Reading Made Easy: Strategies for Online Teaching

Prepare students to read

Include pre-reading prompts or activities to motivate students to read and activate/develop their background knowledge of the subject matter. Here are some examples:

- Introduce key vocabulary
- Show a short video or an image related to the subject to elicit interest and facilitate class discussion
- Ask pre-reading questions
- Create an anticipation guide
- Use a KWL Chart (What I Know/What I Want to Know/What I have Learned)

Engage students during lecture

Breaking your PowerPoint lectures into sections of a manageable amount of information is important to improve retention and comprehension. Whether your lecture is synchronous or not, give students an opportunity to **stop and process** what they have just read or heard. This can be done by asking them a few **embedded questions** that involve literal comprehension, application, or evaluation of ideas and concepts from the portion of lecture they have just been taught.

If you use Blackboard Collaborate, you can use the polling function to ask students a quick Yes/No or multiple-choice question. If you are an OpenLab user, you can use the Word Press poll plug-in.

Questions that require students to make connections to their own experiences or observations or connections among concepts and ideas they have previously learned in the course can also be included. Some **"Why"** or **"What if"** questions can guide students to think critically.

Research shows that the one-minute paper is an effective classroom assessment tool. It also helps students focus and retain information or reflect on their learning. Though it is often used at the end of the class, it can be used to conclude a segment in a lesson.

As you organize your lecture slides, always include **an introduction** listing the topics you are going to cover in the lecture. This can provide students a road map of the content to be covered. Highlighting **key terms and definitions** also help students focus on important information.

If you use pre-recorded lecture videos or PowerPoint slides, you can plan your narration to allow enough time for students to **take notes**, a practice all students should be encouraged to do. You can also ask the students to pause the video to work on a specific task before they continue.

Consolidate learning

There are different ways to reinforce learning after the lecture. One of them is to ask students **post-reading/lecture questions**. They can take the form of a word problem, a short summary, a reflection, etc., depending on your discipline. Another effective and evidence-based strategy is the exit slip. In a regular classroom, students normally fill out the slips before class ends. If you use Blackboard, you can set up a discussion forum for this purpose. Digital exit slips can be generated through online tools such as Poll Everywhere and Google Forms. These tools can help you sort students' responses more efficiently. Exit slips are also a useful form of formative assessment.

Please visit the READ Openab for more resources: https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/groups/read/

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