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Learning Well ...Together Strategies for Teachers

Keeping students motivated when learning remotely can be challenging. Motivation can be improved through activities that increase competence, autonomy, and a sense of connection (1). The Science of Learning Research Centre has developed a set of evidence-informed strategies designed to help students to be motivated and to 'Learn Well...Together' with others, even when learning remotely.

The 'Learning well...Together' strategies utilise social connection as a motivator. Individual study or learning can be lonely, particularly for young people. Working purposefully online with friends can increase accountability, enjoyment, and achievement.

1



Hush Up and Work! (2)

In Strategy #1 students set up a regular time to meet online. Before joining, they each set some learning goals for the session, and share these with the group at the start of the session. After setting a synchronised timer, the students work independently. When times up, they share what they have achieved, what was challenging, and what they will do next time

This strategy can be used for individual reading, writing, or studying in tasks across a range of subjects.

Encourage students to discuss answers, clarify misconceptions, and elaborate on responses.

Remembering Stuff!



2

Strategy #2 is built on the principle of Retrieval - that actively recalling information improves retention, particularly when the retrieval is spaced out over time and is effortful (3).

Encourage students to build Flashcards or Quiz questions on important concepts/ information to share with their online groups. Utilise these in regular class quizzes or homework revision tasks.

3



What Do You Think?

Students need to receive feedback that provides information about where their learning is headed, how they are going with their learning, and what they need to do to improve (4). Feedback also needs to be received in order for students to do something with it (5).

Support your students to know how to give and receive feedback, including making sure they are familiar with the success criteria for each task.

Strategy #3 encourages students to share their work with their peers, and to give, receive, and act upon meaningful peer feedback.



Developing Deep Understanding



4

As students get deeper into a topic, encourage them to wonder about the content.

Strategy #4 supports the students to pose questions that require elaboration about the 'how', 'why' and 'what if' of a topic or concept.

In your lessons, include activities that ask the students to compare and contrast ideas/ events/ objects/ performances/ theories/ perspectives, and also to make connections.

5



Get To The Point!

Explaining an idea, concept or skill to someone else who is inexperienced in that area is challenging. A good understanding of the idea is needed as well as the capacity to answer questions to clarify the other persons understanding.

Strategy #5 will help students identify gaps in their own understanding.

Invite students to share with the class how they would explain something to a grandparent, parent or younger sibling or student.



Justify That!



6

Strategy #6 encourages students to work with their online group to come up with some sentence starters that they could use frequently to promote elaboration and justification.

Invite students to share these with the class, and use them frequently in whole class discussions to develop metacognition.

These questions could be used in a range of subjects and topics, including creative tasks, innovations, and performances.

"What happens when...?"
"How might...?"
"What if...?"
"Why did you...?"
"How did this build on what you already knew?"

7



Puzzle Pieces

Strategy #7 is an online version of the traditional Jigsaw: as a group, the students break apart a topic/ chapter/ activity to work on individually, and then they return to the group to put the pieces back together to construct a shared understanding.

This strategy can work with a range of subjects and topics, and is particularly good when there is a lot of content to cover or information to collate.

Look for ways you can help students to break topics or assessments into various parts, and encourage opportunities for students to share with the class what they have been responsible for, what they have learnt, and how it connects to the work of the rest of the group.



Making Connections



8

Strategy #8 encourages students to make connections between emerging related ideas and concepts.

Using a collaborative online tool the students can talk in their groups about what ideas and concepts are related, why and how.

They can continue to build this map over time.

In class, invite students to share connections and justify.

9



Represent It

Presenting verbal or written information in a visual way through images helps to improve the recall of that information later on (See Weinstein et al. 2019 for more detail).

This strategy invites students to identify ways to visually represent key terms or ideas, to share these with their group and to explain how the image relates.

Invite the class to share their various images, discussing which is most representative of the concepts and build a class image wall.



Make It Concrete



10

Concepts that are very abstract or unfamiliar can be challenging to understand.

Providing or identifying real-world examples can make these concepts more tangible and accessible.

Invite students to share the concrete examples their groups develop, and encourage them to explain them.



These Home Strategies support the 'Learning Well...Together' Remote Learning Strategies developed by the SLRC.

The 10 Strategies are available for Students.

1 Ryan, R. M.; Deci, E. L. (2000). 'Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being'. *American Psychologist*, 55: 68-78. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68.

2. Based on the concept by Rennie Saunders of 'Shut Up and Write'. See <https://shutupwrite.com/about/>

3. Bjork, R. A., Dunlosky, J., & Kornell, N. (2013). Self-regulated learning: Beliefs, techniques, and illusions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 64, 417-444. doi: 10.1146/annurev-psych-113011-143823

4. Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77, 81-112. doi: 10.3102/003465430298487

5. Hattie, J.A.C., Gan, M. & Brooks, C. (2016). Instruction based on feedback. In R. Mayer & P. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Learning and Instruction* (2nd Ed., pp. 249-274). New York: Routledge.