



10 Easy-to-Implement Experiential Exercises

Create your own to suit your class dynamic

Feel free to experiment with or try any of these with variations. To have exercises be effective and well received, set the expectation on day one that you will be using these exercises (especially cold calling and pop quizzes). It is best not to throw in something new partway through a course that will catch students off guard.

In deciding which to use,

- Think of **relevance** first – in coursework and big picture of learning outcomes.
- What is in it for them (the students) – does the exercise **make sense**?
- How can I gain their attention – what is going on in **their world**? Tie it in to exercises.
- Know your audience – find out their backgrounds/experience and **weave** that in.

Exercises:

1. **Pair-share.** Have students discuss problems in pairs and then share their answers with the class. Impact: Ensures engagement with quieter students.
2. **Pop quiz.** Announce that these will happen during the course. It can be as simple as three questions. Impact: “Force point” for learning, appreciated by students (no matter what they say at the time!)
3. **Assign** a group of students (or have groups sign up) to **brief the class for five minutes** on the homework assignment at the start of a class. Impacts: Peer learning; puts students in your shoes.
4. **Front page news.** Share an article that relates to course and discuss. Impact: Demonstrates relevance of your knowledge and weaving in course topic.
5. **Polleverywhere.com.** Use cell phones in class to answer questions. Impacts: Engage entire class; uses relevant technology.
6. **Open with a dilemma.** Have students solve in teams and discuss using course frameworks. Impact: Peer learning
7. **Open with a short relevant video.** Either you or your students can identify and share a short relevant video and lead a discussion on it. Impact: Videos add greater interest, relevance
8. **Use 3x5 cards** for questioning and reasoning, quizzes. Impact: Real time thinking, and writing and can be exchanged or used later in class.
9. **Use post-it notes** for collecting, grouping, and collaborating on topics. Impact: Engages students in seeing how their ideas contribute to a broader framework.
10. **Quick writes.** Pose a topic, reading, dilemma, or problem set and have students write their answers and turn in. Can be graded or not. Impact: Shows you how they are processing your material – useful if there seems to be some confusion in the class.