



INNOVATION ABSTRACTS

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PERSONALIZE, ACTIONALIZE, AND SOCIALIZE!

The Chinese proverb observes: “I hear, and I forget. I see, and I remember. I do, and I understand.” Implementing these three concepts that put the proverb into action can help increase student involvement and engagement in a course—“personalizing” the sessions, “actionalizing” them, and “socializing” within them!

Strategies implementing these concepts raise the level of “edutainment” and interest in the classroom.

Talent Search

When students are asked to think of something unique that they can share with the group at the beginning of a semester, they are given the opportunity to shine and feel good about themselves. The positive tone with which this starts off a journey of learning lasts and spreads throughout the semester as off and on we refer to their presentations. Very often these talents are inspirations to others to learn and grow. This gives each student a picture of the others and it helps build relationships as well. Small-group work is easier when students already have begun to know each other. It is an investment that pays rich dividends.

Setting a time limit on the talent presentation makes it manageable. Alternatively, this can be the way to start a class for the first two weeks, with a few presentations each class.

Positive Weekend Stories

When students return from a weekend, it is time for renewal of the bonds. Asking each student to share one good thing that happened over the weekend helps all focus on the positive. This simple activity can serve a therapeutic purpose for a student who is going through a rough patch, as we all do sometimes. It influences the learning that can happen when students are in a positive frame of mind.

Embellish this joyous activity by converting it into a catch-and-throw session in a circle, using a softball, and it serves not only as a mood lifter but as an energy lifter!

Chapter Quiz Game

After every chapter, content can be converted into a quizzing game. Pairing or grouping students to work together (ask them to work with someone they have not worked with before) helps them interact and socialize as they pick each others’ brains for the answers. This activity can be converted into a team quiz game which generates a lot of excitement, healthy competition, and fun! Revising the content of each chapter as we move along helps to assess learning and reinforce key concepts.

Movin’ and Learnin’

Inherent in brain-based teaching is the realization that too much talk makes people queasy. “Action songs” every 30 minutes make the brain and the body wake up together. It is great way to shake out the “sillies.”

Activities can be built around course topics to have students move around as they search for answers and solve puzzles. “Word and Definition” matches cards; students find their partners who have the definitions of the words they have in hand and then share with the group. “Finding the Family” helps students find related words or concepts within different categories, form families, and share with the group. Activities and games require students to move around, get to know each other, and have fun as they learn!

Each One Teach One

To reinforce learning that is occurring along the way, ask students to teach a concept to a partner. Discussing the concept helps the brain clarify and register the new information. What better way to learn a concept than by teaching it to someone else!

Group Presentations

Students working in groups are always experiencing enrichment opportunities. Defining clear roles for each group member (reporter, recorder, mediator, greeter, introducer, illustrator, or any other relevant role) ensures that each member is participating actively and responsibly. Instructors find that the viewpoints and perspectives students bring to the topic assigned, and the follow-on discussions, make the course come alive!



When given the opportunity, students are able to form classroom communities with open communication, wholehearted discussion, friendliness, respect for one another, willingness to appreciate and learn from each other, and readiness to engage willingly in the teaching and learning process.

Efforts to enrich the teaching content with personalizing, actionalizing, and socializing create zing!

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION COUNTS

Teaching physical education requires degrees in physical education, exercise science, recreation and leisure studies, as well as minors in nutrition, physical sciences, biomechanics, and/or sports medicine. Those of us who teach physical education (PE) come with a plethora of experiences in sports and physical activities, and with the knowledge to provide expert-level teaching for students new to the activity or the discipline at the collegiate level.

“PE” is not only about playing games. Huizinga’s *Homo Ludens* reported that “play was the primary formative element in human culture” and “primary to, and...a necessary condition of the generation of culture.” Play is necessary and not all that simple. For example, the textbooks required for basketball or bowling and the skills needed to play those games are surprisingly more difficult to readers who believe that those games are relatively simple activities—e.g., bowling is based on a series of mathematical computations; the game of basketball is like a game of chess with all the pieces moving at the same time while being required to figure out the next moves. Both are relatively complicated “games” that take time and intelligence to learn and expertise to teach.

Do you know the difference between a soccer ball and a volleyball; the mechanics to execute the proper form in various swimming strokes; the difference between aerobic training and yoga, as well as the various forms of yoga; the different ways to train your body in the weight room depending on different goals, physical limitations, age, or body weight; how to roll, exit, enter, and make basic strokes to canoeing and kayaking; how to survive in the wilderness?

PE teachers can teach all these skills while teaching bioenergetics, biomechanics, kinesiology, anatomy, physiology, and more. They maintain certifications and remain current with research in the field. PE is a science, measured quantitatively and qualitatively. It is this discipline that may save your life. For example, we have an epidemic of obesity and related health maladies that pose enormous threats to our citizens. We understand the issues, how to combat the epidemic, and how to program for prevention.

We love what we do, know it is important, and appreciate sharing respect for educating the whole student alongside other disciplines.

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