

Instructional Strategies

Chalk Talk

A chalk talk is a way to promote discussion and awareness of issues and perspectives—silently. A chalk talk is also an excellent way to promote awareness of patterns/problems and to ensure that all voices are heard.

Procedure:

1. Formulate an open-ended question that will provoke comments .
2. Provide chart paper & markers or a large chalkboard and arrange a good space for students to write & respond. Write the question or topic in the middle of the paper/chalkboard.
3. Set-up norms for the chalk talk: This technique only works if everyone is writing and responding throughout the designated time period. Make it clear that everyone is responsible for writing, reading other people's comments, and responding; there should be no talking; and no one should sit down until the time period is over. Opinions must be freely expressed and honored, and no personal attacks are allowed.
4. Allow 10-20 minutes for the chalk talk. As facilitator, it's helpful to walk around and read, and gently point participants to interesting comments. All writing and responding is done in silence.
5. Search for patterns. In pairs, participants should read through all the postings and search for patterns and themes (about 5 minutes).
6. Whole-group share: Pairs should report out patterns and themes, until all perceptions are shared.
7. Process debrief: What was the experience like of "talking" silently?

Assessment Strategies

Roll the Die

Put a spin on reflection-based assessments by asking students to vocalize instead of write them, quickly taking notes as they speak. To end class, start the activity by placing a die at each student's desk. Each die face represents the beginning of a sentence that must be completed. Displaying or projecting them at the front of class, these six sentences should be along the lines of:

"I learned today that ..."

"I'm still confused about ..."

"I would like to hear more about..."

Since there are six options and likely many more students in your class, you'll hear a range of answers as students roll dice one after another, completing the corresponding sentences aloud. As a result, you should get a grasp of what students do and don't understand about the day's lessons.

Self-Directed Response

Allow students choice to prove to you that they understand the content. Students can express their understanding through a diagram, poem, song, art, or any related form in a way that a stranger would understand.

Example of Student Response: I wrote this chorus of a song I've been thinking of that would explain this character's motivation...



Classroom / Time Management Strategies

Digital Daily Agenda

A digital daily agenda is a slide, usually in PowerPoint or Google Slides format, that you display at the front of the classroom where all of your students can see it. It includes important information about what you're doing that day, as well as the learning objective(s) and any necessary materials. You could also include : the date, bell ringer task, homework, reminders, shout outs, quotes, trivia, etc.