

Active Teaching Viewing Guide

As you watch, list your key observations here:

1. What did you notice about the classroom environment?

2. What did you notice about the teacher-student interactions?

3. What did you notice about the students?

4. What else stood out to you?

Responsive Classroom Approach to Active Teaching

What Is Active Teaching?

Active teaching is a straightforward, developmentally appropriate strategy for delivering active instruction to middle school students.

During the active teaching portion of a lesson, the teacher is responsible for presenting, explaining, illustrating, and demonstrating content in a way that enables students to meet a learning objective—one that clearly describes what students should know, understand, and be able to do.

Although lecturing while students take notes is a common strategy for teaching, more effective strategies for middle school students are those that play to their developmental strengths and needs for activity, social interaction, and fun.

Three Phases of the *Responsive Classroom* Approach to Active Teaching:

Phase 1: Teach and Model

Phase 2: Student Collaboration

Phase 3: Facilitate Reflection

Phase 1: Teach and Model

Graphic Organizers Visual tools students can use to express their thinking and knowledge, grasp of concepts and ideas, and understanding of the relationships among them.	Physical Models Students create concrete representations of what they're learning or use computer-generated models or simulations, which helps them form stronger mental images of this knowledge.	Mental Images Students use their five senses and emotions to generate a picture in their minds of content and skills being learned.	Pictures, Pictographs, and Ideographs Students draw, paint, and use technology devices to create their own pictures to represent their knowledge and understanding.	Kinesthetic Activities Activities that allow students to move and use their senses to create strong mental images based on these physical experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause and Effect • Compare/Contrast • Flow Chart • Mind Map • T-Chart • Goal-Setting • KWL • Venn Diagram 	Language Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flash cards of vocabulary words or spelling words for English language learners Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models of atomic structure or molecules Math <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math manipulatives • Dice Social Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foldables • Board games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided Think-Pair-Shares • Interactive Modeling lessons • Using mnemonic devices • Creating analogies • Visualizing concepts and characters from books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Icons and symbols • Infographics • Illustrations, sketches, and drawings • Collages • Comics and graphic novels • Photos • Videos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive learning structures that involve movement • Demonstrations, such as Fishbowl • Movements associated with reading, such as the brain break The Fidget Family • Curriculum-related brain breaks that involve movement, such as Human Number Line • Role-plays

Phase 2: Student Collaboration

Student collaboration gives students the opportunity to come together by thinking and talking to each other about key points they noticed during the teach and model phase.

Three Key Strategies for Student Collaboration

Provide a structure for students' collaborative conversations	Jump-start students' thinking with questions or sentence stems	Reminding language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For pairs—Think-Pair-Share, Think-Write-Pair-Share, AM/PM Partners, Swap Meet, Walk and Talk ● For small groups—Table Talk, Last Word, Commonalities, One Word Around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Question: In what ways do these parts work together? In what ways are they distinct? ● Sentence stem: When I think of _____ [for example, constructing a five-paragraph essay], I imagine the parts as _____. ● Question: What are some similarities and differences between these categories, and do you see a different way to categorize these items? ● Sentence stem: What I noticed that these categories of _____ [for example, software features] had in common was _____. ● Question: How should someone decide which of these solutions to try in different situations? ● Sentence stem: I can imagine how _____ would solve the problem if _____ but not if _____. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remind students of the expectations for small group learning. ● Refocus students and keep them on track during conversation.

Phase 3: Facilitate Reflection

Teacher-facilitated reflection helps ensure that students make meaning of their learning by thinking about how they experienced that learning.

- **Reflection allows us to make sense of new information.**
- **Reflection is not the same as recounting or restating.**
- **Teachers use prompts and questions to foster fruitful reflection.**

Three types of prompts that help students focus on the specific goals of reflection, with examples of how a teacher might use them:	Three types of reflection questions help students to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Discussion activities—To facilitate student reflection on taking responsibility for their learning, a teacher could have students do an inside-outside circle discussion of what they did to contribute to their own learning today or what they would do differently next time to learn even more.● Writing activities—To help students reflect on the strategies they used to help them learn a difficult concept, a teacher could prompt them to write, on their own or with a partner, a list, paragraph, or journal entry about their strategies and then invite the class to popcorn share, if appropriate.● Art activities—A teacher could prompt students to think about, doodle (draw), or pair-share an image that represents the growth in their learning.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Become more aware of how they learn.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ What skills or strategies did you use to help you learn the content?➤ What do you believe the teacher could have done differently to help you meet this objective more easily?2. Take more responsibility for their learning.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ If you could do this over, what would you do differently to improve your performance?➤ Which aspects of your efforts do you think contributed the most to your success in meeting the objective?3. See growth in their learning.<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ How can you prove that you met the learning objective? What evidence do you have to support your response?