to the student (such as grades). Student will abandon work if extrinsic goals are not realized and will not retain what is learned.



RITUAL COMPLIANCE

LOW ATTENTION - LOW COMMITMENT

The student is willing to expend whatever effort is needed to avoid negative consequences. The emphasis is on meeting the minimum requirements. The student will learn at low and superficial levels.



RETREATISM

NO ATTENTION - NO COMMITMENT

The student is disengaged from the task and does not attempt to comply with its demands, but does not try to disrupt the work or substitute other activities for it. The student does not participate and learns little or nothing from the task.



REBELLION

DIVERTED ATTENTION - NO COMMITMENT

The student refuses to do the work, acts in ways to disrupt others, or substitutes tasks and activities to which he or she is committed. Student develops poor work sometimes negative attitudes towards formal education and intellectual tasks.

The Highly Engaged Classroom



The Well Managed Classroom



The Pathological Classroom



27 Ways To Increase Participation

See Show them the goal of the activity.	Strategize Do team work and let students answer together.	Color Give the student markers to highlight their ideas.
Supply Give the students odd materials to create a product.	Bonding Let the students express themselves in their own way.	Sell Sell them on the idea to conclude.
Demo Demonstrate how to participate.	GAMIFY Use gamification.	Share Have an open share time.
Compete Create a competition out of it.	Time Set a time limit on the activity to increase urgency.	Character Create a character or role for them to play.
Grade Disconnect it from grades so they can give immediate information and not affect the grade.	Rabbit Allow rabbit ears that they want to take.	Patience Be patient for students to engage.
Fail Show them you don't know everything and let it go.	Rule Set rules of engagement together.	Emotion Allow for emotions.
Resources Give them the resources to participate.	Story board Create a story that carries through the lesson.	Survey Ask the students how they like to participate.
Assist Ask them to assist you in the activity.	Switch Switch it up frequently and keep them on their toes.	Energy Teachers, you must have energy and enthusiasm.
Purpose I have a visible purpose for the activity.	Real Give them a real life problem to solve.	Tap Tap into their drive.

By: Mia MacMeekin

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn."

- Benjamin Franklin

Instructional Protocol of The Month

Take a Stand Protocol

Purpose

Students articulate and reflect on their opinions about controversial questions.

Procedure

Post two signs at either end of an imaginary line that goes across the classroom. At one end of the line, post “Strongly Agree.” At the other end, post “Strongly Disagree.”

1. Tell students that today they will be using the Take a Stand protocol, which will allow them to share and explain their opinions. After they hear a statement, they will move to a place on an imaginary line that best reflects their beliefs.
2. Explain the steps of the protocol:
 - a. The teacher will make a statement and then students will move, depending on whether they agree or disagree with that statement, to a place on the imaginary line that goes across the room. Point out that one side of the room is labeled “Strongly Disagree” and the other side labeled “Strongly Agree,” and this means that the middle of the line is undecided.
 - b. After the teacher makes a statement, she will pause for students to think and then ask all students to move to the place on the imaginary line that best reflects their opinions.
 - c. The teacher will ask students to share and justify their opinions, making sure to hear from people on different parts of the line.
 - d. If a student hears an opinion that changes his mind, he can move quietly to a different part of the line.
3. Model how the protocol will work. Make a statement (such as, “Chocolate ice cream is delicious”) and show students how you would move to reflect your opinion. The modeling helps students internalize how to use the invisible line.
4. As you use the protocol:
 - a. Repeat each statement twice.
 - b. You can have students stand up or sit down in their places, depending on the needs of your students.

Cooperative Learning Strategy of The Month

Inside-Outside

Circle



Steps for the Strategy

1. Students pair up, then the class forms two concentric circles with Partner A on the inside and Partner B on the outside. Partners face each other.
2. Pose a question and Partner A shares his/her answer with Partner B. Then Partner B shares his/her answer.
3. Direct either the inside circle or the outside circle to rotate either clockwise or counter clockwise.
4. Once the students have rotated they have a new partner and steps 2-3 are repeated.

Management Tips

1. Alternate way for forming circles: Students create one large circle, they pair up, one partner moves to the inside, partners face each other.
2. Stand inside the circle allows better teacher management.
3. Students can demonstrate they are finished discussing by both turning to face the teacher in the center.
4. Questions should not require paper or pencil to answer. Short answer or higher level thinking skills questions should be asked.
5. Provide two different sets of cards which contain the questions (instead of being asked by the teacher)—one set of the inside circle, one set for the outside circle.

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