

# ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES



A(2.1) Demonstrate understanding of a variety of teaching and learning strategies and resources

B(1) Teach curriculum content using various teaching strategies

One of the best ways to learn is through doing. Confident teachers give opportunities for students to actively learn both individually and in groups. Students can also learn from each other. Activities engage students and help learning. Some students might be shy to answer questions in class but will participate when involved in an activity. It is important to pick the group sizes intentionally based on how you want the students to learn.

## WHICH GROUP SIZE SHOULD I USE?

Different sizes of groups have different purposes. When planning your lesson, do you want students to work:

### INDIVIDUAL

Learning individually is great to assess if students have mastered content and can work independently.

Some activities recommended for students to work on individually are assessments (like quizzes, completing homework and silent reading), 3 facts-2 questions-1 opinion, four corners, filling the board and voting.



### SMALL GROUPS (3-5)

Small groups are great at allowing students to work on their teamwork and gives them opportunity to divide a large task into smaller parts.

Students get an opportunity to lead and make decisions. Some recommended activities for small groups are making posters, science experiments, role playing, group presentations, debates, gallery walks and scavenger hunts.



### PAIRS

Learning in pairs can be used to group a confident student with a shy student, an academically strong student with a struggling student, or pair students that normally don't get a chance to work together. Some activities recommended for pairs are think-pair-share, peer tutoring, student presentations and a scavenger hunt.



## ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS TO DO INDIVIDUALLY

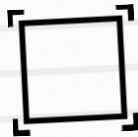
### FOUR CORNERS

- Label each corner of the room with strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree
- Share a controversial statement with the students and ask them to stand in the corner that represents their opinion
- Have students explain their opinions from their respective corners

**For example:**

Myanmar and British Colony (Grade 5 Geography and History)

“The conflict with the Bombay Burmah trading corporation was the main reason why the British government colonized upper Myanmar.” After reading this sentence, ask students to choose a corner and encourage them to explain why they choose to agree or disagree.



### 3 FACTS, 2 QUESTIONS, 1 OPINION

After students have learned a new topic, individually ask them to write:

- 3 new facts they have learned
- 2 questions they still have about the topic not discussed in class
- 1 opinion they have about the topic

**For example:**

Grade 5, Myanmar (“The Oblivious Rabbit”)

Ask students to write down three things they know from the story. Then ask them to produce two questions they have about the story. (This can be pair work.) Lastly ask students to write their opinion about the moral of the story.

**3-2-1**

### FACEBOOK ACCOUNT

Have students write down information about a person they have learned about as if it were their Facebook account: name, about, interests, hobbies, friends, check-Ins, likes, groups and quotes.

**For example:** Sein Bay Dar (Grade 5 Myanmar)

Ask students to write down the information about Sein Bay Dar: What is his birth name? What is his favorite song? What titles did he have? Where has he lived?



### VOTING

Write down questions related to your lesson on newsprint or piece of papers with multiple choice or yes/no answers and have students answer individually:

- Give small pieces of paper to students to write down the answer
- Have students put their papers in a box or basket anonymously.
- Announce the right answer and share how many students got the right answer and celebrate success with a big round of applause.
- At the end of the lesson, the teacher can ask the questions again and see if the students improved.

**For example:**

Grade 4, Math (Radius and Diameter Exercise)

Before teaching a lesson on diameter and radius, give students a few questions about finding the diameter and radius of a circle. Let them vote by putting their answers in a box. (Put a big box at the front of the class). Announce the answers. Now you have an idea of the students’ prior knowledge. Now start your lesson on calculating diameter and radius of a circle. At the end of the lesson, do the voting exercise again to see if the students improved.



## ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS IN PAIRS

### SCAVENGER HUNT

Hide questions all around the room (also outside if possible). Students need to find all the questions in pairs (or small groups) and answer each together. The first group with all questions answered correctly wins.

**For example:**

Grade 8, Geography (Myanmar Population & Ethnicity)

Divide the students into small groups, discuss and answer questions like:

- What is the population of Myanmar? (Find the next question posted on the coconut tree.)
- What are some traditional occupations of Karenni people? (Find the next question near the kitchen.)

Write down such questions and directions for the next questions on the pieces of paper and hide them. The group who finds and answers all questions first wins.



### PAIR QUIZ

In groups of two, have students quiz each other about what they learned during the lesson. Each student takes a turn asking a question and answering a question.



### FILL THE BOARD

This is a great activity to identify what students already know about a new topic or to use as a review activity once a chapter is completed.

Have students work in pairs to write everything they know about a topic on the board. Once the board is full, ask students to explain their ideas to the class.

**For example:**

Before teaching about the water cycle, have students draw on the board all the different types of precipitation they already know about.



### THINK-PAIR-SHARE

- Ask a higher-order question to the class.
- Give students 1-2 minutes to **THINK** of the answer individually.
- Next have them find another student to **PAIR** with and discuss.
- Last have each group **SHARE** their answers with the whole class.

**For example:**

Grade 5, Myanmar (Myit Ayar)

When teaching poetry, give a stanza to students and ask them their opinion on the meaning. Use the above steps to have them progressively share their ideas about the poem.



## ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS IN SMALL GROUPS (3-5 STUDENTS)

### STUDENT DEBATE

- Divide students into small groups.
- Write a controversial statement on the board.
- Student teams are selected to support or oppose the statement.
- Give students time to prepare their arguments, then let them debate each other

**For example:** Grade 5, Myanmar ("Three Friends")

Divide students into two groups and have them debate the statement: "Friends are essential in life." Students need to use evidence from the story as part of their defense of the argument.

**For example:** Grade 6, Science (Humans and the Environment)

Give a controversial statement to the students such as "Industrialization is the main reason for the declining amount of freshwater available on Earth". This could be a great way to begin your lesson to identify what students already know.



### STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

- Give students sections of the textbook and make them responsible for teaching a 5-10 minute lesson about a topic.
- When presenting the students get treated as if they are teachers.
- Their friends are responsible for taking notes and asking questions.

**For example:**

Grade 5, Geography (Learning about Weather)

Assign small groups of students to different topics from the curriculum: wind, temperature, clouds, rain and ask them to prepare a presentation. While different student groups are presenting, the other students to take notes and prepare questions to ask the presenters.



### GALLERY WALK

- Have small groups of students research or read about topics from the curriculum.
- Ask each group to make a creative summary page about their topic on a sheet of chart paper and tape it to a wall of the classroom.
- When everyone is finished have students go around the room and take notes from each other's summaries.

**For example:** Grade 7, Math (Geometrical Shapes and Area)

On a piece of chart paper have the students draw different geometrical shapes in groups (for example: cube, cylinder and cone) and write down the formulas to calculate the area and volume of each. Once completed, have students go around the room and take notes from the posters.

**For example:**

Grade 7, History (Egyptian Pyramids and the Sphinx)

After teaching about some of the significant places from around the world, let your students make posters about a place that they learned about in small groups. Hold a gallery walk and where students can give feedback to their friends about their posters.