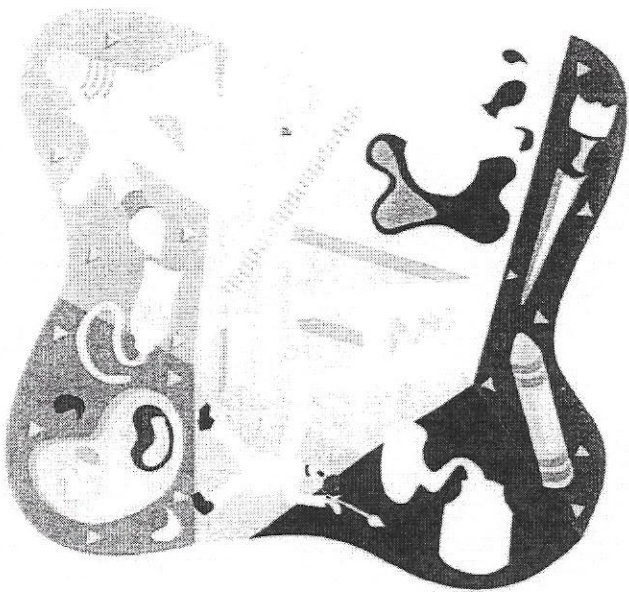


Active Student Participation

A collection of effective strategies to engage all students



Compiled in collaboration with:

Riverside County Office of Education

Mt. Diablo Achievement Team, Mt. Diablo Unified School District

Riverview Middle School, Mt. Diablo Unified School District

Peer Coaching Program, Mt. Diablo Unified School District

Department of Curriculum & Instruction, Mt. Diablo Unified School District

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Strategy	Description	Purposes for Use
Turn to Your Neighbor	As a warm-up activity or connector to a coming lesson, ask students to "Turn to your neighbor and see if he or she agrees with the statement I have written on the board. If there is a disagreement, how can you use last night's reading assignment to prove a point?" At the end of an explanation or demonstration, pass out index cards and have each person write down three important terms or ideas they've just learned, two ideas or facts they would like to know more about, and one question they still have related to the new content. This activity can help make a transition to the next task and let you check in quickly on student progress.	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
3-2-1	Pass out a printed "ticket" about the size of a half sheet of notebook paper. Ask each student to jot down two additional questions about the topic that was just explained or investigated in some way. This is good when an activity concludes just before a break. At the end of an explanation or demonstration, pass out a sheet of paper and ask each student to write a note to a friend explaining the process, rule, or concept they have just learned about.	R, W, CFU, EQ
Ticket to Leave	At the end of an explanation or demonstration, pass out a sheet of paper and ask each student to write a note to a friend explaining the process, rule, or concept they have just learned about.	R, W, CFU, EQ
A Note to a Friend	The teacher asks students to place ideas, concepts or statements in categories defined by the teacher. For example, the teacher might ask "Which statements were based on fact?" and "Which statements were based on inference?"	R, W, CFU, EQ
Sort the Items	The teacher writes key words or phrases from a lesson or introduction in a random order on an overhead or a page to be photocopied. Following the presentation, the teacher asks pairs to "unscramble" the terms and reorder them in correct sequence.	L, S, CFU, EQ
Jumbled Summary	The teacher asks students to work in pairs as they listen to a short story read by the teacher. The teacher reads a short passage, then pauses to ask the prediction pairs to state "What will happen next?" and "Reasons based on the story so far?"	R, W, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Prediction Pairs	At the end of an explanation or demonstration, give each student a different letter of the alphabet and ask them to think of one word or idea beginning with that letter that is connected to the topic just presented.	R, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Alphabet Summary	At the end of a segment of teacher directed instruction, ask participants to work in pairs to create a graphic summary of how they would organize information, reach a conclusion, or interact differently based on the demonstration you just provided.	L, S, CFU, B, EQ
Draw A Picture	Each person reads a separate page or a portion of a longer selection. Then he or she teachers the main points to the two other members of the study group. Each then quizzes the other members to make sure everyone knows all parts thoroughly.	R, W, L, S, CFU, B, EQ, GP
Three Person Jigsaw	Before a film, lecture, or reading have students work in threes to write down what they already know about the subject, and what they want to know about the subject. Then show the film, deliver the lecture, or engage the group in the reading. Then have each trio circle the "known" information that was covered, put asterisks next to the questions that were answered, and add other things they learned as a result of the film, lecture or reading.	R, W, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
K-W-L Trio		W, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP

Purposes for Use KEY:

R=Reading; W=Writing; L=Listening; S=Speaking; CFU=Checking for Understanding; B=Brainstorming; EQ=Equity; GP=Group or Partner Collaboration

Drill Partner	Have students drill each other on facts they need to recall until they are certain both partners know and can remember them all. This works effectively with information like vocabulary terms, sight recognition, names of birds, leaves, mathematical symbols and shapes, grammar, etc.	L, S, CFU, GP
Writing Response Groups	Students read and respond to each other's written work by marking passages that they think are effective with a star, and underlining what they don't understand or think is weak. Errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling, or format are circled. Students then discuss their observations with the writer.	R, W, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Inside-Outside Circles	Organize students into groups of six, with three persons standing with their backs touching and facing out, and three persons forming a circle around them, facing inward toward one person in the center. The teacher directs each inside-outside pair to exchange information related to previously taught material. Then the teacher asks the persons in the center to rotate to the right or left so that they are facing a new partner. The teacher poses another topic for discussion or exchange. Repeat a third time.	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Four Corners	State a situation or dilemma, then asks students to go to one of four corners of the room marked Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree, Disagree. There the students exchange their opinions or reasoning, and summarize their reasoning. Have each corner share out key ideas from their discussion for the rest of the class. This is especially effective in Social Studies or English classes where students encounter controversial issues.	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Numbered Heads Together	Students are grouped by teams. Each team member numbers off, so that each member has a number. After working jointly together, the teacher asks a question or presents a problem. The students must jointly agree on the correct answer. The teacher selects a team, and calls a number at random. The student with that number must answer the question, and briefly be able to explain why that answer is correct. If the group has not been able to come up with an answer that all agree to, the team must "pass" until it is called upon again. Numbered Heads can be especially useful when reviewing large "chunks" of material or in helping students prepare for a test.	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Pair Check	Have students form teams of two. One person in the pair works on a task while the other serves as coach. Then they exchange roles for the second task. At this point, they ask another pair to check their work. If the second pair agrees with their response, the first pair continues. If not, the pair tries to correct their work.	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Roundtable	The teacher asks a question with many possible answers (e.g. "Name all of the items in your home which were not invented 25 years ago.") Using one sheet of paper, students make a list, each person adding one item and then passing the paper to the person on their left. The product is the result of many minds (and hands) at work—hence roundtable.	R, W, L, S, CFU, GR, GP
Send-a-Problem	Each student on a team makes up a question or review problem and writes it down on a flashcard. The author of each problem/question asks the question of his/her team members. If they do not have consensus on the answers the group works on the problem or rewords it until everyone can explain/agree. Next, the team passes their stack of review questions to another team for review.	R, W, L, S, CFU, GP

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Group Test Taking for Practice	Prior to a test, give student groups copies of earlier versions of your test or questions similar to those that will on the test. Explain "tomorrow you will get a test like this as individuals. There will be no team to help out. You can help each other all you want today. Make sure your teammates can get a perfect score. Help everyone understand."	R, W, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
12-Word Summary	Have students summarize the most important aspects of a specific lesson in 12 words or less--first by writing their summary and then sharing verbally with a partner or small group.	W, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Evidence Bag	Tell students their ticket out the door is to write down two ideas learned from the day's lesson and place it in the bag on their way out the door. This information can then serve as a check for understanding and be used to guide further instruction.	W, CFU
Spectrum	Use a spectrum when asking for student opinion on a topic or question: Place a line on the whiteboard or masking tape on the floor in front of the room. Label one end of the line "Strongly Agree" and the other end "Strongly Disagree." Students line up according to their opinion on the topic. Other label ideas might be "Most Important/Least Important," "Greatest Effect/Least Effect," etc.	L, S, CFU, BR, GP
Idea Wave	Each student lists three to five ideas about the assigned topic. A volunteer begins the "idea wave" by sharing one idea. The student to the right of the volunteer shares one idea; the next student to the right shares one idea, etc. The teacher directs the flow if the "idea wave" until several different ideas have been shared. At the end of the formal "idea wave," a few volunteers who were not included can contribute an idea.	R, W, L, S, CFU
Think-Pair-Share	The teacher asks students to "Take a minute to silently and independently think about your own answer to the question(s). At the signal, turn and face your partner so you can discuss your answers face to face. Explain clearly to your partner your own answer and your reasons for making this decision. Listen carefully to your partner's answers, and pay attention to similarities and differences in your answers. Ask your partner to explain more if you don't understand or agree with his or her answer. At the signal, be prepared to share your opinions with the class."	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Learning from A-Z	The objective of this activity is to provide words, phrases, or sentences that relate to the topic being studied. Give students the topic they need to brainstorm. Establish a timeframe to complete the activity. Students work individually or together in pairs or groups, to brainstorm words related to the topic that begin with each letter of the alphabet. When the time limit expires, guide students through discussions of their entries for each letter. Answers can be recorded on an overhead transparency or chart. Students can use Learning from A-Z as a study guide or as a summative assignment.	W, L, S, CFU, B, GP
Quick Write	Direct students write for a brief, specific (e.g. 2-3 minutes) amount of time about a designated topic. Use a quick write to activate background knowledge, clarify issues, facilitate making connections, and/or allow for reflection.	R, W, CFU
Socratic Seminar	Students engage in a focused discussion in which they ask questions of each other on a selected topic; questions initiate the conversation, which continues with a series of responses and further questions. Use a Socratic Seminar to help students facilitate their own discussion and arrive at a new understanding in which they learn to formulate questions and address issues in lieu of just stating their opinions.	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP

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Exit Card	At the end of a class, period or lesson, ask students to write down answers to a few key questions related to the class, period, lesson, day, etc. (e.g. What made learning easy for you today? What made learning difficult for you today? What do you still need to know before we move on? What did you learn today? What should our next steps be?) Students can answer self-selected questions or teacher selected questions.	W, CFU
Fishbowl	Have students form two circles—one inside the other. Students in the inner circle conduct a discussion on the topic/questions provided by the teacher. Students in the outer circle listen. When the inner circle has completed their discussion (or it has been concluded by the teacher), the outer circle of students is asked to respond and evaluate/add to the key points made.	L, S, CFU, GP
Talking Chips	Pose a question for students to discuss. Each member is given a "chip" (e.g. small square of construction paper, poker chip). Each student takes turns "talking" by placing their chip into the center of the table. The first person to talk may only talk at that time, and may not speak again until all the group members have placed their chips in the middle of the table and had a chance to speak. Repeat the process.	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
How Many Ways?	Pose a question or organize an activity with the question "How many ways can you do this?" as the opener in various situations. For example, how many ways can you create shapes on a geoboard? How many ways can you sort bottle caps? How many ways can you make 124? How many ways can you solve an argument? Allow students to write their responses and then share with a partner, small group or whole group.	W, L, S, CFU, B, GP
Gallery Walk	Select several quotations, important passages, or concepts from a text. Place each quotation or passage on a separate piece of butcher or chart paper and hang them around the room. Ask students to quietly take a gallery walk, reading each poster carefully and silently. Have each student select one that interest or intrigues them—one that they would like to talk about. Ask students to return to their desks and free-write about the selected quotation or passage for five minutes. Then ask students to take their free writing and stand by the quotation or passage they have selected. Allow students time to discuss with others who chose the same quote or passage.	L, S, CFU, B, GP
Equity Sticks	Randomly draw popsicle sticks, cards, or poker chips with student names for answers to questions. Draw at least three names per question to gauge understanding.	L, S, CFU, EQ
Fade In/Fade Out	Students begin to read when tapped by the teacher. The teacher then chooses the next reader by tapping him. As the next reader begins, the previous reader begins to "fade out."	R, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Buddy Buzz	At strategic breaks in instruction have students share quick answers/responses to a question or prompt with their seating partner.	L, S, CFU, GP
Word Splash	Students are given handouts with vocabulary words "splashed" on the page. They circle two words and then connect the words with a line. Students then write and verbalize a sentence using the words. This can be done individually, in pairs, or in groups.	R, W, L, S, CFU, EQ, GP
Pass the Picture	Each person in a group is given a picture and a piece of binder paper. The teacher gives a prompt and the student writes a sentence about the picture on the paper. Then, students rotate pictures and papers within the group. Another prompt is given and students write a second sentence. The picture and paper are passed until a paragraph is written.	R, W, GP

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Pictorial Input Chart	The teacher lectures while drawing a picture and putting key words on a visual representation of the topic. Students copy the drawing as the teacher talks. Notes on the topic can be added by students as information is taught, or as a check for understanding.	R, W, L, CFU
Chants/Songs	Create chants or songs on a topic that can be used to help students remember certain topics/content. Students can also be asked to create their own chants/songs to illustrate their understanding of a topic.	L, S, CFU, B
Carousel Cruising	Post large sheets of poster/chart paper around the room, each with a different subtopic or question. Divide students into small groups. Choose a recorder and a reporter for each group and give each group a different colored marker. Send each group to a chart to start asking them to brainstorm responses to the question or subtopic. The recorder writes the responses on the chart. After a specific time period ask groups to move to the next chart and repeat the process. After each group has visited each chart and recorded their responses ask them to "cruise" back to their original chart and review what others have contributed, then group the responses into categories or select the three most significant ideas to report out to the larger group.	R, W, L, S, CFU, GP
8-2 Lecture	Provide about 8 minutes of content/instruction, then pause to allow students time to process what they have heard with a partner for 2 minutes.	L, S, CFU, GP
Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down	The teacher pauses periodically throughout a lesson to ask students to indicate their comprehension using signals like thumbs up and thumbs down.	CFU
Reader Response Charts	Students use a T-chart to record quotes and facts on one side and questions, reactions, and thoughts on the other side.	R, W
Outcome Sentences	Provide students with a series of open-ended prompts to reflect on the day's lesson. This can be done verbally or in writing. Possible prompts might include: I now understand...., I am beginning to wonder...., I was surprised...., I can see the connections between...., I want to know more about...., etc. Students write two or three detailed outcome sentences and then share with a learning partner.	R, W, L, S, CFU, GP
Partner Position	Students sit in pairs with one desk facing backward so that their heads are even with each other. Students quietly pair read. After one student finishes reading, the partner must ask a question about the reading. Then, students switch roles	R, L, S, CFU, GP
Call and Response	Teacher calls out a word and students respond with a predesignated response. Example: "I say 'peace,' you say 'quiet!'" Can be used as a way to pull students back to attention, or as reinforcement for learned content.	W, S, GP
Appointment Clock	Students create "appointment clocks" recording appointments with other students at 3:00, 6:00, 9:00 and 12:00. When a partner is needed the teacher requests that students meet with their "3 o'clock partner," etc.	EQ, GP
"I Remember"	Students read only as much as their hands can cover (usually one paragraph) and then share with their partner in their own words one idea that they found memorable. The teacher can also do a read-aloud (only as much as his/her hand can cover) and have students take turns with a learning partner and share what they found memorable.	R, L, S, CFU, GP
A-B Partner Teach	Partner A turns to Partner B and tells their partner the two most important things they learned during the lesson, reading, speech, video, etc.	L, S, CFU, EQ, GP

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The Foggiest Point	Students are asked to reflect on a lesson/chapter/assignment, and then jot down what the <i>foggiest</i> point in the lesson/chapter/assignment, in effect highlighting what point was the <i>least</i> clear to them. Students then spend three to five minutes on a quick-write activity to reflect on their learning and then share out with a partner or small group what they are wondering about.	R, W, L, S, CFU, GP
Newscast Reporting	The teacher writes a question or series of questions for the interview. Students form partner groups and decide who will be the newscaster and who will be interviewed first. The newscaster interviews his or her partner. Roles are then reversed, and the partner becomes the broadcaster. Student pairs join another pair and report to the small group of four what they shared in their interview.	L, S, CFU, GP
Mix-Mingle-Swap	Select a topic that students will be discussing. Have students number off in small groups from 1 to 4. Students jot down their number on a small card. Begin playing music and instructing students to trade their number card with other students as if it were a "hot potato." Swapping continues until the music is stopped. Students then freeze and look at the number they have in their hand. Students are then asked to form groups of four with others holding the same number and discuss the topic or prompt provided by the teacher. Begin playing the music again and have students continue the fast-paced number card swapping. When music is stopped have students form groups of four with no numbers the same (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4). Have students discuss the new topic or question provided by the teacher. Repeat music and card swapping process. When music is stopped have students form groups of two—odd numbers together, even numbers together—with no two numbers the same. Students discuss the question provided. Repeat music and card swapping process. When the music stops, students freeze. Have students form groups with all numbers the same (e.g. all 1s, all 2s, etc.). Students discuss the prompt. Play music as students return to their seats. Teacher leads a discussion on ideas generated in group discussions.	L, S, CFU, GP

Resources used to compile this document:

- Julie Parks (MDUSD), Riverview Middle School Staff (MDUSD)
- MDUSD Peer Coaching Program
- MDUSD Dept. of Curriculum & Instruction
- Riverside County Office of Education
- Mt. Diablo Achievement Team
- Project GLAD
- www.middleweb.com
- Short Takes for Active Participation: Black Start, P. Pappas, www.edteck.com/blocks/2_pages/short.htm
- 100 Brain-Friendly Tools and Strategies for Literacy Instruction, Dr. Kathy Perez

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