**Maximizing Downtime**

**Strategies to Build Student Engagement before the Start of Class**

*Welcome! As we wait to get started, please complete the following*:

In exactly 16 words (no more, no less!) describe the purpose of activating prior knowledge when teaching:

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*Compare with a neighbor when finished!*

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**Pre-Class Engagement Strategies**

**Slides available at:**

goo.gl/QF0xHS

Activate prior knowledge:

* Lesson topic: Research as inquiry
	+ Play a clip from a detective show involving the investigation of a crime scene. YouTube is helpful for this and can loop a short clip so that it will play continuously. Display the question, “What steps are involved in solving a crime?” When class begins, discuss with the students how crime scene investigation is similar to the iterative research process in that it requires asking new questions based upon information as it is discovered (Farrell, 2015).
* Lesson topic: Authority is contextual
	+ Display the question, “What was the first piece of info you looked for today and where did you go to find it?” Provide an example such as “Today’s Weather/Radar Now App”. Using a response tool like Padlet, Socrative, or PollEverywhere students add responses. When class starts, review the responses and discuss how important it is to go to the correct type of source for your information need and that it wouldn’t make sense to look for weather in a course textbook, just how it won’t work to look for a scholarly article on an event that occurred a week ago.
* Lesson topic: The peer-review process
	+ Display a “spot the difference” picture game (two seemingly identical photos with small changes in one). When class begins have the students point out the differences they noticed and explain that just like how the two images looked similar at first, once you know what differences to look for it’s hard not to see them. This is similar to identifying differences between popular publications and peer-reviewed journal articles. While at first they may seem similar, once you have a criteria and now what to look for, you’ll be able to spot the difference.
* Lesson topic: Database searching
	+ Play dating service commercials by creating a playlist in YouTube of Match.com, Christian Mingle, Farmersonly.com, etc. Display the question, “Where do you look for love?” When class starts, discuss how just as there are many different dating services, many serving a niche audience, the library provides access to a number of different databases, many serving a specific subject while others are more general and interdisciplinary (this analogy can be extended in some fun ways, see Stahura, 2014).
* Lesson topic: Plagiarism
	+ Play the musical scene from the Disney film “The Little Mermaid” in which the sea witch Ursula steals the Little Mermaid’s voice. Display the question, “How does this relate to plagiarism?” When class begins, discuss how plagiarism amounts to losing your own unique voice as a writer by using others’ words.

Facilitate self-assessment:

* Technological options:
	+ Socrative Space Race: Included in a free Socrative account is a “space race” feature in which a spaceship moves across the screen when students answer a question correctly. As a pre-class activity, start a Socrative space race with the login information displayed on a whiteboard and the prompt to “Get your spaceship as far as you can.” In the time leading up to class, students answer questions about their understanding of the concept for the day. When class starts, briefly review the answers with students before moving on (optional prize for the winner!).
	+ Definition Challenge (<http://splasho.com/upgoer5/>): This website challenges users to define a concept using the 1,000 most common words in the English language—a task that is just tricky enough to be fun. As a pre-class activity, display the web address and directions for students to define a term such as “plagiarism” or “research.” When class begins have students volunteer their responses.
* Paper and pencil options: For these activities you can simply write directions on a white board and students can use their own paper. Alternately you can print the directions on half-sheets of paper and pass them out as students enter the room.
	+ Word splash: Display five to seven words related to the concept you’ll be teaching on the board (ex.: paper, students, plagiarism, words, copy). Also display the directions to connect the words together in two or three sentences that define plagiarism. When class begins have students volunteer their responses.
	+ Gist: Display the directions to define a concept in a specific number of words (ex.: 14-16), no more and no less! When class begins have students volunteer their responses.
	+ Acrostic challenge: Display a word vertically on the board (ex.: research, library) with the directions to define and describe the term by working as an acrostic puzzle. Posting an example using a different term is helpful to cue students. When class begins have students volunteer their responses.

Stahura, D. (2014). Information intimacy: Getting our students to commit. *College and Research Libraries News*,*75*(9), 486-489.