

Energizers

Breathing:

The energy in a classroom can become part of your planning. If students enter in a state of over exuberance, an “energizer” can calm them thus preparing the climate for engaged academic learning time. If students are lethargic or distracted, energizers can focus all so that you have the undivided attention of all when ready to move on.

The breathing is calming and is also a “set” for input on the brain’s need for oxygen and stimulation. This is a “brain friendly” move.

Once I was asked to work with a teacher in a Washoe Middle School. It was April and chaos had been the daily norm in a particular seventh grade that always met after lunch. Hmmmm. Lunch = sugar. Ouch! First, we went through several team building strategies. As her coach I would model a lesson, guide her with follow up plans and then go back to see her teach. The one strategy she added for this class was “breathing”. As students entered they would go to their chairs. As soon as the time on the clock began (This school had no bells.), she and the students rose, faced the clock and hear “Inhale.” On the second and third times, each student could decide how long s/he wanted to hold their breath (safety first conditions, of course). The students who had previously been “blurting” out did “cease and desist” all by themselves. It was fascinating to see how one procedure of “calming one’s self” could transfer to a more respectful behavior.

Jerome Kagan is a theorist for impulsive behavior is not helpful to social or academic development.

Heidi Phillips
Methods H
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Pace and Rhythm

I think one important part of a classroom is keeping the students on their toes. Basically keep them moving. The worst class I ever had was in 7th grade, English. I was drawing a picture because the teacher was moving so slowly. I already knew the material she was covering. She asked me what I was doing I told her I was drawing because I was bored. She sent me to the principal's office. I got out of trouble and transferred to another class that was a little more exciting. I would not have been bored if the teacher had been moving at a faster pace or keeping us alive.

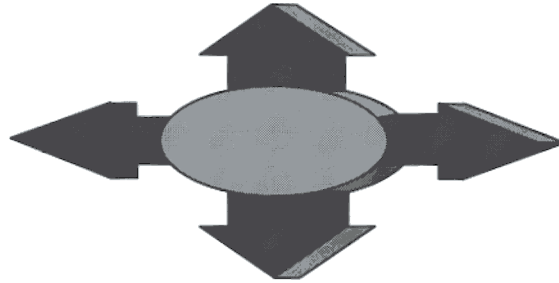
Everyone likes Dixi's class because of the pace and rhythm. We start an activity but before we get bored with the activity we move on to something else. It is a much nicer way to take a class. The human mind will wander when not stimulated. The idea is to keep it stimulated so it will not wander into unwanted territory.

I personally like a class fast and ever-changing. I know the flip side of the coin is the student who may be somewhat slower and give up. The operative word here is MAY get lost. I think these students will rise to the occasion. They will feel challenged and try harder. There is a fine line to draw, too fast and the whole class will get lost: too slow and you will lose 3/4's of the class

When giving student presentations, I don't think more than one at a time is appropriate. It isn't fair to the second student who has lost all the attention span of the students to have to try to get their attention back or the teachers. A faster activity should be placed between the lecture type presentations to awaken everyone.

Categories (Team Building: Level 2-3)

(Materials: four lists placed in four corners of the room, set of conversation topics related to the subject for each of the rotations, etc.)



Objectives:

1. TLW practice conversation skills.
2. TLW make choices and discover who is similar to them.
3. TLW disclose his/her opinion on a topic of conversation.
4. TLW reflect on conversations skills needed in her/her classroom.
5. TLW write the instructions for this lesson and construct a transition statement to connect this strategy to the one that follows.

Instructions:

Pre-lesson:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
5. Transition statement:

Chubby Bumpy Bunny



(Materials: paper towel, grapes, etc. Room arrangement: trios)

Team Building Level 2: (humor, disclosure, nutrition, etc.)

Objectives:

1. TLsW speak in front of a small group of peers.
2. TLsW listen to information shared in small group.
3. TLsW enjoy the facts as they emerge.
4. TLsW attempt to “win” the contest.
5. TLsW experience the positive side of competition.
6. TLsW be able to distinguish between Level 1 and Level 2 of Team Building.
7. (Hidden agenda: Overcoming inhibitions is a part of releasing creativity...being silly does this.)

Instructions:

Pre-lesson: Identify 3 peers to distribute materials to groups; two peers to arrange the environment.

Organize the chairs into trios. This is a safety first environment. All books are put away.

2. Distribute paper towels to all and a bag of grapes to each group.
3. Person whose birthday is closest to July 3rd. will begin. S/he takes one grape and places it in the cheek of the mouth **BEFORE** sharing one fact about him/herself. Then the next person, etc.
4. This continues until only one person can be understood
5. No eating of grapes until done
6. Process activity. (Possible DLL manager task.)
7. Transition statement: “Now, that we’ve begun with communications, disclosure and a team builder for warm-up, please find a Reality Check partner to discuss what variable in Team Building you perceive were part of Chubby Bumpy Bunny.”