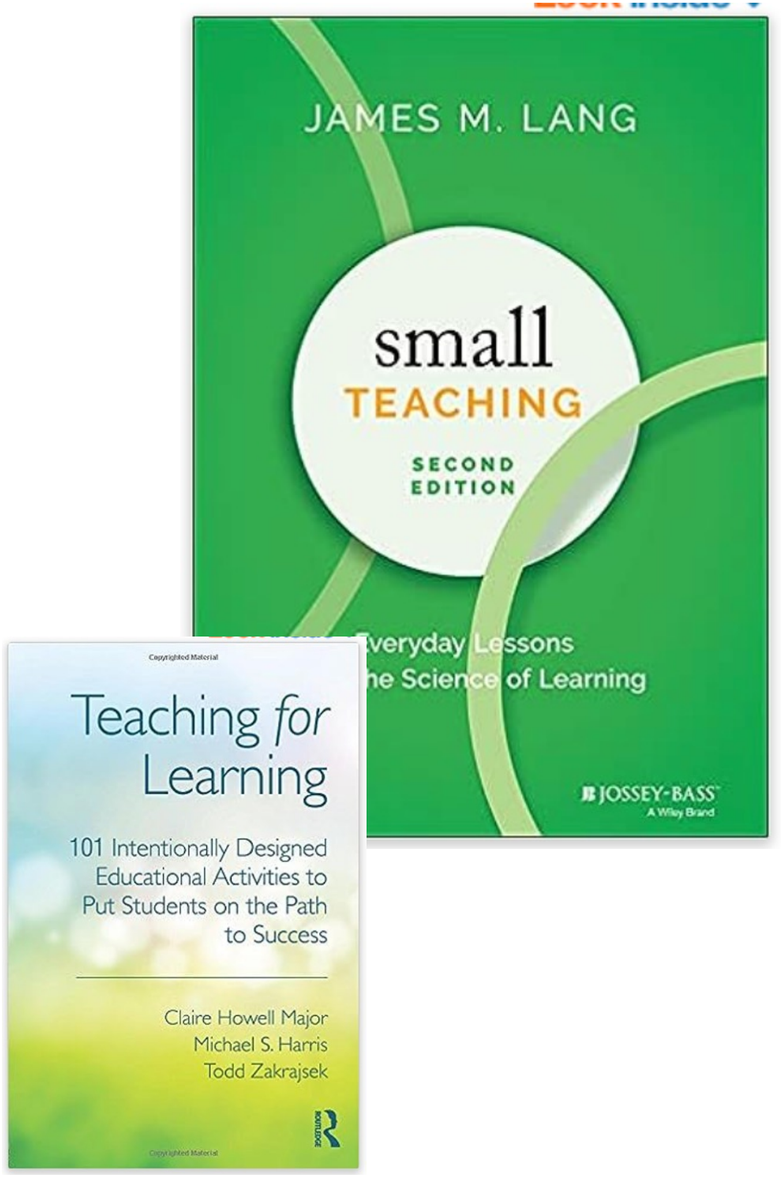
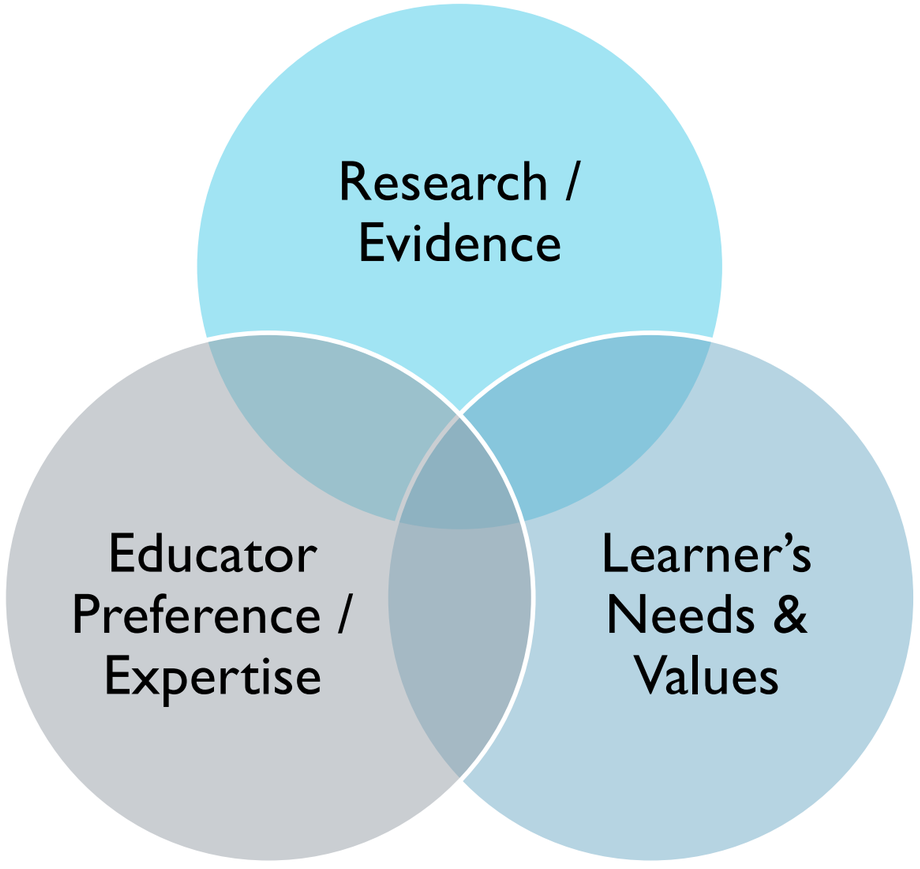


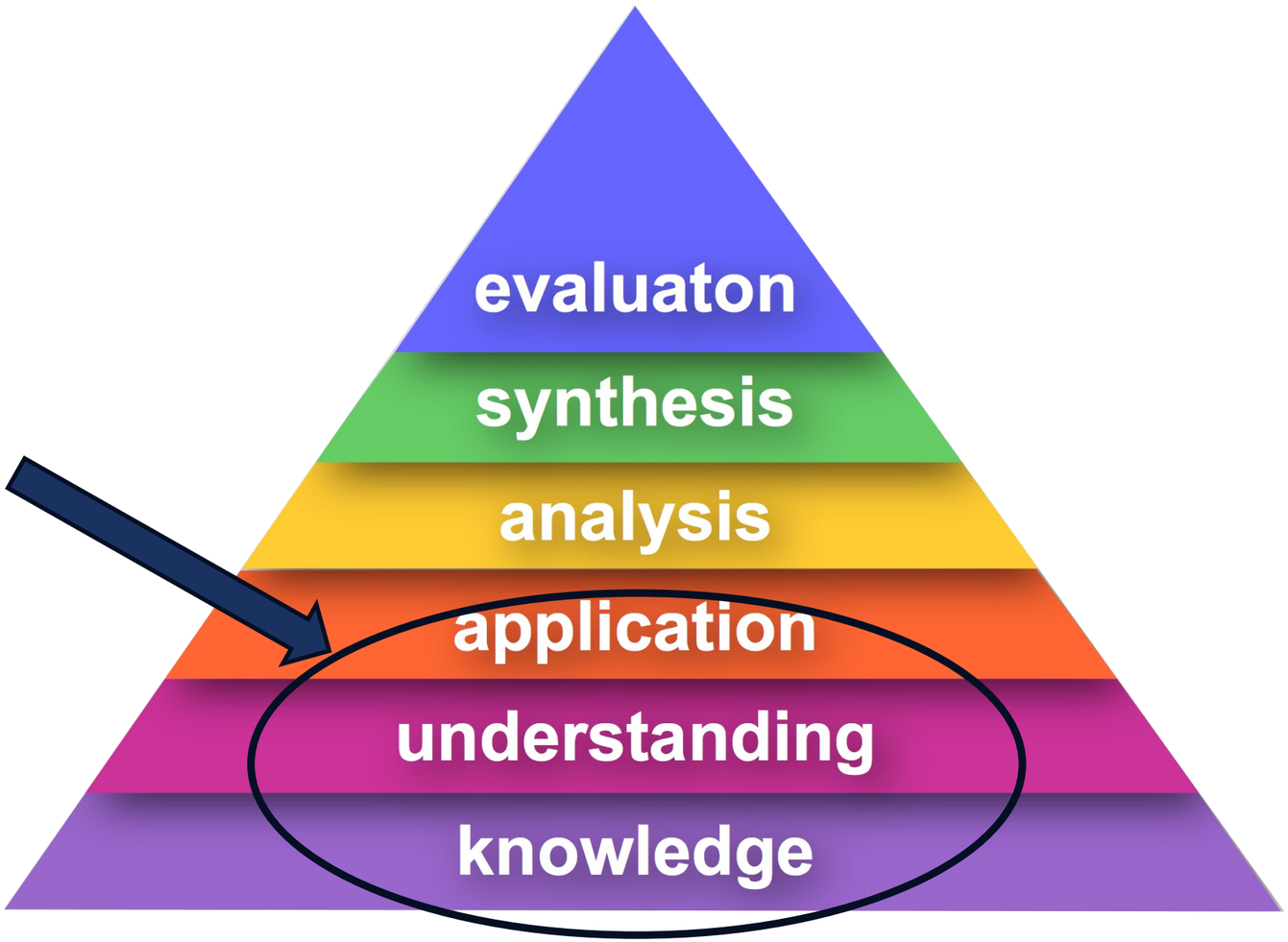
QUICK, EASY ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR ANY CLASS

AIMEE PASCALE, PH.D., NH-LAT, ATC, CSCS



EVIDENCE-BASED TEACHING

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY



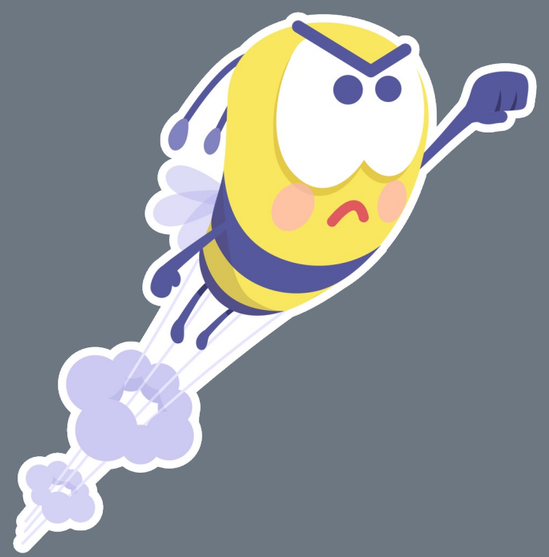
WHAT DRIVES STUDENT ENGAGEMENT?

STIMULATING / ACTIVE

RELATABLE / INTERESTING / MEANINGFUL

MANAGEABLE

STRATEGIES FOR THE START OF CLASS OR LESSON



KICK OFF STRATEGY #1: INTEREST GENERATION

Open each class or lesson with something to wonder about - a story, case, fact, statistic

- In person or online synchronous: video, solo quick read, read aloud, PPT slide with fact or statistic
- Online asynch: start of a recorded lecture, kick off low-stakes assignment
- Accompany with a thinking or writing prompt that connects with some element of that day's lesson

KICK OFF STRATEGY #2: LAST CLASS RECALL

Ask students to identify 3 things that stick out most in their minds from the previous class, or previous lesson.

- In person or online synchronous: ask students to write down, type, or send private chat message
- Online asynch: start of recorded lecture, or low stakes assignment when transitioning to something new or more advanced

- **Cognitive level:** Knowledge / Foundational
- **Best Practice Tips:**
  - Give students 1-2 minutes
  - Ask students to look up when they're done / ready
  - Ask students to choose 1 thing from their list to share, then ask for volunteers and/or call on
  - Can also invite students to include something, or identify what they're unsure of from last class / lesson

KICK OFF STRATEGY #3: ASSIGNMENT RECALL

Ask students to identify 3 things they found interesting, learned, or have questions about from a reading or video assignment.

- In person or online synchronous: ask students to write down or send private chat message, then select 1 to share
- Online asynch: recorded lecture, or low stakes assignment

- **Cognitive level:** Knowledge / Foundational
- **Best Practice Tips:**
  - Tell students this expectation in advance when you make / post the assignment (you will be expected to report / share your thoughts / discuss during the next class.
  - Make part of an assignment or grade category (at the least, part of participation / engagement points). Receiving credit helps boost motivation and accountability.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES DURING A CLASS OR LESSON

DURING CLASS STRATEGY #1
MC QUESTIONING

Imbed MC questions for students to respond to throughout your lesson

- Works GREAT in lecture, or content-heavy classes!
- Mode: Online polling, clickers, physical response

- **Cognitive level:** Knowledge / Foundational
- **Best Practice Tips:**
  - Design for quick recall
  - 2-4 questions in a row is a good amount
  - Imbed as a transition to a new topic, or after ~15 mins of lecturing
  - Also works well as a class opener (quiz on prior material or assignment)
  - Good way to gage student understanding (and for students to self-assess)
- **Supporting technology:**
  - Poll Everywhere, Plickers, Mentimeter, PollDaddy, Flisti, Micropoll, Socrative

DURING CLASS STRATEGY #2
PAST CONTENT RETRIEVAL & RELEVANCE

When introducing something new or higher level, have students start by brainstorming what they already know about the topic. This may work best after providing a brief intro.

- Invite students to make make their own list, or work with the person next to them
- Write, or have students write responses on the board (or a shared screen, or editable work page)

- **Cognitive level:** Knowledge / Foundational or Understanding
- **Examples of leading questions:**
  - What do you think applies to (new topic) that we've already learned about?
  - What did you learn in (previous / pre-requisite class) about (foundation or subcomponent of new topic)?
- **Supporting technology**: Google Jamboard, Poll Everywhere, Microsoft shared/editable doc

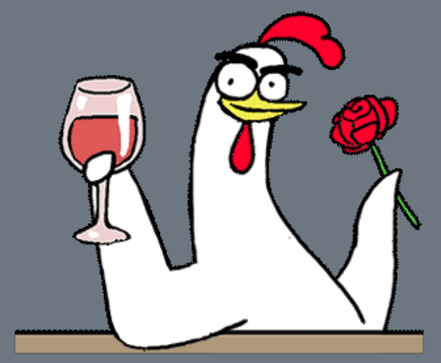
DURING CLASS STRATEGY #3
FIND THE FLAW

Present students with information that has a deliberate error, and challenge them to identify it.

- Works well with something that involves a process
- Can be used to recap content that is a review, or ensure understanding of a process or concept before moving on
- Encourages active listening

- **Cognitive level:** Knowledge / Foundational or Understanding
- **Best Practice Tips:**
  - Tell students ahead of time and employ clear boundaries of where / in what time frame you're presenting something with inaccuracy
  - Confirm if students correctly identified the error, and ensure clear understanding of what is accurate vs inaccurate

CONCLUDING A CLASS OR LESSON



ENDING CLASS STRATEGY #1: MINUTE PAPER

Ask students to write down the most important concept from the day, or summary of key point(s) from that day's lesson.

- Provide 1-3 minutes, or use as "ticket to leave"

- **Cognitive level:** knowledge / foundational or understanding
- **Best Practice Tips:**
  - Collect student responses to gage understanding and perceptions
  - Use of part of Engagement grade, or other assessment area
  - Open the next class by asking students to share

ENDING CLASS STRATEGY #2: ELEVATOR PITCH

Ask students to turn to a peer, and summarize the day's lesson as if it were the BEST and most EXCITING information their classmate will ever be privileged to know.

- Complements objectives that involve public speaking / presenting / selling / communication
- Can be modified as an ice breaker, or to help students get to know each other

- **Cognitive level:** Understanding
- **Best Practice Tips:**
  - Option: give students 1-2 minutes to prepare (write down or think about) what they want to say
  - Ask students to rate their confidence talking about the info to a peer

ENDING CLASS STRATEGY #3
1 MINUTE THESIS

1. Present students with a graphic that has 2 columns:
   a. Left: titles of books, names of people, names of key events or places.
   b. Right: Key themes or theoretical concepts.
2. Ask a student to select 1 theme from the right, and 2-3 titles/names/events from the left column.
3. All students then have 1 minute to craft a thesis linking the common theme with the selected nouns.

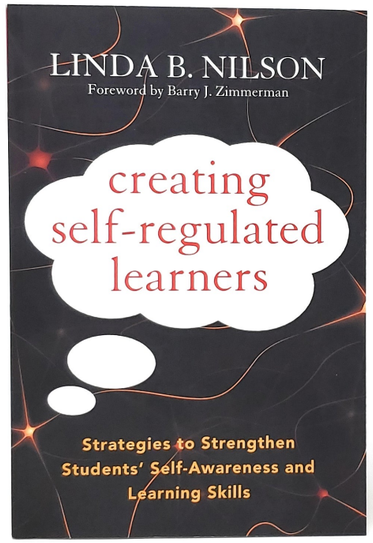
- **Cognitive level:** Understanding or Applying
- **Best Practice Tips:**
  - Can be done as a whole class, small group, or individual activity
  - Works well when approaching culminating assessment or assignment

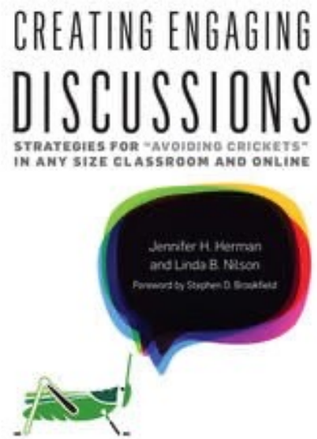
FOR THE UPCOMING ACADEMIC YEAR…

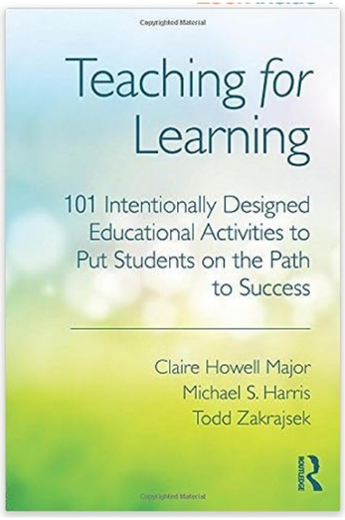
Consider 3-5 active engagement strategies that jive with your teaching preferences and students:

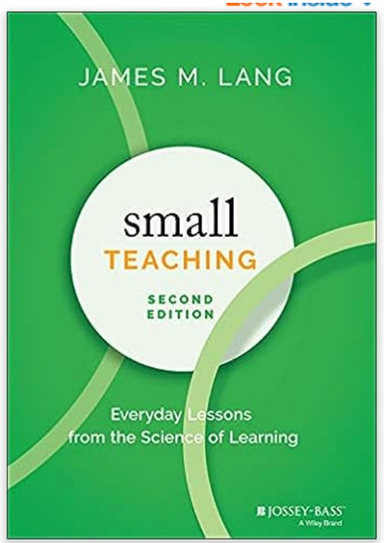
- Add a minimum of 2 active engagement strategies per class
- Modify existing engagement strategies
- Consider collecting feedback from your students 1-2x throughout the semester

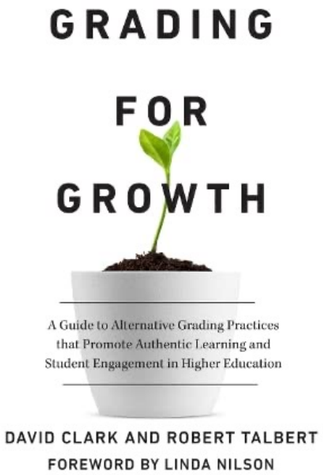
Note: This is the type of thing you can add to your workplan under "teaching" and/or discuss in your promotion portfolio!

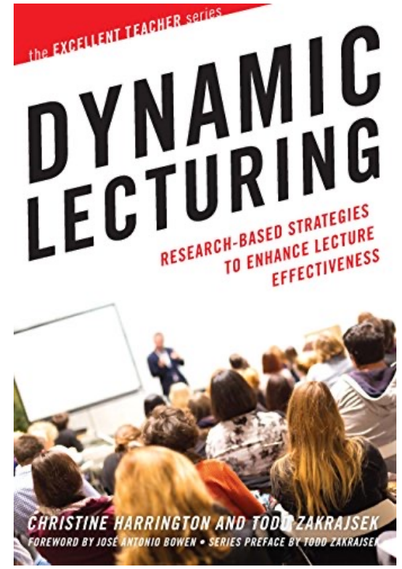












BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS / REFERENCES