| Passive Learning | Active Learning | |
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| **Definition**<br>Knowledge is transferred to the student. The responsibility for learning is with the instructor. | **Definition**<br>Knowledge is acquired by the student through a process of knowledge creation. The responsibility for learning is with the student. The learning objectives are made explicit by the instructor who also prepares activities through which students actively engage in inquiry. | |
| **How to build passive learning activities**<br>Prepare lectures, readings, and videos on which students will be later tested. | **How to build active learning activities**<br>Write learning objectives for the activity. Make sure these learning objectives have active verbs which can be measured. Also, make sure they address higher-order cognitive skills (see Bloom's Taxonomy). These objectives should be written at the top of the activity instructions.<br>Brainstorm a variety of ways students could master the learning objectives, especially using verbs such as *create, make, build, organize, synthesize, reverse engineer, mashup*, etc. Consider new opportunities for students to create things through the use of web 2.0 tools such as online presentations (Prezi), slideshows (Vuvox, Animoto), animations (Go!Animate, Xtranormal), or videos (YouTube). Then select the most effective of the ideas you came up with. Feel free to offer the students two or more options.<br>Write up very clear instructions for the activity. If the students will be graded on the activity, be sure to give clear expectations—perhaps through a rubric.<br>Consider the possibility of having students share everything they create or do in your active learning activities. The discussion board is a good place to share with their classmates and give each-other feedback. | |
| **Examples** | | |
| **Passive** | **Somewhat Active Learning** | **Very Active Learning** |
| Listen to a lecture | The lecture is interspersed with occasional questions students must answer. (Articulate Storyline, Camtasia) | Have groups of students work together to create and deliver the lecture. There are a wide range of tools and presentation methods students could use to create and deliver lectures. |
| Read a textbook chapter | Have students work in small groups to summarize textbook chapters. | Have students write pages in their websites. The Google Docs tool inside the LMS (Canvas) could be used. Weebly, Wix, and other free website creation and hosting services allow students to easily create websites for the class. The fact that the work they produce will be published on the internet for the whole world to see could enhance engagement and motivation. |
| Read a textbook chapter | Have students do research about textbook chapter topics in academic journal databases and present new research findings to the class. | Have students write blog posts. Blogger (blogspot) and other free blogging tools will allow students to create beautiful and personalized blogs for the class. The fact that the work they produce will be published on the internet for the whole world to see could enhance engagement and motivation. |
| Watch a video | Have students find other relevant videos on the topic and share them with the class. | Have students create videos. These videos don't have to show the students' faces (privacy)—instead, the camera (or web-cam) could be focused on a sheet of paper or whiteboard on which students write while explaining the work at hand. |
| Watch a video | Have students critique the video. | Have students create screencasts (Screencast-O-Matic, Screenr, Jing, etc). |
| Read a journal article | Have students find another journal article on the same topic and compare/contrast the two. | Have students search for 3 journal articles on the topic at hand and create an online presentation comparing and contrasting those articles. |
| Read a web page | Have students find other similar web pages and critique them. | Have students contribute to the Wikipedia page on the topic at hand. |
| View a PowerPoint | Instead of PowerPoints, the material is presented in interactive formats such as Articulate Storyline. | Have students create online presentations (Prezi, etc). |