

# Active Learning Methods: <2 Minutes

## Interactive Teaching and Active Learning Best Practices for Teaching and Learning

Now we're going to talk about specific active learning methods that can be incorporated into your own classroom. These methods have them grouped into three categories based on the amount of time they will take during your lesson. There are activities that will take less than two minutes of class time, those that will take between two and five minutes, and those that will take between five and 20 minutes of classroom time. These groupings are arbitrary, but they are useful when planning the length of time that the activities will take in your class. In all of these methods, it is important to think about how the activity will help your students achieve your desired learning objective and its corresponding level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

First we'll discuss activities that take less than two minutes to complete. The first type of short activity is simply asking your students if they have any questions. When doing this, it's important to do two things. First, think about the phrasing of the question that you use. By asking, do you have any questions, you will create an open environment in which students will feel comfortable asking a question.

The second thing that you as the instructor should do is wait for a sufficient length of time after asking the question. By waiting, you will demonstrate to your students that you would actually like to receive questions. Pause for at least 10 seconds. This will be a sufficient length of time for your students to think of a question, and in some situations, gain the courage to ask the question, and then raise their hand.

Let's see how long 10 seconds feels. OK. Ready, go.

OK, that was 10 seconds. 10 seconds feels like a really long time. As the instructor, I usually count to 10 really slowly in my head to make sure that I wait long enough. Another strategy is to take a sip of water or erase the board while you are waiting. It is very important to wait at least 10 seconds. I can't tell you how many times a student has raised their hand once I have counted to nine in my head.

The second type of short activity is to pose a question to your students and give them time to think of the answer. This type of activity is similar to the first one in that the instructor will need to provide a sufficient length of time for students to think about and answer the question prior to collecting the responses. The amount of time that the instructor waits will depend upon the question's difficulty level.

The last type of short activity is a MUD card. You have already encountered these cards at the end of each session. The MUD card is a method in which instructors can ask students to write down the muddiest or most unclear point from the session. The MUD cards are typically handed out at the end of each class, and students have two minutes to complete the MUD card.

Following the class, the instructor can skim through all of the MUD cards very quickly to identify the most common misconceptions. And then these misconceptions can be addressed at the beginning of the next class. In this manner, the instructor will ensure that any misconceptions are clarified prior to continuing with the course material.