

ReadingSkills

ACTIVITIES

forContentAreas



SAMPLE



region 4
Educated Solutions

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Introduction

Learning is something a learner does, not something that is done to a learner (Holubec, Johnson, & Johnson , 1992). Students need to explore the world around them to figure out how they fit into this world. The journey of learning for students begins with motivation and engagement. Students who get involved learn and retain more than those who receive information passively. The more interesting an assignment is, the more likely students are motivated to complete the assignment. Research tells us that the teachers who are most successful in engaging students develop activities with students' basic psychological and intellectual needs in mind (Holubec, Johnson, & Johnson , 1992). Students need work that develops their sense of competency, allows them to develop connections with others, and provides opportunities for self-expression. The challenge teachers face is to create a learning environment that caters to all of these needs.

Two successful methods for helping students to become actively engaged learners are cooperative learning and hands-on activities. While students are participating in cooperative learning groups and hands-on activities, they are not only engaged but are learning many skills. They learn about organization, problem-solving strategies, concentration, coordination, confidence, creativity, interdependence, teamwork, and how to follow rules. The skills and perspectives taught in cooperative learning groups are beneficial in many environments. Integrating hands-on activities with science activities, math, reading, and writing skills are effective ways to reach all types of learners.

Several cooperative and hands-on activities are provided in this kit to support student engagement across content areas. Brief descriptions of how to use the activities have been provided along with possible extensions. Samples of the activities are provided along with blank copies. The directions for how to use the activities are flexible, so the activities may be adjusted to reflect the students' levels of understanding and need.

Response Board

Purpose:

Students use the Response Board to help organize information, take notes, or respond to questions. The board can be used with any activity.

Materials:

Response Board

Laminated Response Board (teacher material)

Directions for Use:

1. Determine the graphic organizer students will use to complete the activity.
 - K-W-L
 - Web Chart
 - Word Study
 - R-A-F-T
 - Story Plan
 - Two-Column Notes
 - T-Chart
 - Concept of Definition Map
 - Venn Diagram
 - Sequence or Timeline

(The mat can be used with any activity where students need to use a graphic organizer, respond to questions/prompts, problem solve, take notes, or write.)
2. Provide each student with a copy of the Response Board. Using the laminated teacher sample, model using the Response Board.
3. Discuss with students how to use the chosen graphic organizer and the board.
4. Allow students time to complete the portion of the activity that requires the graphic organizer.
5. Monitor students' use of the board and provide immediate feedback.
6. Once students have completed the appropriate graphic organizer, have them use the information to complete or extend the assigned activity.

Vocabulary Concentration Synonyms and Antonyms

Purpose:

Students will match vocabulary words to their synonyms and/or antonyms.

Materials:

Synonyms Cards or Antonyms Cards

Directions for Use:

1. Place students in groups of four.
2. Determine the order of play within the groups.
3. Assign one student the role of being the materials person or dealer. This person is responsible for the materials, shuffling, and dealing the cards.
4. The dealer shuffles the cards and lays the cards face down on the table one at a time, making sure that the cards do not overlap each other.
5. The first player selects two cards at random, turns the cards face up, and reads the cards aloud. All players are allowed to see the cards chosen.
6. If the cards match by being either synonyms or antonyms, the player takes the two cards and moves them to the side. (To provide scaffolding support, the pictures and numbers on the synonym cards match. This visual connection will reinforce the player's learning and allow for some level of independence when playing. The antonym cards have matching numbers to assist the students if they are unsure of the words.)
7. The player again turns over two cards at random. If these cards match, the player takes the two cards, moves them to the side, and turns over two cards again. The play continues until the cards drawn do not match.
8. If the cards drawn do not match, the player turns both cards face down in the same position they were initially. This is the end of the player's turn.
9. It is the next player's turn. This player turns over a card that has not previously been shown. The player thinks about whether the synonym or antonym for the new card has been turned over